

St. Luke's UMC Clergy

Dr. Tom Pace

Senior Pastor



What led you to ministry?

I came into ministry through youth ministry, as I worked my way through college as a youth director. I went to seminary to kill a few years while my wife finished college, and then came to St. Luke's as youth pastor. Loved it, so I never left the ministry of the church.

How do you describe your pastoral wedding style?

The wedding is a worship service for St. Luke's, so we hope that all who attend experience the love of Christ in the service. Additionally, I hope the wedding homily will let the congregation know what this brand new family, created by God, will be all about.

Three facts about yourself:

- I have been married 43 years, and have five children and 11 grandchildren.
- I either run (or trudge) almost every morning.
- I am learning to ride horses at the age of 63.

Rev. David Horton

Lead Pastor - Gethsemane



What led you to ministry?

I was in college. I fell in love with the work of Christian community through my campus ministry, the UNC Chapel Hill Wesley Foundation. I also found a passion for social justice through the homelessness outreach student group on campus. Some of the unhoused population in town became my dear friends. I was a pre-med student at the time, but I lost a taste for it. I thought, "What if I could combine these two loves- Christian community, and social justice?" Next thing I know, I'm applying to seminary.

How do you describe your pastoral wedding style?

I'm more at home in traditional weddings. I love the traditional vows, music, and prayers. When I'm a guest at a wedding, I start to roll my eyes when the preacher preaches too long, so I'm intentional about not preaching for long at weddings. I try to tailor the wedding message to the couple. I'm a big fan of pre-marital counseling (it worked wonders for my wife and me), so while I don't require pre-marital counseling for the couples I marry, I highly recommend it. I believe God is glorified through the raw joy of the wedding service. I believe we get a glimpse of God's love for the world when the wedding couple make their vows.

Three facts about yourself:

- I refuse to wear boring socks
- I got a tattoo when I was 19 years old and managed to hide it from my parents for a solid year.
- My wife is also a United Methodist pastor, and we've been married since December 14, 2013. We have 2.5 children (the cat counts as half a child).

Rev. Colin Bagby

Lead Pastor – Branches



What led you to ministry?

Growing up I had the best pastor in my hometown. He mentored me as a young adult and showed me what it meant to follow Jesus. When I was discerning my calling in college, I kept remembering my childhood pastor and had the realization that I could be that for someone else.

How do you describe your pastoral wedding style?

Casual, fun, and celebratory. While a wedding is first and foremost an act of worship, I work as hard as I can to ensure the service celebrates what God has done specifically in the lives of the people getting married. That is, I hope to plan their wedding to be identifiably reflective of the couple and the love God has uniquely given them.

Three facts about yourself:

- I'm a twin.
- I love to play the guitar.
- I once did a wedding in Arkansas where I and the whole wedding party wore swimsuits.

Rev. Michelle Manuel

Associate Director of Adult Ministries



What led you to ministry?

I was super involved with the Wesley Foundation during my time at Texas Tech and received the call to ministry there. I especially feel compassion for those who are questioning their faith or are deconstructing.

How do you describe your pastoral wedding style?

My goal in our premarital counseling sessions is to first get to know you and second to gain skills on conflict management and how to best hear and understand your partner. My wedding style can be fun and casual or very traditional depending on the personality of the couple. My homilies are fairly short.

Three facts about yourself:

- I'm not a regular pastor, I'm a cool pastor. (Yes, it's a reference from Mean Girls).
- My aesthetic is plant life and neutrals.
- I'm in recovery from taking myself too seriously.

Rev. Katie Montgomery Mears

Senior Associate Pastor



What led you to ministry?

I felt called to ministry while I was at SMU in undergrad, but I ended up beginning a career in fundraising right out of college, which I loved! Though I knew God was using me as I worked in non-profits to serve those with less resources, I continued to feel like God was calling me into the local church. As a pastor, I get to share God's love with folks and to help them see how God has invited them to be a part of transforming our community through the love of Jesus.

How do you describe your pastoral wedding style?

No two couples are alike, so no two weddings should be exactly alike! I enjoy getting to know couples during premarital counseling and I am intentional about making each service feel special and unique to the couple. I have a relaxed presence and my goal is to help the wedding guests see both love and devotion between the couple as well as God's deep love for them.

Three facts about yourself:

- My husband Whitney and I have two daughters, Mary Holland and Poppy.
- In addition to spending time with my family, I love to cook (the more complicated the recipe, the better!), snow ski, sit in our backyard with friends, and get lost in a book.
- I cheer for the LSU Tigers, Houston Astros and SMU Mustangs!

Rev. Cliff Ritter

Pastor of Caring Ministries



What led you to ministry?

I was originally planning to start a second career in counseling. While at Seminary, studying the required counseling coursework, our nation experienced September 11, 2001. In the chaotic aftermath, God showed me that in normal times pastors would typically send their parishioners to counselors for care, but in times of crisis the counselors will always send their clients to their pastors for the ultimate answers to life's most challenging moments. In that season of crisis, God called me to be a pastor, and I changed my course of study to begin preparations for the ministry.

How do you describe your pastoral wedding style?

Weddings are a celebration of all that is good in life. I hope to be a joyful presence in this holy and divine encounter with God.

Three facts about yourself:

- I have a beautiful wife, two perfect adult children, a wonderful daughter-in-law and six awesome grandchildren.
- I am developing a fruit orchard at our family farm.
- I am becoming a DIY fanatic.