

# CANDIDATE SEEKING A CALL (CSC)

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 Mailing Address 604 Kirk Road, Apt. 2, Decatur, GA 30030  
 Presbytery Central Florida Candidacy Date 06/09  
 Home Congregation First Presbyterian Church, DeLand, FL

## 1. TYPES OF POSITIONS

<u>  </u> Associate Pastor (Christian Education)	<u>  </u> Pastor (Tent Maker/Part-time)	<u>  </u> Other
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Associate Pastor (Youth)	<u>  </u> Pastor (Yoked/Multiple)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Associate Pastor (Other)	<u>  </u> Co-Pastor	
<u>  </u> Pastor (Solo)	<u>  </u> Designated Pastor	
<u>  </u> Pastor (Head of Staff)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mission Pastor	
<u>  </u> Pastor (New Church Development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Campus Minister	
<u>  </u> Pastor (Redevelopment)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chaplain	

## 2. TYPES OF COMMUNITIES & CHURCH SIZES

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Under 100 members
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Village	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inner City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 101-250- members
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Town	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 251-400 members
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 401-650 members
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban	<u>  </u> Retirement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 651-1000 members
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1001-1500 members
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1501 +

## 3. RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE (List most recent first)

Church/Agency	City/State	Position	Dates	Part/Full Time
<u>First United Methodist Church</u>	<u>Lanett, AL</u>	<u>Youth Director</u>	<u>08/09 - Present</u>	<u>Part Time</u>
<u>First Presbyterian Church</u>	<u>DeLand, FL</u>	<u>Youth Director</u>	<u>07/04 – 06/07</u>	<u>Full Time</u>
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## 4. LIST THE 10 PRIMARY SKILL CHOICES FROM THE PERSONAL INFORMATION FORM:

<u>Communication (Written / Oral)</u>	<u>Organization / Administration</u>
<u>Defining Program Needs</u>	<u>Spiritual Development</u>
<u>Family Ministry</u>	<u>Teaching</u>
<u>Involvement in Mission Beyond the Local Church</u>	<u>Training Volunteers</u>
<u>Leadership of Staff / Volunteers</u>	<u>Youth Ministry</u>

**5. FORMAL EDUCATION** (List most recent first)

<b>Institution</b>	<b>City/State</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Degree</b>
Columbia Theological Sem.	Decatur, GA	Theology	06/08 - Present	MDiv
The ITC	Atlanta, GA	Black Liberation Theology	08/07 – 05/08	MDiv
Univ. of West Florida Daytona Beach Community College	Pensacola, FL	Social Science	01/98 – 07/99	BA
	Daytona Beach, FL	Cultural Studies	08/94 – 12/97	AA

**6. SEMINARY HONORS/SCHOLARSHIPS/LEADERSHIP POSITIONS:**

- Presbyterian Study Grant – \$4,000/ academic year (2007)

**7. GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITATIONS:**

I am open to consider where the Lord is leading me regardless of geography. My roots are in the Southeast, so I would prefer to remain close. However, I consider my call to professional ministry open to the Lord's direction.

## 8. BRIEFLY INTRODUCE YOURSELF:

I was born into a middle class suburban white family in Long Island, New York. My parents were divorced when I was two years old. When my mother was granted custody of my siblings and I, this framed what would be my upbringing – a single mother family with three sisters. My father had visitation with us, which in our case – after we moved to Florida when I was four – meant summer and winter vacations in New York. So there was a lot of travel involved in my early years. This provided a lot of closeness for my sisters, my mother, and I (and I'm sure plenty of bickering).

Another key element of my upbringing was my mother's desire to bring us up in the church. I grew up going to Church at First Presbyterian church of DeLand, FL. Here I was a member of the youth Choir, middle and high school youth groups, was confirmed, and went on many mission. I also became a follower of Christ at a Young Life camp, during a period of time when First Pres., DeLand was in partnership with Young Life. Finally, before coming to seminary, I spent three years as the Youth Director at the same church. I consider it to be my home church.

Early in my faith development I took piety very seriously and filtered all my decisions through prayer and meditation on my readings of Scripture. As I entered into college and received a music scholarship, for example, my system of faith led me to discern this development as if God was leading me to pursue music as my course of study. I spent my first year at Daytona Beach Community College and was soon ready to get out of my house and my hometown. I applied, and was soon accepted – with a music scholarship – to Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

When I moved there and started my classes, however, I soon found that the school was a 'suitcase college.' Almost all the students went home on the weekends. And, as I spent most of my time in the practice rooms during the week learning music, it didn't take me long to become homesick. My feelings of nostalgia served to increase my prayer and devotional life. I spent most of my alone time studying the Bible, praying, and fasting.

Toward the end of my first semester, I heard that my grandfather had been diagnosed with Leukemia. I took this as confirmation that I needed to move home. And I made plans to do so. I re-enrolled at DBCC and finished my Associate of Arts within a year. Meanwhile, I helped around the house and was present to share in the declining health of my main male role model. It was a deeply difficult, yet spiritual time for me.

After my grandfather passed, one of my friends – who was in a similar place in life – suggested taking a semester off of school to work at the YMCA of the Rockies. She had worked there previously, and thought it would be a good place to figure out what we were going to do with our studies. Plans came together easily and soon two of my friends and I were driving across country in my 1972 VW Bug. It turned out to be a pivotal time for me.

As I worked and spent time with my friends I spent a lot of time in prayer, seeking discernment. I prayed through the death of my grandfather, the birth of my first niece, and the future of my life. Sitting on the continental divide and praying was a symbolic thing for me and I appreciated the experience.

One morning in December, I woke up and felt a peace about going into youth ministry. It was something otherwise indescribable, but I knew that youth ministry was what I was meant to do. I immediately made plans to move back to Florida and pursue a degree that would lead me to youth ministry.

Serendipitously, I discovered that the University of West Florida – which I had previously never hear of – offered a BA in Interdisciplinary Social Science with at Pastoral emphasis. Excited about this prospect I applied only to this school and was soon accepted. I got my possessions together and moved to Pensacola – sight unseen. It took me a year and a half to complete my degree and I was excited to find out what 'youth ministry' meant. Did it mean youth ministry in a church? Did it mean teaching, or social work?

Unfortunately, however, there were some difficult issues I was faced with as I drew near to graduation. First my younger sister made a declaration that she was a lesbian. Soon after that I found out that my long time spiritual mentor and role model had been cheating on his wife and was leaving his family. I also found myself struggling with personal demons. This was a dark time in my development in a number of ways.

It took me years to unpack all these things. But I now find myself in seminary studying to pursue ministry once again. I tried teaching, social work, and finally youth ministry in a church. But in all these employment experiences, I found myself searching seminaries on the internet.

The brightest spot during my dark experiences was definitely meeting my wife. I was in a depressed state – having to move back in with my mom after school and not feeling as if I was moving anywhere in my life, when I met Chrissy at coffee house in my hometown (DeLand). She was a student at Stetson and we immediately hit it off. I was openly honest about where I found myself, but she continued to find redeeming qualities in me (to my surprise). She is nothing less than an angel to me. She is my proof that God is gracious and intends to fight darkness and sin with love. Now as we both are completing our seminary education (she at Candler School of Theology at Emory and I at Columbia), we are looking forward with hope and faith to see how the Lord will open up the next chapter of our lives together.

