

Rev. Dr. Dean L. Francis
Biography – November 2018

Dean Francis is a third-generation Methodist pastor. His grandmother, Blanche Sheppard Francis, was the third woman in the Detroit Annual Conference to pastor a local church beginning in 1922.

Following studies at the University of Michigan and Boston University, he was ordained in the West Michigan Conference where he served local churches for ten years. In 1991, he was a 'trailing spouse' and moved to Indianapolis where he eventually served as the Director of Development at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis. After four years in Indianapolis, he was appointed to First United Methodist Church of Evanston, Illinois where he served as Senior Pastor for 23 years, until he retired in August 2018.

During his tenure at Evanston First, he oversaw a dramatic revitalization of the church's ministry that focused on worship, missional outreach, stewardship, family ministries, and becoming a *Reconciling* and *Altar for All Congregation*. Also, during this time, the median age of the congregation dropped by more than twelve years of age. As a part of a *Lilly Endowment, Inc.* funded renewal leave, Dean enrolled in a local culinary program. In 2010, he was honored with a Doctor of Divinity degree from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

Dean is married to his high school sweetheart, Dr. Nora J. Francis, and they have been married for 45 years. Nora is a physical therapist and a retired faculty member of Northwestern University in Chicago. In retirement, they live on the Old Mission Peninsula near Traverse City, Michigan.