



# Overbrook Presbyterian Church

6376 City Avenue ♦ Philadelphia, PA 19151  
215-877-2744 ♦ office@overbrookpresb.org ♦ www.overbrookpresb.org

7 February 2019

Sisters and brothers in Christ at Overbrook:

On behalf of the Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC) I am privileged to identify our candidate for Designated Pastor. He is the Reverend Adam Wayne Hearlson, Ph.D., currently Interim Associate Pastor at Wayne Presbyterian Church.

The Rev. Dr. Hearlson was the unanimous choice of a totally besotted PNC. On first encounter his brilliance was intimidating, but his command of the pulpit, his love of Scripture, his love of the Church, his capacity as a listener, his sensitivity to the gifts of others, and his commitment to outgrow his own limitations quickly won us over without reservation.

More information, including a biography, photos, and statements from the PNC and from the candidate himself, will be available in a brochure that will be distributed by mail, by email, and after worship on Sunday, 17 February 2019. If you wish to learn more about the Rev. Dr. Hearlson, he has a fantastic online presence. Please investigate his wonderful background and works!

The Rev. Dr. Hearlson will preach his candidate sermon on Sunday, 24 February 2019, and a Congregational Meeting will follow to confirm his call.

Rejoicing,

Joseph Piatt

for the PNC: Andrea Gosfield and Robert Harden, Co-Chairs, Margene Biedermann, Cheryl Davis, Jason Duckworth, Suchita Fiorillo, Aimerie Scherluebbe, and Jill Van Rawley

**The Rev. Raymond Bonwell**  
Bridge Pastor  
**The Rev. David K. McMillan**  
Pastor Emeritus

**Sara Davis**  
Clerk of Session  
**Dr. Christopher Gage**  
Director of Music  
**Lisa Faso**  
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**Sharon Parker**  
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“I left my encounters with Adam wanting to be a better Christian. Adam's preaching is not just engaging; it's stirring. I truly felt a renewed vigor to live out the Gospel and make Overbrook a conduit for realizing the Kingdom of God. I suspect that you (and the friends you invite to worship) will feel the same way.” - Jason Duckworth

“The Rev. Adam Hearlson was chosen unanimously by our PNC for many reasons. He is an undeniably skilled preacher. He is a bridge builder, and a great listener. He is an intellectual. Despite his professional and academic accomplishments, he is humble and accommodating. Importantly for OPC, Rev. Hearlson values diversity. These are just a few of the qualities that I witnessed during our time with Rev. Hearlson that made me believe that he would be the best fit as Designated Pastor of OPC. I am excited to embrace he and his family as part of our church family!” - Andrea O. Gosfield

“The first thing that struck me about Pastor Adam was his energy and passion during our interactions. I also loved how he spoke about recognizing the “blessings” of those around him and tapping into that to accomplish the greater good. I was even more excited when I saw those initial impressions on full display during his sermon at a neutral pulpit. Energy and passion are contagious and I can't wait to see Pastor Adam engage and be a part of the future spiritual journey with my OPC family!!” - Robert Harden Jr.

“There are so many reasons but I'll try to narrow it down. Adam is an exceptional preacher. His ability to weave everyday lessons with personal stories and historic biblical facts is exactly what OPC and the church in general needs to stay relevant during these times. Adam is a gifted conversationalist and listener. He has an uncanny way of getting even the most private of people to open up about themselves without even realizing it by asking the right questions. Adam is not only looking to help, support and guide us at OPC but also our neighbors near and far. We are blessed to have him join us and I know we in turn will be a blessing to him.” - Suchita Fiorillo

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“Adam Hearlson looks great on paper, his sermons are amazing to listen to, and he’s even better in person! I love to read, but normally my attention wanders while listening to a sermon; however, I could listen to him for hours! Interesting stories, interpretations of scripture, and talking points that make me want to run to my Bible and read related resources... he is also passionate about social justice, committed to true diversity at our church and in the community and world, and values relationships between all people. God has truly guided this process!”  
- Jill Van Rawley

"Adapted from a message that I sent my son, who is in the Peace Corps in the Republic of Georgia:

'I have been on the committee to find a new pastor for Overbrook. We have made an offer to a really extraordinary individual. He is 6'7" in his mid 30s. He wore pink socks with a large floral medallion pattern to his first face-to-face interview. And he is brilliant, a word that – correct me if I am wrong – you have not heard me use about individual intellects very often. He has a PhD in preaching, and he "can do." He has published one book about subversion in Christian worship and is working through another about ambition. He has a long list of publications in “Christian Century,” a high-brow protestant periodical, and he has a long series of podcasts with one of his buddies about modern cinema – Christian perspectives and how preachers might want to use reflections from cinema in sermons. His energy and confidence went over well with some members of the committee, but I think that others had reservations at first: Just another young guy who is way too smart for his own good. But his capacity for reflection on his own limitations, his listening, and his ability to draw people out won them over. And possibly his assertion that his wife is the smart one in the family... “ - Joe Piatt

“Adam has many gifts and uses them energetically. His preaching brings bible stories vividly alive with messages relevant to today’s world. Adam’s sermons make one’s mind, heart and soul spin with connections. I find Adam to be refreshingly aware of both his strengths and weaknesses. He is a master conversationalist and also an empathetic listener. He delights in helping people discover their own gifts to fulfill God’s will. Adam honors diversity and has great passion for social justice issues. He will bring energy and vision to our church’s mission.”  
- Margene Biedermann

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“Since the PNC’s first meeting with him, I have been impressed by Adam’s sincerity, warmth, eloquence, and insightfulness. He notices and cares about the larger world around him while also being deeply attentive to the individual(s) in his presence. He connects well with others by getting to know them, listening to their thoughts, concerns, and ideas, and learning what their gifts are. Indeed, he has many gifts of his own to share. The PNC has been inspired, intellectually stimulated, and inwardly moved by Adam’s sermons and exceptional preaching abilities. It has been a privilege for us to be in his company, and I have tremendous excitement for his future at Overbrook.” - Cheryl Davis

“Adam Hearlson comes to us with a variety of interests that support everything a 21<sup>st</sup> century church should be. He likes to identify and celebrate people’s gifts. Adam is focused on issues related to race, poverty, ecology, food justice, housing, and gun violence. He shares his ideas through podcasts and writing. He is confident, clever, and an engaging conversationalist. His sermons touch your heart, your mind, and your funny bone.” - Aimerie Scherluebbe



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## Pastoral Nominating Committee Q & A February 7, 2019

- Q:** Why is the Rev. Dr. Adam Hearlson's identity revealed today?
- A:** Initially, the PNC planned to reveal the Rev. Dr. Adam Hearlson's identity on February 10<sup>th</sup>, in coordination with the planned announcement at his current church, Wayne Presbyterian. However, Wayne Presbyterian's announcement date was pushed forward to today, February 7<sup>th</sup>. Accordingly, the PNC moved up our announcement to today. We did this in the interest of getting out the long-anticipated news about our selected designated pastor. In addition to listserv, the announcement and Q&A will be posted on OPC's website. Letters will be mailed to members without e-mail. This Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, hard copies of the PNC announcement letter, and this Q&A will be available.
- Q:** What is a designated pastor?
- A:** A designated pastor is one that is selected through a process where the Commission on Ministry (COM) of the Presbytery of Philadelphia carefully pre-screens and selects pastors that they believe will be a good match for churches within their Presbytery. This greatly reduces the typical time required to seek and call a pastor. The terms of the designated call are approved by the COM, including the length of the call. Next, the designated pastor is confirmed by the congregation, with the option to make the call permanent upon the end of the designated term. Designated terms are typically two, three, or four years. The hope is that the designated pastor will be installed indefinitely at the end of the designated term.



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## Pastoral Nominating Committee Q & A

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Q: How does a designated pastor differ from a called pastor?

A: The major difference between a designated pastor and a called pastor is that there is a term limit on a designated call, whereas called pastors are called indefinitely, until either the pastor or the congregation elects to discontinue the call. There is no practical difference between the duties of a designated pastor and a called pastor. Both roles require the fulfillment of typical pastoral duties, such as preaching and pastoral care.

Q: Who is eligible to vote for confirmation of the Rev. Dr. Adam Hearlson?

A: To vote, you must be an official member of the Overbrook Presbyterian Church and be present at the **February 24<sup>th</sup> Congregational Meeting**, happening after worship service.

Q: Will the Rev. Dr. Adam Hearlson be preaching on February 24<sup>th</sup>?

A: Yes, the Rev. Dr. Adam Hearlson will be leading the worship service on February 24<sup>th</sup>.

Q: If the candidate is confirmed, what will be his first day of employment?

A: **Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>.**



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