



James H. Powell, II, likes to be called “Jim” or “Pastor Jim” and has served as Lead Pastor at Richwoods Christian Church in Peoria, Illinois for the last 21 years. Jim received his Masters' Degree in Theology and Philosophy from Lincoln Christian Theological Seminary at Quincy University and was ordained by the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ in 1997 in Denver, Illinois.

Pastor Jim was raised Lutheran but was born again shortly before his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Jim has said that “one night I was at the end of myself and I poured my life out to God and said 'I will follow you as Lord, not just as Savior.' The Bible became a new book to me. I immersed myself in the Bible and felt that very night God was calling me to share the Good News with other people.” Jim read the book entitled, Power for Living by Jamie Buckingham that opened his heart to fully surrendering his life to Christ on March 24, 1985. He says that “my eyes were opened and I felt an immediate call into ministry even though I didn't know what it looked like yet.”

Pastor Jim is evangelical and orthodox in the main things such as the Trinity, Incarnation, and Resurrection but is on a continual, grace-oriented journey. Jim believes in the priesthood of believers and the empowerment of laity as he leads the church forward. He has reached out to other churches and involved his church in the community. He is well known for his sage advice on church growth and he brings strength, love, compassion, courage and passion to his ministry.

He met his wife through a youth group while in college. He married Stephanie, who is an educator, and now is disabled, requiring a wheelchair. Jim and Stephanie have two sons: Timothy, 18, graduating from high school in the Spring of 2019, and Trevor, 14, entering high school as a Freshman in the Fall of 2018. Jim realizes that Palm West is not a multi-generational church and he and Stephanie have prayed and sought options for their sons attending youth church with others of their age group. The family is pleased to know they could soon be living in a warmer climate, complete with baseball, sports, and pool activities year round.

