

Rev. Sheth LaRue  
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## **EDUCATION**

Master of Divinity – May, 2020  
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary – Austin, TX

Bachelor of Arts, English & Creative Writing – December 2011  
University of Northern Colorado – Greeley, CO

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

Pastor, First Presbyterian Church - Aurora, MO  
Church Size: Less than 100 members  
Community Type: Rural  
8/1/2020 - 12/31/2021

- Planned, coordinated, and led worship
  - for Sunday morning services
  - for Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Hanging of the Greens, Blue Christmas, and Christmas Eve
  - for funerals and baptisms
- Studied, crafted, and delivered sermon for aforementioned worship services
- Recorded, edited, and published church service videos
- Navigated, researched, and implemented regulations for a COVID-safe worship space
- Visited with congregants to providing pastoral care
- Attended monthly various committee meetings, providing input and feedback as needed
- Moderated Session and Deacon's meetings monthly
- Participated in the work and mission of presbytery

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary - Austin, TX  
Editor, *Kairos* (Student publication)  
2018-2020

- Revived defunct student body publication, giving creative voice to students
- Sought and edited student writings on a variety of topics
- Laid out and published document monthly using Microsoft Publisher
- During second year I brought on a publication designer to do layouts and graphic design

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary - Austin, TX  
Resident Assistant - Currie Hall  
2018-2019

- Oversaw safety and security of student residence building
- Provided conflict resolution between students
- Ensured mental and physical well-being of international students
- Worked on-call shifts 1 week per month for security and lock-out issues

United States Postal Service - Salida, CO

PSE Clerk

2015-2017

- Processed mail at main hub, ensuring all area offices received mail & packages
- Processed mail and delivered at six different offices, working daily as needed at 1 - 3 offices
- Sorted mail, packages, and magazines/catalogs for each route
- Worked front counter selling USPS services and products
- Accepted and processed US Passport applications

United States Postal Service - Salida, CO

Rural Carrier Associate

2011-2014

- Accepted, sorted, and prepared all mail for delivery to designated routes
- Delivered mail along a designated route
- Collected outgoing mail and parcels from customers
- In addition to delivery of my designated route, also substituted for other routes as needed

### **SERVICE TO CHURCH**

Solo pastor - Aurora, MO

8/2020 - 12/2021

Pulpit Supply - Austin, TX and surrounding areas

2017-2020

Youth ministry volunteer; pulpit supply - Salida, CO

First Presbyterian Church, United Methodist Church

2011 - 2017

### **LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES**

- Compassionate
- Preaching and Worship Leadership
- Spiritual Maturity
- Lifelong Learner
- Public Communicator
- Media Communicator
- Technologically Savvy
- Contextualization
- Interpersonal Engagement
- Bridge Builder

### **PERSONALITY TRAITS BY RANKING**

- Agreeableness
- Conscientiousness
- Open-mindedness
- Negative Emotionality
- Extraversion

## ESSAY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

### **Describe a moment in your recent ministry that you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.**

After arriving at the church community to which I was called, I was asked to meet with a large, quiet congregant ('Carl'). This man had been attending the church for quite some time, had become a member and yet remained alone in worship and in life. The other congregants were sheepish at his presence and unsure how to interact with him because he lived in poverty and they in wealth. I, and two others, met with Carl, holding conversation with him over lunch, he and I somehow forming a quick bond of friendship.

I learned that he had been unemployed for nearly 20 years, was living in a decaying home, eating sparingly when his roommate had food. Coming from a broken home, he abandoned school at age 14 and found himself in and out of substance abuse and jail. He had been sober yet remained in poverty, loneliness, and purposelessness. We began a journey together: SSI and Medicaid eligibility, psychiatric, health, and dental appointments. In the end we were able to access food stamps, eyeglasses, dentures, medications, and supplemental income.

Two years after meeting him Carl is on the road to success: managing his depression, proudly showing his new smile, willingly talking with others, working two days a week, and soon living on his own. Through tenacity and teamwork we were able to meet his physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. He needed someone to see him, to know him, to love him, and I thank God that I was able to be one of those people.

### **Describe the ministry setting to which you believe God is calling you.**

In discerning a calling one must acknowledge both the holiness and practicality of a ministerial calling. I'll be expounding on the three factors which define the setting of ministry for me: time, place, and circumstances.

**Time:** Kingdom theology teaches us to live in the 'now and the not-yet' – the present reign of God and the unfulfilled reign of God that is to come. The ministry to which I am called does this through evangelism and mission work, discipleship and relationship, social justice and liberation.

**Place:** As disciples of Christ, ministry is wherever we are (Acts 1:8) and whatever we do (1 Cor. 10:31), but in discernment with my partner we have come to know we are our best selves in certain places, preferring suburban, urban, and college contexts. We are seeking ethnically-diverse, family-friendly living and ministry, as we enjoy the beauty and diversity of the human family while we begin our own. We seek a place where we both can live-out and grow-in to our vocations.

**Circumstances:** Practically speaking, I am called to a ministry setting that does the work, not one that merely funds it. A ministry that is actively open and inclusive to all of God's children. In a physically-sound, well-kept building, a ministry that knows their own needs and those of their neighbors. A ministry that rejects scarcity savings, instead living in its abundance, whatever that may be; not stuck in the past but actively living in the present while working towards God's future.

**What areas of growth have you identified in yourself?**

My partner and I are moving into our third year of marriage and, as we continue to grow and change because of life and age, we realize the people we were when we married are not who we are now, nor who we will be. I am starting to comprehend what 'marriage is hard work' means – each of us must adapt to both our own and the other's changes. She and I must understand, grow, and adapt together – we must put in the effort to make our partnership work. While certainly not easy, this growth and change is a worthwhile adventure with my loving and passionate partner.

I have been cultivating a deeper understanding of who I am and how my personality and being impacts the ways I interact with and live in the world around me. Utilizing assessment tools to identify my love and apology languages, recognizing my personality traits, and believing what God, friends and family say about me - all coupled with time spent in therapy - has given me solid insight into who I am. I have begun to identify and embody the ways in which I can best live, love, and lead, realizing that this good work begun in me is a lifelong journey. The difficult task ahead is to remain under and believe in these truths, not seeking identity and satisfaction outside of them.

Working from my strengths, I am learning what it means to be a transformational, visionary leader: how to be assertive without being aggressive, to bring peace without violence, to foster and encourage change, to bring out the best in those I meet.

**Describe a time when you have led change.**

Utilizing Susan Beaumont's book "How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going" I invited the congregation to join me on a storytelling journey followed by work to clarify that church's purpose in the community. It was my hope that through this the church's leadership and congregation would discover identity, purpose, and vision to fulfill its mission.

Through six weeks of storytelling we read the earliest session minutes to understand the founding era of the church, filling in gaps with imagination and community history. We talked about the heroes of the church, those individuals who helped, led, guided, befriended. We talked of glory era stories, discussing the times that were best and why they were, followed by shameful past stories, those times and moments when the church didn't shine so brightly. We concluded with present stories, admitting the reality of the church as it is, apart from hopefulness of what could be.

We then began Forward Thinking, identifying who the church is, who they serve, and for what they stand. We concluded this journey discerning what we were called to do next, utilizing identity, context, and values. We distilled opportunities and actions the church could take to better live out its mission and vision, presented to the church's Session. While the Session ultimately remained grounded in where they were and what they wanted to do, I feel that I led the congregation on a journey of discovery and change, one which I hope will be taken someday.