

Biography: Robert Dahlgren

I was born in California and raised in Taft where I attended all 12 years of school. During my senior year of high school, I came to faith while attending an American Baptist church. I was active in the youth group, Sunday school, and attended worship regularly. After graduating from Taft High School, I began working in the oilfields.

I held positions as a Roustabout, Well Puller, Garage Mechanic's Helper, Station Operator, Pumper and Gauger. During five years of oilfield work, I served Christ as a Sunday school teacher (various age groups), a youth leader, an usher, a liturgist, a young adult leader, college and career leader, and as a member of the Christian Education Committee. Through this service, my call to the ordained ministry came about. In 1986, I sold a house, left my oilfield job, and began attending college at Taft College. I earned an Associated Arts degree and graduated with honors in 1987.

I began my studies at California State University, Fresno in 1988. While at Fresno, I joined University Presbyterian Church, where I attended worship and became active in a young adult group. I came under care of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the San Joaquin Presbytery during my Senior Year. I graduated, Magna Cum Laude in 1990 with a degree in English Literature and focused on other studies in Psychology and Classical Studies.

I began attending San Francisco Theological Seminary in the fall of 1990. While there, I attended church at Sleepy Hollow Presbyterian Church. My involvement with this congregation helped to formulate my sense of call to smaller churches with less than 100 in attendance. I did two internships while at SFTS. I served Grace Presbyterian Church in Daly City (a racially and culturally diverse inner city neighborhood congregation) and Saint John's Presbyterian Church (an urban congregation), both with fewer than 100 people in attendance. I graduated from Seminary in 1994.

My first call was to Gordon First Presbyterian Church in Gordon, Nebraska. Gordon is a town of about 1800 people in northwest Nebraska. Gordon is an agricultural community located 30 miles south of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. I deeply enjoyed the small town atmosphere and the community. I had the honor of being the last pastor ever to be ordained and installed by Box Butte Presbytery (with less than a dozen churches) before the merger of Boulder and Box Butte Presbyteries to form The Presbytery of the Plains and Peaks.

I left Gordon to take a call in Sidney, Nebraska in 1997. Sidney is located in southwest Nebraska and is home of Cabela's Outfitters, which grew from a small mail order business and store on the main street to an international corporation with stores located all over the United States, receiving orders from all over the world. The town grew greatly while I was there, with nearly 500 new Cabela's employees and their families moving to Sidney from all over the world. Light Memorial Presbyterian Church doubled in its worship attendance. While I was there, a new building and a number of ministries came into being which drew more than 65 new members over a seven year period.

I left Light Memorial Presbyterian Church in 2004, and shortly there after, was offered an opportunity to work for Kidz Ark, a Christian organization which is a residential and day treatment center for troubled youth. The young people served by Kidz Ark are challenged in a variety of ways which include: developmental delay;

emotional, sexual and physically abused; chemical dependency; pervasive mental illness; learning disorders; violent and non-violent legal offenses; etc... While working there, I shared Christ in thought, word and deed as residential staff at the boy's ranch, a therapist, crisis counselor at Jackie Reynolds School, teacher's aid, substitute teacher, and as Chaplain. I also assisted with the animal program providing equine and canine assisted therapy.

Over the past three years, I have continued to feel a call back to parish ministry which has grown with each passing month. I have continued to feel drawn toward serving smaller congregations in a rural setting. For the past four years, I have lived in New Raymer, Colorado which is a community of about 90 people (livestock far outnumber the residence within the surrounding area).

My wife, Celeste and I have been married for ten years this past November. Between us, we have four children and two grand children. Our 15 year old son Lucas is the only child living in our home. Our 15 year old daughter Jessa is with us during holiday school breaks and over the summer. She currently lives in California with her mother.

My interests include horse riding and driving, camping, marksmanship, hunting, fishing and reading a wide variety of literature.

Statement of Faith: Robert Dahlgren

I believe in the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; One God, who is one being, expressed in three persons bearing total agreement in motive, intention, and action.

I believe in God the Father, existing eternally, who created all that is out of nothing, both visible and invisible. The Father, out of love greater than our understanding, continues to create and sustain all things. God, the Father, created human beings to be in relationship with the Divine and each other and for the proper stewardship of the creation. Humankind, within the relational freedom God granted, chose sin and brokenness over intended union and responsibility, which is evidenced by alienation from God, each other and the created order.

I believe in God the Son: who, from the beginning with God, is God and ever shall be God, was through miraculous means by way of the creative power of God, conceived and born unto Mary (a virgin) his mother. Jesus, a Palestinian Jew, being fully God and completely human, experienced life with its feelings, joys, cares, needs, sufferings, and necessities common to humanity. Jesus is God with us. Jesus lived life pleasing to God in every way without sin. Jesus shared the God centered life with us through his ministry of teaching, healing, feeding the hungry, and befriending the outcast, thus demonstrating God's love and desire to draw us close to God and one another. Jesus' life and mission brought him into conflict with the political and religious authorities of his day. Fearing the reign of God proclaimed by his thought, word and deed, Jesus was accused of sedition, crucified, died and was buried. God raised Jesus from the dead. Through his death, Jesus has taken the penalty of our sin upon himself. By his resurrection, Jesus secured for us an eternal relationship with God.

I believe in God, The Holy Spirit: existing from the beginning and eternally, sent by the Father and risen Christ to sustain, guide, direct, and comfort the Church; the body of people believing, professing, and following Jesus. The Holy Spirit leads us in our prayers, shapes and gives form to our worship, guides us in our understanding of scripture, equips us to do the ministry of Jesus, helps us to grow in faith, empowers us to love one another, and to do for others as we would have them do for us. As the direction of the Holy Spirit is sought and headed by people of faith in good conscience, God's will and purpose will be made manifest through Christ's body, the Church, by its corporate and individual members in thought, word, and deed.

I believe that Baptism and Communion are the Sacraments given to us by Jesus as God's sign and seal upon us, uniquely marking us as Christ's own people and setting us aside to live in his ministry. Baptism is a sign of our remission of sins, our dying and rising in Christ, and our union with Christ's body, the Church. Communion is more than a remembrance. Eating the bread and drinking the cup, we do proclaim Jesus' death and his rising until he comes. We are also fed spiritually, nourished by his death and resurrection and strengthened by our union with Christ and his body, the Church. The Sacraments of Baptism and Communion are signs of our belonging to God in Christ who shared them in common with us. Through the Sacraments our faith is remembered, revealed and proclaimed.

I believe the Bible, the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament, by means of the Holy Spirit, to be the word of God written. The scriptures bear a unique and authoritative witness to the one sufficient revelation of God, Jesus Christ, the Word of God incarnate. (Confession of 1967). The Bible is a witness without parallel. The scriptures tell the story of God's faithfulness to humanity through: God's interaction with the people of Israel;

the coming of Christ and his ministry; the spread of the early Church by Christ's disciples (both women and men), moved by the Holy Spirit to share the Gospel; and the prophetic culmination of Christ's return. The Bible, when read attentively, guides, directs, informs, instructs, corrects, encourages, comforts, and nurtures us in our faith journey (both corporately and individually). God's word is made known as the scriptures are preached and read in dependence on the illumination of the Holy Spirit (Confession of 1967, paraphrased).