

Pastor Gwen Hermanson Bio

Pastor Gwen grew up in the New Sweden Township, 13 miles west of Saint Peter where she learned the value of hard work and the importance of being in connection with the land. After graduating from Sibley East High School, she decided to explore and first headed south to Waldorf College in Iowa. From there she continued her education at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York where she earned her B.S. in Nutritional Sciences. Needing a break from academic rigors, she spent a year volunteering with Lutheran Volunteer Corps in Washington, D.C. at Miriam's Kitchen. While hearing the stories of homeless men and helping them meet their daily needs, she began to discern a call to pastoral ministry.

Having been a camp counselor at Sky Ranch in Colorado, she wanted to be out west again and went to Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, California. Gwen graduated from seminary in 2007. Her ministry experience includes chaplain residency at Stanford Hospital, chaplain at a retirement community in Cupertino, California, solo pastor at Faith Lutheran Church in Los Gatos, California, private spiritual direction practice as well as leading retreats and serving as pulpit supply in the Bay Area. After 19 years of living elsewhere, she returned to Minnesota in the summer of 2017 to reconnect with family and start a new chapter in her journey. Most recently Pastor Gwen served as interim pastor at First Lutheran Church in St. James, Minnesota.

Gwen's interests include hiking in Minnesota state parks, biking country roads, reading historical fiction, cooking nutritious and ethnic foods, and sharing quality time with her family members across the state, especially her 16-month-old nephew, Howie. You might see her buying lactose-free yogurt at the St. Peter Food Co-op, drinking tea at River Rock Coffee, or centering at a yoga class at the St. Peter Yoga Studio.