

JOHN CALVIN PRESBYTERY

The Rev. Jill Davis Carr - Biography

I was born In Lebanon, Missouri, the third daughter to farming parents. We were raised with three priorities: church, education, and farming. We were taught and expected to work hard. Church life consumed Sundays and any other time there was a service, activity, or responsibility. Church life was our only form of social life, and my parents modeled leadership, commitment, and participation. I am a fourth generation Cumberland Presbyterian.

My parents valued education and encouraged me from an early age to go to college, a dream they were regrettably never able to realize for themselves. I have earned a B.S. in Finance, an MBA, and an MDiv. Through the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, I was ordained to Minister of Word & Sacrament, and I have completed five Clinical Pastoral Education units and am a Board Certified Chaplain through the Association of Professional Chaplains.

I moved to Springfield from Lebanon over two years ago, when I took a chaplain position with Mercy Springfield, following serving a church in Lebanon as Associate Pastor for seven years. I was a volunteer or associate pastor of youth for 30 years. My first vocation was working in finance for manufacturing companies. Since I was a young adult, I have served on and chaired committees, boards, planning teams, and conference staffs at all levels of the church – local, presbyterial, and denominational. I plan to serve the Presbyterian Church USA in the same ways I have served my current denomination over the years. I seek to be a member of John Calvin Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church USA where all persons of diversity are welcomed, recognized as image bears of God, invited to participate and lead, and are loved. My fiance and I attend Trinity Presbyterian in Springfield, where he is now a member.

My adult daughter is active in her Cumberland Presbyterian congregation and the denomination. She is single and has suffered with chronic illness for 10 years. There have been a few life altering events that have changed my life and challenged my faith. These include my sister's death, my health challenges, my daughter's health challenges, caring for my aging parents, and divorce.

As I grew up in the church, my spiritual formation continued, when as a teenager, I began to be exposed to the larger church through participation in camps and conferences. It revealed to me the diversity of people, theological beliefs, political beliefs, and social justice issues.

Camps and conferences were of vital importance to me as both a young person and a youth pastor. I have served in leadership roles of these for over 30 years. It was at one of these conferences, as a late 20-something, that I was called to ministry from finance. Due to family constraints, I was unable to pursue seminary at that time but dedicated more time to serving youth and my denomination. Twenty years later, I was able to attend and graduate from seminary, culminating in ordination to Word and Sacrament. I became introduced to chaplaincy by working PRN for Mercy Hospital Lebanon (Missouri), a small community hospital, to serve the people of my community who were different from the congregation in which I served. God began opening doors that changed my ministry call from the parish setting to chaplaincy.

Advocating for “the least of these” is something I’ve done throughout my adult life both in the church and through volunteering for different non-profits who serve people in poverty or experiencing homelessness. I have volunteered with Connecting Grounds in Springfield, Missouri and have assisted with the Housing and Urban Development’s required PIT (place in time) count in 2021-24 for unhoused neighbors. I helped establish, served on the boards, and volunteered with Elevate Lebanon as well as the Lebanon Warming Center. Prior to these, I volunteered with Springfield Victory Mission, Project 360 Teen Drop-in Center in Lebanon, and The Manna House and Room in the Inn in Memphis, Tennessee.

For self-care and for fun, I love yoga, hiking, camping, floating, and being outdoors, especially exploring God’s creation and its diversity. I enjoy going to concerts, growing flowers in my yard, and playing board games with my family. My fiancé and I will be married in April 2025.

Jill Davis Carr - Statement of Faith

I believe in:

- One eternal God in three beings who are at work in the world, Creator God the Father, Redeemer God the Son, and Sustainer God the Holy Spirit.
- God the Son incarnate, Jesus the Christ, fully human and fully divine, who is Redeemer and Savior of the world through his life, death, and resurrection.
- Humankind being made in God’s image and claimed as God’s beloved children.
 - Humankind is diverse in culture, gender, gifts, abilities, race, ethnicity, socioeconomics, but God created all and calls us good. God loves all, claims all, calls all to different vocations and service.

- Marriage is between two people who are committed to and love one another as God loves us.
- The sovereignty of God and the freewill of all persons who may choose to receive God's covenant of grace, extended first through the law and then completed through Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection, offering salvation by grace to all who believe in him as Lord and Savior of the world and puts their trust in him.
- Human nature that struggles with sin in conforming to non-Christian ways of thinking and doing from the culture around us, personal desires within us, and in temptation of believing lies about God.
- Justification by faith alone through grace alone when we choose to trust in Christ as Lord and Savior and our sins are forgiven, removing fear of condemnation, for according to the Apostle Paul *"there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death."*
- Sanctification is the justified self who is a new creation in Christ and, who through a desire to become more Christlike in thought, word, and deed, lives by God's ways and continues to be molded by God.
- Life everlasting through God's redemption of God's created and creation.
- Heaven as everlasting communion with and praise of the triune God after life on earth concludes. Christ reigns over his body of believers both on earth and in heaven.
- Hell as everlasting separation from the triune God continued after life on earth concludes, manifested as dishonoring God and refusing relationship with the triune God.
- The Holy Bible as the inspired and living Word of God.
- The mission of church, or the universal body of Christ, with members being gifted and equipped by God, brought together by Christ who is the head and foundation of the church, for the purpose of being his disciples who give glory to God and bear witness to the gospel.
 - The triune God calls us to:
 - Make disciples by sharing the good news of the gospel of Christ by proclaiming sight to the blind and freedom to the poor, oppressed and imprisoned.
 - Practice Biblical hospitality & to care for the poor, oppressed, outcast, sick, imprisoned, homeless, & hungry;

- Live out the Greatest and New Commandment by loving God and loving neighbors, welcoming others as Christ has welcomed me; and
- Do justice.
- Prayer, for God is a relational God as shown to us in the Trinity and as the Creator of all creation. Prayer is a way to communicate with and be in relationship with God.
- Sacraments as a response to the Word in worship, which are outward signs of an inward grace, instituted by Christ. In the use of ordinary elements transformed by the Holy Spirit through the mystery of faith, God's people are reconciled to God and one another.
 - Baptism is the sign and seal of God's covenant where persons are marked as God's own into the body of Christ, the church.
 - Baptism represents the dying and raising with Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and cleansing from the pardon of sin.
 - Holy Communion is the communal meal of bread and the fruit of the vine prepared by Christ for those who trust in him as Lord and Savior, for through his life, death, and resurrection, Christ is the bread of life and the new covenant sealed in his blood.