



Office for  
Transition  
Ministry

# Ministry Portfolio

*Full Portfolio (last updated Feb 6, 2025)*

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## The Rev. Lane Goodwin Hensley, San Diego

Priest, Since Dec 15, 2001

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### Preferred Contact Information

4225 Fleur Dr PMB 114  
Des Moines, Iowa 50321-2325  
United States

lane@lanehensley.org

760-851-4641

*I have focused on Interim Ministry since 2019, and love it. Good interim ministry stabilizes and fortifies congregations, equips congregational leadership to see themselves clearly and discern God's gracious will for mission with hope, wisdom, & joy.*

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Current Compensation

Required for New Position

Negotiable

Healthcare Needed

Clergy only

Housing/Rectory

Housing/Rectory Detail

Housing Required for

Housing Allowance

2

*Semi-retired, pursuing interesting interim opportunities. Detailed compensation history available..*

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### Education

1983-1987 A.B., Religion, Duke University

1998-2001 M.Div., Seabury-Western Theo. Sem.

2019 Work of the Congregation, Interim Ministry Network

2018 Work of the Leader, Interim Ministry Network

2017 Church Systems, Healthy Congregations, Lombard Mennonite Peace Ctr

2009 Police Chaplaincy, Intl Conf. of Police Chaplain

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### Position Preferences

Cathedral Dean

Consultant

Dean

Interim

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

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### Open to Consider New Position

Full time

Interim-certified

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### Work History and Skills

Interim	Nov 2023 to Apr 2024	St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral	Minneapolis, Minnesota	<p>Pastoral, financial, mission, Polity/Governance <i>Helped the Cathedral address some longstanding governance dysfunction, clarify and strengthen mission, and stabilize financial issues. Can elaborate in private and confidential conversation.</i></p>
Interim	Sep 2021 to Mar 2023	St. Paul's Episcopal Church	Milwaukee, Wisconsin	<p>Transition, administration, liturgy, pastoral care <i>Helped the congregation focus on mission and outreach to the thriving neighborhood in the center of Milwaukee, strengthen governance structures, and take on difficult and entrenched HR problems.</i></p>
Interim	Sep 2019 to Jun 2021	All Saints'	Austin, Texas	<p>Grief, administration, liturgy, pastoral care <i>Followed after involuntary removal of a longtime rector. Significant staffing and budget challenges, decades of deferred maintenance, and incoherent management of endowment. Cut two positions to bring budget in line, asserted boundaries and differentiation, which freed them to do the same. Established financial best practices and increased trust. Led through major infrastructure upgrades, leveraging crisis and opportunities of COVID-19 pandemic.</i></p>
Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	Jul 2010 to Jan 2019	St. Margaret's Episcopal Church	Palm Desert, California	
	Jun 2003 to Jun 2010	The Church of the Transfiguration	Palos Park, Illinois	
Assistant / Associate / Curate	Jul 2001 to Jun 2003	Christ Church	Winnetka, Illinois	



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Other Contact Information

> <https://lanehensley.org>

Date of Last Background Check  
**Aug 1, 2024**

Company performing check

Diocese requesting  
**Indianapolis**

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Sermons Preached:

> <https://files.lanehensley.org/audio/sermons/>

Resources Created:

Online References:

What Others Have Written:

Groups and Associations:

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Languages Written  
**English**

Languages Spoken  
**English**

Languages in which you are able to Lead Worship  
**English**

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Describe a moment in your recent ministry that you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

In late 2015 at St. Margaret's, Palm Desert CA, our sacristy was burglarized. About \$30,000 worth of Eucharistic vessels were stolen, along with some personal crosses and computer equipment. Soon, the sheriff's office called to report the arrest of a meth addict and dealer who had hit multiple congregations. Following the example of a diocesan colleague in a similar situation, and that of Pope John Paul II after his shooting, I visited the thief in the Riverside County jail and got to know him a bit, offering forgiveness. Over many months of continued conversation, I learned details of his 4-year child sexual abuse by his mother's boyfriend, his dependence on drugs and alcohol, and his longing to meet his newborn son. He was released 17 months early after I advocated for him, attended his one-year sobriety event, and helped him find work and housing. He apologized to the parish on a Sunday morning, became a Eucharistic Minister, using a chalice that had been bent in the trunk of his car. It was, for him, me, and the parish, an extraordinary experience of redemption and reconciliation.

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Describe your liturgical style and practice.

My own liturgical style is deeply informed by two mentoring priests, both now deceased: the Rev. Robert Hall of St. George's, Arlington, VA, and the Rt. Rev. George Council, former bishop of New Jersey, who was rector of Holy Spirit in Lake Forest, IL and sponsored me for ordination. Both are careful and thoughtful liturgists. Both tend to be strict observers of form and of rubrics, though both adapted as necessary to accommodate the needs of the worshipping congregation. Bob taught me to love chanting the Eucharistic Prayer, which I heard for the first time when he sang it. Bob was a low church Virginia priest, and the last I'd expect to sing liturgy. But it was tied to his reverence for the power of the words to bring the congregation into the presence of God. George taught me to appreciate simplicity and elegance in worship and to pray more than perform liturgy. I integrate particular small liturgical mannerisms of both into my own celebration style, reminding me that they are among "all the company of heaven" who forever sing praise to God. Finally, both taught me that not everything that's creative is edifying, and to resist the cutesy.

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How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

This is something I've had to work on consciously, because left to my own devices, I tend toward doing things myself. But a colleague said to me once that every minute a priest spends doing tasks instead of building the leadership of parishioners systematically disempowers a congregation. I'm a list maker, and from time to time I look at my list and ask myself whether I'd be doing a greater service to the congregation if I devoted the effort to equipping the saints. In addition to involving almost 300 people in active lay and clergy liturgical roles and delegating responsibility and authority at St. Margaret's, I formed a parish-wide discernment leadership team as a first step toward mission planning for the congregation. After the Sandy Hook shootings, I preached about the need to do more than ring bells and say "never again," and called for the congregation to start a ministry to end gun violence. That lay-led ministry became one of our largest. I also encouraged and empowered a parishioner who wanted to start an interfaith ministry to create our Building Bridges group practicing interfaith tolerance and collaboration.

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How do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

After 17 years of ordained ministry, I took my first sabbatical in the summer of 2018. The details are at <http://lanehensley.org/about>, but the overarching learning to me was that Jesus' own pattern of engaging deeply with the disciples and the crowd, and then retreating in solitude to pray and practice refreshment, is essential to spiritual health. I stepped away from my job, and recovered my vocation. Using Richard Rohr's "Falling Upward" as my anchor text, I was able to order the massive spiritual warehouse of ego, achievement, identity, and values, and begin the process of wondering in a serious way what those necessary but incomplete structures were intended to nurture and support. And as so many people say about sabbath time, the time disengaged has nourished and sanctified the time when I'm back "on." I preach better, my pastoral care is better, and I see hungry souls around me where I had come to see yellow caution lights.

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Describe your involvement in either the wider Church or geographical community.

My resume describes actual positions held, so I don't do that here. The BCP ordination rite makes clear that priests are not "free agents." Instead it describes working "together with [our] bishop and fellow presbyters ... [taking our] share in the councils of the Church" and "laboring together with [all whom we are called to serve] and with [our] fellow ministers." That understanding of ordained ministry as discerned and upheld by the whole community, and exercised collegially, is essential to my understanding of ministry. I've tried to use the office to establish genuine worship, outreach, and advocacy partnerships outside the Episcopal Church, especially with ELCA Lutherans and Reformed Judaism. I've been a police chaplain, and collaborated with our Congressman, particularly around immigration issues, which are quite relevant in Southern California. And I sponsored a public event when the Supreme Court when same-sex marriage was legalized, bringing together legal, financial, and medical experts to counsel and support a community around newly-received rights and options that most of us take for granted.

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How do you engage in pastoral care for others?

In California, I led a large but seasonal congregation. In August, our ASA dropped to about 250. In February, it was 600-700. Colleagues I learned from in similarly-sized congregations persuaded me of the futility of trying to develop substantial pastoral relations with everyone. The general wisdom is that it's possible to offer effective pastoral care to a group no larger than 150-200. For that reason, I focused my own pastoral efforts on parish leaders and people I'm close to either personally or professionally, and clergy and lay leaders created an effective pastoral care team led by the senior associate rector. My own pastoral efforts included home and hospital visitations, one-on-one conversations around acute issues, referrals to our in-house psychotherapist (who's also a priest), and very short note writing. Structurally, my goal was to equip our congregations to be pastors to each other. Not to get me out of that role, but to expand its effectiveness, consistent with Galatians 6:2.

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Tell about a ministry project that exists because of your leadership. What was your role in its creation? Who can be contacted?

In question 3, I referred to the St. Margaret's gun violence ministry, which the team chose to call Living Without Fear. After the Sandy Hook shootings, the governor of Connecticut called on churches to ring their bells once for each victim at the hour of the attack. We did, and we gathered our mayor, congressman, law enforcement officials, and other clergy to show solidarity. Several mass shootings later, I suggested that ringing bells and offering "thoughts and prayers" was, while important, not enough. We needed to be agents of peace, and not just wishing spectators. I called on the congregation to start this ministry themselves, and coached and advised the leadership. Toward the end of my time there, they expanded to collaborate with the local ELCA church, and organized a public conversation that included Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori and then-Congresswoman Jackie Speier, a former aid to Leo Ryan. This ministry has grown and thrived, and my greatest joy is that my own role has been one of coaching and counsel, not direction and control.

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How are you preparing yourself for the Church of the future?

I've devoted the remainder of my active ministry to leadership transition in congregations because I believe that God is radically retooling the Church. Declining attendance, polarizing politics, and economic and health crises are fueling anxiety and leadership turnover. Each congregation begins to feel shame and start problem solving. But what's happening is the Advent and in-breaking of the reign of God. I've preached that as a child I was confused by the Apollo mission because the capsule that returned didn't include the rocket. I thought that meant failure. What it meant was that the rocket, the biggest part as the mission begins, serves its purpose and detaches minutes into the mission. It's all about the people inside. The resurrected Jesus was unrecognized by his closest friends, and the Church of the future will look nothing like the one we grew up in. That's because God is doing a new thing, and it's terrifying. I want the apex of my ministry to be one of confidence for those whose naves are being beaten by waves of a storm. John 21:18 speaks to this, and I want to be that kind of pastor.

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What is your personal practice of stewardship and how do you utilize it to influence your ministry in your worshipping community?

In short, Becky and I try to practice what we preach. I've called on the congregation to give generously for the simple reason that the Kingdom of God is an excellent value proposition: The ministries we accomplish in our churches can change our own lives, and those of the people we serve in community ministries. I've pushed for and accomplished the installation of a solar energy system for financial and environmental stewardship. At our desert home, we've removed enormous grass lawns that require heavy irrigation three times daily, and replaced them with attractive desert-friendly succulents that save thousands of gallons of water a month and are beautiful. We back that up without own financial stewardship. We are in the top 10% of major donors to the parish, replaced our own lawn at home with xeriscaping, and drive energy-efficient hybrid cars. And during stewardship season, I talk about it plainly. Not to boast, but to share that it's joyful to think and behave this way.

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What is your experience of conflict involving the church? And what is your experience in addressing it?

I believe that conflict is a normal and inevitable consequence of gathering human beings around shared passionate values and differing gifts and perspectives. When St. Margaret's Vestry anticipated the fall of California Proposition 8 in 2013 and published a thoughtful and coherent rationale for celebrating and blessing same-sex marriages, even after having discussed it in open forums and discussions for several years ahead of the decision, we anticipated correctly that not everyone would agree, and that conflict would ensue. Some parishioners were sad, and others were angry. Some left the parish, stating our position as their reason, but privately sharing with me that there were other issues involved, and that they understood and respected our path to that decision. The vast majority of those who dissented stayed, and we continued to listen to and respond to their concerns, while they've begun renewing friendships with their gay friends who now live in holy covenant with God and each other. In all this, I think the key is that we were open about the issues and never shut down anyone who saw things differently.

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What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

When I arrived at St. Margaret's, I inherited a 17-year-old school that never had recovered its costs, and lost \$350,000 in my first year, the last year it operated. The underlying issue was not that the Vestry and other leadership didn't know what to do, but that they feared the consequences of doing it. They knew that there would be outcry from the staff and faculty, parents, and community. But most of all, they were paralyzed at the prospect of betraying the "dream" of my late predecessor to have a school. I didn't force the closing of the school. But following Ron Heifetz's "Leadership Without Easy Answers" counsel, I created a crucible in which the Vestry were safe to be thoughtful and do what needed to be done. On the "gone poorly" side, I eliminated the music (one hymn) at our 8 a.m. Eucharist cutting \$7,000 annually from our budget, but failed to discuss the change with the congregation and the Vestry. I "learned" (again) that the right decision executed without consultation and collaboration does more harm than good to a vulnerable community.

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References

Bishop:

Please see my current résumé at <https://lanehensley.org/resume>

Diocesan Transition Minister

Active Clergy:

Active Clergy:

Colleague in Church Governance:

Colleague in Church Governance:

Colleague in Ministry:

Colleague in Ministry: