

July 31, 2019

Dear FPCC Family,

It has been two long years, but at last your Pastor Nominating Committee is thrilled to announce that we have found the next pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Concord! We reviewed 428 candidates, interviewed 38 of them (19 twice!) and had 10 come to visit us in Concord. We made dozens of reference calls and accumulated more than 4800 PNC-related emails. We spent countless hours, but it was all worth it to present to you the Reverend Dr. Johanna McCune Wagner!

### Meet Rev. Dr. Wagner

Johanna McCune Wagner was born in Manitoba, Canada, and moved to the United States when she was ten. Midway through graduate school to become an English professor, she felt the call to ministry and never looked back.

She received her Master of Divinity from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 2014, and more recently earned a Doctor of Ministry from Duke Divinity School with an emphasis on Christian Leadership. She spent the first ten years of her ministry in the boarding school world, holding positions as a chaplain, Director of Spiritual Life, and Chair of a Department of Religion and Philosophy. Since 2014, she has been the Senior Pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, MO.

She is the founder and Executive Director of 2MIPeople Ministries, a New Worshipping Community that focuses on the ministry needs of people with severe and persistent mental health diagnoses. This community creates and leads Bible studies and curricula for people dealing with mental health issues and provides resources and education on mental health to the church at large.

### About Her Family

Pastor Johanna's husband, Michael, is the scientist of the family. He has a PhD in cardio-pulmonary physiology and has spent the last 20 years working in what used to be called ambulatory monitoring and is now called digital health. He is very excited about moving to the Bay Area.

Her teenage stepson, Ethan, is a musician and actor who spent the summer playing Daddy Warbucks in a production of Annie. He lives in Colorado with his mother, but was born in California and still considers himself a Californian.

Johanna and Michael will also be bringing their terrier mix Macey and yellow lab Ozzie.



### MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

#### Meet Pastor Johanna

*Fireside Room*

Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1-3 PM

#### Hear Pastor Johanna

*Sunday Worship*

Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM

#### Vote on Pastor Johanna

*Congregational meeting*

*following the service*

Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 11 AM

#### Celebrate with Pastor Johanna

*Reception in the Fellowship Hall*

Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 AM

## **Why We Chose to Call Pastor Johanna**

The PNC felt a spark of enthusiasm for Johanna from our first interaction. We saw in her the same spirit and passions that animate FPCC, embodied in our Vision Statement:

### **LOVE GOD**

Pastor Johanna's love for God is clear in her thoughtful preaching, her eagerness to engage theology and worship with reverence and creativity, and her commitment to biblical principles such as care and compassion.

### **LOVE PEOPLE**

Pastor Johanna is kind and warm-hearted, and she loves meeting new people from every walk of life. She wants church to be a safe and healthy place for everyone to grow and flourish. She cares deeply about children, youth, and those experiencing mental illness, and finds particular fulfillment in helping parents deal lovingly and effectively with the mental health issues of their children and teens.

Her colleagues told us time and again that she navigates every interaction—from the happiest to the hardest—with grace and compassion, and we think she will find much to love here at FPCC!

### **SERVE**

Service takes many forms, and Pastor Johanna has the leadership skills we need to serve Concord with boldness and vision.

She has a track record of innovative and effective program development, and a knack for collaborative administration. Her thinking is nimble and creative, and she relishes the challenge of adapting the key values of our Presbyterian tradition to the realities of modern life.

We saw this in her creation of 2MIPeople, her New Worshipping Community, as well as her use of social media and podcasting to complement the Sunday service and to foster in-depth theological conversation in her congregation. We saw it in the way her eyes lit up when we talked about our church's bold history and our plans to help the housing crisis in Concord. We can't wait to see what we will do together!

## **A Note From Pastor Johanna**

*"I am very much looking forward to meeting you this Sunday! Everything I've heard about your church has led me to believe it is a wonderfully (and creatively!) mission-focused and kind-hearted place: just the kind of church I have been praying for. It is my hope that, in calling me to FPCC, God will be able to use my background in youth and mental health ministries, along with a certain odd love for administration, to help further FPCC's mission to 'Love God, Love People...Serve.'"*

It has been our honor to serve the church over the past two years, and we are very excited to begin this next chapter of FPCC's life together with all of you and Pastor Johanna!

Grace and Peace,

Your Pastor Nominating Committee

*Eric Harvey and Susan Koester, Co-Chairs*

*Ann Johnson, Darryl McCollum, Maren Stanczak, Robin Stearns and Jim Whitfield*