



The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee calls

ANNA LANGHOLZ

for Associate Pastor

First Presbyterian Church of Lake Forest

Over the years First Pres has been blessed with Associate Pastors, from Kristie Finley to Dave Bianchin to Gordon Butcher to Kent Kinney and beyond, who have been passionate and selfless in their desire to bring comfort to those who are suffering and to engage the congregation in the life of our Church. In our conversations with Anna it was abundantly clear that this role of caring and sharing the joy and peace of God's love is not a "job" for her, it is her calling. We were impressed with her maturity and composure throughout the discernment process. She is an empathetic listener with a passion to be a lifelong learner. These and other skills create a solid foundation for a ministry of caring and engagement about which the APNC is very excited. Thus, the APNC is thrilled to call Anna Langholz to First Pres as our Associate Pastor for Congregational Life. Her calm demeanor and youthful enthusiasm will go far to continuing our long traditions while creating new ones for the future.

JIM MAYHALL

Chair, Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC)

APNC COMMITTEE

Jim Mayhall, Chair

Stephanie Elliott

Kris Engel

Mark Hamming

Nelle McNicholas

Steve Ratay

Marty Vander Velde

*“I could not be more excited to have Anna joining us at First Pres. She is a **selfless presence** who immediately makes everyone feel comfortable, and after spending time with her, I immediately felt like she belonged here. Her glowing review from her previous head pastor credits their church growth to her leadership, and she was one of their best pastoral residents in 20 years.”*

– MARTY VANDER VELDE

*“After a deep and thoughtful discernment, I’m thrilled that Anna Langholz chose us! It was a wonderful process in getting to know her as well as those with whom she has worked since Divinity school. I am probably most excited about her incredible pastoral care skills. She’s stated that she thrives on pastoral care which is so important in the life of our church. Anna has an innate ability to **connect with people of all ages** (she told a great story about a 93-year-old friend), provides a tailored worship experience based on her audience and has ratcheted up engagement everywhere that she has worked. I cannot wait for First Pres to meet her!”*

– STEPHANIE ELLIOTT

*“We are thrilled to have Anna join our church family as a future leader for us all. She is **positive, talented and friendly**. I have no doubt she will make a seamless transition to her new surroundings while being centered in faith.”*

– MARK HAMMING



*“I am excited for Anna to become a pastor at First Presbyterian because of her enthusiasm and her **ability to share God's word and grace** with others. In meeting with her, I was impressed by all her thoughtful and insightful comments about how she finds God in her life and brings His message to those to whom she is ministering. The excitement and energy she has demonstrated gives me great confidence in her ability to serve our congregation in many different ways for years to come.”*

– STEVE RATAY

*“Anna is a **skilled compassionate listener**. She is a kind, caring and intelligent woman, highly respected and regarded by both her current congregation and co-workers. She is spirit driven and took time to discern God’s call for her ministry. Anna is excited about joining the FPCLF ministry team.”*

– KRIS ENGEL

*“The APNC looks forward to introducing Anna to First Pres! We are thrilled to have her joining Jon and his team and are confident that she will add tremendous value to our growing church community. Her **strong faith and compassion for others** are just two of the many reasons we are certain she will thrive at FPCLF. Welcome, Anna!”*

– NELLE MCNICHOLAS





MEET ANNA LANGHOLZ

Hello! It is such a joy to "meet" you! I am honored to gather with you all as a candidate for Associate Pastor of Congregational Life. I'm excited to get to know one another, but until then, here is a brief introduction about me. I grew up with my two older brothers and parents in Germany, where my parents worked as teachers on US military bases. It fostered in me a deep love of travel, different cultures, and soft pretzels. I moved to the US at 18 to attend Hope College in Holland, Michigan where I studied Psychology, Neuroscience, and German. During my final year in college, I sensed my call to ministry and attended Princeton Theological Seminary where I got my Master of Divinity in 2022. For the past three years I have been working bi-vocationally as a Chaplain at Carroll University, in Waukesha WI and on Pastoral Staff at Crossroads Presbyterian Church in Mequon, WI. Some favorite moments from my time in these roles include teaching a class on prayer, coordinating a new member host initiative, seeing student worship expand at Carroll, empowering and teaching students to lead Bible studies, hosting an all-church square dance, and connecting with many wonderful people over conversation and cups of tea. Someone recently asked me how I understand ministry and the word that came to mind was space. As a pastor and companion, I hope to create spaces, both physical and spiritual, for others to experience God. Space for others to interact with God's word in study, in scripture, in teaching

and preaching and worship, in connection and community, and in their own hearts. Space to grow and wonder, to experience both doubt and clarity. Space to express deep gladness and profound sorrow. Space to notice the abounding and creative work of God, the radical and enduring grace of Jesus, and the nurturing accompaniment of the Spirit. I believe wholeheartedly that the source of our life and hope and being flow from God, the three-in-one. That in love, through faith, we journey through life with the Spirit, seeking to grow in attention and awareness to God's movement in and around us. And that our witness to the love of God in Jesus brings about visions of God's kingdom of peace and justice here on earth. I love what I do and find deep meaning in it, but also enjoy many hobbies outside of my work hours. In my free time, you'll find me traveling, walking, hiking or (sometimes) running in the great outdoors with my significant other Thomas, doing yoga, watching the Great British Bake off, drinking tea, reading a fun novel, enjoying delicious food, or attempting to garden. I am eager to meet all of you and get to know this beautiful community more deeply.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Anna Langholz

STATEMENT OF FAITH

by Rev. Anna Langholz

I believe that many of the specifics of our faith grow and change with us over our lifespan. This is one of the magnificent things about a spiritual life with God, that it journeys and grows with us. There are, however, some central and enduring beliefs that I hold in my life of faith.

I believe in the triune God of grace. God, out of love, molded creation and we see a reflection of God's spirit in all the Earth. God created humankind in God's image and invites us to join with one another and God in caring for the world. However, we are unable to do it alone as imperfect beings. Instead, we use our free will to reach for more and more rather than restore what is. So, we require a savior and teacher. Incapable of sinlessness on our own, we are nevertheless embraced by

God. We are chosen, forgiven, redeemed, and made whole through Jesus, who is God incarnate. He is fully divine and fully human, and came to live and die on this earth, meeting humanity in all our messiness to act as a prophet and messiah. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, we are redeemed and adopted into the family of Christ. By the gift of the Spirit, we continue to grow and be renewed. We find, in the Spirit, an advocate and guide as we seek to mirror the ministry of Jesus and expand God's kingdom of love, mercy, and justice here on earth.

I believe the Church acts as rich soil from which God's restoration grows through worshiping, working, and serving in the example of Jesus. The church is made to bring about and create space for God's kingdom come and to serve as partners in ministry with God. We unite, as a community of believers across all history, in worshiping our loving and gracious Lord through scripture, sacraments, and discipleship. We sharpen and soften one another through our study of the Bible, which is the inspired word of God and our primary source of divine revelation. We journey and support one another to grow in our spiritual lives in discipleship. We celebrate the enduring promises of God to us, and us to each other and God in our sacraments of Baptism and Communion. These are visible signs of God's grace to us, sealing, binding, and feeding us in life and community through Jesus and the Spirit.

Finally, I believe in who we are called to be. We are called to be disciples, meaning, we are called to pay attention and to draw others attention to where and when God shows up. We know that this world could and should be different than it is, so we are called to care for our neighbors, the poor, the orphaned, and the widowed, as the prophet Isaiah says. We are called to practices of inclusion, to contribute to a world where all have voice and respect. We are called to dispel violence and greed, to grow in love, and abandon hate. I believe we are called to seek connection and union across our differences in background, culture, race, gender, socioeconomic status, thought, and theology. God created a diverse world and people, and we encounter God in equally diverse ways, personally and theologically. We are called to be the body of Christ in that deep and joyful complexity. As we journey nearer and nearer to the heart of God, through our individual and communal spiritual practices, I hope it inspires and ignites us to practices of justice, love, and mercy ever more.



First Presbyterian Church
OF LAKE FOREST