



SENIOR PASTOR **CANDIDATE** **PROFILE**



University Presbyterian Church
October 2022

FROM YOUR PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

Brothers and Sisters of our UPC Family,

Thank you for your prayers and encouragement throughout this Senior Pastor search process. As we have asked our sovereign, faithful, and never-failing God for HIS will to be made known, He has shown us, time and time again, that we can trust Him and His providence. **We believe that God has provided an outstanding candidate for UPC, and we are excited to announce our nomination of Rick Gilmartin for the position of Senior Pastor.**

Rick has been serving as a PCA Senior Pastor at Holy Cross Presbyterian Church in Staunton, VA, for 13 years. Here are just a few of the qualities that we have come to love and appreciate about Rick that align with our UPC Pastor Profile, which we shared at the beginning of the search.

- First, Rick is a compelling communicator. We have listened to many sermons, and we appreciate Rick's God-given ability to teach the Bible in a gospel-centered, scholarly way while making it understandable to anyone who may enter the church.
- Rick is a developer of leaders. He is excited about empowering teams for ministry. He does not view a pastor as the hero of a church, but as an equipper of other ministry leaders. He is excited about UPC and its future.
- God has also given Rick the heart of a counselor. Through our various interactions with Rick, many of us have already felt pastored by him. We hope that over time you also will get to know and appreciate his empathetic and compassionate heart.
- Rick has many outstanding qualities, including a willingness to be very open and honest with the committee about his weaknesses, lessons learned, and areas of growth. Rick is authentic about his need for Jesus both in the pulpit and in relationship. We are thankful that God has provided a candidate who understands brokenness and reminds us, through his own example, about our need for the transforming power of grace through the gospel.

There is much more to say, so we have enclosed more information about Rick and his ministry experience in the following pages. You will also have the opportunity to meet him and hear him preach during the upcoming Candidate Visit Weekend ending on Sunday, October 16th. On that Sunday, a Congregational Meeting will be held to call for a vote.

As we approach this new season, please continue to unite in prayer for our church, for Rick and his family, and for the people God is calling to Himself in Orlando.

Sincerely,

Your Pastor Search Committee

Lisel Allbee

Jack Bourret

Gigi Metzger

Angie Moore (Alternate)

Eglin Ayson

Brad Jankowski

Tom Miller

David O'Dowd (Advisor)

Justin Besteman

Vic Godlewski

Wendy Moore

BIOGRAPHY

RICK'S BACKGROUND

Rick grew up in the DC area of Virginia in a non-Christian home. He came to know the love of Christ through the ministry of Cru at James Madison University (JMU) where he earned a BA in Religion and a minor in Music in 2000. He also met his wife, Jessie, at JMU, and they got married after graduating in May of 2000. They came to Orlando in 2002 where Rick earned a Masters of Divinity from Reformed Theological Seminary in 2004.



THE GILMARTIN FAMILY

In addition to Rick's passion and skills for preaching and leadership, he is a skilled vocalist and pianist and plays a variety of other instruments (guitar, drums, trombone, trumpet). He also has a love for hospitality, cooking, and a beautiful lawn.

Jessie loves her role as a pastor's wife and mom of four wonderful children. She graduated from James Madison University in 2000 with a major in Psychology and a minor in Early Childhood Education. She stayed home with her children for 14 years and has recently returned to teaching second grade. Jessie enjoys having coffee with friends, walking/running, scrapbooking, reading, and going to amusement parks!

The Gilmartins have four teenage children: Madison (age 17), Becca (age 16), Andrew (age 15), and Luke (age 13).

MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

MINISTRY ROLES

After finishing seminary, Rick and Jessie felt called back to the Shenandoah Valley region of Virginia where he served in the following ministry roles:

- **Director of Worship and Discipleship** at Tabernacle Presbyterian Church in Waynesboro, VA from 2005-2007
- **Associate Pastor** at Tabernacle Presbyterian Church in Waynesboro, VA from 2007-2009
- **Church Planter and Senior Pastor** of Holy Cross Presbyterian Church in Staunton, VA from 2009-present

Rick worked with a core group of 35 adults to plant Holy Cross Presbyterian Church, which is now home to 250 men, women, and children. Rick and his team have labored to form a thriving, gospel-centered community through the development of a strong small group ministry, which has seen regular involvement climb as high as 93% of adult members and regular attenders. He has also developed and trained elders, ministry leaders, and staff to direct their worship and church ministries.

MINISTRY PHILOSOPHY

Rick's philosophy of ministry is that, by God's grace, he will give his life to help people...

- **Encounter Jesus:** to help both believers and non-believers see Jesus through the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18-19). This is worked out through prayerful exegesis of the surrounding culture, finding those particular emphases of the Gospel that will be most radioactive (1 Cor 9:19-22).
- **Know Jesus:** to help others know Christ in both the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings (Phil 3:8-11).
- **Show Jesus:** to help others live out their Christian faith in the world and bring the Kingdom of God to bear on every aspect of their lives. This is true both individually and corporately.

RESOURCES

Rick's current church is Holy Cross Presbyterian Church. You can visit their website at holycrosspca.org.

SERMON LINKS

During the pandemic, Holy Cross streamed their services, as did many churches. Here are two of Rick's sermons that were captured on video for your reference.

"The Song of Christ" from Colossians 1:15-20

"On The Move" from Acts 17:22-34

After the pandemic, the church only has audio recordings of Rick's sermons. An archive of sermons can be found on their website <https://holycrosspca.org/sermons> or on [Apple Podcasts](#).

"Returning and Robbing" from Malachi 3:6-12

- Four members of our team visited Holy Cross on August 21st and heard this sermon in person, which is representative of his preaching and style.

"Faithlessness" from Malachi 2:10-16

- If you'd like to listen to another one, our recommendation is this sermon from August 14th. Though it is longer than he typically preaches, the congregation raved about it when we were visiting the following week.

UPC PSC WEBPAGE

More information about the UPC Pastor Profile can be found on Pastor Search Committee [webpage](#):



REFERENCES

Reference excerpts from Jason McCall, who serves as an elder at Holy Cross and is a close friend:

"Rick is a gifted expository preacher and deeply cares for the preaching and teaching of the word of God. He connects with not only the "churched" but the "unchurched." He has a unique way of explaining the Gospel to a wide audience ... He is winsome in his manner of speaking and is dedicated to the authority of Scripture in all things."

"He is a team builder by God given nature. He can assess the individuals on a team by innate ability and use that knowledge to grow and motivate them. He thrives on team building and I have seen his positive impact on others over the years. Our session, in particular, is one of the strongest teams I have been a part of. This is largely due to the work that Rick did over many years with us both individually and corporately."

Excerpt from Bill Porter, fellow elder in the Shenandoah Presbytery:

"Rick has a valuable combination of strong faith, learning, experience, leadership skills, and humility that make him attractive for people to follow. It's not always so much a matter of what he knows as it is who he is, how he reasons, and his life witness."

Excerpts from Rachel Blackston, who is a Mental Health Counselor with Redeemer Counseling and has known Rick for more than 20 years:

"Rick is a very dynamic preacher and teacher. I appreciate not only Rick's ability to exposit the scriptures, but also his emotional IQ and curiosity about people. He has an extremely deep heart for God and others."

"Rick walks with integrity. I have a great trust in him as both a friend and a shepherd. It is not uncommon to see him connect to tears over another person's pain, and also offer wise biblical counsel."

THE PROCESS - THE SEARCH

In January of this year, your Pastor Search Committee began the task of seeking and finding our next Senior Pastor. Since then, we have met at least once a week, strived to collaborate well together, and developed and executed a 5-phase process. We spent the first few weeks praying, getting to know each other, and discussing where we have been as a church and what characteristics would be most desirable in our next Senior Pastor. We sought and received additional input from a Congregational Survey as well as meetings with the church leadership and staff to develop a UPC Church Profile and a Pastor Profile.

In April, we completed and published these profiles and officially began receiving applications. We then established “deep dive teams” to review materials provided by the 25+ candidates who applied. Those materials included resumes, ministerial data forms, sermons, and written works. We also conducted and evaluated several candidate interviews, asked candidates to complete a written Questionnaire, and collected written and spoken Reference Reports.

We conducted three interviews with Rick by video conference between May 17th and July 19th. On August 13th, we also had an extended conversation with Rick and his wife, Jessie. These interviews were very profitable; the PSC was able to explore Rick’s strengths as well as areas where God is still building him up. We continued to move forward with Rick as a top candidate and sent a subcommittee of four to conduct an “Incognito Visit” to Virginia from August 27-28. That subcommittee spent a significant amount of time with Rick and Jessie, visited his church, and heard him preach in-person. The PSC then invited Rick and Jessie to visit Orlando September 15-17 so that they could meet with the entire committee, the Staff, and the Session, as well as tour the UPC campus and surrounding area.

After this visit, the PSC was blessed by a special time of prayer with the congregation on Sunday, September 18th. The next day, the PSC fasted and met together to read aloud the many special prayers that were shared with us by the congregation. After breaking our fast together and conducting a final dialectic discussion, the Pastor Search Committee officially voted to nominate Rick Gilmartin to be our next Senior Pastor.

THE PROCESS - NEXT STEPS

We now look forward to introducing Rick to you! You will have opportunities to see and hear from Rick in-person during his **Candidate Visit Weekend, which will take place from Wednesday, October 12th through Sunday, October 16th**. There are topical conversations planned with Rick earlier in the weekend, as well as a main event planned for Saturday evening. Our hope is that you are able to attend one or more of the events, including Saturday evening, to get more acquainted with and informed about Rick before the Congregational Meeting and vote on Sunday, October 16th.

Youth Ministry Meeting - Wednesday, October 12th, at 6pm

- *A conversation with Rick about youth ministry* - All youth and parents are invited - 6-7pm in the Commons, parents will be dismissed at 7pm and Youth Group will continue

Officers' Meeting - Thursday, October 13th, at 6pm

- Elders and Deacons only

Ministries Meeting - Saturday, October 15th, at 9am

- *A focused conversation with Rick about the vision and development of ministry teams and leaders* - All are welcome - 9am in the Commons

Main Event: UPC Meets Rick Gilmartin - Saturday, October 15th, at 5pm

- *All are invited for a special time of fellowship and food, followed by a conversation and Q&A with Rick and his wife, Jessie* - Potluck Dinner 5-6pm in the Commons, Program 6:15-8pm in the Worship Center - Childcare will be provided

Worship Service - Sunday, October 16th, at 10am

- *Rick will preach a sermon at UPC* - 10am in the Worship Center

The Session has called for a **Congregational Meeting immediately following the worship service on Sunday, October 16th**. The purpose of this meeting will be to vote on calling Reverend Rick Gilmartin as the next Senior Pastor of University Presbyterian Church. All communing members in good standing present at this meeting may vote by printed ballot. We encourage full participation. Childcare will be provided, and parents are encouraged to pack a lunch for their children.

If the congregation votes to extend a call to Rick, the next step will be to seek Presbytery approval, which could occur as early as their next standing meeting on Tuesday, November 15th. We hope that Rick will be able to start his new position before Christmas.

LETTER FROM RICK

Dear University Presbyterian Church,

Jessie, our four kids, and I cannot express how humbled and excited we are to join the UPC family. During this process, we have only met a few of you and yet we have been so encouraged by the way the Gospel is believed and lived among you. It is a great honor to be a part of what God is doing in you and through you in East Orlando.

This has been a long process for you all. I have been impressed with the patience, prayerfulness, and care that you have gone through to seek the Lord's face and His will in finding your next pastor. We have been praying for you all, through our part in this, as you wait and trust that the Lord is moving. During this time, God has truly given us a great affection for you.

I will be completely honest; I am incredibly excited to be with you and to partner with you in the Gospel. I can't wait to work alongside you all in seeing East Orlando impacted with the Gospel of Jesus, to see people who have given up on church, or have never been in one, encounter Jesus, and to share with you in a community in which we can be fully known and fully loved by one another.

We will be with you soon! In the meantime, we will continue to pray for you and ask that you pray for us as well. Transitions are always challenging and I, for one, continue to need the grace of Jesus to give me patience in the waiting. God has great things prepared for us all in the days and years ahead!

Your Servant,
Rick

