

Elizabeth Griswold

Elizabeth grew up in Carlsbad, California and attended Pilgrim United Church of Christ. She graduated from UCLA in 2000 with degrees in English and Religion. After graduation, she chose to live in an intentional Christian community in voluntary poverty, serving as a social justice advocate for the Los Angeles Catholic Worker Community, helping to provide for the homeless through a soup kitchen, free medical/dental clinic, and religious and counseling services. She later spent a year as a volunteer English teacher at an indigenous Mayan community school in Guatemala through Church of the Brethren Volunteer Service. She attended Pacific School of Religion for one year before transferring to Harvard Divinity School from which she graduated in 2009, earning her Masters of Divinity degree.

While at Harvard, Elizabeth lived in the Cambridge Cooperative Club, an intergenerational housing collective, with members ranging in age from 24 to 80. She helped lead the UCC student group and WomenChurch Worshipping Community while helping to organize events on campus for the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice and the Massachusetts Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice. She regularly attended ecumenical and interfaith worship services, including at local synagogues. Earlier this year, she was a visiting participant at both the Taizé International Ecumenical Monastic Christian Community and Plum Village Buddhist Monastery in France.



Elizabeth officiating at her brother and sister-in-law's wedding.

While all of her social justice activities are too numerous to list, Elizabeth has been involved with the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network, Global Ministries in Guatemala and South Africa, Harvard Prison Education Project, War Resisters League of San Francisco, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, among many others. Elizabeth has provided bilingual crisis intervention and long-term case management to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, tutored children in San Francisco, and counseled homeless youth.

Elizabeth's goal has been to serve as a parish minister: "What a privilege it would be to baptize children, to help lead marriage ceremonies and funerals – to really walk beside people through all the different stages of life." She was seeking a congregation similar to the one she grew up in where she could do social justice advocacy and some international work. At Pilgrim, she served as a guest preacher, liturgist, Sunday School and Vacation Bible School teacher, choir member and fundraiser for international outreach projects. She has also been a counselor at Pilgrim Pines Camp and Conference Center.



At the beach in Cape Town, South Africa.

Elizabeth enjoys traveling and learning about new cultures and languages, spending time at the beach, meditation and exercise (bike-riding and yoga), talking with people, and reading. Her parents still reside in Carlsbad, and her siblings and their families are all Southern California residents.