Introducing the Reverend Jeffrey S. Smith
June 29, 2014

Jeff grew up in Blowing Rock and Lenoir. His faith was nurtured by his grandfather and a youth pastor who invited him to play on a church basketball team. At First Baptist Church of Blowing Rock, Jeff found himself actively involved in the youth program. He sums his faith journey up in one word—grace—which led him to Montreat College.

There, “God determined my steps (Prov. 16:9) and planned for me to stay and major in Bible and Religion. It was the continued affirmation of my church family, professors, and even God's special messengers placed in my path that led me to embrace my calling to ministry.”

Following college, Jeff served the children, youth, and young adults of First Presbyterian in Bennettsville, SC, for four years. He next spent six years at FPC, Spartanburg, SC, as the Director of Youth Ministry while completing seminary at Union-PSCE, Charlotte. Eastminster Presbyterian in Columbia, SC, called Jeff and his family to be the Associate Pastor for Middle School Youth and Families, and Evangelism and Membership, where he has spent the last four years. At Eastminster, Jeff has implemented a new confirmation process, conducted new members’ classes, taught Sunday school and Wednesday night classes, led prayer breakfasts and church-wide retreats, performed baptisms, weddings, funerals, served Communion, and been deeply involved with pastoral care. He has been a pastor “with every age at every stage.”

Jeff has been married to Angela for 13 years, who readily proclaims she “was called to be a minister’s wife.” An Asheville native, Angela is employed by Presbyterian Communities; she is an active singing participant in worship, and serves on the Board of Directors of Presbyterian Youth Connection. The couple has two wonderful and active sons, Brennan, 6, and Lawson, 5.

With confidence, humility, and passion, we prayerfully offer REVEREND JEFF SMITH as our unanimous recommendation for pastor of First Presbyterian Church.

Pastor Nominating Committee
Melia Gropfer, Moderator
Beth Alexander, Corresponding Secretary
Gay Lynn Williams, Recording Secretary
Anna Lehman  •  Ben Miller  •  Rebecca Weaver  •  David Wilkins
First Presbyterian Church
131 Big Valley St., Boone, NC 28607
firstpresboone.org  •  828-264-5906

Biographical Information

Ordination
February 26, 2012

Formal Education
Bachelor of Arts in Bible & Religion with concentration in Youth Ministry, Montreat College, 2000
Master of Divinity, Union Presbyterian Seminary, Charlotte, 2011

Continuing Education
Attendance at conferences themed in youth ministry, recreation, evangelism, Presbytery-related training/informational workshops

Work Experience
Associate Pastor for Middle School Youth and Families, and Evangelism and Membership, Eastminster Presbyterian Church, Columbia, SC 2012-Present (2300 members)
Pastoral Associate, Eastminster Presbyterian Church, Columbia SC 2010-2012 (2300 members)
Director of Youth Ministry, First Presbyterian Church, Spartanburg, SC 2004-2010 (2700 members)
Director of Christian Education, First Presbyterian Church, Bennettsville, SC 2000-04 (200 members)

Service to the Church and PC(USA)
• Committee on Preparation for Ministry, 2012-Present
• Presbyterian Youth Connection, 2012-Present
• Central Carolina Foundation Talk About Giving Board Member, January 2011-13
• Comprehensive Health Committee, Spartanburg, SC, 2006-08
• Spartanburg Area Youth Workers, Spartanburg, SC, 2005-10
• Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Spartanburg, SC, 2004-10
• Ministerial Association of Marlboro County, 2002-04
• Presbyterian Youth Connection, 2001-04
• Marlboro Academy Basketball  head coach of three youth teams, 2000-04

Dear Friends,

My family and I are very excited about the possibility of God’s call to First Presbyterian Church, Boone. We have truly felt the work of the Holy Spirit guiding and leading us to speak with your PNC. Our conversations have been so joyful and filled with excitement about the work that God has been doing in and through you already. I must say that they represent the congregation very well! We know without a doubt that God has been leading and guiding this process all the way. Our prayer is that as they share their experiences of how God has led us together, that God will grant you the same affirmation that we have all shared. I’m excited about the numerous ways God will build His kingdom in and through you in the future, and would be humbled and honored should God call me to shepherd your congregation! May God give you His grace and peace as you discern God’s will this day!

Blessings,
Jeff

“During their visit here I took Jeff and Angela on a church facility tour and had an opportunity to talk with both. I was most impressed. Jeff’s training and experience in adult education and youth work will really be a plus in this congregation’s life. Theologically, I believe Jeff will fit well within your faith, discipleship, and mission outreach calling. I am sure Angela will fit well within the parameters of her husband’s ministry. Their age and young family in the local school system will also be a plus for you as the congregation continues to draw young adults with children, yet Jeff will also appeal to the older generation. I endorse Jeff to be your next pastor.”

—Reverend Doug Sterrett, Teaching Elder, PC(USA), Retired
I believe in one God and yet distinct in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God created out of nothing, the heavens and the earth and all living beings that dwell on, above, and below the land. God created everything out of His divine freedom and solely out of His love for His creation. God created man and woman in His image and gave them dominion over all living creatures. God’s creation was pleasing in His sight. Yet the man and woman were disobedient to God’s command to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and thus they sinned against God. God’s good creation fell away from Him. Their disobedience separated them from the communion God intended to have with them and made them liable to all punishment in this world and cursed unto death. From this moment forward, all of humanity has been steeped into sin from birth, and creation has suffered from sin’s effects.

God, however, is gracious and merciful, and sought us out by sending His only Son, Jesus Christ, who was born of the Virgin Mary came to bring salvation to those who believe and trust in His name. Jesus took on our humanity by taking on our flesh. He is fully human, yet sinless, because He is fully God. His life bore witness to God’s love for humanity, as He had compassion on all sinners, caring for their physical and spiritual needs. He came as the perfect sacrifice and gave His life in exchange for all. Jesus Christ is the Judge who was judged in our place. By His death on the cross and His resurrection from the grave, He offers redemption through the forgiveness of sins to all who confess Him as Lord. Salvation is a free gift found only by His grace through faith in Him, and we are called to live in response to that grace.

God imparts His Holy Spirit to live within those who believe and confess Christ as Lord. The Holy Spirit guides us, illumines our hearts and minds to the understanding of God’s Word, convicts us of our sin, encourages us to believe, and reminds us of God’s provision and care, enables us to follow God faithfully, and is the seal that marks us as children of God, and reminds us of God’s love and forgiveness for those who believe. The Holy Spirit helps us to understand the scriptures and gives us the courage to live according to the Word. The Holy Spirit guides us, illumines our hearts and minds to the understanding of God’s Word, convicts us of our sin, encourages us to believe, and reminds us of God’s provision and care. Salvation is a free gift found only by His grace through faith in Him, and we are called to live in response to that grace.

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Christ is the head of the church and the foundation on which we stand. He calls His church to proclaim the good news of His salvation through the proclamation of the Word and through the administration of the visible Word in the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper. We are called to make disciples and baptize all the nations in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We are also to obey and teach all of His commands until He returns again.

a pastor who delivers meaningful sermons that will provide something of value to incorporate in our daily walk with Christ. Jeff is energized when he preaches and teaches the Word of God. “The Bible is God’s love story—the greatest ever written, speaking truth to us today as well as in the past.”

a compassionate and responsive pastor…Each time we speak with Jeff, we are eager to listen to him. He has ministered to our PNC in so many ways already, through prayer, his calm and firm statement of conviction, an easy and delightful sense of humor, and devotion to His Lord, his church and his family.

a pastor with leadership strengths in administrative skills, conflict management, communication and stewardship…Presbytery leaders who have met Jeff are equally impressed and welcome his involvement with them on a local level. He has been an active participant in the Presbytery of South Carolina, where he lives and has moderated the Committee on Preparation for Ministry for the past two years. The church leaders are convinced, but “God chose to use us as instruments of His grace and calls us to use our gifts together.” Conflict has not been easy, but is a necessary growing pain in human relationships. “Under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we are brought together despite our differences.”

a spiritual shepherd who is enthusiastic and has a solid rapport with all ages…“God is calling me to a church that places great emphasis on personal devotion, prayer, and service to God. This church hungers and thirsts for the Word of God as a form of continual pastoral care and sustenance, through preaching, teaching, and discipleship…” Above all, this church seeks to embody and share the good news of Christ’s love and forgiveness with everyone.

a pastor familiar with and strong in both contemporary and traditional worship…Jeff has taken part consistently in two of the three worship services conducted each week at his present congregation, one of which is a contemporary service, and the other, a traditional service.