

Donald J. Grauer

Faith-Sharing Moment—February 25, 2017, the Presbytery of Santa Fe

I have served as an “ambassador for Christ” as a youth minister, pastor, head of staff, geriatric and hospice chaplain, teacher, camp counselor, instructor, intern supervisor, ecumenical representative....and in many other “roles” and ministry capacities since my 1969-70 McCormick Seminary parish internship in Huron, OH, and then my ordination to the Teaching Eldership ministry of Word and Sacrament in 1971 by the Presbytery of Chicago, UPCUSA/PC(U.S.A.). I entered ordained ministry in a time of raging warfare in Southeast Asia. I concluded my 45 year professional ministry with retirement on 1/1/2016 with warfare raging in Southwest Asia and elsewhere on planet Earth. Always the hurts, violence, suffering, and brokenness of the human family yearn for the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, proclaimed not only in words, but manifested and experienced in *deeds* of justice, advocacy, compassion, and service. One “touchstone” of my life and ministries has been Micah 6:8 “*What does the Lord require of you, but to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God?*” I have been privileged to date to have worked, served, covenanted with thousands of faithful ones in diverse communities, states, countries to work collaboratively for *shalom/salaam* and the sovereignty of God. Jesus Christ IS Lord, Emmanuel (“God with us”—and *for* us), Incarnate Love, “the Way, Truth, and Life.” Christ IS my Lord and Savior.

I grew up and came to faith in the Irvingwood-Acacia Presbyterian Church in Chicago, IL, felt God’s call at a youthful age, left a career in public high school history teaching to enroll at McCormick Theological Seminary, met my wife and life partner of 48 years- to- date Brenda Grauer—herself now a retired UCC minister—and set forth to areas and experiences known but to the Providence of God. I served as a parish intern in Huron, OH (Presbytery of Maumee) then post-ordination as four year Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, St. Clairsville, OH (Upper Ohio Valley Presbytery); eight year Pastor of Bethel Presbyterian Church, Jarrettsville, MD (Presbytery of Baltimore); subsequent 20 year Pastor-then-CoPastor of Valley Presbyterian Church, Chagrin Falls, OH (Presbytery of the Western Reserve); then 12 years as Chaplain and Spiritual Care Director at 800-resident Breckenridge Village Retirement Community (Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services) of Willoughby, OH. The Presbytery of the Western Reserve conferred Honorably Retired status upon me effective 1/1/2016.

God’s call continues (to cite our siblings in Christ of the United Church of Christ, “God Is Still Speaking”). Just after my retirement and new residence in Shaker Hts., OH, I received an invitation to sojourn at Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, NM, for a year as full time “Volunteer Faith Community Liaison” and *de facto* Ranch Chaplain to guests and staff. Brenda and I felt it was truly God’s call, and we drove out from Ohio at the beginning of September, 2016, to Sept., 2017. Brenda also volunteers as a liaison with faith development and social justice groups who come to Ghost Ranch. I requested transfer of my membership from Presbytery of the Western Reserve to Santa Fe Presbytery during the year of my Ghost Ranch service, and Santa Fe Presbytery was most kind to have received me. I am here among you, colleagues and sisters and brothers in Christ, to serve to network churches, clergy, ecumenical groups, youth and family events, educational classes and retreat conferences with the awe-inspiring and profoundly spiritually-formative resources of Ghost Ranch. Ghost Ranch’s 21,000 acres were gifted to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 1955 by Arthur and Phoebe Pack, and the Ranch has been developed and maintained as an educational and retreat and conference center for the denomination and wider world. I am blessed to be here at Ghost Ranch and among you as a member of Santa Fe Presbytery.