

BARBARA HAGER BIO SKETCH

I was raised in Western New York and was very active in the Presbyterian Church throughout my childhood and youth. After attending Allegheny College in Meadville, PA, I felt a call to ministry and went to Princeton Theological Seminary, graduating in spring 1982. I was ordained in November 1982 to a solo pastorate position in small church in rural Kasota, MN. After serving there for three years I moved back east to be an Interim Pastor at a UCC church in Bethlehem PA.

Around this time I became interested in the law as it related to the PCUSA and church legal issues. While working during the day as a paralegal, I attended law school at night at University of Connecticut, graduating and passing the bar in 1996. I discovered it was very difficult to make a living as a church lawyer, as most churches seemed to want only *pro bono* or low-cost legal services. I wound up going into the legal specialty of working with homeowners' associations. I did a lot of training and governance guidance for Boards of Directors. My work as a lawyer built up my skills for use later in leading sessions and doing church administration.

During the time I was a fulltime lawyer I stayed involved with the local presbytery (Southern New England) by participating frequently in the Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) where I could combine my love for serving the church with my legal skills. I also did lots of pulpit supply at various churches throughout Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. Around 2007 I became involved in a local PCUSA church, at Milford on the shore of CT. I first served as the minister's parish associate. Later I guided them through the process of finding an installed pastor. I taught adult classes there, and did a lot of worship leadership and preaching, which I quite enjoy.

Around spring 2018 I lost my law firm position and started seriously praying about whether I was called to return to full time church work. After a time of discernment, I felt the call to return to church parish work as a minister. Since I had previously been an interim and liked it a lot, I looked at interims and am still interested mainly in interim positions. I feel much better guiding a church through a transitional time than being a "regular" pastor. I was then called to be interim pastor at Roxboro Presbyterian Church in Roxboro, NC. I worked with the church to lead them to and through finding their current installed pastor. That position lasted from December 2020 (having moved there in the middle of the pandemic!) and ended in June 2022.

I have family in Wilmington so decided to move to Wilmington NC and I arrived here late June 2022. I am interested in taking some time off before taking up pulpit supply work. I feel a strong need to have more personal time and take a sabbath.

I am excited to be able to attend the St. Andrews Covenant Presbyterian church in Wilmington where my sister Ginny attends. They are also going through a transitional time. I find it spiritually renewing to be the person in the pew listening to the sermon and participating in worship and not being the leader. However, my friends and family who know me well think I may get bored with the laid-back beach life (I live very near Carolina Beach) and want a new interim position after a few months. I am praying and listening for God's spirit as to where and how to use my skills going forward.