



Introducing Rev. David Carter Florence



Meet David Florence:

David grew up in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley in a family of farmers, artists, carpenters, teachers, and entrepreneurs. His passion for the environment, liberal arts, social justice and Christian education has guided his vocational life. Ordained in 1988, David has served as a pastor, chaplain, and teacher in churches, camps and schools. David's current interim call at Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church is to work with developing the foundations for sustainable children, youth and family ministries. David believes that when the whole church sees itself as a growing entity, especially through education and mission, innovative ministries arise that meet people where they are today. His methodologies draw on holistic education, sustainability, and systems theory.

And His Family:

David is married to Anna, an avid fiber artist and a homiletics professor at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia. His son, Caleb, is a math and sustainability teacher at the Island School in the Bahamas. Caleb is advancing innovative pedagogical and leadership skills through work with the National Outdoor Leadership School and the Klingenstein Summer Institute. David's son, Jonah, is a Kenyon College senior majoring in international development with concentrations in Spanish and Economics. Both Caleb and Jonah share in their love of Camp Dudley in the Adirondacks and played lacrosse at Kenyon.

A Few of His Interests:

David and Anna enjoy connecting with people of faith through retreats, mission trips, and travel. Trips to India, the Iona Community in Scotland and hiking in Iceland have been memorable. David lives into God's creation through organic gardening, wilderness adventures (hiking, kayaking, canoeing, sailing, fishing) and service trips. When he is not working, he is part of a small mountain community in the Nantahala Gorge of North Carolina. He has a Pack and a Pride in his home with two dogs, Bo and Wiley; and two cats, Michael and Thora!

Favorite Poets and Writers:

Homer, Meister Eckhardt, Hildegard of Bingen, Rumi, Rilke, Shakespeare, William Blake, William Wordsworth, Thoreau, Twain, Melville, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Emily Dickenson, John LeCarre, E.F. Schumacher, Aldo Leopold, Mohandas K. Gandhi, Sir Albert Howard, David Cline, Gene Logsdon, Masanobu Fukuoka, Rudolf Steiner, Robert Frost, Barry Lopez, Loren Eiseley, Seamus Heaney, Wendell Berry, Mary Oliver, Terry Tempest Williams, Gretel Erlich, Wendell Berry, Carlyle Marney, Walter Brueggemann, Fred Craddock, Barbara Brown Taylor, and Frederick Buechner (*David asks that we don't judge his spelling - or misspelling - of names, as he was in a hurry when he wrote this list!*)

Educational Highlights:

- B.A., Hampden-Sydney College, 1984
- M. Div., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1988
- Teaching Certification, Antioch University New England, 2003
- D. Min., Columbia Theological Seminary, beginning 2017



SPC's Search for a Supply Pastor:

How did we discover and select David?

Last August, upon receiving John Weicher's request to dissolve the pastoral relationship with SPC, Joyce Shin reached out to her colleagues in the Presbytery of Philadelphia, a number of Presbyterian seminaries, and the wider PC (USA) to receive recommendations of potential candidates to serve as a temporary minister for Christian education. Through a former colleague, she was introduced to the Reverend David Carter Florence, who was recommended as a person of "high energy and creativity and a team player." Upon this promising recommendation, Joyce reached out to the Reverend Florence to learn more about his vocational background, life experience, and potential candidacy for this temporary position at SPC.

Convening a gathering of Elders and leaders currently serving on the committees of Christian education – including Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, and Adult Education – Joyce and two members from the Personnel Committee, Joe Stock and Doug McCullough, invited David Florence to an evening of conversation. David learned from each of the representatives about the contours and growing edges of Christian education from the perspectives of their committees and shared salient stories and background about himself and his vocation. We learned that indeed David has spent his life in Christian education, working with people of all ages – pre-schoolers, elementary students, middle and high school youth, college students, young adults, and adults. Furthermore, David has been a Christian educator in a variety of settings – churches, schools, and camps. He is familiar with traditional and non-traditional approaches to learning.

This gathering was followed by a formal interview of David by Joyce, Joe Stock, and Doug McCullough. Following the interview, Joyce re-convened the Elders and leaders currently serving on the committees of Christian education to share their perspectives on David's candidacy. The group was agreed that David would be an outstanding temporary minister of Christian education.

Having multiple conversations with David, Joyce felt that David would indeed be a good team player with colleagues and church members and would bring the right gifts for this time at SPC. Upon receiving Session approval of a compensation package, Joe Stock made an offer to David, and David joyfully accepted.

David will join the SPC staff on November 1, 2017. Until then, he will bring to an end his pastoral service at Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church in New Castle, Delaware. David is a person of diverse and extraordinary background. He has learned of the strong foundation in youth ministry built by John Weicher and is eager to build upon that foundation as SPC lays the groundwork for a permanent position in Christian education. We are delighted that David is joining us. Thanks be to God!

*We are grateful to the members who served in the selection process.
Thank you to: Bob Hall, Kathy Gerner, Chris Burk, Ellis LaFrance, Laurel Vincent,
Lauren McKinney, Doug McCullough, and Joe Stock.*



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