

New Minister Information
2023 Winter Stated Meeting

Statement of Faith
Dana Riley
October 2022

I believe God is the artist of creation, the breath of life, the story of all stories. God is the faithful “I Am,” past, present, and future, who hears, sees, and knows God’s people. To trust this is to live as if it is true, trusting that God desires what is best for each and for all. God’s love is reflected in each human being, the Imago Dei, the image of God. In and through nature and humankind the great diversity and divinity of God is revealed.

I believe God’s love for and faith in humanity is revealed in and through the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is faith enfleshed, God’s purpose lived out. Jesus shows us how to live, how to love, and how to serve, through his life, ministry, and relationships. I believe Jesus considered people of all ages, abilities, hues, habitats, and persuasions, worthy and worthwhile, and that we are called to continue to love and to celebrate each individual and all people, as Jesus did.

I believe the Holy Spirit acts as our advocate, our guide, and our constant companion through each season of our life, including death. The church celebrates the spirit within everyone through the sacrament of baptism. An outward expression of an invisible grace, the waters of baptism represent God’s promises to us and affirms our promises made before God to one another. The triune God unites us and invites us to join as one body to love and to care for one another as the family of God.

Like the sacrament of baptism, the Lord’s Supper is a communal practice in which we give thanks in remembrance for Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection by sharing a meal together. At Christ’s table, all are included and invited to commune with Christ where we are physically and spiritually nurtured and nourished in and with community.

I believe communities of faith are meant to worship God together in wonder and in thanksgiving, in hope and in hospitality where we welcome the stranger, sing songs of praise and lament, and ponder God’s word proclaimed. I believe the church is called collectively to do justice, practice kindness, steward God’s earth, share our resources, care for the sick and the broken-hearted, advocate for the poor and the oppressed, and attend to God’s presence in and around us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

I believe Scripture stands as the inspired word of God and is designed to be read and interpreted in and with community. I believe God speaks through Scripture to a particular people at a particular time in a particular way and that we have an obligation to question and to challenge different interpretations of the Bible when they are used to harm, divide, and dehumanize people. I believe the Bible was written to offer hope to the helpless, to encourage faith in the faithless, and to liberate all people.

Dana Riley
Journey of Faith Statement
October 2022

To know me is, in part, to know my parents and my grandparents. They stood as the most powerful influences in my life, their words and actions were my teachers. Other than college and seminary, I have lived my entire life in Jacksonville, Florida.

My maternal grandparents were charter members of Southside United Methodist Church, where I was baptized and confirmed. My mother made sure my two younger brothers and I made it to Sunday school with regularity, looking perfect, while my dad, a traveling salesman, preferred to stay at home in his recliner.

Once there, I liked Sunday school, the teachers were kind and read us stories from the Bible. Afterwards, we usually joined our grandparents for worship where my grandmother lured us into the pew with chewing gum and Hershey's kisses.

When I was in the second grade, my parents sent my brothers and I across town to a private Presbyterian day school, in whose church I was later married. When I was in the fourth grade, my mother and father separated. My mother explained that she and my dad had "fallen out of love." I prayed and pleaded with God to bring them back together. In the fifth grade my parents divorced, but my fifth grade teacher was amazing grace every day, offering me warmth and compassion. By the seventh grade, I had a new step father, a younger step sister and a step brother, along with a new home on the other side of town. Church was a side bar in middle and high school. However, in high school there was one Young Life leader who kept coming around during our lunch hour. She'd wait for us, my friends and I, out on the terrace at Lee High school (now Riverside High) with her warm smile and quirky sense of humor. She continued to be a part of campus life until we graduated.

In college, I attended church sporadically, my roommate at UGA was a major Christian influence. My senior year of college I dated a friend named Jim, from Jacksonville. Our friendship turned into a romance and we were married two years later at Riverside Presbyterian Church, where Jim was baptized and confirmed, and where I spent those formative years in elementary school.

I married into the church just as surely as I married Jim. Together we weathered the rough seas of parenthood and marriage, hanging onto each other with one hand and the church with the other. For 28 years I was raised and re-parented by a faith community who showed up and pointed the way.

When our youngest child was college shopping, I started to ponder my next chapter in life. When I couldn't conceive of what may lie ahead for me, I prayed for God to show me how I could faithfully serve. Within months I received what I can only imagine was a call from God through comments that came out of left field from unlikely and unpredictable people. As a part of my discernment, I sought work at a local church and was graciously hired as a paid intern at Geneva Presbyterian.

Almost a year later, at age 54, I left Jacksonville to pursue a Masters of Divinity at Columbia Theological Seminary. For three years I studied, worshiped, communed, and commiserated with a community of people I can only describe as the kin-dom of God. When the pandemic hit, I transitioned back to Jacksonville where I finished my final semester and graduated via Zoom. Several months later, while pursuing a Masters of Theology, I received a phone call from Palms Presbyterian Church to fill in during a period of transition. For almost two years I have been presented with multiple opportunities to practice ministry with a wonderful and supportive staff at Palms which has helped better prepare me for the journey that lies ahead.

REPORT OF TERMS OF CALL
Presbytery of St. Augustine
2022

*Complete the fillable fields
below, print, sign and return
via email or mail.*

Pastor / Certified Educator Dana Riley Telephone (904) 673-1613

Church or employing entity Riverside Presbyterian Church

Terms of Call	2021	2022
A. Personal Compensation		
1. Annual cash salary	_____	40,000
2. Housing allowance (if no manse)	_____	20,000
3. Utilities allowance (if applicable)	_____	_____
4. Medical supplement (if any)	_____	_____
5. OPTIONAL SECA tax reimbursement (above required 50%)	_____	_____
6. Deferred income	_____	_____
7. Other income (specify _____)	_____	_____
8. Manse amount (30% of total of lines 1-7)	_____	_____
9. Total effective salary	_____	60,000
B. Expenses		
10. Reimbursable professional expenses	_____	_____
a. Auto expenses (OR provision of auto w/full expenses)	_____	_____
b. Book allowance	_____	_____
c. Other reimbursable expenses	_____	3,000
11. Continuing education allowance	_____	3,000
12. Total Expenses	_____	6,000
C. Required Benefits* (click here for Board of Pensions Calculator)		
13. Medical (27% of line 9)	_____	16,200
14. Pension / Death / Disability (10% of line 9)	_____	6,000
15. REQUIRED 50% SECA Reimbursement	_____	4,590
16. Total Benefits	_____	26,790
TOTAL PACKAGE	_____	86,790
D. Vacation and Leave		
Vacation	_____	4 Weeks
Study Leave	_____	2 Weeks
Parental Leave	_____	_____
Additional Terms (may use separate page) _____		

PNC Chair or Clerk of Session

Dana Huggin Riley
Pastor/Associate Pastor / Certified Educator / CPE
Designated Pastor / Interim Pastor / Stated Supply

***Section C is required by our minimum terms of call for installed positions; SECA is provided for many of our contract positions. BOP benefits – if provided for contract positions – may be subject to different calculations. Please check with a tax advisor for tax advice.**

Please return by **March 4, 2022** by email to Sandra Hedrick, Stated Clerk (Sandra@staugpres.org) OR
By mail: Presbytery of St. Augustine, 1937 University Boulevard W., Jacksonville, FL 32217

A Brief Statement of Faith

After almost 50 years of work in the church and hearing and reading faith statements of ministers and candidates I have come to the conclusion that the most worthy of faith statements is a brief one.

I'm old enough to have discovered that what I believe, no matter how well-crafted, is a temporary construct subject to scrutiny, challenge, and creeping doubt. I've also come to embrace Tennyson's observation that "There lives more faith in honest doubt than in half the creeds."

I do not doubt, however:

That the church with all its shortcomings in theology and practice, the gospel of Jesus Christ which it proclaims, and the good people who slog away at the task of faithfulness are the living hope of the world.

That the richest blessings of life include the great diversity of the human family. The differences of attitude, opinion, abilities, ethnic heritage, gender, language, sexual orientation, political persuasion, passions, and hope account for the wonder of creation.

That Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior and I will spend all my days searching for what that means.

Roy Sharpe
August, 2022

Roy Sharpe
Faith Journey

I came to the church to play basketball.
I came to the Christian faith by osmosis.
I came to the pastoral ministry through a profound sense of call.

I transferred to a new school in the seventh grade. A new friend “recruited” me to play basketball for his church league team. Church attendance was required – my first experience with the law. Youth meetings counted as church attendance – my first experience with grace.

Riley, the pastor at Bethel Presbyterian Church, was a single guy in his first call. He drove a Volkswagen bus and picked up most of the kids for youth meetings on Sunday evening. The church was located on the corner of my high school campus and Riley’s boys were pictured in the yearbook as if they were a school activity.

After a year of youth meetings Riley was picking me up on Sunday mornings for Sunday school and worship. I don’t remember any “aha” moment of belief. It was more like I just soaked up believing from being around it. I do remember old Mr. Rollins sitting on the front pew of the church nodding his agreement as the kids tried valiantly to answer questions from the Shorter Catechism.

In worship, Sunday after Sunday, I found myself identifying with the preacher and the task of preaching. I noted what he said that I thought was meaningful and important. I also noted the things I would say differently or in addition to his remarks. This fascination with preaching led to me being asked to “preach” on Youth Sunday my junior year. I don’t know what I talked about but I remember that a couple walked out when I mentioned racism. In college I was active in a campus ministry program and participated in the rotation of student speakers for youth chapel services.

As a pre-law student I was engaged in choosing a law school in the summer after my junior year. At a Baptist revival service I attended with a friend, the preacher had this annoying habit of saying “If God would someday somehow...” At one point he declared, “If God would someday somehow raise up men (sic) to preach the gospel”. From that moment I was sure that what I wanted to do was preach the gospel. I changed plans for graduate work from law school to seminary.

Following graduation from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary I was ordained and accepted my first call. Several years later I enrolled at McCormick Theological Seminary and completed the course work for the Doctor of Ministry degree. I didn’t finish the program because I had also taken on the task of building a house. I’ve never regretted how things turned out and I became convinced that anyone who can build his own house deserves to be called doctor.

Fifty years of pastoral ministry and I remain committed to the joy of serving the church as a pastor. Through this time the church has nurtured me, challenged me, shaped me, and forgiven me. I am grateful.