

Necrology for the November 2019 Annual Meeting  
of the CT Conference United Church of Christ

Ordained Clergy with standing in the CT Conference who have died  
since the May 2019 Special Meeting

**The Rev. Edwin O. Ayala**, The Rev. Edwin O. Ayala, who led Latinx congregations of the United Church of Christ in Connecticut, served on the denomination's national staff, and headed an ecumenical agency in Hartford, died of pancreatic cancer Sept. 23. He was 71. Born Dec. 20, 1947, Ayala graduated from the College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts, now part of the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez, with a degree in civil engineering in 1970. He then studied theology at seminaries in San Jose, Costa Rica, and San Juan, P.R., receiving his Master of Divinity degree in 1979 from Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico. He later took advanced courses at Hartford Theological Seminary. He received ministerial standing in the UCC and the American Baptist Churches. From 1979 to 1991, he ministered in New Britain, Conn., first as "Hispanic Pastor" of South Congregational UCC and then as pastor of Iglesia Bautista Congregacional, or Baptist Congregational Church, organized in 1982 and dually affiliated with the UCC and the ABC. From 1991 to 1995, Ayala was based in Cleveland as the first-ever Hispanic church development specialist with the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries. He was part of a UCBHM team creating programs to nurture churches of the UCC's historically underrepresented racial and ethnic traditions. Returning to Connecticut, Ayala joined the staff of the [Christian Activities Council](#), a Hartford ecumenical social service and social justice agency. He served there from 1996 to 2014, in positions including associate director and executive director. He remained active in the wider UCC as a member of the Connecticut Conference Department of Church in Society, president of the New England Hispanic Ministries Council and on the national Council for Hispanic Ministries. He was a presenter at a UCC New Church Leadership Institute in Atlanta in 2007 and was among 70 participants in a UCC convocation on health care in Cleveland in 2008. In retirement, he served occasional interim ministries, such as one from 2015 to 2017 at First Congregational UCC, Bloomfield, and operated a cultural-diversity consultancy that he called Intersections Connections. He is survived by his wife, Doris (Luciano) Ayala, and a number of children and grandchildren. Rev. Ayala kept his standing as an ordained minister in the Hartford East Association of the Connecticut Conference.