

## AARON D. FRANK

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I am a native of Palatine, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. I was raised Lutheran-Missouri Synod, and attended the parochial school, Immanuel Lutheran, in Palatine. In high school I swam and played water polo competitively, at Fremd High School. I continued to swim at Hope College, in Holland, Michigan. At Hope, I began as a pre-med major, but ultimately completed a dual degree, English Literature and Religion and a minor in philosophy. Following college, I attended Union Theological Seminary (now Union Presbyterian Seminary) in Richmond, Virginia. As a student, my focus was on a PhD path, and I focused my studies on theology and ethics courses. I was a student member of a Lilly Foundation program, The Institute for Reformed Theology, which invited scholars, pastors and students (5 each) to engage in substantive discussion around specific topics in theological study. I did two internships, one as a student chaplain (10 weeks) in Grand Teton National Park, in Jackson, Wyoming, and one as a Student in Ministry (14 months) at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Alexandria, Virginia. (I completed CPE training later while living in Dallas, Texas.)

Following seminary, and my SIM internship, I served as an intern to U.S. Representative Stephen Rothman (NJ-9), and worked for some six years as a corporate paralegal in two global firms, details below. During this time, I completed my ordination exams and the requisite examination by National Capital Presbytery. As an active member of New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, I taught classes periodically and had the honor of preaching on two occasions. I also supply preached within the presbytery when called upon.

My experiences in the business world have informed not only my work ethic, but also allow me to understand the rigors of business life that parishioners' experience. As a leader, thinking strategically, engaging the requisite parties, developing plans and considering possible outcomes all before committee or congregational roll-out are just a few of the strategies I have employed to get programs off the ground. Engaged support and regular follow-up have been key to programmatic success across my career. As pastor, I am sympathetic to the stress that many encounter, the "church on Sunday, work on Monday" ethical concerns. High quality worship, educational and conversational opportunities are central to leading informed lives of faith as we are distracted and pulled in so many ways each day.

My earlier calls, serving as Seminary Intern at Westminster, in Alexandria, Virginia, and as Pastoral Associate at Colesville, in Silver Spring, Maryland, have given me a firm foundation. At Westminster, we had multiple staff and volunteer leaders who worked together to oversee the various ministries. As a Student in Ministry (SIM) intern, my responsibilities included: working with the Associate Pastor for Youth, leading middle and high school youth groups and assisting with Sunday school, teaching Confirmation (adapting curriculum to our needs), teaching a multi-week adult education class, participating in and leading Missions activities (including youth trips, starting an interfaith Habitat for Humanity build and committee meetings), assisting in worship weekly (preaching quarterly) and pastoral care. When the Associate unexpectedly resigned to become a solo pastor only four months after my arrival, I was thrust into a greater leadership role in all aspects of my internship. My one year placement became sixteen months as the church asked me to stay on to help lead summer programs and as I considered my next steps in ministry. Working with a team of interdependent leaders committed to creating the best experiences for congregants and guests of all ages and providing attentive pastoral care is foundational to my leadership style and strategy.

At Colesville Presbyterian Church, I served as an unordained, interim Associate Pastor. The contract was to be one year only, as they re-structured the pastoral leadership of the church. This was stressed in my interviews. I was to lead the youth groups and coordinate Christian Education, while co-chairing the Missions Committee, preaching monthly and providing pastoral care. Then Head of Staff unexpectedly quit some 6 months after my arrival to become a hospital chaplain. I served for 5 months as solo pastor until the Interim Head of Staff arrived, and was kept on for a total of two and a half years to provide continuity for the eventual new installed Head of Staff.

During my tenure I preached some 50 times, regularly taught Adult Education classes, while also overseeing the missions and social justice program. Building upon my own readings and my continuing education experiences, I developed original lessons on a variety of topics, including: Bible 101 (thematic and individual book studies), Celtic Spirituality and an in-depth study of the Psalms. I also led two book discussions and taught Confirmation. Working with the Sunday school coordinator we used the workshop rotation model as our guide, creating new projects and activities for the classes. As a Missions Team, we supported numerous projects. Following a Session retreat, we made concerted effort to move the church from an internal perspective of being 'friendly' and 'welcoming' to embody a motto of, "All are welcome, no exceptions." By increasing our public presence and engaging our neighbors Colesville has grown to truly be a place of welcome.

In-between my experiences at Westminster and Colesville, I worked for six years in the private sector. I was first a congressional intern for Stephen Rothman (NJ-9), now retired, and then as paralegal for two large international law firms. As a paralegal, I worked my way up from an entry level position to a senior level, ultimately serving as trial assistant and lead paralegal on a \$600MM dispute before a World Bank tribunal in Paris, France. Following our highly contentious multi-week hearing, and subsequent win, the senior partner offered me the greatest compliment I have ever received in my annual review. "Mr. Frank is resourceful and unflappable." He was not inclined to offer any positive reinforcement and I remain humbled by the compliment to this day. This experience continues to underpin my professional dedication and inform my understanding of the challenges of business life – long hours, conflicting schedules, immanent deadlines, etc.

When not working, I enjoy reading (generally non-fiction and politics/history), and periodically dabble in furniture making. While I have continued to swim throughout my adult life, I am very active and an avid cyclist, having led training trips to Tucson, Arizona and Greenville, South Carolina, with our local bicycle shop. Marcy and I enjoy travelling, especially now that our daughter, Emily, has married a Brazilian and is living in Brazil. She is in the process of starting her own clothing business as 2017 dawns. Our other daughter, Ellen, lives in Orrville, Ohio and works for Smuckers, as a coffee researcher. I have been truly blessed to be a step-parent to the girls and no matter how far flung our locations may be our gatherings are full of laughter and joy!