

Rev. Dr. James A. Gilchrist

The Reverend Dr. James A. Gilchrist serves as senior pastor and head of staff at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Upper St. Clair, PA.

He was born and raised in nearby Charleroi, Pennsylvania. He earned his B.A. in philosophy in 1977 at Yale University and remained in New Haven to attend Yale Divinity School, where he received his Master of Divinity in 1979. Dr. Gilchrist was ordained in the United Methodist Church and assigned to Warren, Pennsylvania. His next position was as an associate pastor at Christ United Methodist Church in Bethel Park, and he later became pastor of the Dormont United Methodist Church.

In 1985, Dr. Gilchrist was invited to become the executive director of The Wesley Institute in Upper St. Clair. He coordinated a staff of 150 and a budget of \$5 million. During this time, he pursued a Master of Public and International Affairs degree at the University of Pittsburgh. Upon leaving Wesley in 1990, he continued his graduate studies, earning a Master's degree in history from Carnegie Mellon University in 1991. While enrolled in graduate school in the early 1990s he also served as director of operations for the New Standards Project, a nationwide effort to develop voluntary educational standards and assessments. Dr. Gilchrist observes that working with non-profits allowed him to practice an entrepreneurial spirit, as well as gain valuable management skills that are applicable to the church.

He transferred to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 1993 through the Pittsburgh Presbytery, and was called to serve as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Tuckerton, New Jersey. He earned his Ph.D. in history and policy from Carnegie Mellon in 1997, and the same year became senior pastor of Second Presbyterian Church in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Gilchrist is passionate about education. He enjoys teaching in a church setting, and has taught courses at Carnegie Mellon University, Dickinson College, and the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. He has also published articles in *The Christian Century*, the *History of Education Quarterly*, and the *Encyclopedia of Social History*.

Dr. Gilchrist appreciates the variety ministry offers. Along with teaching, he is inspired by preaching, social outreach and mission, small groups, retreats, and imagining new forms of ministry.

Jim and Gwenn have been married for 20 years. Their two children, Jeremy and Anna, were born in Pittsburgh. Jeremy attends the University of Pittsburgh and Anna is a senior in high school. Jim claims many hobbies, but concedes they are mostly hypothetical, for lack of time.