

## Thoughts from your Associate Pastor Nominating Committee

*Brigitte Davis, Betsy Davison, Martin Frey, Matt Kuntz, Rosemary Monahan, Gail Starr, Jonathan Summers, Melinda Sutter*

- Ryan's experience in community work and his proven ability to create curriculum give him strong credentials to organize and lead our church into meaningful adult faith formation opportunities for individuals, small groups, and large groups spanning ages, interests, and needs.
- Ryan Wallace is grounded in faith and has a passionate desire to serve Jesus both within the church and 'out in the vineyard'. He believes that Christian formation must engage head, heart and hands—learning, feeling and doing—to create an on-going and active witness for Jesus in the world and with each other. He is a powerful listener, seeking first to understand and know where we have been, where we are and where we want to go as a congregation. He has great ideas, will form relationships easily, and is clearly, in my mind, the right person at the right time to move us forward in faith and expand our understanding of 'Christian Education' beyond Sunday School!
- I'm so excited that Ryan has accepted our call! His thoughtfulness and compassion are so evident in everything he does. He wants to meet each one of us...from the smallest to the tallest, to build relationships, and to help us all individually grow in our faith.
- It is with great enthusiasm that we introduce Ryan to the congregation. Ryan's experience in ministry with children, youth, adults and family is a perfect fit for the needs of our

congregation. He is the pastor our group sought to hire. Ryan has a heart for faith formation across all ages, and his experiences, both personal and through his vocational callings, lend perspective that will greatly benefit our church.

- Ryan has experienced first-hand the importance of service opportunities for even the young: his passion for knowing and serving God's kingdom grew from his experience during his first youth mission trip. He has continued to develop his faith and commitment ever since. Ryan is strategic in thinking, planning and preparation. He *wants* to hear what others think, works collaboratively and values relationships. Hailing from a nearby community, Ryan has an intimate understanding of life in the north suburbs, with all its benefits and challenges, distractions and joys.
- I am excited that God has called Ryan to congregational ministry in our church. He is a good listener and will enjoy building relationships with our congregation, the staff, and our community. His thoughtfulness and ability to understand what is important to our church will allow him to lead a vibrant faith formation program.

## Thoughts from Pastor Brian Paulson

Ryan Wallace has my full confidence and enthusiastic endorsement to serve as Associate Pastor for Faith Formation. His insight, empathy, intelligence, and proven track record in ministry confirm our sense of call for Ryan in ministry with our congregation. I am confident he will build lasting relationships with people of all ages and stages of life. In particular, I am excited to see the way his presence with our children and their families will blossom and flourish. It will be joy to add him to our ministry team!

The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee of the First Presbyterian Church of Libertyville is pleased to introduce:



## Ryan Wallace

*“As Christians, being a follower of Jesus is not a decision we make just once, but every day of our lives. Each day we affirm our faith by seeking to renew and deepen our commitment to Christ.*

*I am filled with joy and gratitude that God is calling me to come alongside the children and adults at First Presbyterian Church of Libertyville on this lifelong journey of faith and discipleship!”*

## The Process

For the last nine months, APNC meetings have been filled with imagination, reflection, candid discussion and prayer. We have found strength in our hope for new possibilities. We have trusted God to guide us to the candidate who will cherish the strong foundation of our current faith formation ministry while seeking to innovate with new approaches. We have sought an innovative collaborator, skilled at equipping all of us for ministry.

The committee worked together to clearly communicate an accurate description of our congregation, our community and our hopes. Many resumes were received and read; interviews were conducted with promising candidates. Through the process of discussion and reflection the pool of candidates narrowed. Eventually, two candidates visited us in Libertyville. In addition to meeting formally and socially with the APNC they also met individually with all of the pastoral team as well as other members of our staff. Valuable insights from these various perspectives were shared with the committee.

As a result of this thorough, thoughtful and prayerful process, the APNC confidently presents Ryan Lawrence Wallace for the position of Associate Pastor for Faith Formation. We confidently trust that he will lead and nurture faith development of our adults, families and children with energy, creativity and enthusiasm.

## Experience

- Interim Director for Children, Youth, Mission, and Outreach Ministries at Park Ridge Presbyterian Church
- Ministry Assistant at First Presbyterian Church of Deerfield
- Monthly Guest Preacher/Worship Leader at Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church in Chicago
- Director of Organizing for Interfaith Worker Justice, an Interfaith/National not-for-profit

- Congregational Organizer and Policy Associate for Community Renewal Society, an Ecumenical/Local not-for-profit
- Junior High Youth Director at First Presbyterian Church of Nashville
- Member of the Launch Team for a UCC/ Disciples of Christ new church start
- Co-chair of the Vision Team (i.e. Church Council) for a UMC new church

## Education

- Master of Divinity, McCormick Theological Seminary, 2018
- Master of Theological Studies, McCormick Theological Seminary, 2012
- Bachelor of Arts and Sciences in Spanish, Religious Studies, and Philosophy, Vanderbilt University, 2008

## Preparing for a Life of Ministry at First Pres

Several representatives of our church attended the annual Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators Conference in early February. Within an hour of our arrival, we were taken aside by the Director of Christian Education from First Pres, Deerfield who had a lot to say about a possible candidate for our position of Associate Pastor for Faith Formation. The introduction was thorough and intriguing, more than enough for us to reach out to Ryan to request his resume and credentials.

Reviewing notes from that conversation, we're impressed with how accurately Thom Cunningham described his mentee; all that he told us was validated in our interviews, reference checks, document examination, recordings of sermons, and face-to-face time with Ryan.

Ryan has received recognition for his outstanding scholarship and has consistently graduated at the head of his class.

His energy is invested in thoughtfulness, fostering of meaningful relationships, and building consensus decisions. Ryan's diverse experiences include recruiting, preparing and encouraging volunteers. Participating in new church starts, Ryan collaboratively engaged in "outside the box" thinking, planning, and implementing. He has welcomed people where they are and guided them to a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Ryan has filled a range of positions working alongside and learning from experienced pastors, directors for children's ministry, youth directors, ministry assistants, guest preachers, curriculum creators, and teacher of adult classes. With his breadth of experiences, Ryan is highly qualified for our position of Associate Pastor for Faith Formation. We are excited and blessed to imagine the future with him.

## Ryan's Family

Ryan and his wife Amanda, who hails from Chattanooga, met while students at Vanderbilt University. It didn't take long for each of them to realize that they had found the one. Married since 2011, they are now parents to two beautiful children. Mae is two years old and will cheerfully inform you that she will be three in August. Silas was born on Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup> and has yet to master the fine art of sleeping for extended periods of time.

