

From Our Session

Our search for an Associate Pastor began last April. The Session appointed a committee to identify and interview potential candidates for the position. Three candidates were eventually interviewed and Becca was the unanimous and clear choice!

The Session is extremely excited and pleased to present the Rev. Becca Bateman to you as our candidate for our new Associate Pastor. We believe she has exactly the right gifts, experience, energy and personality we need to help us move forward in the next chapter of First Pres' ministry and mission.

Becca is nominated to be our Pastor of Congregational Care and Adult Discipleship Ministries. In addition to providing leadership and encouragement to these ministries, Becca will provide staff support for our Women's Ministries, Membership Ministries and Community Concerns Ministries. Becca will also join Jim in leading worship and preaching regularly.

We are nominating Becca as a Designated Associate Pastor. A Designated Associate Pastor simply means we have used a fast-track nominating process to identify her as our candidate. A Designated Pastor is an installed position that after two years, with the concurrence of both Becca and the congregation, becomes a permanent call.

It is with great pleasure that the Session, acting as the Nominating Committee, presents Becca Bateman to you as our candidate for our new Associate Pastor.

From Becca

Even as a young child, my life was built on and guided by faith in Jesus Christ. As I grew through adolescence, my decisions about friendships, commitments, and social situations were determined by the principles of my faith and scripture. It has always been clear to me and to those around me that faith in Jesus Christ defines me. It's who I am. It's why I end up organically in conversations with strangers about Jesus. It's Jesus' love of people that stirs my deep love for people, his forgiveness that frees me, his words that challenge and move and shape me. It's the source of hope, light and joy that radiate within me. It's the source of empathy and the pastoral heart I have for people. It's the foundation that frees me to be vulnerable and open about my own failings and fears. I have come to know that this faith is a gift of the Spirit.

Being raised in the Baptist church I learned to love and trust Scripture. I memorized scripture, was taught to read it daily and seek it for truth, hope, wisdom, and guidance. It is the source of my understanding about myself, God and the world. This love and trust of scripture has never waned. Even as my methods for approaching scripture grow and expand, that pursuit is rooted in the belief that the scripture is God's word for us...to be continuously explored and discovered, internalized and externalized in our living. Preaching the word of God is one of the greatest honors, and sacred responsibilities of my calling. It is only possible through the gifting and the power of the Holy Spirit. The church has always been a second home for me. I believe in the church. Jesus left us not a methodology, or theological tome, but a community; a community of believers, who together are Christ in the world. Scripture was given to a community, Jesus gathered a community, the Spirit empowered and empowers the community. One of my greatest joys is helping connect people within the church community. We need each other. We are meant to be together. Being the church together is hard, and beautiful. I believe being together as the church is a large part of how God refines us. It's where we learn about the fruits of the Spirit, but also have to practice them. It's where we teach about forgiveness, but also have to walk it out. I believe doing life in the church community- the actual work and meetings, and relationships and hard decisions and difficult people and situations- gives us one of our greatest opportunities to bear witness to how life with Jesus infuses, informs and transforms these things. This is where we can most live out a different way of doing things in the joys and griefs, in the connections and alienations, in the wounding and healing, hurting and forgiving. I have staked my life and work on the claims of scripture about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. I have given my life to the work of the church.

Becca's Bio

I grew up in San Pedro, California with an older brother and parents who thought they would go to the nearby church with a 'good kids program.' Thanks to the leadership of St. Peter's by the Sea Presbyterian Church in Rancho Palos Verdes, I was able to see women in pastoral leadership, grow in faith in an enriching environment, experience how music could be the harmony to speak with God, and able to verbalize Christian tenets at an early age. It was during college that God opened my heart to consider being a pastor as a vocation. I double majored at California State University, Long Beach in History and Classics with a minor in Latin. By the time graduation approached, I was able to articulate what a wonderful resource I had in experiencing the time period, place and people the incarnational Jesus as fully human encountered and was looking forward to my time at Fuller Theological Seminary to see how those the expressions of faith of the people became the church.

At seminary, God confirmed both my gifts and my desire to participate in God's work in the midst of a congregation. It was also during this time I confirmed God's call to be ordained as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament. After seminary I began at Calvary Presbyterian Church in South Pasadena, CA and was called as their Associate Pastor for Christian Life Formation. At some point I felt a nudge to spread my wings and fly, and looked where God was calling me next and it was not very far to San Marino Community Church as their Associate Pastor for Children's Ministries which became for Family Ministries. Seeing how faith formation played out in the whole family was particularly moving in moments of intergenerational ministry.

2010 became a pivotal year personally and professionally as I was both ordained (February 8) and also married my husband Mike (December 31). Together we have two children, Maisie Grace (4 years old) and Royce Thomas (1 year old). His time is occupied running his own startup company in wholistic pet products. We live in Pasadena with three dogs, Stavros, Cooper, & Zoe. In case you were wondering, this past year having young kids during the pandemic was not boring. Throughout the years I have enjoyed playing for adult women's soccer teams, being in cohorts related to my career development, learning how to cook and enjoy delicious meals and make note of the intricacies of God's creation through the eyes of a wonder filled 4 year old on our 100th walk through our neighborhood. I am looking forward to what God has in store for this season of my life and this new call. With a full heart I continue serving the Lord and finding creative ways to reexperience God's presence. For this, I am unspeakably grateful.

Statement of Faith

I believe in one God: from oral tradition to written scriptures became familiar as the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit. In God's sovereignty, the world was created good and people in God's image but humanity gave into sin falling short of the glory of God. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only son, fully human and fully divine. Only through Christ restoration and salvation are found and the forgiveness of sins is made possible by grace through faith alone. Christ came in the flesh to live among people, to love, to die for sins, to defeat the power of death through his own death and resurrection, and to reconcile all things. I believe in the Holy Spirit, a comforter and guide, to teach us, to remind us of all Jesus has said, and to empower us through the Word. Spiritual gifts are given to the people of God, the Church Universal, to do God's work. The Spirit dwells within us to empower us to serve Christ daily and in that we are to seek justice in a world filled with cruelty and bring peace where there is chaos. I believe the Church universal, with Christ as its head, is made up of the priesthood of all believers, seen and unseen. In unity, we grow up, out, and together. Up: Our call is to worship God and pray together. Out: Our call is to care for the poor, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, to love, and to go make disciples and teach. Together: Our call is to discipleship. I believe we are all called to give back to God with our time, talents, and treasure as good stewards in our care of creation and builders of where God is at work.

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Statement of Faith

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I believe that scripture is the authoritative word of God which bears witness to the Word of God, Jesus Christ. They are useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. Both the New Testament, the testimony of the life of Christ and the Holy Spirit guiding the Church, and the Old Testament, the telling of God's faithfulness and fulfillment of promises, are essential and indispensable. God continues to speak through the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit today. The creeds and confessions, both historically and in contemporary terms, declare the church as a community of people in statements of who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do. Together we celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. A sacrament is a sign, seal, and a symbol of God's love poured out on us. Baptism marks the entrance into God's covenant family and at the Lord's Supper we are invited again and again to the family table. We believe that God has chosen to be in a covenant relationship with creation and that all are confirmed in this covenant through Baptism. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is celebrated when we come to the table to experience the presence of Christ among us as we eat and drink through the Holy Spirit. With these sacraments we recognize that God and humanity have an interrelationship of love. Together we believe in and anticipate Christ's return. We look forward to a new heaven and a new earth in which every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and God's kingdom will have no end.

Becca Bateman



The Session is pleased to introduce Becca Bateman as our candidate to be our new Designated Associate Pastor.

