

The Rev. Jim Melnyk

Some aspects of Jim's ministry among us will look different (it is reported that some of his clergy shirts are not black and his music tastes run along the lines of classic rock) and some will look comfortingly similar: infant immersion ("I can't wait"), footwashing ("absolutely") and a batting average that should serve Tongues O'Fire well. Jim has offered the following additional information about himself, his family and his vocational life and journey:

Jim was born and raised in Westchester County, New York, and moved to Columbia, South Carolina in the early 1970's to pursue a degree in Broadcast Journalism at The University of South Carolina. Graduating with a B.A. in Journalism in 1977, Jim worked for a while in radio before moving into business. A life-long Episcopalian, Jim entered The School of Theology at The University of the South in Sewanee, TN in 1986 and graduated with a Masters of Divinity Degree in 1989 and was ordained as a Transitional Deacon in June, 1989 and as Priest in May, 1990.

Jim is married to an Episcopal Priest, the Rev. Lorraine Ljunggren, with whom he has teamed at St. Mark's Episcopal Church since March 2000. Jim and Lorraine have a son, Jake, who is currently a graduate student at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, where he is active in UNCW's Episcopal Campus Ministry. Jake has also been the lead musician for several diocesan youth events, including the Middler Conference this past October as well as part of the music team for the National Youth event held in Colorado last December.

Jim began his ordained ministry as Assistant to the Rector at Christ Church, Greenville, SC where his duties included: Beginning the Singles and Young Adult ministries; Ministry with Aging Task Force; Co-chair for AIDS Task Force; Christian Education. During that same time period Jim took on the responsibilities as Priest-in-Charge of St. Andrew's Church, Greenville, SC. St. Andrew's was a small, downtown mission that was in the process of rebuilding. During his time at St. Andrew's attendance doubled and the budget was tripled. Shortly after he left, St. Andrew's was able to move to parish status.

In 1991 Jim moved to Asheville, NC first as Associate Rector of All Souls (parish church) and later as Canon Residentiary when All Souls became The Cathedral of All Souls. Jim served on the committee exploring the possibility of All Souls becoming the Cathedral for the diocese as well as on the committee that designed the Cathedral Covenant between All Souls and the Diocese. In December 1996 Jim became the Interim Dean of the Cathedral after their Rector and First Dean retired following forty years of service to All Souls. During Jim's tenure as Interim Dean the Cathedral was able to add a part time lay minister for children and youth.

In 1999 Jim and Lorraine moved to the Triangle where Lorraine became Rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Raleigh, and Jim became the Interim Rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Durham. A year later Jim was called by the Vestry of St. Mark's to become part of a clergy team with Lorraine. While Jim and Lorraine have worked together on all aspects of ministry at St. Mark's, Jim has had a focus in Children's and Youth programming, Christian Social Ministries, Pastoral Care and Stewardship. Jim has been active in Raleigh's interfaith community and has been the St. Mark's clergy partner for the Companions in Mission committee with St. Ambrose Episcopal Church in Raleigh. Lorraine will continue to serve as Rector of St. Mark's, Raleigh.

During his twenty-year ministry Jim has served as an interim on three occasions, helping congregations move through their times of transition. Jim believes that such transition times can help parishes better understand who they are as the Body of Christ gathered in community, discover untapped gifts and new opportunities for leadership and ministry, as well as strengthen ongoing leadership and ministries in the parish.