

**THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
REV. JOHN L. FRYE, JR., CHAIR
OCTOBER 21-22, 2011**

FIRST SECTION

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY, AN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION, OR A TASK FORCE THAT REQUIRE ACTION BY PRESBYTERY:

I. RECOMMEND FOR COMMISSIONING BY THE PRESBYTERY AS LAY PASTORS:

A. MARCIA REIGHLEY

From: Commissioned Lay Pastor Graduate

As: Commissioned Lay Pastor, Sweetwater Presbyterian Church

Effective: October 21, 2011

(The commission is to include permission to celebrate the Lord's Supper, Baptisms, weddings and moderate the Session.)

(See COM Attachment 1 for Bio Credo.)

B. RUSSELL REIGHLEY

From: Commissioned Lay Pastor Graduate

As: Commissioned Lay Pastor, Sweetwater Presbyterian Church

Effective: October 21, 2011

(The commission is to include permission to celebrate the Lord's Supper, Baptisms, weddings and moderate the Session.)

(See COM Attachment 2 for Bio Credo.)

C. PATRICIA H. QUEEN

From: Commissioned Lay Pastor Graduate

As: Commissioned Lay Pastor, Union Mills Presbyterian Church

Effective: October 21, 2011

(The commission is to include permission to celebrate the Lord's Supper, Baptisms, weddings and moderate the Session.)

(See COM Attachment 3 for Bio Credo.)

D. THOMAS QUEEN

From: Commissioned Lay Pastor Graduate

As: Commissioned Lay Pastor, Union Mills Presbyterian Church

Effective: October 21, 2011

(The commission is to include permission to celebrate the Lord's Supper, Baptisms, weddings and moderate the Session.)

(See COM Attachment 4 for Bio Credo.)

II. RECOMMEND TO PRESBYTERY THE VALIDATION OF MINISTRY FOR:

A. David R. Lytle, Chaplain for Presbyterian Healthcare, Charlotte, through October 21, 2012.

B. William Buchanan, Co-Director, Asheville Youth Mission, through October 21, 2012.

C. Mike Johnston, Director of Spiritual Care for Gaston Memorial Hospital, through October 21, 2012.

- D. Robert A. McCully, Jr., Counselor/Literacy Coordinator/Resource Coordinator for Charlotte Rescue Mission, through October 21, 2012.
- E. Joan C. Martin, Chaplain for Covenant Village in Gastonia, through October 21, 2012.
- F. Lynn Michie, Chaplain for Swannanoa Correctional Center for Women, through October 21, 2012.
- G. Robert Tuttle, Vice-President of the Center for Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Montreat Conference Center, through October 21, 2012.
- H. Monty B. Burnham, Field Staff for Priority Associates, Campus Crusade for Christ, through October 21, 2012.

SECOND SECTION

The Book of Order provides that the Committee on Ministry may be given authority by the Presbytery to find in order calls issued by churches, to approve and present calls for service of ministers, to approve the examination of ministers transferring from other Presbyteries, required by G-11.0402 and G11.0502g, to dissolve the pastoral relationship in cases where the congregation and pastor concur, to dismiss ministers to other Presbyteries, and to approve administrative commissions to ordain/install with the provision that such actions be reported at the next stated meeting of the Presbytery. (G-11.0502h) This permission was granted to our Committee on Ministry; therefore, the following actions are to be simply admitted to the record.

I. APPROVED THE EXAMINATION AND TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP TO THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA:

A. DENEISE DETER LISS

From: Salem Presbytery
 As: Interim Pastor, Long Creek Presbyterian Church
 Effective: September 12, 2011
 (See COM Attachment 5 for Bio Credo.)

B. MARGARET (MARGIE) BOYD

From: Salem Presbytery
 As: Designated Pastor (two years), Cullowhee Presbyterian Church
 Effective: September 19, 2011
 (See COM Attachment 6 for Bio Credo.)

C. J. WHITTINGTON (WHIT) MALONE, JR.

From: Presbytery of North Central Iowa
 As: Pastor, Hickory First Presbyterian Church
 Effective: October 24, 2011
 (See COM Attachment 7 for Bio Credo.)

II. APPROVED PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP AND TERMS OF CALL:

A. MARGIE BOYD

| | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Salary | \$27,000 |
| Housing Allowance | 20,000 |
| Social Security | 3,453 |
| Reimbursable Expenses | |
| (Auto, Prof. Dev.) | 5,000 |
| Total | \$55,453 |

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Pension/Insurance | Yes |
| Four Weeks Vacation | Yes |
| Two Weeks Study Leave | Yes |
| Moving Expenses | Yes |

B. J. WHITTINGTON MALONE, JR.

| | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Salary/Housing Allowance | \$85,000 |
| Social Security | 6,503 |
| Auto Allowance | Reimbursed |
| Book Allowance | 400 |
| Professional Dev. | 1,500 |
| Pastor Discretionary Fund | 1,000 |
| Total | \$94,403 |

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Pension/Insurance | Yes |
| Four Weeks Vacation | Yes |
| Two Weeks Study Leave | Yes |
| Sabbatical | Yes |
| Moving Expenses | Yes |

III. APPROVED INTERIM PASTOR RELATIONSHIP:

- A. Wallace Johnson and Newton First Presbyterian Church
Effective: August 1, 2011 - October 31, 2011

IV. APPROVED STATED SUPPLY RELATIONSHIPS:

- A. Kent Smith and West Asheville Presbyterian Church
Effective: July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012
- B. Albert Shaw and Ryburn Memorial Presbyterian Church
Extended: August 1, 2011 - July 31, 2012
- C. Albert Shaw and Duncan's Creek Presbyterian Church
Extended: August 15, 2011 - August 14, 2012
- D. Wendell Ligon and Morrison Presbyterian Church
Extended: September 1, 2011 - August 31, 2012
- E. Jack Presseau and Saluda Presbyterian Church
Extended: August 30, 2011 - August 29, 2012
- F. William Whiteside and Green Mountain Presbyterian Church
Extended: September 8, 2011 - September 7, 2012

V. APPROVED CONTINUATION OF COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR RELATIONSHIPS:

- A. Dwayne Durham and Hendersonville First Presbyterian Church
Extended: June 15, 2011 - June 14, 2012
- B. Betty W. Shaw and Ryburn Memorial Presbyterian Church
Extended: August 1, 2011 - July 31, 2012
- C. Betty W. Shaw and Duncan's Creek Presbyterian Church
Extended: August 15, 2011 - August 14, 2012
- D. Philip Adams and Conley Memorial Presbyterian Church
Extended: August 5, 2011 - August 4, 2012

- E. Randy Patterson and Dixon Presbyterian Church
Extended: September 7, 2011 - September 6, 2012

VI. APPROVED AS MODERATORS:

- A. John Knox and Bert Sigmon
- B. Pine Street and Billy Lowe
- C. Ironton and Billy Lowe
- D. Newdale and Don Cooper

VII. APPROVED DISSOLUTION OF PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP:

- A. Michael Brazelle and Newdale Presbyterian Church
Effective: August 14, 2011

VIII. APPROVED DISSOLUTION OF COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR RELATIONSHIPS:

- A. Dick Hood and John Knox Presbyterian Church
Effective: July 31, 2011
- B. Ken Humphreys and Bessemer City First Presbyterian Church
Effective: September 11, 2011

IX. APPROVED THE TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP FOR:

- A. Jerry Bron
To: Coastal Carolina Presbytery
As: Honorably Retired
Effective: June 16, 2011
- B. William Cockrill
To: Charlotte Presbytery
As: Interim Minister, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, NC
Effective: February 12, 2011

X. APPROVED THE REQUEST FOR HONORABLE RETIREMENT:

- A. Cameron Murchison
Effective: July 1, 2011

XI. APPROVED MOVING TO MEMBER-AT-LARGE STATUS:

- A. Lynn Webber
- B. Ray Fancher

XII. APPROVED PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR:

- A. Sweetwater

XIII. APPROVED ORDINATION/INSTALLATION COMMISSIONS:

- A. Approve the Administrative Commission for Installation of Esta M. Jarrett as Pastor of the Canton Presbyterian Church on Sunday, August 28, 2011 at 4:00 p.m.

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Responsibility on Commission</u> | <u>Min/Eld.</u> |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| John Lindsay | Moderator/Preside | Minister |
| James Aydelotte | Propound the Constitutional Questions | Minister |
| Margaret Torrence | Preach the Sermon | Minister |
| Samuel Baraki | Propound Questions to Congregation | Elder |
| Valorie Vliek | Charge the Minister | Elder |
| Riley Covin | Charge the Congregation | Minister |
| Bobbi White | Lead in Worship | Minister |
| Peggy Rada | Lead in Worship | Elder |

- B. Approve the Administrative Commission for Ordination/Installation of Melissa Anne Upchurch as Pastor of the Marshall Presbyterian Church on Sunday, September 25, 2011 at 4:00 p.m.

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Responsibility on Commission</u> | <u>Min/Eld.</u> |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|
| Patricia Clark | Moderator/Preside/Propound Constitutional Questions | Elder |
| George Gunn | Preach the Sermon | Minister |
| Hank Shaner | Propound Questions to Congregation | Elder |
| Gene Linton | Charge the Minister | Minister |
| Maggie Lauterer | Charge the Congregation | Minister |
| Bobbi White | Lead in Worship | Minister |
| Helen Hall | Lead in Worship | Elder |

- C. Approve the Administrative Commission for Installation of Lauren S. Vanacore as Associate Pastor of the Gastonia First Presbyterian Church on Sunday, October 23, 2011 at 10:30 a.m.

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Responsibility on Commission</u> | <u>Min/Eld.</u> |
|--------------|---|-----------------|
| Bobbi White | Moderator/Preside/Propound the Constitutional Questions | Minister |
| Rusty Harris | Presentation of the Candidate Propound Questions to Congregation | Elder |
| John Frye | Charge the Congregation | Minister |
| Daria Ragan | Lead in Worship | Minister |
| Lois Camp | Lead in Worship | Elder |
| Ed Forsyth | Lead in Worship | Minister |

| <u>Guests</u> | | |
|------------------|---------------------|----------|
| James Rissmiller | Preach the Sermon | Minister |
| David Sease | Lead in Worship | Elder |
| Jerry Bron | Charge the Minister | Minister |

COM ATTACHMENT 1

Marcia D. Reighley
Faith Statement
August 18, 2011

I believe in the extraordinary love of God as shown forth in all living things which God alone has, is, and will create. **Sovereignty**

I believe God demonstrated his love through his self revelation when **The Word was made flesh** in the person of Jesus Christ and lived amongst his people. Jesus demonstrated through his words and actions how human beings are to love and take care of one another.

I believe God's love for the human family is powerfully expressed through the death and resurrection of God's only Son, Jesus Christ who died upon the Cross to vindicate us of our sins of faithlessness, selfishness and judgment. **Atonement**

I believe that the **Holy Spirit** is active and working in the lives of all human beings ever drawing them into a personal relationship with God through his Son Jesus Christ. I believe that when we recognize and receive His love the transforming power of the Holy Spirit begins to change our character to more closely resemble that of Christ's.

I believe that through our faith in the **Trinity**, (the sovereignty of God, the atoning sacrifice of His son, Jesus Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit) we are adopted into the Family of God through the **Sacrament of Baptism**. We are forgiven and freed from the power of sin to control our lives. In gratitude we proclaim that God alone is worthy of our praise, worship and service.

I believe the **Sacrament of the Lord's Supper** is practiced to remind us of God's extravagant love partaking of bread and juice signifies that we receive spiritual nourishment through the Holy Spirit as we, the Body of Christ gather around the Lord's Table.

The Church received the Great Commission from Christ to continue the work Jesus began, to go and make disciples of all nations. Every child of God has received at least one Spiritual Gift and our purpose is to identify and use our gift/gifts to strengthen the faith of other believers to build up and edify Christ's Church. We are to live lives worthy of his calling, making real God's love for the world.

I believe that **The Bible** is God's love letter to us; it is a written account of God's relationship with his people and their relationships with one another. I believe that God chose, ordained and enabled the writers to preserve His Story. God revealed himself as the Word, creator, covenant maker, liberator, judge, redeemer, shepherd and comforter in the O.T. In the O.T. God commanded his people to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus repeated the commandment in the N.T. Because God has commanded us to love Christ has made it possible for us to obey His command. The power of the Holy Spirit will transform human hearts of stone into hearts of love.

I believe **sin** is nothing more than ceasing to love the Lord, our neighbor and our self, an unloving heart is judgmental and selfish hurting our relationship with God, our neighbor and our self. Christ died on the cross in order to forgive our sin and renew in us the capacity to love again. **Grace**

COM ATTACHMENT 1

Marcia D. Reighley

My faith journey is my life journey with its profound challenges, hurts, wounds and disappointments, some caused by the choice of another and some self-inflicted which altered the course of my life. There have also been events which have brought extreme happiness, celebrations and blessings.

September 19, 1978 holds tremendous significance in my life since this was the day that our daughter KD was born and I had an epiphany. While observing how perfect she was made I proclaimed, "There must be a God because she is a miracle". I had not thought about the existence of God before but at that moment I became consciously aware of God's love for me through the life of my daughter. This proclamation opened up an immediate blessing, an invitation to attend a "Friendship Bible Coffee". During this bible study, "Examine the Evidence" I professed my love and trust in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I attended many bible studies over the next 7 years and grew in my love and dependence of God.

Another significant blessing was the Holy Spirit healing me to wholeness from an early childhood event which robbed me of my innocence and a regrettable choice which I made 20 years later. These two life altering events left me with two deep gaping wounds. My personal healing experience has made me acutely aware and empathetic to the pain and brokenness which many people live with.

I have learned the power of prayer! In 1985 we moved from the NW to Greensboro, NC. Before we actually moved I prayed that God would place us in a Christian community with a church that my husband would be comfortable attending. My prayers were answered the second day we arrived when I received two invitations, one to a Christian Women's luncheon the second to visit Community in Christ Presbyterian Church. We joined and I was baptized with our three children in 1986 and later was ordained as an Elder. Reverend Jim Rissmiller and my husband became good friends.

I learned Christian Women's Luncheons were part of Stonecroft Ministries the same organization which sponsored the FB Coffees I had been attending in Portland, OR.

I experienced another blessing when I attended NC Presbyterian Pilgrimage in 1998, where I experienced God in a new, fresh and powerful way. My understanding of God's extravagant love for me became real and tangible. After that weekend my faith life began to grow exponentially and I became more open and obedient to be used by God to express his love and healing powers into the lives of others whom he called me to minister to. I was enabled by my Spiritual Gift to encourage and guide a young homeless man 26 yrs. old to enter a drug and alcohol program and later moved him into a halfway house.

In 2000 I began to pray over two profound disappointments, our marriage of 23 years had become a loveless marriage and our daughter KD was living the college life and I sensed in ways that were harmful to her. I prayed fervently for 6 months that our marriage would be restored because it was simply a legal contract we had yet to form a covenant union with God as the head of our marriage. I prayed that my husband and I would become yoked with God and that he would draw our daughter back into relationship with Him. On a Thursday evening my husband and I decided that we would separate but on Friday evening Russ told me that he had surrendered control of his life to Christ and asked for forgiveness to which I replied, "I will forgive you as freely as the Lord has forgiven me." Truly this was the Holy Spirit intervening to keep our family in tact because on Monday we learned that our daughter was pregnant. Before I spoke with her I prayed for wisdom as to how to handle the conversation and I heard the Spirit say, "Don't judge her, only love her or I will not be able to draw her back to me". I know that what Satan means for harm God will turn into a blessing. These two events were significant faith builders for me. Our grandson Jaeden is 11 years old. KD married a lovely man who adopted our grandson and her relationship with Christ was restored.

I believe my Laity Training and experience as a Crises Pregnancy Counselor, a Facilitator for Sexual, Post Abortion Healing and being a Stephen Minister has prepared me for the ministry of Pastoral Care. My Spiritual gifts of Wisdom, Exhortation and Pastor/ Teacher will also enable me to fulfill my call of employing these gifts to edify The Church. My husband Russ and I have been invited by the Session of Sweetwater Presbyterian church to Co-Pastor, Russ responsible for Administration and I for Pastoral Care and we would share in leading worship and teaching.

COM ATTACHMENT 2

Faith Statement

Russ Reighley.....8-18-2011

I fully, completely, and humbly believe in the Triune Deity; God/Abba, Jesus/Messiah, and the Holy Spirit.

I believe Abba/God our Father created heaven and earth and all things. I believe that Abba/God spoke to us (mankind) in many ways: in the Garden, in the Flood, in the reeds of a Basket, in the Burning Bush, and in the Dry Bones in the valley. I also believe that Abba/God spoke to us through many different people; through the Actions of Adam and Eve, through the Obedience of Noah, through the Courage of Moses, through the Faith of Abraham and Isaac, through the Faith and Naivety of Ruth, through the Boldness and Faith of David, through the Wisdom and Faith of Solomon, through the prophets and many others. I believe that we (mankind) listened to the word of God/Abba when the word had direct affect on us; otherwise we listened to ourselves for personal direction.

Then; “the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us”! The Triune Deity decided to give mankind the ultimate gift of both perfect Example and complete Sacrifice; the son of Abba/Father God in human form and being-Jesus, the Messiah. Jesus/Messiah walked, talked, led, followed, taught, bled, and died among us. Jesus/Messiah was perfect in all ways. He set the example of living through Loving that goes beyond the limits of time. But Jesus/Messiah did not come to “show and leave” He came to be indelible for all time and for all people everywhere and any time. Jesus/Messiah insured His gifts would be available for all of us forever through His disciples. Jesus/Messiah chose 12 original disciples, but He really chose any and all of us to be His disciples. Jesus/Messiah was not looking for “full time students”; He wanted people who would first learn and then teach. He wanted people who would first (and forever) follow Him, but would then lead others back to Him. Jesus/Messiah was the greatest of all humans, but His fullness did not come in His living, but in His death. Jesus/Messiah knowingly and willingly suffered greatly and died for us-you and me- at the hands of the human authorities of the times. After His death there was confusion and fear among His followers. On the third day He rose again and revealed Himself to; the Women, the eleven, and James.

Before Jesus/Messiah was crucified He shared with the disciples that He would leave with them the “Gift of the Spirit”. After Jesus/Messiah was crucified and rose again He entered the Upper Room and said “Peace be with you”, “my Peace I leave with you”. The Triune Deity has given us the “gift of the Holy Spirit”, who walks with each of us daily. It is the Holy Spirit that enables me to have Faith. Because of the strength of the Holy Spirit I know that I am a Sinner. But it is also because of the Holy Spirit that I know that as a Sinner I am loved by; Abba/ God the Father, Jesus/Messiah, and the Holy Spirit. It is because of the Holy Spirit that I know the Triune Deity only wants one thing from me; a close/personal relationship.

Peace to All

COM ATTACHMENT 2

My Faith Journey

Russ Reighley.....8-18-2011

I am currently 66 years old and strongly in love with our Lord. There are two major tenets to my life:

1. "Our Lord will put at our feet the things which He would have us do."
2. "There are four quarters to life; 1st Learn, 2nd, Learn/Teach, 3rd Teach/Learn, 4th Teach

I was blessed to born into a strong family unit. Ours was not a powerful "faith family", but I did attend Sunday school and church at our local Methodist church in a small town in Ohio. I was smart in school but not a "hard worker". I was asked to "take a break" during my sophomore year in college which got me into the Army and to Viet Nam in fairly quick order. Our Lord has plans for each of us. Viet Nam was clearly (not the war part) part of our Lord's plan for me. I needed to learn that I could do things I didn't think I was capable of, and Viet Nam taught me that.

After the Army I spent a few years following my own pursuits; I was pretty unfulfilled with most of those, except for my wife Marcia and our three children. In 1985 I left the comfortable surroundings of the Northwest and moved to North Carolina. To do this Marcia and I took a backward step financially, but a "voice" told me things would be okay. A few months later I came home from work one day to a man sitting on my porch smoking a pipe and drinking a beer. He was soon my pastor (I was not looking for a church) for the next ten years, and my close friend through this day. I joined Community in Christ Presbyterian church in Greensboro in 1986. I served as an active Elder there three different times, I sang in the choir, and I was a worship leader in many different ways.

The huge step in my faith walk came in the Fall of 1998 when I attended North Carolina Presbyterian Pilgrimage #29. It was there that I came to truly understand our Lord's desire to have a unique and personal relationship with each of us. Since then I have learned that all of my skills, secular, personal, and spiritual are gifts from our Lord. I have also learned that He will present all of the opportunities in which He will ask me to use those skills. I have been blessed to help expand Presbyterian Pilgrimage in numbers (5 to 7 annually) and geography, help start pilgrimage movements in Michigan and Nebraska, help start an inner city ministry in Hickory, help with the Back Pack program in Catawba County, go to Laity School, and now go to Sweetwater Presbyterian church with Marcia.

My time in life is to be sharing first (teaching) while constantly learning. Our Lord has blessed me beyond my understanding; I stand to Praise Him.

Peace to All

COM ATTACHMENT 3

Statement of Faith

Patricia H. Queen

August, 2011

I most assuredly believe that I am a child of God. I believe in the one true triune God. It is through the love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior, and the communion of the Holy Spirit that I worship, praise, and serve my Lord.

I believe God is Maker of all things good, seen and unseen. He is a loving and just God who created me, not because He needed me, but because He wants to love me and have me love Him. I believe He literally calls me by name, knows the very numbers of hairs on my head, and cherishes my adoration and love for Him.

I believe that God's son, Jesus Christ is fully human and fully God. He came to confront me with my sins, to offer me forgiveness and life everlasting. He came to teach me His Father's ways, to teach me how I should live in relationship to God and to my fellow believers and non-believers. When He hung on that horrible cross, He took on my sins and those of the world upon Himself. I was saved at the Cross. I was cleansed and made whole in the sight of God the Father Almighty. Through the sacrament of Baptism I remember Christ's sacrifice for my salvation; through the sacrament of Communion I remember Christ's crucifixion, death, and resurrection.

I believe the Holy Spirit to be in this world today to advocate for me and to instruct me in my daily living. It was the Holy Spirit that inspired the Word of God when the Bible was written. I believe it is that Godly inspiration that has given us the Bible as the true living Word of God, so that it is as relevant to us today as it was to the Jewish nations in the Old Testament times. It is my source of knowledge, guidance, strength, inspiration, and authority for how I am to live my life.

I believe in the one holy catholic church, guided by the confessions of faith as found in the Book of Confessions of the Presbyterian Church, USA. I believe in the reformed tradition in that we are reformed and always reforming. I believe that it is my responsibility as a Christian within the reformed tradition, to question all theological thoughts in my Christian search for Biblical truth

When I invited Jesus into my life, into my heart, into my very being, I believe He forgave all my sins. When I invite the Holy Spirit daily into my heart and daily reconnect with Jesus the Christ and God the Father Almighty, I believe I am cleansed so that the Spirit fills my being, and I can be used for God's purposes. I believe it is through daily prayer, meditation, and worship that I respond to God's invitation to a more abundant life in Him than I ever imagined possible. I praise God and thank Him for all His gifts to me, pray that I am wise enough to reach out and accept those gifts. Praise be to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.

COM ATTACHMENT 3

Biographical Faith Journey for Patricia H. Queen

I cannot tell you exactly when my journey of faith began. I remember going to church with my family at an early age. At about age seven, my dad stopped going to church with us, and soon we all stopped going. At age twelve, when my parents were having financial problems, ladies from a church nearby brought us children sweaters for Christmas. I remember being really touched by their kindness.

When I was in the eighth grade, we moved to Winnsboro, SC. Patsy Oxner, the Director of Christian Education at Sion Presbyterian Church came to visit us. Ms. Oxner showed a great interest in my family and invited us to church. My siblings and I attended Sunday School and church. It was a great social outlet for us. We began going to the Junior and Senior High Meetings. When I was sixteen, my two sisters, brother, and I were baptized and professed our faith in God and Jesus as our Lord and Savior at Sion Presbyterian Church. The only times I remember my parents attending church with us was for our baptism and when we were in the church Christmas pageants or other Sunday morning young peoples' programs. When I was in my junior and senior years of high school, I often played the piano for our opening Sunday School services and helped with the younger children in Sunday school, sometimes teaching. It was during these times that my knowledge of God's Word and young faith grew and matured.

Other than my baptism and profession of faith at Sion Presbyterian, there were two things that left a significant impression on me. The first was when Ms. Oxner asked me to play the part of Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the church Christmas pageant. I have had few things in my life that have made me feel so honored and humbled. The second was when Patsy Oxner left our church to become a missionary in Brazil. The Senior Highs attended her commissioning service at Montreat. I believe her example is what has given me a great passion for missions of God's church.

While a student at Winthrop College in Rock Hill, SC, I attended Oakland Avenue Presbyterian Church and the College Presbyterian Students' Fellowship. In 1969 I married Marvin Hula, moved to Union, SC, taught at the local high school, and joined a Methodist Church there. My husband and I became the Senior High Adult leaders. In 1971, we moved with the Forest Service to Dahlonaga, GA, and joined a small Presbyterian church where I served as an assistant musician. It was there that my firstborn, Will, was christened as an infant. From there, we moved to Charles City, VA, to my husband's family's farm. We then joined Providence Forge Presbyterian Church. We attended both Sunday School and worship services regularly; Marvin was ordained a Deacon, and I directed several Bible Schools.

In 1975, my husband was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. My faith strengthened me through the next six weeks of diagnosis and a month spent in New York City for treatment. The 28th verse of Romans chapter 8, sustained me. It does to this day in my times of crisis. Marvin's cancer was gone. We went back to our normal lives. In the fall of 1975, two dear friends and I started Sunshine Nursery School at the Providence Forge Church. That nursery school continues today as part of that church's ministry to the community. During Marvin's episode with thyroid cancer, directing Bible School, and starting the nursery, my faith grew as life, friends, and church family influenced and encouraged me.

In 1976, we adopted our second son, Ted, at age six. In 1977, we moved to Williamsburg, VA, and joined Williamsburg Presbyterian Church. We decided we needed a smaller congregation and moved our membership to Jamestown Presbyterian Church in the early 1980's. On February 9, 1985, Marvin, my husband, my children's father, and so much of my strength, fell 25 feet from a grain tank. On February 19, he died without ever regaining consciousness. My world fell apart. Again, I was sustained by faith, Romans 8:28, family, friends, and God Almighty! Soon after Marvin's death, I was ordained an Elder at the Jamestown Church but served for only a few months before we moved.

In 1986 I moved my family to Kings Mountain, NC, to be nearer my own family. There we joined Kings Mountain Presbyterian Church. I was lost. I felt God and His people had abandoned me. I moved us to Charlotte, NC, where the boys and I joined Park Road Presbyterian Church. Again, I felt no connection with God or His people. In 1990, Tom Queen and I began dating regularly. I was just finishing my Masters in Special Education- Supported Employment. I had finally found what I wanted to be when I grew up...an advocate for people with development disabilities and a trainer for the parents and professionals who serve them. During this time of feeling lost, the witness of close friends kept reminding me that God had never left me; He was and is always in the same place waiting for me to reconnect.

Tom and I were married in 1991. He retired and traveled North and South Carolina with me as I pursued my career with Exceptional Children's Assistance Center. In 1993, I worked for the Autism Society of NC and developed their advocacy program. In 1995, my friend and I started our own consulting business, Community Training and Integration, Inc. (CITI). Through CITI, we worked with professionals serving people with developmental disabilities to help them learn more inclusive and respectful ways to serve that population.

During this time, Tom and I visited several churches in Charlotte but never really found a church family with whom we connected. In 2000 we moved to Rutherfordton, NC. We felt really welcomed at Rutherfordton Presbyterian. After Don Scofield became the pastor, we joined RPC in the spring of 2001. Finally There we have been nurtured by Dr. Scofield and the church family. We have attended Bible studies and Sunday School. I have served as Moderator of the Presbyterian Women and as an elder for RPC. I have a passion for missions, serve with the Outreach Committee, and help support a Kenyan couple who are missionaries to their own people.

In 2008 I entered the School of the laity by divine intervention in my life. There my relationship with God deepened significantly. My experience as pulpit supply for several churches over the last eighteen months, including the last four months exclusively at Union Mills has further grown my faith, deepened my commitment to Him, and increased my knowledge of His Word. As I look back over my life, I can see that my experiences and opportunities for service to God and His people have prepared me for the call to serve His people at Union Mills Presbyterian.

COM ATTACHMENT 4

My Statement of Faith Thomas F. Queen

3 August 2011

I believe in God the Father who is the Creator. He created the Word, formed the earth, universe, and all things good. He created me for a purpose and I belong to God. I trust in the one triune God, Jesus Christ His son, and the Holy Spirit who inspires me, rules my faith and life in Christ through the scriptures. The Holy Spirit sets me free to love God and my neighbor. He is always with me and binds us all together. I believe in the love of God, and He is always faithful to me. I believe the writings of the Bible were a gift of God. As written the Bible was inspired by God, and it is his Holy Word. The Bible tells me the story of God's presence and purpose. I believe that in scripture God still speaks to me today just as he did to the Jews and Apostles in days past.

Through the love and grace of God, and that of our Lord Jesus, I trust in only one God whom alone I worship and serve. I believe the scriptures tell me that Jesus was born fully human and fully God. He was sent into the world for redemption of humanity by his teaching, his death on the cross and resurrection. My sins were forgiven and my heart cleansed when Jesus died on the cross. This gives me access to God and the promise of eternal life. I believe this salvation was a gift from God when He chose me.

I believe in the church universal, which was instituted by God through Jesus Christ. It is the church for all people who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. I believe that as members we are to live in fellowship with others, to witness and be disciples for God. As a Christian I live under the rule that Jesus Christ is Head of the Church where He is presented in Word and Sacrament. Communion reminds me of the sacrifices Jesus suffered for me and through Baptism the Holy Spirit awakens me to the new life I have in Jesus Christ. Through the Holy Spirit I am encouraged to pray continuously and to live a holy and joyful life by following the example of Jesus.

In my inevitable failure to be faithful in my response to God, and in love and service to God, I know I am forgiven by God's grace and glory. I know he will not let me down, and pray I won't let Him down. Our Book of Confessions show that our reformed theology is always reforming. Our Presbyterian background places responsibility for Christ's ministry on me and all believers of the community of faith in every time and place. I rejoice that nothing can separate me from the Love of God as expressed in Jesus Christ.

Glory be to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

COM ATTACHMENT 4

Biographical Journey of Faith, Thomas .F. Queen, Sr.

I was born in the latter years of the Depression on July 13, 1938 in Charlotte, NC. I cannot remember not going to church in my earlier years, always with my mother and three older sisters. I knew in these early years there was a God, and I believed in Jesus Christ. I accepted Jesus as my Savior, joined the Baptist Church, and was baptized in a creek in western Mecklenburg County when I was twelve years old. Soon afterwards my family moved to High Shoals, NC, where I continued to go to church. When I was fifteen we moved to Honea Path, SC, and I joined Honea Path Baptist Church where I was very active. After high school I attended Erskine College and Clemson College. It was at Clemson that I strayed from my faith and early training.

In 1959, I left college and joined the Army. My spiritual life suffered during my military service years. I was married in 1965 and was blessed with three children. I worked for Pan Am at Cape Canaveral, Florida for ten years. In 1972, I moved to Sharon, South Carolina to a farm to start a new life with my family. At that time I was also working as a salesman for Sears. My marriage failed and I was divorced in 1974. The one good thing from my marriage was my children. I felt the most important thing in my life for the next eighteen years was my children. Although I did not go to church often, my children did. In 1976, I moved back to Florida to get help from my family with raising my children, and to help my mother with my ailing father.

I finished my education at Rollins College in 1976 at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. I moved back to my farm in South Carolina in 1977, and took my parents with me as they were aging and declining in health. I returned to work for Sears in Rock Hill, SC from 1977 through 1992. My parents died in 1989 and 1990.

In 1990, I met Patricia Hula who had been widowed several years before. She had two sons, both in high school. Pat and I became very close. After about a year we were married. She was an active Presbyterian in search of a new church home. We attended various Presbyterian churches in Charlotte. With the love of my new wife coupled with my past upbringing I began to love God more and more.

In 1992, I retired from my business life. Pat continued to work. We moved several times, first to Sunset Beach, back to Charlotte, and then to Helen, GA. Searching for an appropriate retirement community and wanting to be more centrally located to all six of our children, we moved to Rutherfordton, NC in 2000. We began attending Rutherfordton Presbyterian Church (RPC) in 2000. Through Pat's insistence and God's love for both of us, we found a nurturing church family at Rutherfordton Presbyterian. There I rededicated my life to God and joined RPC. It was here I found a new life, and my faith got stronger.

In 2003, I was ordained an Elder at RPC. I have served as Chairman of the Stewardship Committee, worked on the Outreach Committee for the past ten years, as missions are my passion. I worked at the Soup Kitchen, built ramps, decks, roofs, and been on mission trips to KY and WV numerous times. I help support a Kenyan couple who are missionaries to their own people. They are our brother and sister in Christ, and I have learned much from them.

In 2008, I started in the School of the Laity to learn more about my God, His Word, the Bible, more about the Presbyterian Church and to become a better Christian. I believe in the triune God and want to serve God with all my heart, be a servant to God and to be a disciple. There is so much more to learn. I know God has a purpose for me and will use my talents for his purpose.

After graduation from the CLP training in 2010, I felt a calling to serve God more and more. I have lead Worship service at Rutherfordton, assisted with exegesis and collaborations of sermons Pat has delivered for the past 18 months. I have also helped with services and pastoral care for the past four months at Union Mills Presbyterian Church. I believe the call from Union Mills to co-pastor with my wife is a call from God to serve.

COM ATTACHMENT 5

STATEMENT OF FAITH – Deneise Deter Liss

I believe God is the sole Creator and Sustainer of the universe and of every form of life God has chosen to place in it. I believe God is all-powerful, all-knowing and is present in every facet of existence, including that which is beyond human comprehension and words.

I believe God makes God's self known to the world manifest in the three persons of the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

I believe in God whom Jesus called "Father" as the source of everything that is good: all mystery and wonder, all mercy and redemption, all grace and hope, all creativity and possibility and love. I believe in God whom God himself called "Son," Jesus Christ our Lord, whom God sent to earth as one who was at once fully human and fully divine. I believe that, in the example of how God's Son lived, as recorded in the written Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, God taught us how he would have us live also as believing and faithful people, as children of God. I believe that in the act of Christ's atoning death in which he "bore the penalty of sins to deliver his own people from them" (Calvin's Institutes III 4, 30), God committed God's greatest and most profound act of love for all of humankind by sacrificing God's only Son's mortal life. And I believe that in then restoring God's Son from his mortal death and bringing him unto God's self, God also freed us from the confines of our sinning selves so that we might live forever--- in Him. I believe in God whom God, both Father and Son call "the Spirit," who is issued by and emanates at once from them and whom the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God liken to a "breath," a "wind," a "fire," a "dove" as God manifests God's self in a world in need of regeneration, repentance, comfort, adoption, reassurance, and love.

I believe the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, are the Word of God, the ultimate authority for all believing people and institutions of faith, written and recorded in specific historic contexts by human hands, guided and inspired by God, the Holy Spirit. I believe that the study and interpretation of Scripture, although also guided and inspired by God, the Holy Spirit, is subjective and that it is the responsibility of every reader and every hearer to be both knowledgeable and prayerful and to regularly seek the educated support and authority of a community of faith in this undertaking.

I believe the organized church is the "Body of Christ" called into existence by God following the death of Jesus Christ for the express purpose of carrying on and carrying out the ministry to which he called his disciples during his life and ministry and to which he commissioned them, to "Go and make disciples of all nations" when he knew the end of his earthly life was near. As Christ walked the earth, preaching to the masses, touching the poor and outcast and healing the sick and lame, so the "arms" and "hands" and "legs" of the church as the "Body of Christ" are called to active, mobile ministry from local communities to global nations seeking to bring justice and healing and spreading the gospel, the "good news" of Jesus Christ, to all the world.

However, as members of the Reform tradition, I believe the life and ministry of Presbyterian faith communities must be thoroughly grounded in, prepared and sustained by: #1) Worshiping and praising God together and interpreting God's will for God's people in the contemporary world based on the authority of Scripture (see above), #2) Sharing in the sacraments of 'baptism' and "The Lord's Supper" as a faith community #3) Informed understanding of the history of our tradition as recorded in our "Book of Confessions" (i.e. *The Nicene Creed, The Apostles' Creed, A Brief Statement of Faith*), #4) and how they can be applied to the world today.

The sacraments of baptism and The Lord's Supper are human representations and re-enactments of something of the mystery of God that we enter into in and participate in by faith and by which we are reminded of the intimate and vital presence of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in our lives. In baptism, who we are as God's children is demonstrated to us by the cleansing and renewing properties of water and by the fellowship of a faith community vowing personally and corporately to love and teach and nurture the child of God standing before them. In The Lord's Supper, as a church family we re-enact and therein re-member and re-engage, symbolically, with God, the Son, who poured out his life for us that we might live again. And, as we are enriched and renewed as a family of God by these holy sacraments, we are then prepared and fortified to go out into the world and respond to God's calling to us to "Go and do likewise."

Deneise Deter Liss

COM ATTACHMENT 5

Biography

Rev. Dee D. Liss

I was raised by two atheists. I attended Vacation Bible School the summer after second grade at the Unitarian Church in my hometown of Charlottesville, Virginia. My childhood piano teacher was the organist at a local Presbyterian church and my mentor in college, ---the Baptist --related Denison University in Granville Ohio-- was a Presbyterian minister who chaired the Religion department and served as Dean of the Chapel. Years later, however, it was a Catholic priest who, instead of endorsing the final stages of my “conversion” to Catholicism, said he believed God had other plans for me. “The farthest you could ever go in the Catholic Church, Dee, would be to become a nun,” he said and handed me a catalogue to McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago.

It used to embarrass me that I memorized the Apostles’ Creed and the Lord’s Prayer while man-handling a U Haul truck down the New Jersey Turnpike hoping and praying to live long enough to actually arrive safely in Richmond in time for “Greek School!” But, ordained as Chaplain and Instructor at Queens College in Charlotte, installed as Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian, Albemarle, trained with the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, and in private practice as a state-licensed pastoral counselor in Charlotte for thirteen years, over the years I found myself relishing the unusual encounters, the profound and often mystical experiences I believe have come into my life as a result of my highly unconventional background and the unique perspective I bring to the ordained ministry. For this, I continue to be truly grateful!

Although thoroughly un-churched for the first part of my life, I grew up in an environment whose emphasis on academia and the arts was as ardent and obsessive as any fanatical, evangelical religion. Looking back on it, unbeknownst to my parents to or me, the “good news” for this early stage of my life was that I believe God had been revealing God’s self to me all along--- through the arts: classical music, great literature, paintings by the masters, live Shakespearean theater, opera and ballet. Beginning with my seminary training, for twenty --plus years, it has been my great privilege and joy to be able to go to the Bible, at will, to open it and to learn more about how God is constantly revealing God’s self to me and to the world in his Word and in the example of Jesus Christ. Every teaching moment, every prayer, every opportunity for pastoral psychotherapy and for pastoral care, every sermon, every administrative meeting, every tear, every hug, every moment with children in the house of God are all ripe with the grace and the creative possibility that comes in being able to connect some more dots—between God in Christ, Christianity, faithful discipleship, communities of faith, biblical authority, ministry, forgiveness, reconciliation—and today’s world.

When I left Queens College, I missed finding God in teaching and in ministry with young adults. When I left the pastorate, I missed the people, the community, the fellowship of the family of God and its power to reach out and touch and heal each other and the world. When I retired from pastoral counseling, I missed the ministry of presence and the sacred ground on which, by grace, the therapeutic process. Stands. But since I have returned to parish ministry, first as pastor to the Glendale Springs Presbyterian Church in Ashe County, NC and now as Interim Pastor to Long Creek Presbyterian Church, everything I’d been missing --- has come back. And I am grateful, once again!

Dee Liss

8/26/11

COM ATTACHMENT 6

Margie Boyd Faith Statement

Thanks be to you, O God – Author, Creator, and Giver of life! You called all life into being, and your Spirit enlivens all who walk the earth. All creation reveals your glory, majesty, beauty, and power. You have made us in your image; made us for relationship with You. You have put in us a hunger for Your presence and favor. We understand from the prophets what you require of us in this world: to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with You.

But we confess that we have chosen to rebel against You by the things that we have done and the things that we have left undone. Our faults and failings keep us from experiencing the fullness of life, and contribute to the brokenness of this world. We deserve nothing more than the consequences of our sin. But You are gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love. You have reached out to us by taking on flesh and dwelling among us. You have made a way for us through the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. By your mercy, Jesus took upon our judgment by substituting his own sinless life for our sinful lives. By your power, You raised him from the dead. By Your grace, you saved us from the grave and for eternal life with You. By your love, we are forgiven people, who are free to begin each day anew.

For the living of our lives, you have given us the Holy Spirit, your indwelling presence and power. We worship you in the mystery of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). We look to your Word as the unique, authoritative, and true witness of your love and purpose for the world, and our guide for living. We are blessed by you to be a blessing to others; we are enabled by your Spirit to grow in faith; we are unified with believers everywhere by your Spirit to be the body of Christ in the world, using our gifts to express your love to everyone. We trust that by your Spirit your purposes will be completed in the world, and that you will reconcile all things to yourself. So we wait in glad hope for the day when every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess Jesus to be Lord of all.

Until that day, we give thanks that keep us in love. You hear our prayers and speak to us through a myriad of ways. You assure us of our fellowship with you through the Sacrament of Baptism, our initiation into the new covenant through Jesus Christ. You nourish us with the very bread of heaven and the cup of salvation as often as we participate in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Through these gifts, we remember You, and are strengthened in our connection with You and the body of Christ. We thank you for the Church, and our communities of faith, which provide us sanctuary, nurture and challenge us, and extend your love beyond ourselves.

We are full of gratitude for your relentless love that pursues us all the days of our lives. Our glad response, by your grace, is to live lives of joy and integrity - reaching out to the stranger, forgiving others, generously sharing our time, talent, and treasure; extending compassion to the sick and hurting, and loving others as we have been loved. And we trust, and live in the hope, that you indeed work all things together for good for those who love you, and who are called according to your purpose.

Thanks be to God!

COM ATTACHMENT 6

Margie Boyd Faith Journey

As a child, I alternated between worshipping at my mother's church, First Presbyterian Chattanooga and my father's parish, St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church. When it was time for confirmation, my mother won out and I was confirmed Presbyterian. The next year, though, I entered Notre Dame High School and received 4 years of Catholic instruction. In college, I occasionally worshipped at an Episcopal Church, then a Baptist Church, and even a charismatic fellowship. Such is the journey of faith.

In 1980, while looking for an internship in my graduate program in Recreation Ministries at Florida State University, I noticed a flyer on the wall for a "Club Program Supervisor" at Montreat Conference Center. I drove up to Montreat for the first time, was hired, and subsequently spent the most important summer of my life. I came back to my Presbyterian roots, and discovered that I fit perfectly into the culture and theological framework of the PCUSA. I also re-claimed the assurance that God had always loved me, and patiently walked beside me throughout all my searching, leading me eventually back to the place where I would give my life in service to the call of Christ.

That summer in Montreat not only brought me 'home', it gave me my call to ministry. Instead of returning to Florida to work as a recreation director on a cruise ship, I entered PSCE, and after graduating began ministry as a Christian Educator. I expected to work happily as an Educator for the duration of my career, but when my husband was called to Columbia Seminary in 1990, and I became part of the seminary community, I felt the stirring of the Spirit to pursue more learning. After auditing a couple of classes, I knew that my heart was warming towards ordained ministry. So I began seminary immediately after my husband graduated, and my call was confirmed by a wonderful experience at Columbia.

Following graduation, at 40 years old, I became Associate Pastor at Trinity Church in Hendersonville. Following that call, and a 2-year interim Associate Pastor position at Black Mountain Church, I have spent the last 13 ½ years as Associate Pastor at Guilford Park Presbyterian in Greensboro, NC. This community has helped me form my identity, and together we have grown in faith, love, and service. They became a family for me, as I became single again, raised my children, nursed my parents until their deaths, and experienced the ups and downs of life. I will always be grateful to the Guilford Park community for their love and support.

I am turning now to the new opportunities and challenges of serving as a solo pastor/campus minister in the mountains that I love. I so look forward to using my gifts, taking new chances, forming new relationships, and participating in the 'new thing' that God intends to do at Cullowhee Presbyterian Church! I intend to pour my heart and energy into the ministry of this church. As I have been blessed, I hope to bless others, following the example of Christ.

COM ATTACHMENT 7

Statement of Faith - Rev. J. Whit Malone

When I say, “I believe in God,” it is my grateful response to what God reveals. God has graciously chosen to be known in creation; in the words of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures; and most fully in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. And though God is free to speak and act in unexpected ways, what I believe finds its primary source in the preaching of Holy Scripture in regular corporate worship, in the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist, in probing the depths of the creeds and confessions of the Church, and in the voice of God’s Spirit as it speaks through sisters and brothers in faith.

The Bible is the written Word of God and the primary source of what I believe. Interpreted within the community of faith, using both mind and heart, and illumined by the Holy Spirit, the Bible is the authoritative rule of faith and life, both for me and for the Church. The God revealed in Holy Scripture requires a response. That response is to follow Jesus. And the Bible reveals to us what that means.

I believe in one, holy, and living God who reaches out to us in three persons: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is essentially relational. Each one of this three is wholly one only in relationship to the other persons. God lives in mutual love and equality and intends this relatedness and mutual love to mark human relationships. This is mystery. God’s eternal essence is always greater than our human understanding.

I believe God is creator. In love God creates all the worlds that are and everything God creates is good. God creates human beings in God’s image to love God and others. God gives us a vocation to be stewards of all God has made and to live with others in justice and love. God also sets limits, giving us freedom to obey or violate them. We reject God and disobey God’s commandments. Yet, God does not reject us; keeping God’s covenant promises down to this day.

I believe God is savior. In God’s fullness of time and love, God came to us in Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus’ involvement in our humanness is God’s involvement in our humanness. Jesus was human. He was like us in every way except without sin. And in the living of his life, he revealed what it means to be truly human. Jesus is divine. Being God, he is able to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves – to love us unconditionally, to forgive us, and to restore God’s image within us.

I believe God is the living God. God’s Holy Spirit is alive and active in our world in ways both seen and unseen. It is the Spirit who makes God real to us in Scripture and preaching and the sacraments. God’s Spirit convicts us of our sin, assures us of forgiveness, and calls us to live new lives. And it is through the Spirit that God enables us to respond with trust and obedience and gathers us into the church.

Christ’s church does not exist for itself, but for the world. Gathered by the Spirit, in its life together the church is to be a witness to the world of God’s intention for human life. Sent by the Spirit, the church proclaims the gospel, strives for justice all relationships, and shows compassion for all people.

In Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, God has overcome the power of hatred, injustice, and death in the world. Yet, the many expressions of sin remain strong. Still, we hope. Even in the face of evidence to the contrary, we trust that God will finish what has begun in Christ.

COM ATTACHMENT 7

Faith Journey Rev. Whit Malone

I can honestly say that I have never been very far from the church. Growing up in a very active Southern Baptist family, my sisters and I were at church doing something several times each week. When my family sort of drifted away while I was in high school, I found “church” through active participation in Young Life. And though like most folks, I was less active during college, even then I was never very far from the church.

There are really two specific times in which I believe I have heard God calling me to Christian ministry. The first was while I was in middle school. Each Tuesday afternoon, our youth pastor would pile several of us in her car and we would drive from our affluent church down to Atlanta’s inner city. There we would meet a bunch of much less fortunate kids who gathered around a Baptist Home Missionary connected to our church. We would swing and play kickball and wrestle around in the grass. We would eat bologna and peanut butter sandwiches. And we would hear a Bible story and have a prayer. It was sometime during one of those many Tuesday afternoons that I sensed I wouldn’t be taking over my father’s construction company. These early experiences, along with later urban ministry experiences through Young Life, eventually led me to pursue a degree in social work as a way to continue serve those who struggle for the basics of life.

The second experience came during my senior year of seminary. I went to seminary needing to work some things out with God. I was hurting... I was searching... and I was not finding the answers I needed in the faith I had been given as a child. So I studied Bible and theology and had every intention of immediately getting a masters degree in social work and heading back to work in the inner city of Atlanta. But God had another path for me. During my senior year’s field work in a wonderful congregation, I experienced a Presbyterian-style call to pastoral ministry. I felt led to the work of preaching and teaching and pastoral care. The congregation affirmed my emerging gifts as a pastor. And that was almost thirty years ago.

Since that time I have been pastor to two small, rural churches in southern Indiana (2 years); an associate pastor for youth and education in a large congregation in Louisville (4 years); and the pastor and head of staff at a suburban congregation also in Louisville (17 years). Currently, I am pastor of Collegiate Presbyterian Church in Ames, IA. (4 ½ years). I feel greatly blessed to now receive the call of First Presbyterian in Hickory to be their next pastor. And I believe deeply that this is at the leading of God’s Holy Spirit.

Personally, the loves of my life are my wife, Kris, and my three daughters; Maggie, Emma, and Evelyn. I enjoy cycling, gardening, and building things with my hands.