

BIO
The Rev. Dr. Emma Jordan-Simpson

The Rev. Dr. Emma Jordan-Simpson is the Executive Pastor of The Concord Baptist Church of Christ, Brooklyn, NY. She is the sixth of seven children born to a single mother in Newark, New Jersey. The beneficiary of programs like the first generation of Head Start and free after school programs run by local churches in Newark, she knew early on that she wanted to live a life of service. She preached her first sermon at the age of 17 at House of Prayer Episcopal Church in Newark. She attended public schools in Newark and graduated from Arts High School in 1981 before going on to Fisk University in Nashville, TN as a “first-generation” college student.

While at Fisk, Rev. Dr. Jordan-Simpson was a member of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, the Fisk University Choir, and the Black Mass Gospel Choir. She served the Fisk Memorial Chapel as student chaplain, and she served as chaplain to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Alpha Beta Chapter. She graduated with honors in 1985 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in the double major - Religious and Philosophical Studies and Music. She graduated from Union Theological Seminary in New York City with a Master of Divinity degree in 1988. When the Concord Baptist Church of Christ ordained her in 1989, she became the second woman in the church’s history to be set apart for the Gospel Ministry. She received the Certificate in Not for Profit Management, Executive Level from the Columbia Business School Institute for Not for Profit Management in 1995, and earned the Doctor of Ministry Degree (with distinction) from Drew Theological School in 2009.

The passions of her life are reflected in some of her writings, which includes a blog entitled “A Voice in Ramah” – aimed at providing meditations and encouragement for people who work with and on behalf of children. They also include “*Structural Poverty in Bedford Stuyvesant: Church and Community Challenge*,” a lecture originally delivered on behalf of Union Theological Seminary in honor of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Greifswald, Germany and excerpted in Global Black Woman Magazine; and a meditation entitled, “*Loving Our Daughters*,” for Sister to Sister: A Devotional for African American Women. The prayers for this meditation have now been adapted and published in “*Standing in the Need of Prayer: a Celebration of Black Prayer*,” by the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and Coretta Scott King.

As a bi-vocational minister, she has combined pastoral ministry with social justice community engagement. She served as the Executive Director of the Children’s Defense Fund – New York from 2007 until 2012. The mission of the Children’s Defense Fund is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. The Children’s Defense Fund provides a strong, effective and independent voice for all the children of America who cannot vote, lobby or speak for themselves. Prior to that, she was the Executive Director of Girls Incorporated of New York City, and the Executive Vice President for the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation.

She currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the Brooklyn Community Foundation, Union Theological Seminary, the Weeksville Heritage Society, and the Concord Christ Fund. She is also chair of the OCFS Brooklyn for Brooklyn Community Advisory Board. She is married to the Rev. Dr. Gary V. Simpson, Senior Pastor of the Concord Baptist Church of Christ. They have three children, Candace Yonina, David Michael and Jordan Elizabeth.