

## Rev. Jennifer Bailey



Named one of 15 Faith Leaders to Watch in 2015, **Rev. Jennifer Bailey** is an ordained minister, community organizer, and emerging national leader in the multi-faith movement for justice. As Founder and Executive Director of the Faith Matters Network (FMN), Jennifer believes that people of faith can be game changers in the fight to build a more just, compassionate, and peaceful world. She comes to this work with nearly a decade of experience combatting intergenerational poverty in her hometown of Chicago and her adopted home, Nashville, Tennessee. A child of the food justice movement, Jennifer worked to increase access to public benefits for food insecure families in Middle Tennessee and organized residents of food deserts to advocate for transformational public policies in their communities. After years of listening deeply to the stories of community members living with hunger, Jennifer realized that the immediate issue of food insecurity was a symptom of much larger issue: structural economic

injustice. At the same time, she noted that the regions of the country with the greatest economic disparities are also the areas with the highest rates of religious participation in the United States. A Truman Scholar, Jennifer earned degrees from Tufts University and Vanderbilt University Divinity School where she was awarded the Wilbur F. Tillett Prize for accomplishments in the study of theology. She is an ordained itinerant elder in the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church, the oldest historically-black denomination in the United States. Jennifer is currently a Nathan Cummings Foundation Fellow, an elite cohort of innovative leaders combatting issues of economic and social inequality with outside-the-box thinking.