

The Rev. William Schram

Brief Bio

My journey to ministry reads like Jonah's – I ran from it for a while. My father was a Presbyterian pastor and I grew up with people asking if I was going to be a pastor like him so I said no. In college I connected with a student led Bible Study/Fellowship group. I didn't tell my background right away and was able to interact as a Christian as me, not a lineage. After college I served in a City/County Ombudsman's office. I was politically liberal. Helping people in complaints against bureaucracy felt fulfilling. I also got involved in a local church where I was drafted to help with the youth group. I soon found that it was the Gospel that added meaning to my weekly work and renewed my spirit after dealing with complaints. My teaching with the youth group drew positive response from students and other teachers. Others in the church asked if I'd considered ministry. They asked on the basis of who I was, not who my father was. I made the decision to go to seminary realizing that I wasn't going to be a minister exactly like my father any more than he could be one exactly like me. And that's how God liked it. With that realization, it became a joy to talk ministry with Dad.

I attended McCormick seminary in Chicago. I met my wife Jenny there. We got married just before the start of our senior year at seminary. From there we went to a co-pastor position, each ½ time, at a redevelopment church in Detroit Presbytery. After the birth of our first daughter, we realized that: 1. One small church salary and a child made things financially tight; 2. We each needed to grow in ministry beyond what we did ½ time, and do so without stepping on the other's areas of responsibilities. I went full time at the church and Jenny did some part-time interims then became the stated clerk of the presbytery.

I have served churches, in seminary and since, in urban, near suburb, small town, county seat towns. I have served as pastor, associate pastor, interim pastor, and have served as a chaplain at a hospital.

In Detroit and Lehigh presbyteries I have been on and chaired Committee on Ministry. I served on the Committee on Preparation for Ministry in Detroit and Scioto Valley presbyteries. I have completed interim training and was trained as a consultant for the visioning process that Lehigh Presbytery provided for congregations in partnership with the Center for Parish Development.

Between work times, I enjoy walking outdoors while humming the first verses of songs that I know at least the first verse of. My musical tastes are varied from the popular music of my younger days, to hymns, to contemporary Christian songs and to jazz. After being told by my doctor to go on a heart healthy diet, I have gotten interested in cooking and figuring out how to make food taste interesting without salt.

We have 2 natural and one foster daughter. Delightfully, we have now a granddaughter to enjoy.

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Statement of Faith:

I believe in one holy God, known to us in the trinity of God our Creator, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. Our triune God is marked by grace and purpose in relating to this world and the people on it.

God brought forth creation and created people in God's own image. Humans share the ability to have unique, loving, and caring relationships with God, one another and creation. People misused the gift of choice, turned from God and impacted human life and all creation through their sinfulness. God has consistently sought to restore relationships and creation to the fulfillment of God's intent. God called a people, redeemed them from oppression, gave a land and laws on how to live as God's people that they might be a light to the nations.

In the fullness of time, the eternal Word of God came to live among us, fully God and fully human in the person of Jesus the Christ. Preaching the presence of the Kingdom of God, calling people to turn their lives Godward, teaching the ways of the kingdom, performing signs that show the nature of kingdom life in its fullness, Jesus opens the way to salvation and wholeness.

In crucifixion, Jesus faced the worst of human sin. His power over sin is demonstrated in his words from the cross, "Father, forgive them." He breaks the cycles of recurring sinfulness. Dead and buried, Jesus shows his power over death in the resurrection. Through faith in Jesus, we share this victory over sin and death, thus freeing us for life in the kingdom of God.

The Holy Spirit is the vehicle of the grace of Christ, calling us to faithfulness, embodying grace, inspiring us as members of the Body of Christ. The Spirit helps bring us wisdom, opens scriptures to us as living words that witness to the Word, gives us courage to live as witnesses to the way of Jesus and servants sharing in Christ's ministry.

The church is now the Body of Christ in the world. We are called by the Spirit to a life of salvation and service. We are not only recipients of grace, but channels of grace; not just those who are saved, but those who can help spread salvation; not just those who are loved but those who can help embody Christ's love to others.

We are sealed into this body through Baptism. We are nourished, renewed and joined in a new covenant in Christ through the Lord's Supper. We share in the work of Jesus – bring good news to the poor and oppressed, bringing healing of body and spirit and relationships, and witnessing to the joy of life together in Christ.