

# Meet Reverend Ruth Estell

Our Candidate for Solo Pastor  
*Second Presbyterian Church - Saginaw, MI*

Volume 65 No. 13





# Education

## Formal Education

*Bachelor of Arts, Christian Education and Ministry*  
Minors in Music and Bible  
Wheaton College. Wheaton, IL (2001)

*Master of Arts, Intercultural Studies and TESL*  
Wheaton College Graduate School. Wheaton, IL (2002)

*Master of Divinity*  
Western Theological Seminary. Holland, MI (2018)

## Missionary Work

*Taiwan Fellowship Deaconry Mission*  
Hualien, Taiwan (2012 – 2015)

*Reformed Church in America*  
Yanji and Xian, China (2007-2012)

*Independently*  
Qinhuangdao, China (2002-2007)

## Experience in Ministry

*Chaplain*  
Covenant HealthCare  
Saginaw, MI (2018 – present)

*Seminary Intern*  
Calvary Reformed Church  
Holland, MI (2016 – 2017)

*Chaplain Internships*  
Holland Hospital  
Holland, MI (2017 – 2018)

*Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services*  
Grand Rapids, MI (2017)

*Porter Hills Retirement Community*  
Grand Rapids, MI (2016)

*Resthaven Care Center*  
Holland, MI (2015 – 2016)



The PNC invites Second Presbyterian Church members to meet and greet Ruth

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 2023**  
**3:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.**  
**Fellowship Hall**



# Background

Ruth Estell is no stranger to Second Presbyterian Church. She has been attending this church since she moved to Saginaw in the fall of 2018. Prior to moving to Saginaw, she had earned her M.Div. and had been ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacrament with the Reformed Church in America. She came to Saginaw for a year-long Clinical Pastoral Education residency program at Covenant HealthCare, after which she was hired on as a full-time staff chaplain. She has loved serving as a chaplain and continues to have the heart of a chaplain. But she is also excited as she follows God's leading to explore this call to serve as pastor of Second Presbyterian.

Ruth was born and raised in Taiwan to missionary parents. She is grateful for the example they provided in lives committed to loving and serving God. Ruth accepted Christ as her Lord and Savior at a young age. As a high school student, she had the opportunity to lead a friend to Christ. She was humbled and amazed to realize that God had used her to make a difference in her friend's life. This experience resulted in her committing her life to serving God.

Ruth returned to the USA to attend Wheaton College. After earning both her B.A. and M.A., she followed God's leading to serve in China. She went there to teach English because China does not welcome missionaries. Teaching college students provided opportunities for friendship, evangelism, and discipleship. After about 10 years in China, she returned to her hometown in Taiwan. She had opportunities to provide spiritual leadership at a home for physically and mentally disabled children and adults, to teach English at a seminary, and to lead an English Bible study at the local prison. When this unexpectedly came to an end, Ruth returned to the USA, wondering what would come next. She felt that God was leading her to attend seminary in preparation for work as a chaplain. She did not expect to one day pastor a church, but she continues to follow God's leading in her life. She is excited about this opportunity to serve God at Second Presbyterian Church.

Ruth enjoys spending time with her family, especially get-togethers with her mom and two sisters. Music has been a part of her life since childhood. She plays the piano, violin, and Celtic harp. She also enjoys putting together puzzles, finding bargains at thrift stores, trying out new recipes, going for walks in parks, and getting together with friends. Since moving to Saginaw, Ruth bought her first home. This has come with its own set of challenges, but also the joy of gardening. Ruth doesn't claim to have a green thumb, but she enjoys plants and flowers. A couple of months ago, Ruth got engaged to Craig Smith. They look forward to a future together.



# Statement of Faith

I do not claim to have a full and perfect knowledge of God. I humbly rely on the Holy Spirit for understanding as I base my faith in Scripture which I believe to be the Word of God. God has revealed himself to us through general and special revelation. We know God to be loving, merciful, holy, all-powerful, and eternal (to name a few of God's attributes). General revelation points to the existence and nature of God, but it is only through the special revelation of Scripture that we understand the way for our salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ. I believe in the ultimate authority of Scripture.

I believe in a Triune God. God has been and always will be Triune – one essence/substance and yet three distinct “persons” – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who are equally and fully God. There is perfect love between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as they exist in communion and relationship.

I believe that God lovingly created all things by his Word and this includes creating humankind distinct from the rest of creation. All people are created in the image of God. Our relationship with God was damaged when sin entered the world through Adam and Eve. All of humanity has inherited a sinful nature. As a result of this sinful nature, we do not choose to follow after God. It is God who has lovingly and graciously chosen us.

Jesus Christ is the only and eternal Son of God. He is fully God and fully human, except that he was without sin. Jesus is our only hope for salvation. Jesus died on the cross for our sins, was raised from the dead, and then ascended into heaven. Salvation only comes through the death and resurrection of Christ. Our sinful nature makes us deserving of punishment and death. Salvation is a gift of grace from God. We are saved by grace through faith.

The Holy Spirit is fully God and in eternal relationship with the Father and the Son. The work of the Holy Spirit is found throughout Scripture. The Holy Spirit continues to be active in the lives of believers and in the life of the church. The Spirit guides us into all truth, dwells within us, and is active in the work of transforming us to become more and more like Jesus.

I believe Christ instituted two sacraments – baptism and the Lord's Supper. These are visible signs of God's grace and they seal us as God's covenant people. It is the people of God that make up the church. There is one universal church, meaning those whom God has gathered out of the entire human race in all times and places. This church is made holy by the blood of Christ and sanctified by the work of the Holy Spirit. God calls his church to participate in his mission to the world until that day when Jesus Christ returns. Christ's return will be glorious, public and visible. Afterward, there will be one resurrection of the dead and one final judgement in which God will restore all things and establish a new heavens and a new earth. Through the help of the Holy Spirit, we strive to live as God's people as we eagerly await Christ's return.

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## **SPECIAL EDITION PLEASE OPEN IMMEDIATELY**

### **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:**

Dear Friends,

It has been our honor and pleasure to serve as your Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) during the past 18 months. We certainly appreciate all of your prayers during this time. We also prayed for God's guidance and felt the Spirit in our work.

The PNC began working in June 2021 by writing our Ministry Information Form (MIF) based on our Mission Study. Our MIF was completed in November 2021 and the Church Leadership Connection used the information in that document to match us with pastors seeking calls. The PNC reviewed 70 Pastor Information Forms (PIFs) and interviewed multiple candidates.

After over a year of working through this process, **we are excited and honored to recommend the Rev. Ruth Estell as our next Solo Pastor.** As we journeyed through this time together, we were guided to Rev. Estell, whom many of you know. The PNC is thrilled with her experiences and the gifts she will bring to Second Presbyterian Church. On January 8th we invite the Congregation to worship at 9:00 A.M. where Rev. Estell will lead the service before a special meeting of the congregation. Once approved, her start date will be February 1, 2023.

With Grace,

The PNC

*Billie Bauer, Marsha Bennett, Pete Brucker, Barbara Easton, Adam Engel, and Sonia Hoepfner*

The Session of The Second Presbyterian Church of Saginaw has called for a special meeting of the congregation for the purpose of hearing and acting upon the report of the Pastor Nominating Committee.

**THE MEETING WILL BE HELD SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 2023  
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE 9:00 A.M. WORSHIP**