

Rev. Gina Durbin

Gina grew up in the A.M.E. Zion church where she developed her love and gift for music. She has been singing since she was a little girl and has continued to do so into adulthood. She studied vocal music education at University of Missouri – St. Louis for 3 ½ years before moving on to full time employment as a medical coder. The years Gina spent working in hospitals as a coder gives her a unique comfort level in visiting the sick, communicating with medical personnel, and bearing witness to the grief that often accompanies physical illness. Gina eventually furthered her education and moved on to a vocation in Information Technology where she worked for almost 15 years.

Coming out and dealing with her spirituality and sexuality was extremely difficult for Gina. Her love of music remained the light and spiritual language that anchored her soul. The greatest healing came though when Gina started attending MCC of Greater St. Louis in June of 2000. It was there she came to realize God still loved her, and her spiritual self was resurrected as she began singing in church once again. Gina could finally be her authentic self in all aspects of her life, including in worship and her relationship with God.

God spent many years rekindling Gina's passion for ministry. She sang with the praise & worship team and choir at MCC of Greater St. Louis for almost sixteen years. During this time, Gina was reminded of the call God placed on her life at the tender age of 16. Gina finally answered that call and entered seminary where she graduated with a Master of Divinity. Gina completed her ministry internship with MCC of Greater St. Louis, as a Gap Pastor with MCC of Topeka, KS, and as a Chaplain with Shalom House (a homeless shelter for women with substance use and mental health issues). Gina was employed at MCC of Greater St. Louis as Pastor of Congregational Care for 2 years and then completed a Chaplain Residency with the Veterans Administration. Gina realized during her Chaplain Residency that her call is to serve the local church. She moved on to serve as Interim Pastor for Heartland MCC in Springfield, IL before relocating to Florida where she was the Interim Pastor for SunCoast Cathedral MCC in Venice, FL. Gina's work with SunCoast, particularly the grief work they did together following the death of their founding Pastor, helped her to understand Pastoral Care is an essential piece of her calling. God has been preparing Gina to serve in this capacity for many years. Gina considers herself a **#WYSIWYG Pastor** (a what you see is what you get pastor). She is thrilled to bring her heart for ministry to serve as a member of the Board of Pensions.

Bio provided by Rev. Gina Durbin