

## Where I Am From and How I Got to Gloria Dei: Christine Tani



I grew up in New Windsor, New York in the lower Hudson Valley. I grew up in a Lutheran parsonage, my father was pastor of King of Kings Lutheran Church. Growing up in a parsonage offers you a unique perspective on the church and what it means to be a member of a congregation because it is such an integral part of your life. When Tom and I got married we settled in New Jersey. We started our married life in East Brunswick but shortly after we moved to the Morristown area.

As a pastor's kid it was very important for me to find "the right" church home. To be honest, I did not visit churches of other Protestant denominations. I was born and bred Lutheran, it is part of what makes me who I am.

For me, my church home had to have a certain feel to it. It had to be welcoming and comfortable, like your favorite sweater. Of course, there was the usual checklist of items: Was the congregation friendly? Was the pastor a good preacher? Did they sing (there is nothing sadder to me that being in a church where you cannot hear anyone singing the hymns)? But it had to have "something" more. That "something" could not be evaluated using a checklist, or measured by some standard. I guess in theological terms one might say it is the Holy Spirit. To me it is that feeling that I am home. It is where I feel grounded and secure; I have found where I am meant to be. So, I visited several Lutheran churches but Gloria Dei is where I felt grounded and secure. Gloria Dei was where I was meant to be. Since I joined Gloria Dei many things have changes. We worship in a new space, we have a different pastor, the congregation has changed and yet it still feels like home. I am writing this amid the upheaval of the Coronavirus when we cannot worship together and yet when I join with all of you via Facebook - I am grounded and secure, I am home!