



Greetings DUMC. My family and I are so excited to be coming alongside you all in mission and ministry. These last few weeks have been a whirlwind, but it has truly been a pleasure learning about Denver and the amazing work you are doing in this community and across the globe. I believe a church is at its best when it is creating and sustaining relationships with neighbors and the community at large. And from what I have learned about DUMC already, I can tell that this is a place where God is moving.

A little bit about my family and me: I grew up in Thomasville, NC, and attended Memorial United Methodist Church from birth. I first began to feel a call to the ministry in middle and high school, which was nurtured by my youth minister at the time, who just so happens to be a seminary classmate and good friend of Steve Autrey. (Isn't our United Methodist connection wonderful?!) After high school, I attended High Point University, where I received a bachelor's degree in religion, and then went on to Duke Divinity School, where I received my Master of Divinity degree.

Mae is from Lewisville, NC, and also grew up in the United Methodist Church. She also received her degree from High Point University and worked in the corporate world for a few years before making a career change. For the last 11 years, she has taught CTE at Stuart Cramer High School, focusing on business. Though we met in college, we didn't start dating until later, a story for another time. We've been married for 15 years.

Our oldest, Alma Grace, will be entering the 4th grade this fall. She loves dance, LEGOs, reading, and keeping us all in line. Millie will be turning 5 in a few months and has one more year of preschool before she begins Kindergarten. She loves collecting rubber ducks and all things pink!

Over the years, God's call has led me to some wonderful places and to some wonderful people. It's hard to believe, but I am now beginning my 18th year of ministry. My first appointment was to a two-point charge in Lawndale, NC, where I served Lawndale UMC and Kistler's UMC for 5 years. I was then appointed to serve Park Street UMC in Belmont, where I have served for the last 12 years.

As I said before, I believe relationships are important in the church: relationships with the community around us, but also relationships amongst each other, and of course, our relationship with Jesus Christ. Much of that finds its roots in our Wesleyan heritage. I believe deeply in that heritage and our theology as United Methodists. In particular, I love our continued emphasis on God's grace and its constant work in our lives. Denver's mission is to be a harbor of hope in a chaotic world, and I can't tell you how much that idea resonates with me and how I view a church's purpose and call. I'm excited to live out this mission beside each of you.

As we go through this time of transition, please know that we are in prayer for all of you and for this church. Pastoral transitions are never easy, and we know that many of you are likely to be grieving the loss of a pastor you loved, but please know that we are excited for what lies ahead and for meeting and forming relationships with all of you. We can't wait for Sunday and the opportunity to worship with all of you for the first time.

Blessings,

Pastor David Hiatt

Denver United Methodist Church | 3910 N Hwy 16 PO Box 661 | Denver, NC 28037 US

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