

CPC Member Profile

Flo Gabbard



The Presbyterian Church has always been part of my life, my home away from home so to speak. Growing up, my family lived one block from Olivet Presbyterian

Church, in Chicago. My mother's family helped to build the church. My grandfather was an elder, my uncles played basketball in the gym. As children, I sang in the choir along with my sibling. After school we took cooking, craft, and sewing classes as well as music lessons.

We spent part of each summer at the Norman B. Barr camp in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

My mother taught Sunday school at Olivet. Before going to work each morning in the winter, my father stoked the church furnaces. I was baptized, confirmed and married at Olivet.

Following the birth of our son, my husband Max and I decided to move to Prospect Heights. Upon arrival, I immediately looked for a Presbyterian Church that had a loving and caring family. I found it at Community Presbyterian.

I joined the choir, became an Elder, taught Sunday School and the confirmation class. I worked with Junior High and Senior High young people. I also taught Biology and Anthropology at Daley College for 38 years. Retired, I now volunteer at Northwest Community Hospital.

As our son grew, he became involved in the Presbytery and Synod activities and at the age of 16 became the youngest commissioner to the general assembly.

In my youth, I became interested in mission work. At the time, I corresponded with a minister from Olivet who traveled to Thailand. Mission work became my goal, a goal not fulfilled until adulthood. CPC started a mission to the Dominican Republic and for a ten year period, I traveled there as a member of the health team to run a health clinic. For an additional ten years, our church teamed up with 1st Church of Arlington Heights. I travelled to the Dominican Republic each of those ten years as well.

CPC also started an annual mission to Romania in 1989, working with gypsies. Today the Romanian mission is a joint effort of CPC and 1st Presbyterian Church of Howell, Michigan.

My mission work was also here in the United States: in Pennsylvania for work in a nursing home and Colorado to work in homeless shelters and soup kitchens.

Aside from mission work, I have made multiple trips to Europe with the Elk Grove, Illinois Jazz Band.

My son works for the Church via Mary Holmes College, McCormick Theological Seminary and today Austin Theological Seminary in Austin, Texas.

I can thank CPC for its leadership and caring about my desire to fulfill a long ago dream of being a missionary. I feel the presence of God in our church, our congregation and its love, caring and friendship. I feel so grateful to be a member of CPC.