

# Reverend Joel W. Lynn



Candidate for Pastor  
and Head of Staff  
First Presbyterian Church  
Albemarle

The Pastor Nominating Committee  
is delighted to present Joel Lynn  
to the congregation as candidate  
for Pastor and Head of Staff.

# The Process:

The Pastor Nominating Committee was elected by the congregation on October 20th, 2022. We met weekly to complete a ten-page form including many key facts about our church, specifics about our open pastor position, leadership competencies that are most important to us, and then answer five lengthy essay questions. Our form was entered into a PCUSA database and continuously matched with pastors open to a call who fit our profile.

Over time we were matched with a total of nearly 250 candidates. Each week as we received new matches, we carefully screened each candidate's information form. For candidates we had a strong interest in, we went online and viewed multiple church services and other available information. We then discussed each candidate and selected those we wanted to interview in person (NC candidates) or via zoom. Three candidates passed all our initial screening and were eventually invited to visit us here in Albemarle. One candidate stood out and the Committee Chair, Rich Schaefer, brought a unanimous and enthusiastic recommendation to Session on March 6 to call a meeting of the congregation to vote to call a new pastor. Session members gave email approval to that recommendation that same evening.

## **Committee Members**

Rich Schaefer, Chair

Emily Andrew

Peggy Finley

Katherine Jolly

Gayle Russell

Jim Sawyer

Chris Whitley

# The Call:

***When asked, Why do you feel called to First Presbyterian Church? Joel responded like this...***

*The greatest asset a church has is not its building, but its people. I have been consistently so impressed with everyone I've met associated with First Presbyterian. They have been kind and intelligent and their passion for loving God and others has been so evident. I'm excited at the prospect of serving alongside this congregation.*

*I've been very impressed with all the ministries the church has been doing over the past years: from weekly meals to mission trips to youth ministry to generous scholarships. First Presbyterian has a strong foundation. We can keep building on it together.*

*It is my belief that if God has providentially led me to your church, there is a good reason for it. I hope that I will be able to help you all grow deeper in your connection with Christ and reach out wider in love to Albemarle and Stanly County. I hope that I will be able to plant seeds of faith, water seeds already planted, and perhaps even reap the harvest of the good work of those who have come before me.*

# Our Ministry Together:

## **Joel expresses his hope for ministry with us like this...**

*My hope is that my love and passion for God is infectious to you all. I find the Bible supremely interesting and love digging deeper into its stories and lessons. There are treasures on every page that can transform our way of viewing the world and challenge our way of living within it. I hope to help us learn new things and help us revisit the ways in which even the old, old stories speak new to us year after year.*

*I hope that we will be a people who never tire of being amazed at God's grace, and I hope that the knowledge of God's unmerited goodness to us will impact how we interact with all those around us.*

*I hope that we would be a city on a hill and a light to the world, where others look at our faith, hope, love, and joy and see something so beautiful that they want to come and be a part and join in the abundant life that Christ offers.*



## **Meet Joel and Katie Lynn**

Joel grew up in Naperville, IL, a suburb of Chicago, alongside his three older brothers. He has a bachelor's degree in pastoral ministry from Olivet Nazarene University (2015) and a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary (2018). Joel was the recipient of the Sylvanus Carter Homiletics Award for preaching excellence, and of the Presbyterian Leadership Award, Princeton Seminary's highest scholarship.

Throughout college and seminary Joel interned at various churches in addition to serving as a camp counselor at two different Presbyterian camps and being a hospital chaplain. Joel began his ordained ministry as a solo pastor at Coates Street Presbyterian Church in Moberly, MO, a small town north of Columbia where the University of Missouri is located. He has served there over five years. While there he has, among other things, served as chaplain for the Moberly Area Community College basketball team, served as Vice-Moderator for the Missouri Union Presbytery, and served as Secretary for the Randolph County Ministerial Alliance.

Joel married his wonderful wife Katie on June 9, 2023. She is a graduate of Tulane University and has worked for an autism non-profit and MLB's non-profit, the Baseball Assistance Team. She has a strong faith and contributes to worship by singing and playing violin.

Joel enjoys all sorts of athletic activities such as distance running, basketball, pickleball, and disc golf. Joel plays the piano and cello. He enjoys board games and being an uncle.

# Next Steps:

Joel has been approved for ministry in the Presbytery of Charlotte by the Commission on Ministry. Upon election by our congregation, Joel and Katie plan to relocate to Albemarle in early May in preparation for a mid-May start date with our congregation. Specifically, we are targeting for Joel to begin preaching at our worship service on May 19th.

We look forward to fully embracing them as they make their home among us as friends and fellow followers of Jesus Christ bringing more people to Christ for our second hundred years in this church.

