

TO QUOTE CHUCK:

"The church exists to call humanity from self-obsession to the joyful abandonment of holy worship--getting lost in wonder, mystery, and love.

"I am one who seeks to lead with a vision of where I believe God is calling the church to be."

"Focus on your strengths and strengthen your strengths."

"I will not be the savior of your church--Jesus is!"

WHAT HAS GIVEN YOU THE MOST SATISFACTION IN YOUR MINISTRY?

"I can have a decisive influence on a person at key moments in that person's life--baptism, marriage, and death."

EXTRAS ABOUT CHUCK:

ENJOYS WORKING WITH WOOD

RELAXES TAKING MOTORCYCLE RIDES ON COUNTRY ROADS AT A SLOW RATE OF SPEED

LIKES TO WORK OUTSIDE

SERMON TOPICS ARE FROM THE LECTIONARY

NOTES ABOUT MARYANN:

A creative and ardent gardener

Very supportive of her husband's ministry

Has a great love of history, as does Chuck

Extremely personable

Does not ride with Chuck on his motorcycle

Has a wonderful sense of humor

Her great great great grandfather founded the West Beaver Presbyterian Church in Wellsville, OH

Has a daughter (Chris) living in Hendersonville, MD and a son (Michael) living in Erie, PA

MORE:

THEY ARE GRANDPARENTS TO ANDREW, DANNY, CASEY, AND KENNEDY.

THEIR DOGS' NAMES ARE SIERRA AND GUS.

CHUCK'S STATEMENT OF FAITH

~ I believe in the Triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Creator, Savior and Sustainer of life.

~ I believe out of love God created the universe to be in joyful relationship with its God. Humankind was created in the image of God but that divine image has been marred by sin. Whatever form it may take, sin is idolatry which turns us from the one true source of life to the puny gods of our own making, gods who can only take life from us and produce death within us. Only the Triune God can give life, redeem life and empower it to be a holy sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

~ I believe grace is amazing. Even before we know it or can recognize grace woos and charms us and brings us back into God's loving arms. I believe faith is a gift that can only be humbly received. By faith we are called to a life of discipleship and stewardship, a life of worship and prayer, a life of self-forgetting service in the same humble spirit as the one who knelt and washed disciples' feet.

~ I believe in the Word made flesh, revealed supremely in the birth, life, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That same Word we receive in the gathered faith community read from Holy Scripture, proclaimed from the pulpit, and made visible in the sacraments.

~ I believe in a simple washing that confers a new identity in which we are called to a new walk and talk. Our life is to be spent living into the reality of our baptism. I believe in a simple meal in which the Lord Jesus Christ imparts his life to his body that the church may be in the world but not of it, a light calling the world out of its darkness, salt to savor the earth with acts of loving-kindness.

~ I believe in that community of faith entered by baptism and nurtured by Word and Sacrament. Contrary to the idolatrous "isms" of this world, we are called as a covenant community to love God wholeheartedly, follow Christ faithfully, heed the holy promptings of the Spirit prayerfully, to be with and for each other forgivingly and to go out into the world joyfully to make disciples.

~ I believe this Triune God is sovereign over all. That sovereignty is seen displayed in the heavens and on the earth. It is manifested in the conquering love that flows from Calvary's cross and in the morning surprise of an empty tomb. That almighty power is also unveiled in suffering transcended in the lives of the saints.

~ While this sinful world may cast doubts upon the faith, the church tenaciously clings to the good news that is uniquely ours to celebrate- in life and in death we belong to God. Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God.

INTRODUCING



CHUCK AND MARYANN

LAPLACA



Chuck's Spiritual Autobiography

Chuck's Formal Education

Technical Memorial High School, Erie, PA

1976: B.A. - Gannon College, Erie, PA

1979: M. Div. - Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
Pittsburgh, PA

1992: D. Min. - Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Chuck's Past Experience

2002-Present: Pastor - First PC - Danville, VA

1994-2002: Pastor - First PC - Lewiston, NY

1990-1994: Pastor - Trinity PC - McDonald, PA

1979-1990: Pastor - First PC - Belle Vernon, PA

September 23, 1979: Ordination Date

1977-1978: Student Assistant - Edgewood PC

1978-1979: Preaching Association of Pittsburgh
Theological Seminary

1974-1976: Pulpit Supply - Erie Presbytery

Comments by References:

"Unusually fine candidate"

"Great organizational skills"

"Well-respected"

"Good listener"

"Can tackle tough problems"

"Finisher"

"Rye sense of humor"

"Personable"

I count myself fortunate to have been raised in a Christian home with a mother whose primary mission in life was to raise her three boys in the Christian faith and in the life of the church. That faith "took" as all three of them in some way are actively involved in Christ's Church.

I was nurtured in a Pentecostal church with an emphasis on life in the Spirit with its various manifestations. That community of faith placed a heavy emphasis on worship and prayer and on living a life of strict non-conformity to the world. That non-conformity seemed to place a greater emphasis on law, overshadowing grace and also more on emotion than intellectual integrity. I am grateful for the spiritual nurture of the church of my childhood and for the saints who influenced my faith. In the end, however, it was that priority of law over grace, that imbalance of emotion over intellect that compelled me in years to come to find a new spiritual home.

In my senior year of high school, I felt a sense of call that was also confirmed by my pastor and various members of my home church. After high school graduation I attended the Northeast Bible College outside of Philadelphia for three years in preparation for ministry in the Assemblies of God. After three years I received a diploma of ministry and returned home to assist in various areas of my home church. At my pastor's encouragement I applied for a year-long Clinical Pastoral Education program at Hamot Medical Center in Erie, Pennsylvania. This was a significant spiritual turning point in my life.

In 1972 for a year and a half I was a student chaplain making daily pastoral calls and pre-opt visits, providing weekly televised chapel services, and met weekly with three other clergy, a Methodist, Episcopalian and Presbyterian along with our CPE supervisor for group sessions. It was during this time that I became increasingly disenchanted with my childhood faith while at

the same time being drawn to a faith that was not fearful of doubt, rejoiced in amazing grace and was intellectually free to consider differing points of view. There was no going back. I decided I needed a new church home and found it in the Presbyterian Church. I have never regretted my decision.

In 1974 I joined the First Presbyterian Church. Still sensing God's call, I decided to attend Gannon College in Erie to receive my BA. The Rev. C. Ferguson took me "under his wings" involving me in the ministry of First Church as well as preparing me for seminary. With the blessings of the Session of FPC and Lake Erie Presbytery, I matriculated to Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 1976.

In 1979 I was ordained and installed as the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Belle Vernon, PA, the first of four congregations. Recently, my leadership and ministry expanded beyond the local church to the presbytery of the Peaks where I have been actively involved in its Division of Ministry. From that perspective it is quite apparent that we need healthy ministers and congregations in these very challenging times.

While our denomination has, like all mainline churches, fallen upon "hard times." I hold it in high regard. I value our form of government, our connectional system, our willingness to discuss openly controversial issues and our humility in listening to minority voices. I have been blessed and sustained by this church and have been and continue to be grateful for its Reformed theology and heritage.

On a more personal level, my life has been blessed by my wife, MaryAnn. She continues to be my best friend and companion and very gifted to fill that difficult role of being a minister's spouse.