



Office for  
Transition  
Ministry

# Ministry Portfolio

*Full Portfolio (last updated Oct 9, 2019)*

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## The Rev. Dr. William Carl Thomas, East Carolina

Priest, Since Dec 20, 1989

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### Preferred Contact Information

4832 Bluebell Trace  
New Bern, North Carolina 28562  
United States

williamcarlthomas@gmail.com  
252-876-6841  
252-876-6841

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*LOVE, LISTEN, TRUST, LEAD, COLLABORATE. Retired but active (available for interim work), I teach being on the dance floor while observing the action with a balcony perspective. I offer Workshops, Consulting, & guide Transitions (see WCT.coach).*

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Current Compensation	Required for New Position	Negotiable	Healthcare Needed
		Yes	Clergy+1
Housing/Rectory	Housing/Rectory Detail	Housing Required for	
Housing Allowance		2	

*Prior to retirement Annual Compensation: \$110,000. Interim comp should be same as former rector.*

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### Education

2005-2014 Doctor of Ministry, Ministry Development, Virginia Theological Seminary

1986-1989 Master of Divinity, Parish Ministry, Parish Minis, Nashotah House

1970-1985 Bachelor of Science, Mass Communications, Boston University

2019 2 days - no certificate, leadership and discipleship, RenewalWorks

2016 20 CEUs, IMN Annual Conference, Interim Ministry Network

2016 20 CEUs, Enneagram training, Univ of the South / J Howell

2015 16 CEUs, Disaster Chaplaincy Training, E-RD, Natl Disaster Interfait

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### Position Preferences

Cathedral Dean  
Interim  
Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

### Open to Consider New Position

Full time  
Interim-certified  
Supply

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### Work History and Skills

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	May 2015 to Sep 2018	Christ Church	Middletown, New Jersey	<p>Pastoral care, leadership, liturgy, Adaptive Practice</p> <p><i>Challenge: A three to five year Bishop's appointment as Priest-in-Charge to rebuild a once strong program size parish following the conflict inherent in the involuntary termination of a short-lived rectorship. The Bishop recruited a skilled, experienced priest (me) to deepen relationships with God and one another. A collaborative environment ensued and revealed health that led to energetic community renewal within this remarkable historic parish.</i></p>
Interim	Aug 2013 to Mar 2015	Christ Church	New Bern, North Carolina	<p>Interim rector, transition, preaching, pastoral care</p> <p><i>Moved this energetic million-dollar multi-staff parish through a needed staff transition that made possible the call of the current rector. Began rebuilding the lay ministry infrastructure necessary to support this corporate size historic church.</i></p>
Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge (Part-time)	Feb 2013 to Aug 2013	St. Peter's Episcopal Church	Huntington, West Virginia	<p>Interim Ministry (part-time) while writing doctoral thesis</p> <p><i>Brought pastoral care and leadership within a part-time ministry for a wonderful and committed family size congregation.</i></p>
Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	Sep 2003 to Jul 2012	Saint Matthews Episcopal Church	Charleston, West Virginia	
Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	Dec 1994 to Jul 2003	St. Matthias Episcopal Church	Tuscaloosa, Alabama	
Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	Jul 1991 to Nov 1994	St. Mark's Episcopal Church	Warren, Rhode Island	



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Priest, Since Dec 20, 1989

### Other Contact Information

4832 Bluebell Trace  
New Bern, North Carolina 28562  
United States

Bill@WCT.coach  
252-876-6841  
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> [www.WCT.coach](http://www.WCT.coach)

Date of Last Background Check  
Wed, 2019-02-13

Company performing check  
Diocese of East Carolina

Diocese requesting  
East Carolina

Sermons Preached:  
> <https://WCT.coach>

Resources Created:  
> <https://WCT.coach>

Online References:

What Others Have Written:

Groups and Associations:  
> <http://www.imnedu.org/>  
> <http://www.imec-online.org/>

Languages Written  
**English**

Languages Spoken  
**English**

Languages in which you are able to Lead Worship  
**English**

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Describe a moment in your recent ministry that you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

The successful resolution of committee assignments concerning two strong longtime lay leaders affirmed my ability to be fully present in a non-anxious manner while guiding a tension-laced discussion with one of these leaders and the senior warden. We found common ground as we reviewed the role of the parish finance committee and the core values that guide that group's work on behalf of the vestry. I found an opportunity to calmly bring the name of the other leader into the conversation. As we discussed the relationship of the two strong leaders, it became clear that one would not serve with the other due to their long history. The resolution appeared when the conversation expanded to include the work of the endowment committee. The strong leader brightened at the prospect of such an assignment and accepted with joy a transfer. I felt fulfilled as I used the reflection-in-action skills honed in my Doctor of Ministry thesis in order to lead by giving space. In this case, the space offered to discover a resolution came from deep listening made possible with the Baptismal Covenant core value: I am better at what I do when I do it with God's help.

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Describe your liturgical style and practice.

I am guided by the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer and am conscious of the community I have the privilege to lead in worship. I once served in a parish that does not embrace a priest who chants. I honored their custom as an example of my commitment that liturgy is the work of the people. This approach is more broad church than high church. I introduced a chasuble as a common priestly vestment. The brass was exchanged for wood during Lent. I preached at the crossing before the pews rather than the pulpit. These became the well-accepted norm. The preaching moment is a sacred moment for me. My seemingly extemporaneous sermon reflects my interaction with God during the week and is a time when I open myself to share what I encountered. This is challenged by the weekly lections and calls for theological reflection rooted in a discipline of ongoing study. How healthy relationships are shaped within the tension among Benedictine values such as living in a wholesome rhythm, humility, and answering each other's call are often at the heart of my sermons. I attempt to hold the context in which we live our lives open to the change that inevitably comes from listening carefully to God.

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How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Hospitality brings people into community. Community is where gifts and talents are nurtured and shared. Ministry is the outcome. The first step is creating a warm, spirit-filled environment in the church. Sensitive greeters, helpful ushers, understandable bulletin, relaxed yet reverent worship create the desire to return. Interaction with caring clergy and parish based fellowship events build relationships. Formation within small group study or clergy led instruction leads to identifying gifts that bring commitment to internal and external ministries. My experience in developing a catechumenal process such as the lay-led, clergy supported Living Our Baptismal Covenant (LOBC) supports this outcome. In my pastoral sized second parish, 100 adults were formed. Strong relationships with each other and God became what I identified as Deep Church: a group of people who gather with a willing expectation to share intimately the love of God. In my third parish, a program size church, the community principles of St. Benedict supported an organic approach to incorporation. The Invite-Welcome-Connect method of the Diocese of Texas is an excellent example of a systematic yet organic approach.

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How do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

Disciplined time integrating the Rule of St. Benedict gave the gift of this breath prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, I have nothing to prove, only your invitations to offer. Living within Christian community and sharing the healthy tension promoted by the Benedictine principles of sticking with it, active listening, and daily improvement gives me a deeper appreciation of the strength found in collaborative leadership. Sharing the discovery that every moment is sacred through “listening with the ear of the heart” and “living this life with an attitude of loving kindness” nourishes and sustains my spiritual journey. I enjoy cooking and learning new things (especially tech!). I love to read (history, mysteries) and watch movies. Edna Marie, my wife of 46 years, has a great laugh that I love to stimulate. Daily 70 minute walks for exercise includes prayer stimulated by Christian musicians such as Newsboys, Bebo Norman, Kutless, Josh Wilson, Sidewalk Prophets deepen me spiritually. Calorie-counting on my iPhone helps. Home repair is satisfying. Tennis is a new avocation. Go Red Sox & Roll Tide. Kanuga each summer provides personal and family renewal and refreshment.

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Describe your involvement in either the wider Church or geographical community.

I am committed to walking with members of the African-American community. In Tuscaloosa AL I was honored to be the first Caucasian elected an officer of the historic Tuscaloosa County Inter-Denominational Ministerial Alliance. In Charleston WV key African-American pastors embraced me as we worked together to create a collaborative effort to combat racism and promote economic justice. This work led my bishop to appoint me his representative to the West Virginia Council of Churches and name me diocesan Ecumenical Officer. Partners-in-Care, a movement to support current military members, veterans, and their families is an outgrowth of this work. I was also involved in coordinating the Lutheran/Anglican/Roman Catholic annual conference as well as the 10th anniversary celebration of Called to Common Mission with the local Lutheran Synod and the Diocese of West Virginia. In the Diocese of East Carolina, I offered my support to the LGBT community by hosting worship at Christ Church, New Bern and worked to teach the deep commitment found in the Baptismal Covenant: Will you strive for justice and peace, among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? I will, with God’s help

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How do you engage in pastoral care for others?

The moments of intersection where I am invited to share someone’s joy or pain as well as those opportunities when I can reveal the joy and pain of my faith journey form the most important aspects of parish ministry for me. This means my role as pastor, where I am available at any time in order to affirm that we are not abandoned, is the place “where my deep gladness meets the world’s deep hunger” (Buechner). Guided by the principle of the compass and the clock (Covey), my practice of pastoral care affirms people and relationships as paramount (the true north found in the image of the compass) while accepting these holy interruptions when managing events and things (for which there is never enough time found in the image of the clock). This means when I know a parishioner needs me I am present either by telephone, text, or in person. I use gatherings (usually over food!) to connect with people and seek out opportunities for more intimate visits. Personal note writing also builds healthy relationships. I also use lunchtime to visit and engage the busy professionals.

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Tell about a ministry project that exists because of your leadership. What was your role in its creation? Who can be contacted?

Reconstituting in 2007 the Stewardship Commission of the Diocese of West Virginia is the outcome of collaboration between laity and clergy. Two dedicated laypersons and I shared our gifts. With their input I developed a resource website. Over time new members, both laity and clergy joined the commission. I edited and shared writing *The Kingdom of Heaven is Like* (2010); *Finding Our Commitment to Christ in Ordinary Times* (2009); *Planning for Abundance - A Lenten Study* (2008). The full scope of collaboration was realized in *Hidden Treasure: The Diocesan Stewardship Training Event* (2011) where I led two workshops: *The Transactional Analysis of Money and Discerning the Role of Clergy in Stewardship*. We added a fifth point to the Alabama Stewardship Plan's four commitment outcomes 1) Evangelism calls people to commitment 2) Worship celebrates that commitment 3) Christian formation teaches the meaning of that commitment 4) Stewardship is the practice of that commitment 5) Discipleship that leads to Apostolic Action is the outcome of that commitment. Contact Linda Crocker, Former Commission Chair, 61 Ronald Reagan Drive, Parkersburg WV 26101 (304) 210-5591 (llbc100@msn.com).

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How are you preparing yourself for the Church of the future?

Adaptive Practice grounded in study and shared through technology form my preparation. My Doctor of Ministry (successful thesis defense 06/28/2013 - theme: *Leading By Giving Space*) developed a Reflection-in-Action Synthesis that brought three intrapersonal capacity building approaches together: Organizational Development (Heifetz, Grashow, Linsky); Emotional Knowledge (Bowen, Freidman, Steinke); and Educational Theory (Argyris, Schön). I developed two practices that guide my response to stimuli: The Anxiety Response Chart (ARC) and Yellow Pad Discipline (YPD). Both practices support non-reactive response and influence my decision on how much anxiety is necessary to promote transformation within the church (refer to [balconyperspective.com](http://balconyperspective.com)). "Adaptive Practice in Conversation with Enneagram" is the natural extension of D.Min. Presenting these self-reflective practices to clergy with the Enneagram Type as a base of reference, as I did at the 2016 IMN Annual Conference, is a way to prepare the leadership of the church of the future.

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What is your personal practice of stewardship and how do you utilize it to influence your ministry in your worshipping community?

Stewardship is about more than money. Stewardship, as noted in the answer on my leadership in developing a ministry, encompasses five functions that all have to do with deepened commitment to God and one another. Stewardship is an attitude in harmony with the Rule of St. Benedict. For example, the qualifications of Benedict's Cellarer (the one responsible for the food) focused on character as much as ability: "Let him regard all the utensils of the monastery and its whole property as if they were the sacred vessels of the altar." Stewardship, as I retell the Pearl of Great Price story, reminds us that all that we have is on loan from God and is to be managed with prudence. Stewardship is a discipline that nurtures healthy relationships, celebrates abundance, and asks, "What is enough." My teaching entitled "The Transactional Analysis of Money" calls adult participants to consider if their use of money is expressed as a Parent, Adult, or Child. The teaching incorporates the same three-box approach I use with children (10% giving, 10% savings, 80% spending). My wife and I are proportional givers and are public in our commitment that 10% is the minimum standard of generous giving.

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What is your experience of conflict involving the church? And what is your experience in addressing it?

There is nothing inherently wrong with conflict as conflict is implicit in transformation. The deeper question concerns how to recognize and manage conflict. 28 years ago in my first church I was as unskilled as I was energetic. Long simmering internal conflict undid the growth that occurred during my rectorship. My doctoral self-study used this time as a benchmark for when I began to appreciate the importance of listening. In 2009, 35 people from various aspects of my ministry evaluated my preferences within Speed Leas' Conflict Management Survey. Stimulated by their assessment, I developed listening techniques that built trust and made collaboration the norm with senior lay leadership. Conflict in the corporate parish I served (2013-2015) centered on animosity between inherited clergy associates. I used my time-certain status as Interim Rector to make painful (for some) staff decisions that ultimately were best for the parish. My personal guiding principles bound up in the words Love, Listen, Trust, Lead, Collaborate were seen as expression of my character. The senior lay leadership recognized the importance of the principle that I was acting on what would be best for the parish.

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What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

In many ways, my D.Min answers this question. The previous question on conflict recalls my first parish. The commitment to the catechumenate of my second parish gave me an intuitive feel for the importance of trust and giving space when leading change. In order to lead and address the eventual positive change in my third parish, I embraced Heifetz' "Adaptive Leadership" model. Learning to listen deeply made it natural for me to encourage rather than control: collaboration became the regular outcome. I am at my best when I remember that God trusts me and that I have nothing to prove: only God's holy invitations to offer. Guiding mission-oriented change sown in holy space cultivates congregational vitality. Trust in God and one another lets the Spirit breathe life into such space. This is why the word TRUST is pivotal in the guiding expression: LOVE, LISTEN, TRUST, LEAD, COLLABORATE. The once conflicted parish where I was called by the Bishop to serve in 2015 is now vibrant because of Trust in God and one another. Building trust began before I was physically onsite as we shared pictures and emails that built the foundation for the now healthy relationship between people and priest.

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### References

#### Bishop:

The Rt. Rev. William H. (Chip) Stokes (609) 394-5281, Ext. 11, [wstokes@dioceseofnj.org](mailto:wstokes@dioceseofnj.org)

#### Diocesan Transition Minister

The Rev. Michael Singer 252-522-0885, Ext 228, [msinger@diocese-eastcarolina.org](mailto:msinger@diocese-eastcarolina.org)

#### Active Clergy:

The Rev. Paul Canady 252-633-2109, [paulcanady@christchurchnewbern.com](mailto:paulcanady@christchurchnewbern.com)  
Diocesan Colleague

#### Active Clergy:

The Rev. Julie N. Harris 304-261-0500, [revjulie2@comcast.net](mailto:revjulie2@comcast.net)  
Diocesan Colleague

#### Colleague in Church Governance:

The Very Rev. Ron Pogue 832-576-9019, [ron@e-piphanies.com](mailto:ron@e-piphanies.com) [llbc100@aol.com](mailto:llbc100@aol.com)  
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#### Colleague in Church Governance:

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Exec. Dir - IMN

#### Colleague in Ministry:

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2011 Senior Warden, St. Matthews,  
Charleston

#### Colleague in Ministry:

Ms. Cynthia McCormack 732-778-0558, [cynthiamccormack33@gmail.com](mailto:cynthiamccormack33@gmail.com)  
2016 Senior Warden, Christ Church,  
Middletown NJ