

## Eric Koenig-Reinke Faith Journey.

I like to joke that I was literally born in the Presbyterian Church. I grew up attending Noble Road Presbyterian Church (NRPC), in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. At the time I was born, my parents were serving as co-pastors and so the church was a major part of my life. The church building was a second home of sorts; but the people were, and are, my family. I remember Sunday School classes, with saints, who have remained invested in my life all the way into my adulthood. Including several who were able to attend my ordination. When I was in elementary school I took the church for granted; it was an assumed part of my life that had immense value, even if I did not think very critically about it.

Around the time I entered middle school, my parents were called to other positions; denominationally related, but not in congregational ministry. This changed my relationship to my home congregation. Because we did not move, I decided to remain active in the life of NRPC. I feel like this allowed me to form a relationship with the church, and my own faith-life that was self-differentiated from my parents. Youth-group became an important circle of friends in my life. These individuals functioned as the main connection to the church, but all of us youth were blessed to have adults who cared deeply about our faith life, as volunteers, and with intergenerational engagement. I went through confirmation with most of the same core youth group and decided to join the church. When I was in High School I was asked to serve on session; and did for about a year and half before departing for college.

While in college I drifted from church life a bit. I had two main things that kept me connected to the life of the denomination, and to my own faith. I would continue to return to NRPC, the church that I continued to call home whenever I was in Cleveland Heights. I also worked at Ghost Ranch for five summers while completing my undergraduate degree. Upon graduating from college, I was unsure of my next steps. Being a double PK, I had consistently been asked if I would become a pastor, but was not ready to commit. I decided to serve as a Young Adult Volunteer, and spent a year in Austin, TX serving and discerning. During that time, I decided to enter seminary; because I trusted in the love of God, and the family welcome nurtured by NRPC, and I wanted to be a part of that work for the Kingdom.

I attended Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, VA and enjoyed my studies greatly. Upon graduating with my M.Div., I wanted to take a few more Bible classes, so I enrolled as a Th.M. student writing my thesis on Gospel Healing Narratives. When I graduated for a second time, I took a position as Pastoral Resident at First Presbyterian Church, Ann Arbor, and was ordained as a Teaching Elder in October of 2017.