

New Minister Information

2018 Spring Stated Meeting

Ana Lugo-Berrios

James Kendrick

Statement of Faith by Rev. Ana Loyda Lugo-Berríos

I believe in God, the creator almighty. It is thru God's creating energy that all came to be and continues to be for God creates in us a clean heart to live as God's children in this world God has entrusted to us.

God is a parent (mother and father), providing the children with gifts and talents to live as God's children, raising each other up, caring for the Earth, for each other, telling the story of God's love towards all.

God established a covenant with humanity to be our God and for us to be God's people. God raised prophets, teachers, judges, kings, women and men to bring God's children back to the covenant. But we, the children of God, continued to fail. Therefore, God sent the Son.

Jesus, son of God, the bridge between God and humanity, the redeemer. In the Son we see the Love of God towards creation. Jesus' death and resurrection bridged the chasm between God and creation once and for all, reconciling us with God. It is thru his sacrifice on the cross that we have received salvation.

In Jesus we learn how God intended humanity to live, a glimpse of the kingdom of God. Where the last shall be first, where the hungry are fed, the ill healed, where all creatures have enough, where there is justice for those experiencing injustice.

The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is our inspiration, guide, faith giver, faith grower. The Holy Spirit continues the work of God and the Son of God by inspiring, transforming, guiding men and women to serve in our church, our communities, our nation, our world.

I believe the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God, telling the story of God's relationship with God's children, first with the children of Israel and then with all nations. When we gather around the communion table, we are nourished for our service, we remember our Lord's sacrifice and we get a glimpse of the Kingdom where all nations will come from East and West, from North and South to sit at table. In baptism, God welcomes us into the kingdom just as we are and we promise, as a Christian community help raise the newly baptized in the faith. Both sacraments are public so that entire body of Christ is nourished and strengthened for service.

Journey of Faith by Rev. Ana Loyda Lugo-Berríos

I grew up in a Presbyterian home. But my faith heritage goes back to my great-grandparents in the mountains of Puerto Rico. When Puerto Rico became a territory of the United States as a result of the Spanish-American war of 1898, the mission field was open to the reformed tradition. My great-grandparents embraced the reformed faith early in the 20th century and they experienced their community's ostracism for leaving the mother church. They taught the faith to my grandmother, who in turn taught the faith to my mother. My mother married my father, a Presbyterian pastor in Puerto Rico. I am product of that home, product of the mission field.

I became church leader during my teens, teaching Sunday School, leading youth groups, singing and preaching. I was a leader in Puerto Rico's synodical youth. Those were wonderful years, gathering annually and semiannually with youth from all over the island. It was during my college years I began the process of discerning my call to the ministry of word and sacrament. I always thought I would follow a scientific path, either in Biology or medicine even as I was very involved with my local church and the Presbyterian youth. In the end, when the time came to make a decision, I trusted God's call to serve as an ordained pastor.

I graduated from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez in 1981 with a bachelor's degree in Biology and Chemistry. I enrolled at San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, CA and received my Master in Divinity in 1985. I served my internship year at Fort Washington Heights Presbyterian Church in New York City under the supervision of the Rev. Idalisa Fernández, the first woman ordained in Cuba by the Methodist Church. I sought Rev. Fernández on purpose for I figured a woman like her would have a lot to teach and wisdom to impart to a new comer like myself.

My first call was a co-pastorate in the Presbytery of Denver, CO. I served as co-pastor to Bethel Presbyterian Church in Denver, CO and El Buen Pastor Presbyterian Church Brighton, CO for seven years. These were the only two Hispanic congregations of the Presbytery. During those years I met brothers and sisters like me, whose faith journey started with mission workers who went to the fields to preach the gospel, heal the sick and teach, for Presbyterian mission workers would start a school, a clinic, and a church wherever they went. At the same time, it was eye-opening to learn how different our experiences had been. During this time, I served in numerous Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly committees and task forces.

In 1992 we moved to Dumas, TX and I began my service with Church Financial Campaign Services, a service of the General Assembly lodged in the (old) Stewardship Ministry Unit. For 20 years I assisted congregations with capital campaign, raising funds for new construction, remodeling and/or restoring present structures, and debt reduction. I learned first hand about God's children financial generosity when their efforts and energies are focused on a project. I also assisted with annual campaigns when these drives were done concurrently. During those 20 years I worked with over 200 congregations, helping them raise over \$80 million. At the

same time, I assisted and advised the congregations my ex-husband was serving as a pastor with their annual campaigns.

In June of 2013 I accepted the positions of Gift Planner for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Foundation for the Florida-Bahamas Synod. Palo Duro Presbytery validated this call as our denominations are full communion partners. The FL-BH Synod is comprised of 178 organized congregations with 54,553 baptized members. In this position I am responsible for identifying, cultivating, soliciting and securing new and ongoing gifts from individuals in support of churchwide ministries, congregations, synods and related ELCA ministries. I continue to be amazed by God's people generosity, this time to continue to bless families, institutions, and ministries they have supported in life with their legacy gifts. Sometimes I am invited to preach and when I accept, often I will administer the sacrament of communion as part of worship.

When I'm not on the road, doing my job on weekends, you'll find me teaching an adult Sunday School class at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church and singing with the choir. I have been teaching this Sunday Scholl class since 2011 and singing in the choir since 2001.

Statement of Faith - James Kendrick

I believe in a loving and creative God who created all the earth and everything in it, including humankind, created in the image of God, God was pleased.

(Genesis 2:1-3, Genesis 1:27-37)

I believe humankind fell short of God's expectation and desire for humanity by turning away from God.

(Genesis 3:11-19)

I believe God's deepest desire is to reconcile with humankind and renew a right relationship based on God's love for humanity and increase our action and love for God.

(Jeremiah 29:11-14, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Isaiah 54:10)

I believe God came into existence among humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, fully human and fully divine, as an example of the perfect, sinless life, so that all sinners who believe in him may have eternal life.

(1 Timothy 1:15-16)

I believe Jesus has taught and commanded humanity the way of the Christ:

to love God,
to love one's neighbor,
to love oneself.

Through God's love we have been forgiven and we are to share that forgiveness with others, as Christ forgives.

(Matthew 22:37-39, Ephesians 4:32)

I believe Jesus took on the sin of the world and through his death and resurrection, at the direction of God, released humanity from the burden of sin and death to a righteous life.

(Romans 6:16-17)

I believe through the power of the Holy Spirit believers are compelled to share the Gospel amongst all peoples everywhere.

(Acts 1:8)

I believe the Holy Spirit gives humanity the sustenance to continue to love God and neighbor as the Church in the world, sharing the love of God, the peace of Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

(Acts 2)

I believe through the sacrament of Baptism humanity may be washed clean of our old sinful lives and brought forth into a new life in the covenant community, just as Christ was raised from the dead.

(Romans 6:3-4)

I believe through actively partaking in the Lord's Supper humanity may experience the presence of the living Christ among us anew each time the Sacrament is received.

(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

I believe that we, as the community of Christ, the church are called, even now, to "do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God." (Micah 6:8)

Faith Journey Statement
11/14/2017

James Kendrick

If a journey means getting from one place to another I must start with the present and work backward to the starting point. As of this moment I am at the place where I begin to discern God's intentions for the rest of my life. Having arrived at this point, I am drawn closer to the idea of pastoral ministry than I ever thought I might be. The past eight to nine years have not been what I would call overly spiritual, yet all of the work of seminary and worship internships and Clinical Pastoral Education were steeped in spirituality. It all just seemed like work at the time.

My experience of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is probably the primary reason that I am considering a call to pastoral ministry. Prior to CPE I always thought I would end up using my secular skills from the swimming pool industry to find my way into a clean water ministry. Another option was, and is to work with people like myself, who had, or have a negative view of the institutional church. CPE had a profound impact in teaching me what it meant just to be with people, any person, in possibly one of the worst moments of life. I learned to be compassionate, often silently and exhibit the grace and love that Jesus gave

the world through his life, death and resurrection.

Before my rotation of CPE I viewed most of my tasks (that is how I viewed them) in the ordination process as boxes to be checked off or hurdles to be cleared. While sometimes I still get those feelings in the back of my mind, I now understand the process and appreciate the reasoning behind the process toward ordination. Since this path toward ordination has been my focus for almost the last decade, it has in many ways become a spiritual journey itself.

Having shunned the church and organized religion from about age twelve to the age of twenty-eight I am still somewhat of a novice when it comes to being a faithful Christian. That being said I quickly grasped Christian life in the way Jesus himself described it in the Great Commandment in the Gospel of Matthew: "Love God and love your neighbor as yourself." Prior to age twenty-eight I definitely did not model the type of behavior in that commandment. So for the purposes of this exercise I could point to this time period as a beginning to my faith journey. The more I grow into the Great Commandment, truly learning to love God, by first loving myself (read that as personal growth) and loving my neighbor, the more I feel called to ministry in some sort of pastoral setting.

This journey has been difficult, at times painful to the point of just wanting to give up. At the same time it has been ultimately rewarding, exciting and joyful. Throughout it all I felt God's presence leading me from one point to the next and as the journey continues I trust God continues to be my guide.