

Stephen Portner Bio

Stephen Portner was born and raised near Rome, NY, where he and his family attended a small Methodist Episcopal Church in the town of Lee. He graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of Arts degree and worked as industrial designer in New Hartford, NY, for four years. During that time he met the woman who would become his wife, Christine. It was only after they were married and had their first child, Nate, that Stephen responded to the call to ministry. Later they would add to the family a set of identical twins, Alex and Ben. Nate now works for Riot Games in Dublin, Ireland. He is married to Laura, and they have a son, Eli. The twins live together, along with Alex's wife, Liz, in Fuquay-Varina, NC. Alex works as a chiropractor and Ben works in IT for Red Hat, a division of IBM. Christine currently works out of our home in revenue recovery for Geisinger Medical Center.

Stephen received his Master of Divinity degree from Drew Theological Seminary in Madison, NJ. He has served at a number of United Methodist Churches, usually helping churches through times of transition. At Delaware Water Gap-Poplar Valley, he followed a beloved pastor who had served there 24 years. At Grace, South Williamsport, he helped prepare the church for a yoked ministry with a neighboring United Methodist congregation. With the two churches, Morrisdale and Palestine, he helped them through a time of healing. At Lightstreet, the church needed some motivation for a building project that was long overdue. He also helped them develop an effective team-based ministry. In Chambers Hill, the church grew in number and in mission, cooperating with other community organizations in ways they had not before. At St Thomas, Stephen followed a beloved pastor who had served there sixteen years. At Bethany in Berwick, he helped a church heal from its brokenness.

Stephen loves the Lord and desires to serve the Lord's people to the best of his ability, with God's amazing grace. He believes that "God so loves the world" – no exceptions. One of his favorite pastimes is drawing. He recently illustrated a children's book with author, Angel Kishbaugh, called "The Go-To-It Man," which is presently available on Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

