

Pastor Cris Frigm

Pastor Cris begins his ministry at St. Paul's with just under fifteen years of pastoral experience and entering his third congregational call. His journey toward being a pastor is rather long with a few key moments along the way.

He grew up in a small country church, or at least it seemed like a small church at the time. Baptized and raised in this congregation, he learned about his faith and was formed in the liturgy of the *Lutheran Book of Worship*. His life-long love of Camp Nawakwa and experiencing God in outdoor ministry began as a camper and continues to this day.

Meeting his future wife, Laurel, in high school, they navigated the waters of college and serving on the staff of Camp Nawakwa together, marrying in 1995 (at Nawakwa) right after Cris began working in youth ministry in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. A second youth ministry position followed the next year followed by a realization that congregational ministry wasn't the best fit for him. After a few years working with young people dealing with behavioral and emotional issues, he began his most important work as an at-home dad when Cole was born in 1999. Sydney followed two years later, and they were his primary vocation for a total of seven years.

As Sydney was getting ready for kindergarten, Laurel and Cris learned that the next stage of their journey would be seminary and returning to congregational ministry. In the winter of 2006, they realized that God had been preparing Cris to serve the church in an unexpected way (at least it was unexpected to him) and he began candidacy with the Delaware-Maryland Synod and enrolled in seminary.

While at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (now part of United Lutheran Seminary), Cris also realized that he was being called to serve in the Navy Reserves so that he could bring a message of God's grace to those doing the difficult work of defending our nation. He was commissioned as an Ensign and Chaplain Candidate on September 9, 2008.

He has served in two small-town churches and one country church in Frederick and Carroll Counties in Maryland. In his Navy career, he has served with the 4th Combat Engineer Battalion (Baltimore, Maryland), the Chief of Chaplains' Office (Arlington, Virginia), the 25th Marine Regiment (Quincy, Massachusetts), and USMC Training and Education Command (Quantico, Virginia). He has two deployments: Djibouti and Sembach, Germany.

Cris and Laurel have been married for twenty-nine years and continue to flirt with empty-nest-hood. Currently they share their home with two awesome dogs: Tonks (9-year-old mutt) and Remus (4.5-year-old Shepherd/Husky). Cole lives in Martinsburg, West Virginia and works for a commercial window manufacturer. Sydney is in her final semester of her master's in athletic training degree at the University of Virginia with a plan to make her love of football her profession.

The move to Newark is their tenth house in almost thirty years of marriage and they are looking forward to restoring their 1923 bungalow to its original glory (with an eclectic flair) and turning grass into beautiful gardens (Laurel provides the vision and ongoing care, Cris digs the holes). They also look forward to all the activity within the congregation and the community.