Deborah DeMars Conrad

Deborah DeMars Conrad, EdD, pastor of 30 years, finds her life’s calling in congregational renewal and social transformation.

A native of South Carolina (with previous lives in NJ, PA, MD, DC, TX, CA and KY), she is Senior Minister of Woodside Church, an interracial, welcoming and affirming congregation in Flint, Michigan (You know of Flint, right? where Democracy is regularly under siege and poisoned water gave us something else to be mad about?). She believes faith is deeply political; she has spent a career advocating for her LGBTQ community, and educating church folks about the multi-faceted racial and economic injustice that is the American way.

Deb holds degrees in journalism, visual arts and leadership. She prepared for ministry in the Washington Theological Consortium – where she studied preaching at Howard University Divinity School under Dr. Evans Crawford. She has served in a variety of ministry settings, including parish renewal and church planting, university and hospital chaplaincy, and denominational leadership; she has directed a community center, founded a center for poverty education (urbanspirit.org), and taught preaching at the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. Since 2007, she has coordinated a summer mission intern program for the Disciples of Christ.

In recent years, she has embraced a vegan life, believing that care for creation mandates reconsideration of animal exploitation and consumption.

Deb is a photographer, with work in galleries in Indiana and Kentucky. Her partner Hannah is an attorney with PCUSA; they are a bi-state family, commuting between Flint and Louisville.

She is a contributor to Trouble the Water, the Alliance’ congregational resource for racial justice; her sermons and essays – and links to her photography – are online at mendtheworld.me.