

Ministry Biography of the Rev. Dr. Ted Pierce

I began formulating and hearing a call to ministry early in my life. I was only thirteen years old when my older brother died suddenly in a commercial TWA plane crash. In this crisis, our home church surrounded my family with love, compassion and spiritual guidance. From that point on, I wanted to have a major part in this loving Christian community. Consequently, from my adolescent years to the present, my work and educational experience has revolved around the church.

Early on I began a process of nurture and discipleship in my church. I loved the friendship I had with my Youth Pastor, volunteer leaders and youth group friends. I volunteered many hours to work in this church. I helped in youth choir, Vacation Church School, service projects, youth worship, etc. During this period, the leadership of the church nurtured my relationship with Jesus Christ and gave me true friendships with adults and peers.

My early volunteer work experience in church gave me a very important goal as a pastor. It is crucial that our youth receive the same opportunity I had to serve and grow in their faith. The local church must design worship and programming that includes young people and children!

I chose a Christian liberal arts college in East Tennessee because it had a strong religion and education program. In the summer months, I chose jobs that I believed would help prepare me for ministry. My first summer, I was employed by the college in a quartet that traveled the South and Midwest to nine church camps. I taught Bible classes, led songs and played the guitar, gave campfire devotions, served as cabin "dad" and counselor for grades five through twelve.

During this summer, I learned the importance and relationship between camping ministry and Christian growth. Pastors need to encourage this type of ministry. Another summer, I worked for the Indiana Children's Christian House. In this position, I met young people who had been abused, runaways, youth with criminal records and drug users. In this experience I learned that pastors can give an exciting vision to a congregation to reach out with money and time to other institutions that desperately need finances and Christian workers.

My first full time position in a local church was as the Director of Youth Ministries in East Tennessee. I directed the educational ministry from preschool to college. It was an 800 member Presbyterian Church with a ministerial staff of four. Early in this position I was doing a lot of counseling with young people and their parents. I realized I needed further training in this area. The church encouraged me to work on a Master's degree in counseling at East Tennessee State. This has been a very valuable tool in working with parishioners and with my own family. After four years of youth ministry, the church said, "We are tired of you-we want to pay your way to seminary!"

I received a Master's of Divinity from Union Theological in Richmond, VA and a Master's of Arts degree in Christian education from Presbyterian School of Education. I also had the opportunity to complete my Doctorate of Ministry degree from Reformed Theological Seminary with my dissertation focus on Education in the Reformed Tradition.

I am presently a Teaching Elder and the Head of Staff at Rolling Hills Presbyterian Church. I have served Churches in Richmond, VA, as associate minister for youth and families, in Orlando, FL as minister of Christian education, in Illinois, as Senior Minister and Head of Staff, and as Chaplain of the Little Church of the Pines in Island Park Idaho. I have also worked in the solar industry at Inspired Solar Technologies. I have served on numerous boards; American Red Cross, YMCA and the Boy Scouts of America (I am an Eagle Scout).

I love to travel and have been to almost all of the national parks in the USA. I enjoy exploring God's glorious creation; hiking, backpacking, and scuba diving. My greatest enjoyment comes from spending time with my wife, Juliet and our children, Lauren, David and Makenna.