



# Pastor Picard Called To Be St. James Permanent Pastor

**By: Karen Carpenter**

For spiritual health it helps to have permanence and stability. For the last year St. James United Church of Christ has been served by an interim pastor.

Pastor Frank Picard began his service at St. James on February 1, 2017, as the church's interim after the permanent pastor stepped down.

Pastor Wendy Ward served as lead pastor for St. James for eight years. She retired from St. James on August 31, 2016.

It was a matter of importance for the congregation at St. James to have the permanence and stability of a full-time pastor.

"I had no plans to stay in Barnesville longer than a couple of years," said Pastor Picard. "We planned to move to Florida where we own a home."

Members of St. James soon realized that Pastor Picard would be a really good fit for the congregation.

"People kept asking me if I would accept a permanent call to St. James, I kept saying no," stated Pastor Picard. "It finally became abundantly clear that God was calling Betty and

me to change our plans and stay in Barnesville."

With all parties in agreement, a vote was taken on January 28, 2018 to call Pastor Picard as permanent pastor at St. James UCC.

Things won't change much at St. James other than the congregation has the security of knowing their pastor is planting himself in the city.

Pastor Frank and Betty actually started the process a year ago when they bought a townhome in Barnesville. It could be said that God was nudging them, even then, toward the lead pastor position.

The Picards have been married for seven years and have a blended family.

Pastor Picard's last full time ministry was in Minot, ND. While there he shepherded the congregation through a devastating flood where 4,800 homes were lost in the area.

After retirement the opportunity for interim positions presented itself. Pastor Picard served four interim positions in UCC churches before coming to St. James.

Since Picard imagined only

being in Barnesville a short time he didn't get involved in a lot outside the church. He is an active member of the local ministerium. "We will probably get more involved in community activities now," said Pastor Picard.

Nothing will be different than when Picard was interim. "I still try to do meaningful worship, preaching and teaching. I think our Lenten services will show that," said Picard.

"I like that the United Church of Christ Conference wants their ministers to be pastors and teachers," stated Pastor Picard.

He has found St. James to be a wonderful church which is still hungry for the gospel. "I think St. James has a bigger footprint in the community than their size reflects. The members act and think ecumenically," continued Picard.

The Picards have found the community of Barnesville to be nice and friendly. "We felt completely welcome from the very first day in both the church and community at large. We couldn't be happier," concluded Pastor Frank Picard.



St. James puts on a soup and break luncheon in October each year. The event is open to the public and one of the many ways that the congregation reaches out to the community.



Pastor Frank Picard has been serving St. James United Church of Christ in Barnesville as interim pastor since February 1, 2017. On January 28, 2018 the congregation called Pastor Picard to be their permanent pastor. Pastor Picard and his wife, Betty, accepted the call and couldn't be happier.



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