

WESLEY COMMUNITY CHURCH
WESLEY ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

Name & Church

(PDS) Pastor Dawn Smith Wesley Community Church

(FSM) Father Steven J. McCloud; Pastor of St. Joseph, Wesley; St. John the Baptist, Bancroft; Sacred Heart, Ledyard, and administrator of St. Benedict Cemetery.

Tell us about your family

(PDS) "My husband Dave Pastors at Renwick Baptist Church. My daughter lives down in Waterloo with her husband and youngest daughter, and she is an associate pastor for church of the Nazarene. Our son is David Weyersberg and he lives in Owosso, Michigan, with his wife and new baby. About 7 years ago God moved us up here to Renwick originally from Port Huron, Michigan. Worked with the deaf for 2 years and also certified licensed interpreter for the deaf and Dave studied the language. We have been in ministry for 26 years and my main ministry up till about a year ago has been music minister, I have been a license minister for 8 years. I then decided to finish my college career and receive my masters in ministry and went onto a seminary and received ordination, shortly after was called to Wesley."

(FSM) My parents are living in Fort Dodge and are members Corpus Christi Catholic Church. My dad was the City Health & Housing Inspector and my mother was the Webster Co. Clerk of District Court from 1977-2000. Oldest of two children, attended Corpus Christi Grade School, St. Edmond High School, Loras College, Dubuque, St. Mary Seminary and University, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins & St. Joseph School of Medicine, Baltimore, and Kenrick Theological Seminary, St. Louis. While taking a leave of absence between 1985-1990, I worked for the Webster Co Law Enforcement Center.

How would you describe your church?

(PDS) "Friendly, loving, welcoming, that's how I was received and I think that's how anyone would be received."

What words describe your church?

(FSM) Eucharistic, hope, healing, happiness, community, education, inspiration, enlightenment, comfort, challenge, empowerment

Describe how much better things will be for a person when they visit or become a part of your church?

(PDS) "They would support a group of people that would support them and help them if they were going through some kind of struggle. They would have someone they could call, and that would reach out and help them."

(FSM) As a youngster, I thought going to church was a mystical adventure filled with a strange language, bells and incense and a gold box where Jesus lived. We knew we were in a sacred place because it was so mysterious and reverent. I always felt safe and peaceful there. It was here as well as in our home where my vocation to the priesthood was nurtured and grew.

Perhaps the greatest, most incredible thing is that Jesus left us with a real, tangible Church founded by Christ and how He gave the Church the authority to teach, authority that we see manifest in the New Testament. In the Eucharist, in confession and in the knowledge that God gave us the Church, we can be certain of His grace. Shortly after his full entrance into the Catholic Church, G.W. Chesterton wrote "I don't need a church who can tell me when I'm right; I need a Church that will tell me where I'm wrong."

What makes this church unique? What is it that you do or have that others don't?

(PDS) "That it is blended and that they are considerate of each person's worship preference. I enjoy exploring different kinds of worship music, I have been bringing different flavors of music to them and they seem to enjoy it. Communion and Baptism I think people would enjoy that you have options for that." "I think flexibility and the ability to change up the worship, which I have changed it up some, most churches you walk in and you have your announcements first then you have a song, then you have praise and testimony and offering where you know what's going to happen. They have encouraged me to switch it up, move things around they look forward to that. Also I noticed that it's refreshing and something different every week."

(FSM)The Mass, here is where under the appearance of bread and wine, Christ becomes truly present. "This is my Body, this is my Blood." In those very words Jesus makes present under the form of bread and wine His own body and blood. He wanted to feed us with the bread of life; with the food that brings eternal life.

As Catholics, we are 100 percent Bible Christians—that is to say, the Catholic Church believes that the Bible is the inspired word of God and, as such, the Bible stands as the support and energy of the Church. Therefore, Catholics are indeed Bible Christians—and there is perhaps no other aspect of the Catholic faith that exemplifies this more than the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

The Catholic Mass is not a foreign experience from the Bible. In fact, its structure, its words and gestures, and even its built-in theology are embedded in the pages of sacred Scripture. An examination of this "Bible blueprint" leads to the discovery that Catholic worship is truly a biblical style of worship. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross was once and for all, final. The Mass is not an additional sacrifice or a repetition of Christ's sacrifice; rather, it is a re-presentation of the one sacrifice of the cross. This is what happens in the Eucharist. The power of Calvary—the sacrifice that takes away sins, heals, and transforms—becomes present and available to us.

What do you think about this time of year Christmas/Holidays and how does it make you feel doing the job you do?

(PDS)"I think it is an exciting time in the church I don't know if they celebrated advent in the past with the readings but that is something I plan to bring in this year. I have activities for the kids I would like to bring in that focuses on the real meaning behind Christmas and why we have gift giving."

(FSM)Christmas is a happy time for most people; friends and family are important. The aspect of my priesthood I appreciate the most is probably no surprise: I love celebrating Holy Mass. Of all the Masses I have celebrated, the celebration of the Christmas Mass is one of the most special moments of my life. Celebrating the birthday of Jesus with my parishioners in the delightful, inspiring and awe-filled Christmas liturgy of the Catholic Church brings a lot of joy and peace and it has enriched me spiritually with God's unique gifts.