



Walnut Hill Church
welcomes



Reverend Shawn E. Barkley

INTRODUCTION

It is a pleasure and honor to be able to introduce myself to you. When thinking about who I am and the highlights of the life God has given me, my mind first goes to my early years. Born in Lynchburg, VA, I was adopted by an amazing couple, Dwight and Debbie Barkley, who were living in Blacksburg while my Dad was earning his PhD at Virginia Tech. From an early age, the idea that God gives us grace and adopts us as sons and daughters in Jesus Christ, made sense to me. After all, my parents gave me unconditional love and an amazing childhood when I did nothing to earn this. After my father graduated, we moved to Richmond, KY where they would raise our family (my sister Lauren would later be adopted) and live to this day. We were active members at First Presbyterian Richmond, the place that I consider to be my spiritual home.

I graduated from the Richmond Model School and WKU. While spending my college summers working at Camp Burnamwood, and then a Law Firm during the school year, God began to form my sense of call. I recall reading Bonhoeffer's great work, *The Cost of Discipleship*, in the quiet of that camp setting and feeling a strong nudge from the Holy Spirit to devote my life to serving God and the church as my vocation. The call was confirmed by several mentors and "spiritual parents", including one of the attorneys who told me that I probably wouldn't enjoy or do well in Law School (he was right!).

Since graduating from Columbia Seminary, I've served congregations in North Carolina, Kentucky and Ohio. It is a lifestyle that I love. In my personal life I've seen God's grace at work in many ways. I am blessed to

be married to Amy Jo, also from Richmond. It amazes me that we didn't know each other in our small town, yet God in His providence introduced us while living 100 miles away in Louisville. She's a graduate of Transylvania University and, before dedicating herself to serving congregations alongside me, worked in Human Resources at the Director level. We enjoy being together; being outdoors, going on walks, working in our yard, entertaining family and friends in our home, and having long discussions about the faith we share in Jesus Christ.

My son Davis, born in 1995, lives close to us in Cincinnati. Over the years the two of us have gone through quite a bit together, including dealing with a major health issue in his life - Hunter's Syndrome (MPS 2), a rare genetic syndrome. He's come through numerous surgeries and procedures amazingly well, and still receives a weekly infusion. In the midst of his challenges, I have again seen God's grace and provision in amazing ways. We have learned to completely depend on The Lord, especially during difficult days when the bad news seemed to just keep coming. While there are still difficulties in his life, Davis is thriving. Like me, Davis enjoys watching and playing various sports. We have spent countless hours passing baseball and football, playing basketball and golf, and obsessing over our favorite college and pro teams.

It is my sure conviction that Jesus Christ is the hope of the world. I have not only experienced His grace, but have seen Him redeem and transform individuals, families and communities. As a pastor it is a privilege to open God's Word and share with others the amazing story of our Creator, Redeemer, and Lord. Looking back, I feel blessed to have served growing congregations that have expanded facilities, as well as ministries both within and outside the congregation. I'm energized by the

wonderful challenge of partnering with congregations to discover our God-given gifts and use them to align with what God is doing in the church and community. In addition to serving as a local church pastor, I serve as Director of PresbyLab, a Lilly Grant funded ministry of Cincinnati Presbytery that supports and equips pastors who serve in the congregational context. I see an exciting future for PresbyLab as we're working to establish partnerships with neighboring Presbyteries, as well as Louisville Seminary.

My prayer for next season of life is to continue to enjoy the aspects of ministry that I love; relationships within the congregation and the opportunity to grow deeper with fellow believers in faithfulness and service to God.

Reverend Shawn E. Barkley



The Reverend Shawn Barkley with his wife, Amy Jo, and son, Davis.

TEN (FUN) THINGS to KNOW

1. Born in Lynchburg, VA and raised in Richmond, KY.
2. Graduated from Western Kentucky University with the intention of pursuing a law degree, but later changed his career path and attended Columbia Seminary.
3. Long-time friend and mentee of WHC's Rev. Dr. Mike Ward.
4. Ordained on July 21, 1991 and celebrated his 30-year ordination service in 2021.
5. Has served congregations in Versailles, KY (Versailles Presbyterian Church); Louisville, KY; Charlotte, NC; and Ohio.
6. Married Amy Jo ("AJ") Barkley, who also grew up in Richmond, KY and graduated from Transylvania University, at Walnut Hill Church.
7. Has a son, Davis, born in 1995, who will also move to Lexington in 2024.
8. Serves as Director of PresbyLab, a Lilly Grant funded ministry of The Presbytery of Cincinnati focused on Congregational Vitality. PresbyLab looks to prepare pastors for effective ministry in today's changing context.
9. Interests include grilling, reading non-fiction, golf, hiking, Penn State and Pittsburgh Steelers football (*editor's note: Boo Steelers, Go Bengals!*).
10. Helped serve over 20,000 people at the largest church BBQ in the state of North Carolina while at Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC.



THANK YOU

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