

# An Introduction of Pastor Dale Stiles



Greetings!

I am hopeful for the opportunity to serve as the next pastor at St. Paul Lutheran in Wyoming. Thank you for considering me.

## **A Bit About My Family**

My wife, Carrie, and I live in our 120 year old renovated farmhouse on Carrie's family farm in Franconia Township, south of Lindstrom, about twenty minutes from St. Paul Lutheran. Carrie grew up on the farm, and eventually graduated from Chisago Lakes High School in Lindstrom in 1988 before attending Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter. I grew up in Albert Lea, MN, and also graduated from high school in 1988 before attending Concordia College in Moorhead.

Carrie and I met at Luther Seminary in St. Paul as first year students in the Fall of '92. Carrie completed her Master of Arts degree in Youth and Family Ministry through Luther Seminary and Youth Leadership, Inc. in 1994. Carrie provided Youth and Family ministry for 17 years at St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, North St. Paul, before being hired at Fish Lake Lutheran in 2009 as their Director of Youth & Family Ministry where she and I worked together in ministry for nearly six years. Carrie most recently served as Director of Children's, Youth & Family Ministry part-time at Glen Cary Lutheran Church in Ham Lake, MN.

In May of this year, Carrie completed a two-year certification program in Spiritual Direction at the Christos Center for Spiritual Formation in Lino Lakes, MN. She now offers individual spiritual direction and group retreats at our farm and calls it, "Holding Space." You can find out more at [www.holdingspacespiritualdirection.com](http://www.holdingspacespiritualdirection.com)



We have been married 25 years and have three children, Caleb (22), Annica (18), Tobie (16), and a golden retriever named Oscar. Caleb graduated from North Branch Area High School in 2016 and from Concordia College (Moorhead) in 2020 with a degree in broadcast journalism. He currently works as a News Content Producer at the NBC television affiliate, KBJR, in Duluth, MN. Annica is also a 2020 graduate, from Forest Lake High School, and is taking a gap year while nannying in Washington state for our newborn twin nieces. She will study at George Mason University in Washington, DC beginning this fall. Annica has interests in photography, tennis, and advocating for social justice and racial equity. Tobie is an 11th grader at Chisago Lakes High School in Lindstrom, plays percussion in the band, is on the Diving Team, and is a level 10 gymnast.

As a family we enjoy camping (state parks and BWCA), biking, swimming, running, hiking and the Minnesota Twins!

### **My Call to Ministry**

My call to ministry began in college when I became active in campus ministry and outreach. I played guitar in a worship and praise band that led daily chapel services and I visited the local juvenile detention center once/week to minister to the teenagers who were incarcerated there. These experiences led me to work at Camp Onomia Bible Camp for three summers while in college. That then led me to seminary upon my college graduation. From then to now, my call to ministry has only continued to be affirmed in powerful and rewarding ways. I am so thankful for where following my call has led me and am always open to the Holy Spirit's working in my life and ministry.

### **My Passion for Ministry**

What I am most passionate about is seeing people become excited about their own faith. I then am eager to walk alongside them to help them grow into the disciples Jesus calls us to be. Discipleship is hard work and we need to work together at it. It is so rewarding, too! I am passionate about teaching and preaching and baptizing and communing and marrying and burying. I really shine when I preside at funerals. All of which gives me energy and hope. I thrive in a community of faith that shares that energy.

### **My Vision of the Church**

The church always serves as a beacon of hope and light in a dark and hurting world - especially now in the midst of the pandemic. We, as the Church, are continually called to embody it and be the hands and feet of Christ to all. My hope, prayer, and vision of the church, is that it will continue to be a place where people turn for hope, comfort, assurance and forgiveness, especially in these days of unrest and uncertainty across our national and global political and spiritual landscape.

### **My Gifts for Ministry**

I am well-seasoned and experienced for parish ministry having been ordained now for almost 25 years (July, 2021). I have served in four distinct congregations – small sub-urban, rural, and large sub-urban. I have progressed in my ministry from youth pastor, to solo pastor, to lead pastor. I have had the opportunity to serve as pastor in the United Methodist Church because of the ELCA's Full-Communion Partnership with them. I have learned much throughout this progression but remain rooted in my original call to ministry and continue to thrive on the rewards I see daily in any setting. I am humbled and honored to serve as a parish pastor and be invited into the lives of the people I serve. I enjoy preaching, teaching and visiting the most. I value good, quality, authentic worship, committed mission and outreach, solid spiritual learning and growth, and an authentic sense of community.

### **My Leadership Style**

I share leadership and consider myself a servant leader. I delegate and surround myself with gifted and talented lay leaders who can help me be a better pastor.

### **My Education**

- Bachelor of Arts (Psych/Soc.), Concordia College, Moorhead (1992)
- Master of Divinity, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN (1996)
- Doctor of Ministry, Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, MN (2017)

### **My Parish Ministry Experience**

- First United Methodist Church, Lindstrom, MN, 2018 - 2020 (interim)
- Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Stillwater, MN, 2014-2018
- Fish Lake Lutheran Church, Harris, MN, 2003-2014
- Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Circle Pines, MN, 1996-2003

### **My Service and Community Involvement**

- In Chisago and Washington Counties, I have been involved with Habitat for Humanity, Valley Outreach, Meals from the Heart, Feed My Starving Children, Union Gospel Mission, A Brush with Kindness, Family Pathways, and Ruby's Pantry. I have provided prayers and benedictions at annual Memorial Day services at local cemeteries.
- My wife and I volunteer twice a week at the International Institute of MN teaching English as a Second Language.