

August 5, 2022

Dear JIPC family and friends,

Your Session is happy to announce the selection of Rev. Tricia Petraven as our Interim/Transitional Pastor of James Island Presbyterian Church. Our Interim Pastor Nominating Committee has completed its search, made recommendations to Session, Staff, and Presbytery. Your session has unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed Rev. Petraven for this time of transition. Her bio and statement of faith are included so you can get to know a little bit about her. She welcomes the opportunity to know you!

What can a Congregation Expect from an Interim/Transitional Pastor?

In addition to the work all pastors do, an Interim/Transitional Pastor leads a congregation during the transition time after an installed pastor has departed, helping the congregation prepare to welcome the leadership of a new installed pastor. Interim/Transitional Pastors understand the dynamics of a congregation in transition, including feelings of grief, loss, and, sometimes, relief or anger. Interim/Transitional pastors will help the session provide for continuity of essential programs and may assist the session in assessing needs for changes in programs and ministries of the congregation. Some Interim/Transitional pastors have special skills and experience that can help a congregation recover from a time of conflict or after other trauma.

Please allow Rev. Tricia Petraven to introduce herself....

I am an artist, a carpenter, a singer, a teacher, and a pastor. Pastoral ministry is a second career for me. I earned my M.F.A. in Theatrical Design at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music and was a college professor of theater design and production for 14 years. My scenic art has been onstage at Chautauqua Opera, Baylor University Opera, Opera Carolina, and many other places.

It was at James Island Presbyterian Church where I felt God calling me to seminary. Cameron Smith, who was in seminary at the time and an associate at JIPC, suggested I investigate options in the area. I wasn't sure I would ever find something as meaningful and creative as scenic design, but I find ministry to be the most meaningful pursuit of my life.

After ordination I trained to become an interim pastor, completing my training in 2018, while simultaneously working as an interim. I've been called to interim ministry intentionally, and I feel that God has gifted me with the aptitude and ability for this specialized work. My passion is Faith and the Arts, and I care deeply about people on the fringes, who are struggling to find their way with God. I love Habitat for Humanity work and have been to Africa twice with Remember Niger.

My hobbies are reading, carpentry, renovation, painting, gardening, sewing, and international travel. My strengths as a pastor are compassionate preaching, nurturing spiritual deepening, and worship planning. I have a close relationship with my parents and with my three sisters, and I enjoy getting together with them at my parents' farm in Kentucky whenever we can.

Rev. Petraven's Statement of Faith

I believe in all powerful and loving God, creator of the cosmos. God is vastly beyond human comprehension but maintains a love for and relationship with people. One way God revealed this was by incarnating in the person of Jesus the Christ, someone we could relate to who could also relate to us. God continues to connect with us through the Spirit, our guide and conscience, who shapes and prods us. I believe that what matters most in this life is people, since individual souls are eternal. God knew us completely and fully before we became anything resembling a human form. God loves us beyond understanding and has a sovereign purpose for each of our lives, and even though we freely choose some day we will be able to look back on all our choices and see the divine plan manifested. Life is richer and fuller when we live with the kingdom of God first in mind, which includes love, compassion, righteousness, generosity, prayer, and submission to the path of God as revealed in the scriptures and demonstrated by Jesus. When terrible things happen, it is not a punishment by God. We can respond to these occurrences by trusting in God to be with us, meditating on God's Word, and continuing to work for justice and mercy, caring for those who are in need or who are hurting. The church gives us a community for support, a venue for expressing our grateful praise to God, a reminder of our eternal purpose, and an opportunity to grow in faith and grace. In church we are sealed in baptism as God's children, and we celebrate Communion to identify with the life, burial, and resurrection of Christ and to know that Christ is still with us in every bite of bread and every sip of wine. The church also helps us to understand and interpret the Bible, our record of God's continuous guidance and love for humanity. Through the church we have help to relate scripture to a constantly changing world, and we make space for the Spirit to work in and through us. The future destiny of humanity is in the hands of God, who will restore all things to perfect unity. The grace of God is our only hope for reconciliation with God. It comes to us from God, and we do nothing to deserve it. I believe we have responsibilities to fulfill in this life and in the life hereafter. God designed each of us with talents and aptitude and gave us inspiration to do things we love. My own path is strewn with creative works of art, music, poetry, painting, design, carpentry, theater, and performance, and my passion throughout life is to employ these gifts through pastoral ministry to God's glory.



In Christ,

Reverend Tricia Petraven