

Rev. Charles E. (Ted) Wright – biography for Albany Presbytery

January 9, 2017

First, the hard data:

Married in 1974 to Susan Williams Wright. Sue is a VT-licensed clinical social worker employed in Bennington by United Counseling Service, deployed to Mt. Anthony Union Middle School.

Two children: Bethany Ides, a writer/teacher/ performance artist, often found at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. David Wright, a pastor in Philadelphia Presbytery. David has a wife and two young children. His daughter was born with a severe heart defect, but by the grace of God has been thriving.

Formal education: B.A. Amherst College; M.Div. Princeton Seminary; doctoral work at Duquesne University's Institute for Spiritual Formation. (Did not seek a degree...) Certificate from Shalem Institute in group contemplative prayer leadership.

1978 – Ordained June 25 by Philadelphia Presbytery

1978-1982 – Pastor in Schaghticoke NY

1982-2005 – Pastor & head of staff, Langhorne PA (Philadelphia Presbytery)

2005-2009 – Regional Liaison for south/central Africa, PCUSA World Mission

2009-2016 – Pastor & head of staff, Gaithersburg MD (National Capital Presbytery)

2016 – Retired October 24

Now, a little background:

We bought our house in Valley Falls just prior to heading overseas. When the call came – completely unexpected – to pull up roots and begin a new assignment, we needed a place to stash possessions and eventually call “home.” Answer: the Hoosic Valley. It's where our kids were born, where I first learned ministry, and where precious relationships continued. It was much more affordable than suburban Philadelphia, so five tenants later, here we are.

Gaithersburg Presbyterian has over 700 members with enormous diversity of almost every kind: racial, cultural, educational, financial, political, theological and national origin. My challenge was to help them pivot toward the future – vision, worship,

program and staffing – and particularly, to move beyond *multi*-cultural toward *inter*-cultural, where the engagement is proactive, and people learn across lines of difference.

Mission service in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique afforded great preparation. Sue and I were employed by PCUSA World Mission, but funded through The Outreach Foundation. In return for that, we spent half our time looking after TOF projects. We must have done well, because today Zambia is a major PCUSA region of focus. I did learn Chichewa. We built strong partnerships. We gladly would have stayed longer in this role if my parents back in the States had not been dying.

We lived in Langhorne for 23 years. That's where our children grew up. I led that congregation through numerous developments: way too long of a story to tell here. Before that time, 4+ years in Schaghticoke – where growth and progress were evident. In those days I served at presbytery level mainly by leading youth ministry events.

I am willing to preach, teach, encourage, listen, facilitate retreats, or offer guidance as desired. My one caveat: I have relapsed leukemia. Therefore, I'm not a candidate for an interim pastorate. Soon I will begin a clinical trial at Dana-Farber. Until that gets established, I want to be cautious about promising more than I can deliver. But right now, I feel fine, and indeed I look forward to how God will fill this experience.