

# Welcome, Eric Pone!



**ERIC PONE**

OUR NEW CANDIDATE FOR ORDINATION

*It was just about a year ago when the Pone family visited Brunswick for worship the first time. Many of you were excited to hear Eric preach in August. He and I have been meeting regularly since June, planning youth and children's ministries post-Covid. After the September Leadership Team meeting, Eric will be an official member of our staff, albeit unpaid at this time. His involvement with younger people will allow me to work more on adult discipleship. God has a ministry for Brunswick in raising up new clergy, and I am thrilled for all of us to be starting that journey again with Eric.*

—Pastor Ruth Ann

Grace and peace from our Lord, Jesus Christ,

I am so excited to start my ministry with Brunswick United Methodist Church in Children and Youth Ministry. I have met many of you during our time as members of the congregation and have also had the pleasure of ministering to many of the kids and youth at Brunswick.

For those who may not have met me, my name is Eric Pone. My spouse Brenda and I reside in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota with our two youngest kids, Lenny and Daisy, who many of you have met. They are balls of energy who exude the joy of creation in their living. We are a blended family and as such, I have six other adult children you may see around from time to time and three (soon to be four) grandchildren and three hunting dogs!

I think I sum up my faith journey as one of being in a boat and trying to pull the shore to it. I have spent many years praying and seeking God through the trials and tribulations of life. I relate to Jacob. I find that I have wrestled with God over the years and have been broken by Him. But praise God for the brokenness because it is there that we find salvation through Christ Jesus and trust in his grace through his sacrifice on the cross for all our sins.

I am drawn to the Youth and Family ministry because the Church was there for me during this critical time. People picked my siblings and me up for Sunday

School, encouraged us in Acolyte and Youth Ministry, and nudged us to lead over time. For that, I am truly grateful, and I see my ministry as a yes to all that the elders at my home church of Oakland UMC taught me.

I have been engaged in children's and youth ministry in four United Methodist Church congregations: Hennepin Avenue, Brooklyn, Oakland, Living Spirit, and at the Church of the Open Door. I have also been a camp counselor and dean with what was the Multicultural Camp at the former Camp Kingswood site. My most recent appointment was as a Student Local Pastor with Grace on Penn in Minneapolis in 2002.

My approach to ministry is to maintain an open door with kids and their families — to do practical ministry that both prepares children for life and for leadership within the congregation; and ultimately, to support their families through the inevitable trials and joys of raising children.

My first year here is to learn the congregation, establish a program, and work with the District Council on Ministries to restart my process for ordination as Deacon. I will restart Seminary in Fall 2021. Please keep me and my family in your prayers as I begin a new journey! I am so excited to be here!

In Christ,  
Eric Pone