



## The West Side Presbyterian Church

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### West Side Presbyterian Church Hires New Associate Pastor for Family Life

*Description: West Side Presbyterian Church's new Associate Pastor for Family Life with Youth, Children & Parents will drive innovative new programming and services for families, with a focus on youth and children as well as the connection between children/youth and their parents. This move is the latest in a series of transformations at West Side aimed at making the church highly relevant to the needs of families and individuals in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Ridgewood, New Jersey (January 23, 2012) – The congregation of West Side Presbyterian Church of Ridgewood, New Jersey voted yesterday to call (hire) Ms. Penny Hogan as its new Associate Pastor for Family Life with Youth, Children and Parents.

This ministry is dedicated to sustaining and expanding West Side's traditionally strong family life programs and serves a wide range of family needs – those of children, middle and high school youth, and their parents – in a more integrated manner.

"In today's world, families are looking for places to be together in meaningful ways. West Side's focus on family ministry allows each age and stage to develop spiritually together," said Liz Junod, Pastoral Associate at West Side. "Parents who work all week and barely see their children don't want to 'get rid of them' on the weekends. I think parents like the idea of sharing and growing together with their children."

This led West Side to look for a "family minister" not a "youth pastor" as has been the model in the past for many churches.

"Penny has extensive experience with children and parents," noted Cynthia Cheesman, Co-chair of the Associate Pastoral Nominating Committee, the team of church members who led the 15-month long selection process. "She has demonstrated outstanding organizational skills from tasks as small as weekly prayer groups to those as large as family mission trips to Africa. Through all of this she displays wonderful relationship talents. We are very fortunate to have been introduced to her."

Ms. Hogan received a Master of Divinity in 2010 from Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey. Before entering seminary, Ms. Hogan served for six years the youth, family and mission ministry at the 1500-member La Jolla Presbyterian Church in La Jolla, California. Among her many responsibilities, she planned and co-led a youth mission trip to Kenya, co-led multi-generational trip to Malawi, and implemented an annual youth group house building trip to Mexico for nearly 100 people.

She also attended Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California and is a 1994 graduate from Bowling Green State University with a B.S. in Education. Raised in Upper Arlington, Ohio, Ms. Hogan is married to John Hogan, a Bergen County native. They reside in Ridgewood.

Ms. Hogan will be joining West Side's dynamic leadership under Dr. Gareth Icenogle, Senior Pastor, and Rev. Marc Oehler, Associate Pastor of Parish Life. She will begin duties at West Side on February 1, 2012.

**West Side Presbyterian Church:**

West Side is a welcoming congregation in the mainline Protestant tradition and is part of the Presbyterian Church (USA). A God-centered church, with strong mission, worship, music, family, and youth components, West Side is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is located at 6 South Monroe in Ridgewood, New Jersey.

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