

"We love because God loved us first. But if we say we love God and don't love each other, we are liars. We cannot see God. So how can we love God, if we don't love the people we can see? The commandment that God has given us is: "Love God and love each other!""

1 John 4:19-21 (CEV)

It is with great joy that I anticipate participating with you in your ministry in Benton Harbor and around the world!

I have thoroughly enjoyed developing budding relationships with members of the Pastor Nominating Committee and I look forward to getting to know all of you and joining you in your outreach and ministry.

The world in this unique period in history offers great challenges to being the church and living out the call of Christ in the world, but also presents us with great adventures and opportunities to love God and neighbor. I look forward to discerning how we can join together to deepen our roots in the truth of God's love while spreading our branches to provide mercy and reconciliation to our neighbors. I pray that our time together on the weekend of June 12th will provide us with firm and fertile soil for building a journey of serving in the reign of God.

"The beginning of love is to let those we love be perfectly themselves, and not to twist them to fit our own image. Otherwise, we love only the reflection of ourselves we find in them."

-Thomas Merton, No Man is an Island

I am a near-native of Colorado, raised in non-denominational and Baptist churches, and joined the PC(USA) in 2011. As a graduate of the University of Northern Colorado (2011) and Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (2020), I have enjoyed blending my passion for the English language with my desire for people to know that God loves them. Prior to full-time ministry I have had careers in ranching, construction, retail, and as a clerk with the post office. In my free time I enjoy blogging about life (www.shethlarue.com), spending time in nature hiking and exploring, and testing new recipes in the kitchen.

Joining me in Benton Harbor will be my spouse of two years, Chelsea May, a Texas native. The two of us met in seminary as we sought ordination in the PC(USA). As she has discerned God's call on her life and work as a chaplain she has found a spiritual home with the

Religious Society of Friends – what we know as Quakers – and will be worshipping with the South Bend Friends Meeting. She enjoys crafting and a good cup of tea (usually at the same time) and is looking forward to warm walks on the beaches of Lake Michigan and, as the snow flies, cozy nights on the couch cuddled up with our cat, Scooter.

It is my life's mission and vision to proclaim the Good News through work and word for all to know and thrive with their Creator, and I cannot wait to see how God uses our ministry together in the years ahead.

be well. love well.



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