

APNC'S NOMINEE FOR ASSOCIATE PASTOR

**REV. DR. JOHN
JI-HOON YU**



COLUMBIA

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Growing in Life. Together.

A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Dear Church Family,

The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC) is thrilled to present the Reverend Dr. John Yu to the congregation for a vote on whether he will partner with us in ministry as our next Associate Pastor.

The APNC was commissioned a little over a year ago, and the first phase of our journey was to get to know each other, our responsibilities as a committee, and broadly what the role of the next Associate Pastor would be. We met with Pastors Matt and Scott and leaders of the previous two pastoral search committees and benefited greatly from their wisdom and experience as we began the work.

A key component of our second phase was a series of interviews with representatives of various ministries within the church. These interviews proved extremely valuable in putting together a ministry profile that reflects our current values and priorities as a church, with an eye toward where God may be calling us in the future.

The ministry profile was approved by the Session on May 27, and it went live on the PC(USA) job site on June 20. God provided us with a strong pool of candidates quickly. We reviewed 40 profiles, and selected nine for the first round of interviews, which took place July 24-August 3. Four candidates really stood out in these interviews, and we interviewed them a second time August 5-11. There was a point during John's second interview in which we all experienced a quiet shift - it had ceased being (just) an interview and became a time in which we were being ministered to, warmly and gently, but also unmistakably.

Though John emerged as a top candidate, the remaining candidates were also impressive, and we decided to meet

all of them in person for a sequence of intensive two-day interviews. Prior to these interviews, we spoke with five references for each candidate. The interviews themselves took place Sept 10-24 and involved a lot of time with candidates. Pastor Matt also spent significant blocks of time with each candidate. Our time with John affirmed and amplified the impression of him that had been emerging from our prior interviews with him and his references. John's love for our Lord, his love for the gospel, and his deep knowledge of scripture permeate his speech.

We met on Sept 28 and 30 to discuss the candidates. Pastor Matt was part of these meetings, principally as a listener. It was clear at this point that John was the candidate we wanted to bring before the congregation.

We met with Session on Oct 25 to share about John and how we came to see him as the candidate we wanted to put before the congregation, and to request that they call a congregational meeting so that we could vote on this significant decision. Session approved our request, which brings us to the congregational meeting.

We have felt well-supported in prayer throughout this journey, and we thank you for that. For our part, we worked prayerfully and diligently, but it is always God who brings good fruit, and we have experienced God's guidance and provision. We are unanimous and enthusiastic in our endorsement of John, and we are excited for you to get to know him and for him to serve God with and through our congregation.

Yours in Christ,
Erin Endreson, Marilyn Kimble, Steve Martin, Jeff Oval,
Brian Randolph, Mary Buckheister Smith, Ben Stimmel,
Aaron Villanueva, Julie Wilcox

*"Unless the Lord builds the house,
those who build it labor in vain." (Psalm 127)*

A letter from *John*

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Columbia Presbyterian Church,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! I am extremely honored to be considered for the Associate Pastor's position at Columbia. Our family (Meesun, Jean, Micah, Haley, and myself) is extremely excited to serve our great God alongside all of you, should the way be cleared. Furthermore, our excitement grows each and every day, as we learn more and more about the community of Columbia.



From the very first conversation I've had with Associate Pastor Nominating Committee of Columbia, I learned that Columbia is different. First words from APNC was not "let's introduce ourselves" or "tell us who you are," but "we are praying for you." Before any business, before getting to know one another, before breaking any ice, APNC wanted me to know that they are praying for me. I believe it is because of this prayer, we are where we are right now.

I've heard from a friend a long time ago that prayer is the real work of the church. God, in his infinite wisdom, decided to work through the prayers of his people. And certainly APNC has embodied this truth.

I too have been praying. I asked for a copy of Columbia's directory, and have been going through it, praying for each family and member. Even though I have not met most of you, I wanted to pray for you, because we are all in it together. We are all partners in the Gospel, ministering and serving one another, for the sake of Shalom.

For me, Shalom represents everything we are working for. While the word is often translated as "peace," Shalom is far more than that. It is about balance, stability, wholeness,

oneness, harmony, unity in the midst of diversity – all these and more. It is about heaven meeting earth, God's Kingdom and will being done here on earth as it is in heaven.

I look forward to living out the values of Shalom with you all. I bring many gifts, talents, perspectives, and experiences. And I hope these will all help Columbia grow more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ. There may be many learning curves for me – it is a different church and different culture. While I have lived in many different places, this will be the first time for us in the Pacific Northwest. So, there will be a period of adjustment and learning for us. Please be patient with us in this time of transition.

I am excited. I am excited about what God has planned for all of us. I am excited about serving, ministering, and doing life together with you. I look forward to serving together to expand God's Kingdom in Vancouver, WA and beyond. May God work in and through all of us. And let us be faithful to him, knowing that, in words of Paul, "he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil 1:6, NIV).

Indebted in your prayers,
Rev. Dr. John Yu



ABOUT JOHN

EDUCATION / TRAINING

Doctorate of Educational Ministry

Columbia Theological Seminary
9/29/2014 - 5/16/2020

Master of Divinity

Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary
7/22/2002 - 5/20/2006

Bachelor of Arts

Brandeis University
8/29/1997 - 5/13/2001

Continuing Education

Clinical Pastoral Education
2009
Seton Hospital, Austin, TX

Austin Theological Seminary
2008
Special Student
4 Courses (Preaching,
Systematic Theology, Polity,
Worship & Sacraments)

Association of Presbyterian
Christian Educators Annual
Events
2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011,
2012, 2013, 2017

TRAINING/CERTIFICATION

Clinical Pastoral Education
Training Certificate
2009

WORK EXPERIENCE

7/18/2021 - Present
Organizing Pastor
The PSALM New Worshipping
Community
Aurora, CO

1/1/2016 - Present
Lead Pastor
True Light Community Church
Aurora, CO

12/2/2012 - 12/20/2015
Associate Pastor
Korean First Presbyterian Church
Greensboro, NC

1/16/2011 - 11/25/2012
Associate Pastor
Austin Korean Presbyterian Church
Austin, TX

6/12/2005 - 1/16/2011
Youth Director
Austin Korean Presbyterian Church
Austin, TX

6/2/2002 - 6/5/2005
Associate Director for Campus
Ministries
New Covenant Presbyterian Church
Newton, MA

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Korean-Native Speaker
English-Fluent

JOHN & FAMILY

in his own words...

Meesun is a Registered Nurse. Meesun and I have been married for 15 years now. She came to the United States after we got married. She is humble, sacrificial, dedicated and hard-working. She loves to listen to music and enjoys a nice conversation.

Jean is in 8th grade. She loves to sing and also loves to play volleyball. She likes to do things that are creative – went to Destination Imagination Global Finals last year, as a member of one of the teams representing Colorado.

Micah is in 7th grade. He loves video games, coding, and building things. He has a wide range of interests – he explores, reads, and tries new stuff. He is also black belt in TaeKwonDo.

Haley is in 3rd grade. She is always upbeat, joyful, and cheerful. She is also very caring of those around her. While she does not try many new things, she is deeply committed in what she does, and always follows through.

Prior to becoming an adult, I lived in Korea, New Jersey, North Carolina, Louisiana, and Texas. I lived in big cities, suburbs, and small towns. It seems like we were



always on the move. I went to three different high schools, one of which is located in a tiny, little town called Nachitoches (pronounced Nack-ee-tish), Louisiana. How tiny? The town had one Walmart Super Center, from which 75% of all sales taxes were collected.

I have developed a wide gamut of interests. I played the violin – was a concertmaster of school orchestra a few times. I enjoy mostly non-fiction books – books that critique/analyze current culture, climate, politics, etc.

I love trying new foods and learning different cultures. Favorite foods are BBQ Texas (Brisket) and Korean are two of the best kinds out there. Not a huge dessert fan, but I do love good southern peach cobbler and tiramisu. I love a great cup of coffee.

I am an avid sports fan – three favorites are soccer, college basketball, and baseball.

JOHN'S STATEMENT OF FAITH

I believe in one, sovereign, triune God. Our God is the great I AM: all-powerful, all-knowing, eternal, ever-present and wholly different from who I am. God has created everything in this world, diverse, harmonious, and beautiful, through the Word.

It did not take long for God's beautiful world to be corrupted. Human beings, in Adam and Eve, participated in rebellion against God. Rather than following God's standard, we decided to be the judge of what is good and what is evil. We wanted to take place of God. We were selfish and self-centered. And yet, God was merciful.

Because of God's compassion and graciousness, God sent Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. Jesus was both fully God and fully man. He came to the world in order to live the life that we were supposed to live and to die the death that we are supposed to die. His life did not end there. The death could not hold him. He was resurrected on the third day. Through his life, death and resurrection, Jesus offers us new life, the life to the fullest. It is only through faith in Jesus Christ we can have this new life, and the faith in Christ is only possible through the working of the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit works in our hearts to draw us to God. It is the Holy Spirit, who allows us to confess our sins, and believe in Jesus Christ.

Even though I am a selfish being, living to fulfill my own selfish desires, God has chosen me, called me, and adopted me as God's child. Furthermore, God provides a

way for me to grow into God's likeness, and live the life as God intended. God has also given me the inspired Word of God. The Word of God is authoritative and is sufficient guide for me to live for God.

God also called me into a community of believers, the church. This community exists for the fellowship and edification of believers. The church is responsible for administering the sacraments also. Through baptism and the Lord's Supper, we can see the kingdom of God progressing in this world. These sacraments increase our faith, and help us to see and look forward to the eternal fellowship and communion we will have in heaven.

Through these means of grace, God wants me to live for God's glory. This means I am to exhibit God's love and grace to the world. There are so many broken places in the world. I am to be an agent of God's rest and renewal, so that shalom of God may be experienced. Shalom is not just an absence of conflict, but true peace, where everything exists in harmony and balance – true reflection of God's kingdom.

I look forward to the day when Jesus will return and the whole church, transcending race, ethnicity, and culture, will be gathered in front of God for the very first time. Since God is God and I am not, I must recognize my limitation and wait for the Lord. I am excited for that wonderful Day of the LORD. And I can look forward to that day without fear, because of the unconditional love, grace, and mercy of our God. To God be all the glory, honor, and praise.

APNC REFLECTIONS

Jeff Ovall, Co-Chair

John has a gentle charisma that is warm and welcoming. Whether you are an introvert or an extrovert, he will make you feel comfortable and heard.

Mary Buckheister Smith, Co-Chair

John has so much experience in the Presbyterian church. His core beliefs are theologically solid.

Erin Endreson

John is subtle, calming, and thoughtful. When I learned that he has gone into coffee shops and displayed a sign that reads “The Pastor Is In,” to invite conversation and spiritual connection with strangers, I knew he was a wonderful fit for CPC.

Marilyn Kimble

John has a mature spiritual faith that we saw exhibited in our Zoom and in-person contacts with him. John’s spirituality was a characteristic that his references all mentioned.

Steve Martin

Pastor John has a unique ability to bridge theological depth with practical ministry. From his creative community engagements to his thoughtful approach to difficult conversations, he shows that impactful ministry happens both at church and in everyday moments of life. CPC will be blessed by his presence and pastoral wisdom.

Brian Randolph

When the APNC began to study and think about calling someone to this position, our discussions illuminated many categories of service we would ideally like to have addressed by the Associate Pastor. In fact, to me it felt a bit of a stretch initially. Now, I personally feel that God has done a “good work” here. We have been directed towards someone who is compassionate, thoughtful, and exhibits leadership qualities across a broad set of giftedness. I am excited that God is allowing us to call the Rev. John Yu to be an Associate Pastor at Columbia.

APNC REFLECTIONS

Ben Stimmel

From the moment we met John we could tell he was someone very special and as we spent more time with him it became clear God was calling him to be our next Associate Pastor. CPC will be blessed by his passion for creative ministry, engaging and warm personality, and his astute theological and spiritual wisdom.

Julie Wilcox

Sometimes when you meet someone, you instantly know that God's grace is in the mix, so it is with John. His deep faith is evident and present in every interaction.

Aaron Villanueva

John's history has shown that he is a strong yet gentle leader. He leads but is also collaborative and will bring others (staff/lay people) along with him in the ministry projects he is involved in.

Quotes from References

- *Leads with vision and caring*
- *Helpful - pays attention to those in the margins*
- *If there is a problem, John is the one people go to*
- *Great follow through*
- *Brings people together*
- *Full-on disciple of Jesus Christ*
- *Authentic*
- *Has great integrity*
- *A bright and shining star and any church would benefit from his skills and abilities*



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