



Rocky River Presbyterian Church

Transitional Pastor Announcement

August 1, 2023



Rocky River Presbyterian Church (RRPC) is thrilled to announce the appointment of the Rev. Dr. Peter J. Lawson as Transitional Pastor and Head of Staff. Rev. Lawson has accepted a one-year renewable contract as full-time Pastor beginning Monday, August 28, 2023. His first sermon at RRPC will be Sunday, September 3, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.

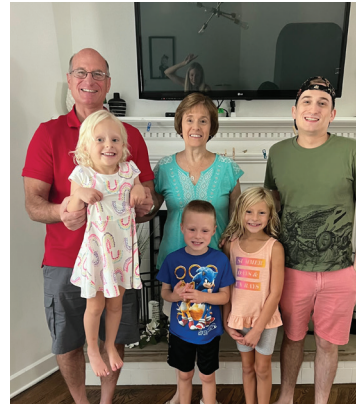
Rev. Lawson will be responsible for the full range of pastoral duties including worship, congregational care, outreach, and church development. As Head of Staff, he will supervise RRPC employees and provide organizational oversight for the work of the Church. Importantly, he will lead our congregation through a Self Study and the search for a Called Pastor.

Rev. Lawson served as Pastor of the Northfield Presbyterian Church in Northfield, Ohio, from July 2020 to July 2023. Prior to his service at Northfield, he served as a U. S. Army

National Guard Chaplain from December 1989 through May of 2020. The last 13 years of his military career were spent in Active Duty status. He has been deployed, serving as a Chaplain for the 2/28th Pennsylvania Army National Guard Combat Team in Ramadi Iraq (2005-2006), and to Kuwait (2018) with the 28th Infantry Division, Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

Before being brought on full-time status with the military, Rev. Lawson served as a part-time National Guard Chaplain and also as a full-time Pastor at four Presbyterian Churches: Linden Road Presbyterian Church, Mansfield, Ohio (1985-1991); Boiling Springs Presbyterian Church, Spring Church, Pennsylvania (1992-1999); Brownlee Woods Presbyterian Church, Youngstown, Ohio (1999-2007); and Heritage Presbyterian Church, Poland, Ohio (2007-2008).

Rev. Lawson has a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Westminster College (PA, 1982); a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary (NJ, 1985); and a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (PA, 2002).



Rev. Lawson resides in Chagrin Falls with his wife, Rev. Joyce Lawson, who is the Pastor of the United Methodist Church of Chagrin Falls. Together they enjoy spending time with their daughter Emily Melewski, who lives in Canfield, Ohio, with her husband Kyle and their three children: Elin (7), Kyle Jr. (5), and Hannah (4). Their son Ethan lives in Chicago. When not busy with family, Rev. Lawson enjoys sports, reading, hiking, physical exercise, going to the movies, meeting new people, and traveling.

We asked Rev. Lawson what he hopes to accomplish at RRPC: “My greatest task will be to prepare the way for the Installed Pastor and put a plan in place for that individual’s success. This will involve honest reflection about what the ministry of the congregation presently is, and asking the challenging questions concerning what the ministry of the congregation is to be.”

What is Rev. Lawson most looking forward to at RRPC: “I’ve held diverse ministry positions serving as a Pastor and a Military Chaplain. I have been humbled by how much I have learned from each role. These have greatly enriched me as a person and have made me more effective in my overall Christian service. As a Transitional Pastor, I look forward to engaging the unique aspects of RRPC ministry and experiencing how it will help me grow as a person.”