

I am the ECC.



Tell us a little bit about you personally.

I am a white male in my early 70s. I grew up in a small town in southern New Jersey in a small close-knit family. I have lived in Washington, DC; the Boston area; between Dallas and Fort Worth; overseas in the UK (Wales, actually); and now in the Tucson area.

Tell us about your family.

My family consists of my husband – we have been together since 1971 and legally married since 2010. We raised his biological son and daughter back in the 1980s – a gay couple with children was practically unheard of back then. We are close to them, their spouses, and the grandchildren. His family is extensive; mine is quite small and most of my surviving biological family lives in and around Tucson.

Tell us of your educational / professional background.

I am a mostly retired academic – I have attended American University, George Washington University, Simmons College, Harvard University, and the University of North Texas. And I have degrees from all but one of these. I have studied abroad in the UK, Egypt, and Israel / Palestine. I have worked as an academic librarian and a faculty member at various places including Cambridge MA, Denton & Arlington TX, and here in Tucson AZ. I am a published author and have been a frequent presenter at academic conferences.

Tell us of the faith journey that led you to the ECC.

My religious life started in the Methodist Church. My mother's paternal grandfather was a Methodist circuit rider in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey. I attended Sunday School, church services, and Vacation Bible School. As an older teen, I taught the younger children. I also participated in the Youth Choir and in Methodist Youth Fellowship. My spouse was born and raised a Roman Catholic and when we got together, I started attending Mass with him. Eventually I was confirmed in that faith. We have always been active in the various parishes in which we lived around the country. For me, this was particularly true when we attended Most Blessed Sacrament (Arlington TX) and San Martin de Porres (Sahuarita AZ). When we decided to marry, we decided that we wanted a cleric to perform the ceremony. It was then that we heard of the Old Catholic Church. A priest from this movement performed the service for us in Washington, DC, where we had met. When this was "discovered" by the priest in the Roman Catholic parish that we were attending back home in Arizona, we were told that we would be welcome to attend but that we must give up all the ministries with which we were involved. Not wishing to be "second class" Roman Catholics, we looked around for an alternative and found a branch of the Old Catholic movement here in Tucson. And so, we joined the Ecumenical Catholic Communion through St Michael the Archangel Parish. I have been delighted to serve the community in many ways.

I am Stephen J Stillwell, jr, and I am the ECC.