



Dear Members and Friends of First Presbyterian Church of Northport,

As your Pastor Nominating Committee, we must begin with our thanks to all of you. From the time you submitted our names for consideration to the day you voted to grant us this responsibility and privilege, we have been cognizant of this deep honor.

We have read over 250 Personal Information Forms (PIFs), listened to countless sermons and interviewed many candidates.

At one of our first meetings nearly two years ago, our liaison from Presbytery said something that was both terrifying and encouraging. He said that God already knew who our next Installed Pastor would be. Our job was to go through the process of finding that person. And we could not be more delighted to finally be able to announce that we have voted to call the Rev. Rachel Vione as that person God has chosen for us.

Little background on our process...

When we first began the process in early December of 2018, we asked Pastor Rachel if she was interested in being considered as a candidate for the Installed Pastor position. At that time Rachel indicated to us that she would not be submitting her name for consideration because it was not the right time for her or her family to be considered for the position. The PNC then went forward with its search, accepting PIF's, listening to sermons and interviewing candidates.

In June of 2020 the PNC approached Rachel to ask her if things had changed in her life and if she would pray and listen for God's voice as to whether or not she would like to be considered as a candidate for the position. Rachel did pray for discernment and listened for the Holy Spirit's call on her life. She then came to the realization that things had indeed changed in her life and in the world. The PNC invited Rachel to meet via Zoom. We then asked Rachel to submit a PIF and asked her to come back for a second interview. Rachel submitted seven personal and professional references, all who gave her high praise. The PNC extended the call to Rachel on September 1, 2020. The Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Long Island voted to approve the call on October 13, 2020.

Rachel's background contributes to her unique combination of strong management expertise, a deep understanding of theology and the Bible, superior preaching skills, and the vision to lead in uncertain times.

Rachel is passionate about ensuring the gospel is understood as good news in all areas of life.

As per the Presbytery of Long Island's requirement, Rachel will become our Designated Pastor before becoming our Installed Pastor. This is the Presbytery's way of allowing for Interim Pastors to become Installed Pastors. Pending the congregational vote on Sunday, November 8, Rachel will become our Designated Pastor.

Please know that the PNC has felt your prayers, appreciated your patience and been humbled by your trust. This Sunday, in your meeting, you will vote to dissolve our PNC. We will miss each other but part knowing that what our liaison said was true - God has led us to the candidate God has chosen to fulfill God's vision for us.

Thank you all.

Carole Gandy, Kim Gilbert, Dennis Hartin, Wayne Louis, Diana Montusi, Anita D'Amico Stambouly

Words from the PNC

"Rachel has tended to us lovingly with scripture and spiritual guidance and a delightful personality that makes one feel like she is not only your minister, but also your friend."

"Pastor Rachel is respected and deeply cared for by our congregation. The youth of our church find connection with her and feel fully engaged in the life of the church because of the energy and attention she gives them."

"When the pandemic came and Rachel had to preach to an empty sanctuary, the online services that she brought to us each week were so beautifully intense that you felt you were with her in the sanctuary, and that she was looking straight into your eyes."

"I truly believe that God has put Rachel in the palm of our hands and said, 'This is who I have wanted to be the next Pastor of First presbyterian Church of Northport.'"

Words from the Staff

"Rachel is the best boss I have ever had! I was hoping she would stay at FPC."

"If Rachel went somewhere else, I would consider going with her."



Bio on Rev. Rachel Vione

Rachel was born and raised in the Midwest as the daughter of a minister father and a choir director & musician mother. Rachel was nurtured in her faith from a young age by her parents as well as Sunday school teachers and youth group leaders.

Rachel attended North Park University in Chicago, Illinois where she majored in Psychology and Business, and minored in Voice. While at North Park, Rachel was active in inner-city ministry to under-privileged youth and at-risk young adults in the Cabrini Green Housing Projects in Chicago.

Rachel came to New York with the dream of being successful in the business world. To that end she was, having had a successful career in New York City working with the Discovery Channel and its affiliates staffing for their Ad-Sales/Marketing departments. Sensing a call to "something more" Rachel applied and was accepted to Princeton Theological Seminary and graduated after receiving awards in preaching and homiletics.

Rachel's Family



Rachel is married to Joe, who is in the food service business. When Rachel decided to go to seminary when their children were young, Joe was her biggest supporter. Joe is a native Long Islander and a former Sunday school teacher.

Joe and Rachel have two grown children: Joseph, a graduate of Penn State University with a degree in Finance, who works in Futures Trading at Bank of America in New York City, and Amanda, a graduate of The University of Rhode Island and New York University with a Master's Degree in Special Education and is a Special Education Teacher in New York City.



Words from Pastor Rachel

My Dear Friends at FPC Northport,

I am honored, excited and humbled to continue in ministry with you at the First Presbyterian Church of Northport. I can't wait to see what God is going to do next at First Pres! I look forward to partnering with you as we seek to follow God's call together.

The future calls us to walk the path paved by the faithful members and ministers of this congregation into a future that honors the best of the traditions and embraces new possibilities.

While we remain in the midst of this horrible pandemic and continue to worship remotely, I continue to pray for you and look forward to the day when we can be back together again, in worship and in our shared ministry. I am grateful to the PNC for their hard work and dedication in

seeing this process to completion. I couldn't be more thrilled with the results!

"I believe God is calling me to a ministry setting ...

... with a congregation unafraid to look honestly at itself, assess its gifts, is involved in the community of which it is a part and seeks to be a catalyst for abundant life for everyone in it.

... where people commit to being together regardless of their differences, knowing that they are united in Christ.

... that is not afraid of failure, has a sense of humor, recognizes the talents God has given them to steward, exercises boldness coupled with humility and is ready to engage in ministry within and beyond the walls of the church.

I believe this is the ministry of the First Presbyterian Church of Northport!