



Ken Wilson

Chaplain American Legion, Post 291

I am the newly elected Chaplain for the American Legion Post 291. Let me share a little of my story with you so you have some idea of my journey thus far.

I served in the USAR from 1970-76, Vietnam era Veteran. My active duty was at Fort Campbell, Kentucky and Fort Belvoir, Virginia. While based at Tustin, Ca., I graduated from Cal. State University Long Beach, CA in 1975.

I worked at Fairview State and Sonoma State Developmental Centers from 1975- 1979 as a Rehabilitation therapist. In 1979, I moved to Washington State to build homes with my brother.

During 1971 to 1979, I lived a life of “party hardy:” wine, women, drugs and what not. There were moments I contemplated life or death. I searched for deeper meaning and eventually came back to my foundation of faith in Christ. Today, I follow a Jewish Carpenter. I hold to Judeo-Christian principles regarding life and faith. My favorite verse is Ephesians 2:8-9. The Grace of God is what sustains me in all seasons of life.

In 1981 I married an incredible woman of God. We have 3 married adult children and our first granddaughter was born June 2018. (It is true about being a grandparent, “I fell in love with my granddaughter at first sight.”) We went to North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago, IL. from 1982-86. I received my Master of Divinity in 1986 and was ordained in 1991. My wife and I went to Costa Rica from 1986-87 for Spanish language training and then served the Evangelical Covenant Church in Mexico City from 1987-1991.

In 1991, we moved back to Costa Mesa area and I worked with Orange County Mental Health in Anaheim for a year before I became an Associate Pastor at Orange Covenant Church in Orange, CA. I served for 9 years and eventually became a Hospice Chaplain on Sept. 11, 2001. I am presently serving as per diem Hospice Chaplain: semi-retired.

In all the dashes between the years, there were times of success and great failure. I have lived in the valley of “the dark night of the soul” and on the peaks of eternal hope. I am still on a journey of accepting myself with all my sins and virtues. To coin a phrase by Parker Palmer, “I am on a journey of shared broken-wholeness.” If we can walk together for a little while, perhaps we can encourage each other to laugh more, love lots and forgive plentifully. God Bless, your partner in this crazy journey we call “life.”