

## **Journey of Faith - Rev. David Powers**

The journey that I find myself on began not of my own volition, but out of the shared faith of Jean and Richard Powers when they sensed God calling them baptize their infant son. Only six months into what has been more than a 39 year journey, my parents watched as the Rev. Bob Smith poured handfuls of water from the font of Sardis Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC over my forehead.

The truth is that my parents faintly understood the journey they were inaugurating for me. Standing at the font, we never really do. Great is the mystery, right?

What they did believe was that the love and grace of the God they knew in Jesus Christ would be sufficient for whatever the journey held. For their faith in that truth, I am eternally grateful.

For my part, I would not contemplate the Divine with any real devotion for nearly two decades. Go to church with regularity? Of course. Serve on Presbyterian Youth Council? Check. Wrestle like Jacob with the God of All Creation? Not in a significant enough way to leave a mark.

It was my years at Presbyterian College that invited me into a deeper engagement with matters of faith and doubt, the Bible and prayer, Christian community and contemplation. Not that I engaged my faith with great fervor, but I did engage it with some measure of intention, which was a start.

A few months removed from graduation, I had what I can only describe as an experience of God. To include the details of the experience would challenge the limitations of this document, but the end result was that over the second weekend of December in 2004, with no prior warning, my educational pursuit shifted from law school to seminary. God turned my life on its axis.

A shift that was as jarring to live as that last paragraph was to read.

Seminary was the place where my exploration of God and faith began in earnest. Having majored in Political Science and History and having limited Biblical literacy, I saw myself at a disadvantage to my classmates. At the same time, everything was new to me which meant that almost every lesson in language, scripture, and theology held the possibility of wonder.

Beyond the classroom and community of seminary, my time spent laboring in the field of ministry through multiple internships nurtured a deepening sense of appreciation and love for the Christ that I had so long claimed. God used my experience in churches from Charleston to Houston to nurture a warm, vibrant faith within me. This faith solidified my sense of call to ordained ministry and service in the church.

Through four distinct seasons of ministry in Madison - filled with strife, transition, and joy - God has used this calling to make space in my soul for a deep, resilient faith. A faith that finds comfort in the endless possibilities of the Divine. A faith that feels alive. A faith that is opening to the ever-expanding revelation of God in my life and the world. A faith that finds wisdom and purpose and grit in the life and ministry of Jesus while recognizing the Christ as the touchstone for the mystery of God that indwells all things.

I am grateful for this faith and this journey.

From a font in Charlotte to a church in Memphis, God's love and faithfulness abide. I am grateful for the ways that God continues to shape and reshape my understanding of life and faith and love and grace. I give thanks for the journey that I did not choose to begin, but has become my own in a way that only the God of All Creation could have known it would.