

My Faith Journey-Rev. Jayne L. Ruiz

I grew up in a small town on the Ohio River. There were many influences on my life such as growing up in an inter-racial neighborhood, having friends of different racial and economic backgrounds having a close-knit family and growing up in a river town.

While I attended my small Presbyterian church, most of my friends went to other churches or were unchurched. In fourth grade, I had a sledding accident where I ran into a house rupturing my spleen. Some thought that I might not survive this accident, but somehow, I did not even consider that I might die.

I remember a few months afterwards, walking up that same hill realizing a miracle had happened saying to God that I would answer God's call for my life.

I attended Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida and was excited about my new-found freedom in being far away from home in a new environment. It was at College that I had a deep spiritual renewal of my life rededicating my life to God.

I was called to Seminary at Princeton Seminary. It was tough academically and the culture there was so different for me, much more traditional and rigorous especially after Eckerd where people tended to be more zany and unconventional.

Princeton was challenging in many ways. It was a learning and at times a lonely and painful growing experience. I serve in ministries such as a Chaplain at Trenton State Prison, Common Cause, a rural Church in Missouri and as a Chaplain at a Methodist University Ministry.

It was through ministry in Chaplaincy that I felt a passion for a holistic ministry and to live out a ministry that integrates discipleship, evangelism, compassion, service, and social justice.

Thus, after Seminary I pursued my Master of Social Work at Rutgers.

There I flourished and loved the diversity of people with whom I worked as a colleague and a friend. My area was Community Organizing and Planning.

I decided to live, work and study in Mexico City, Mexico. This was also tough, but I learned so much about living in a country in need, about culture, and about third world poverty and about working to become bi-lingual and bi-literate.

I have been called to a variety of ministries from the Pastor and Director of Beth-El Ministries in Florida with farmworkers, as a Social Worker and Chaplain with Hospice, as the Coordinator for Hispanic and Immigrant Ministries in Ohio, as an Interim Pastor in New Orleans, as the Designated Pastor for an English speaking as well a bi-lingual church in El Paso and in Topeka, Kansas.

My goal in ministry has been to proclaim the gospel helping people, churches and institutions to transform their lives and to transform the greater world.

I am blessed with a supportive and caring husband, Alfredo and a wonderful 29-year-old son, Cristian who works for Teach for America.

I have had the opportunity to serve a diverse group of people in a variety of ministries.

My Call to Belen - I saw an ad at the General Assembly for a Pastor to a small church close to Albuquerque desiring a pastor who could speak Spanish, and work in a small church with skills working with and connecting with the greater community.

I decided to pursue this and here I am today at my new call as the Designated Pastor at First Presbyterian Church-Belen.

Statement of Faith: Rev. Jayne L. Ruiz

I believe in God Almighty, Creator, and Sustainer who continues to give meaning to my life and to my very existence and who is a refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble.

Humanity turned away from God. Therefore, God, desiring to reconcile all people sent Jesus into the world that the world might be saved.

Jesus Christ is the Savior and the liberator of the world representing God's unfailing love and grace. Christ brings reconciliation and redemption to this broken, sinful world.

Through Christ's death and resurrection, we have been recreated into new persons, holy, and acceptable to God through grace. Jesus reached out to all types of people: the poor, rich, the lonely, the ill, the notorious sinners, the disenfranchised, the oppressed, the respectable of society, etc. All who repent and commit their lives to Christ and follow are given new life and hope.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is God's constant presence in our lives continuing to be at work in the world. The Spirit guides, comforts, convicts, renews, and challenges us to live out the will of God on earth and in our communities

The Spirit empowers us to live out the Christian life and to respond to God's call. As I review my own life, I believe that the Holy Spirit has often been at work in my own life in ways that I did not always perceive or understand at that time. God has continued to unfold His design for my life; step by step.

The scriptures contained in the Old and New Testaments are God's written inspired Word. The Bible stands as the unique witness to salvation history.

The Church needs to understand and to interpret scripture in a spirit of love in its original context and in the context of today's world as a book of hope and liberation for God's people.

The Church, the body of Christ, is the community of those who gather together for worship, repentance, prayer, education, celebration, renewal and transformation to proclaim the gospel of Christ through witness and service.

Baptism is an act of the church, being a sign of entrance into the church. It sets forth the grace of God through Jesus Christ and affirms that the believers and their children are heirs of the covenant of grace.

Christ's presence is with us in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, uniting us as a body in love and grace, bringing us into new communion.

As disciples, we are instruments of God's love, mercy and justice in this world, called to bring healing and reconciliation to a world separated through sin.

We sow love, where there is hate, peace where there is war, hope in the place of despair, equality and empowerment in the place of discrimination and oppression and inclusivity in place of exclusivity.

It is urgent that the Church interpret and reinterpret how to proclaim and live out the Gospel in the ever-changing, growing, diverse world in which we live with our new and old neighbors.

