

## GETTING TO KNOW...

February 2018 Edition

### **DAN ROBERTSON began serving Fairbury First Presbyterian Church in June 2017**

Dan Robertson was born and raised in Blue Springs, Missouri. He was baptized as an infant at First Presbyterian Church of Independence. As the younger of the two children Dan often looked up to his older brother and wanted to fit in with the older kids. A competitive *I can do it* attitude was instilled early in him and carries through today. His free time as a youth was largely spent outside playing the sport of the season, and basketball year-round (even outside in the snow).

The High School years were spent at Blue Springs High School where Dan focused on debate and forensics while working part-time. Debate was a great teacher of oral delivery, logical thoughts and arguments, and developing an internal clock while speaking or presenting. Forensics, which can also be described as competitive interpretation (usually humorous or dramatic), worked the right side of the brain while debate involved the left. A striving for balance has been and continues to be a goal.

Dan went to college at William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri where he majored in Political Science. The lawyer track he was on changed course between his sophomore and junior year in college as God's call to seminary intervened. While staying under the umbrella of Political Science, the last two years involved elective courses in religion, art, and music. Much of his free time in college was taken up by his involvement in the Greek Fraternity Lambda Chi Alpha. The need for community was heavily developed at this time and is apparent in the communal, relational focus in his theology.

Not heeding the advice of many others suggesting he take a year off from studies between college and seminary, Dan thought *I can do it* and went straight ahead to San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS) two months after graduating from William Jewell. Dan and Sara were married during the summer after his first year after having dated in college. At SFTS he studied under their four-year Master of Divinity program with a focus on parish ministry. The theological classes made him feel right at home, while classes of Hebrew and Greek had a different effect. During seminary Dan spent two years interning at First Presbyterian Church of San Anselmo gaining valuable experience with youth ministry and older adult ministry.

Following graduation and completion of his Master of Divinity Dan completed a half unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Heartland Regional Medical Center in St. Joseph, Missouri. During his time at CPE he accepted a call to Metairie Ridge Presbyterian Church in Metairie, Louisiana. His first call was a time of learning and an opportunity

to make many new friends while developing his own sense of self as a pastor. Sara gave birth to their first child, Sophia, in the summer of 2016. As a new parent Dan is excited for community focused ministry in a different setting and will strive to live out his new motto - *with God's Grace we can do it.*

**DEB SWETS began serving Plainfield Wheatland Presbyterian Church in December 2017 and was ordained on January 14, 2018**

Deb is a native of southeastern Wisconsin and grew up in the Christian Reformed Church. During her time as a Music Education major at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, IL, she began to feel the call to ministry. Deb graduated Trinity with a double major in Music and Theology with the intention of pursuing a career in church music. However, after giving a brief meditation during a chapel service at Trinity, she was encouraged by several professors to attend seminary.

Her post-graduation years began as a personal assistant to the CEO of marine science camp on Catalina Island. It was during this time she began to seriously consider seminary. The Southern California weather kept her on the west coast, and she enrolled at Fuller Theological Seminary in September 2011 where she was introduced to the Presbyterian Church USA. She began attending Knox Presbyterian Church in Pasadena, becoming a Youth and Worship intern, exploring pastoral ministry.

After graduating from Fuller, Deb moved back to Wisconsin in August 2014 to complete her Clinical Pastoral Education unit at Rockford Memorial Hospital. She became a member of Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church in Janesville, and was elected a Ruling Elder in 2016. She has preached and done pastoral care work in the pastor's absence.

Deb's family includes two older brothers and a nephew. She enjoys reading, beekeeping, cooking, knitting, and singing. Her passions include the Old Testament, ecology, cats, musical theater, and potatoes. Her favorite Bible story can be found in 1 Kings 18-19.