

# Mentor Bios 2019-20



## Kate Fiedler

I am a Southerner, but you can't tell from my accent. I have moved back and forth across the VA and NC state line seven times, with one year in Chicago, one summer in New Mexico, and several long trips and semesters overseas thrown in the mix. I am a passionate sports fan, but only marginally athletic, yet highly competitive at board games and cards. My friends have encouraged me to stay away from drinking coffee; my energy doesn't require caffeine in the morning. When the news is too distressing, I read poetry, bake gooey chocolaty things, dance in my kitchen, or go for a walk in the woods.

God continues to surprise me as life unfolds, and I appreciate the way the Spirit has brought people into my life to encourage me along the way. I am an associate pastor at University Presbyterian Church (across the street from the Chapel of the Cross), and I work with the adult education program, the young adults, and new members. I look forward to encouraging the JSC corps members as they explore, question, and discern how the Spirit is at work in their life during this year of community and reflection.



## William E. "Chuck" Hennessee

I was born in Durham, NC and raised in Fayetteville, NC. I attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill graduating 1984 with a BA in Radio, Television and Motion Pictures and African and Afro-American Studies. I attended North Carolina Central University where I received a MA in Middle Grades Education with a concentration in History. I am currently a retired 30-yr veteran of NC's public education. During my tenure as an educator, I taught, coached, supervised transportation, and served the NC Association of Educators as a local president and state member of its Board of Directors. For

the last 10 years, I have worked part-time as a Staff Developer and Consultant for the Eastern Division of AVID Center. I am a lifelong Episcopalian, christened at St. Titus, confirmed at St. Ambrose and serving currently as the Senior Warden at St. Titus.



## Nancy Spencer

I am a native North Carolinian who was born in Charlotte, N.C. However, my family moved to Washington, DC when I was five months old and I lived in Washington or the D.C. suburbs until I left for college. I attended Carson-Newman College, a small Baptist school in Tennessee and received a BA in French and Philosophy. As I prepared to graduate, my major professor in Philosophy told me, "You are prepared to do nothing, so the whole world is open to you." Given that sage advice

and not knowing what else to do, I immediately applied to graduate school. I attended Emory University, where I received an MAT in French. I spent the next three years teaching French and Philosophy at West Georgia College. However, I never forgot the whole world was open to me. After three years, I sold all my possessions and spent the next year traveling in Europe, finally settling in Paris and teaching English. I returned to DC that next summer and worked as an editor at George Washington University for a year. During that year, I met my husband and we moved back to Georgia, finally settling in Athens. It was during this time, I found my passion. So back to graduate school and teaching children with behavioral disorders in the public-school system. Four years later, we moved to North Carolina to pursue our careers. We have lived in North Carolina since 1977, most of that time in the Triangle. We have one son and two very large dogs. I

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am now retired after 25 years as a special education administrator. Exercise is a very important part of my life, Nia and Yoga are my favorite practices.

I have always been a spiritual seeker. I grew up in a Baptist/Jewish family, so I knew early on that there was more than one version of spiritual truth. What I have learned to be absolutely true is that we are all connected and that all beings deserve love, compassion and respect. Contemplative practice and prayer are my tools to greater understanding. Laughter and a sense of humor are what keep me sane.



Erin Reitz

Hello! I'm a Midwest transplant with an ever-deepening love for the people, places, and spirit of the South. Although I grew up going to church, I didn't begin to feel committed and connected to cultivating a spiritual life until recently. I have a lot of gratitude for my alma mater, Guilford College, for opening up that space in me. After graduating from Guilford with a degree in English in 2012, I spent five years exploring North Carolina with camera in hand as a digital producer for *Our State* magazine. Today, I'm the Communications Manager at the Campus Y, UNC's hub for social justice and innovation. a graduate student at UNC's School of Media and Journalism and a second-year student at

the Second Breath Center. I love discussing the intersection between spirituality and psychology, LGBTQ+ representation, dogs, live music, and the newest binge-worthy show on Netflix. I've lived in either Carrboro or Durham for over half my life and am excited to welcome you into this awesome area and offer support and/or recommendations as you make it your own.



David Stanford

I am a retired Episcopal Priest, and in the 1980's I served as Campus Minister at Chapel of the Cross. I also served for 15 years as Chaplain to Lawrence Hall Youth Services in Chicago. I lived in Chicago for 33 years before moving back to North Carolina four years ago. I am a Guardian Ad Litem for Orange County, a volunteer with Duke Hospice, and a volunteer with Yokefellows/Orange- Alamance Prison Ministry. In my spare time I enjoy gardening, raising our flock of chickens and other outdoor activities.



Althea Alton

I am a retired United Methodist Pastor, and also a retired Biology Professor. I am active in our church, St. Titus' Episcopal Church, where I serve on the Vestry. I also design, create and sell jewelry. I am originally from the Philippines but immigrated to this country in my early 20's to attend graduate school. My experience as a pastor includes serving two small country churches, serving on the pastoral staff of a large parish, and serving a church located in a retirement community. I have also served as volunteer Chaplain to both the Wesley Village Retirement Center, and Graham Hospital, both University, although I started my career as a Biologist doing cancer research at Sloan Kettering Cancer Research Center in New York City. I enjoy photography, traveling, and cooking.

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## Tana Liu-Beers

Originally from New Jersey, I moved to Durham in 2003 and immediately loved it. I currently serve as Immigration Legal Counsel for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), helping immigrants navigate the madness of the immigration bureaucracy and keeping churches informed about alarming policy changes. Over the years, I have represented asylum-seekers, immigrants in detention, migrant farmworkers, and survivors of human trafficking for nonprofit organizations in both the U.S. and in Mexico. My faith journey has been a winding road, and I have finally found a church home at Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship. I'm married to Chris Liu-Beers, and we have a seven-year-old daughter Miriam. I enjoy cooking from my small but happy garden. I look forward to working with JSC!



## Debra Wuliger

I am an oil painter, draughtswoman and fine art documentarian who listens deeply and watches the way the brush and charcoal carves shapes and patterns onto a surface. I am interested in portraying the strength, dignity and joy of people as they act out their lives in ordinary circumstances. I am also fascinated with how similar we are as human beings and like to capture people's common movements using simple shapes. These shapes connect together in interlocking patterns and act as a metaphor for how we connect as people into one unified whole. I share my love of art in several ways.

I have created murals with groups of people for their communities. I also run creativity workshops and painting classes for both adults and children, out of my home studio school, Winking Moon Art, to support others on their own artistic journeys. My home and studio are in Durham where I live with my husband, Joel, and my dog, Tessa.



## Jack Mitchell

I am a lifelong Episcopalian (thus far), as well as being an almost lifelong member of choirs in one form or other, starting with the Cherub Choir at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Greenville, SC where I grew up. I have lived in the Triangle since 2001 when I moved to Carrboro to participate in the Johnson Internship (now JSC). Less than a month after moving to NC, I met Becky Cary, and four years to the day later we got married. We now live in Durham and have one dog and a ridiculous number of books. Professionally, I sell and do training and support on various assistive technology for people with visual impairments. Since early 2019, I have also been a Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist, and teach people with visual impairments the necessary skills to get around safely and to know where they're going. I sing in the choir at St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Durham, and also coordinate the music for a Taize Evening Prayer service at United Church of Chapel Hill. In my spare time, I enjoy singing, contra dancing (and calling for dances), horseback riding, bicycle riding and playing various board games.

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### La Fayette Chavis

I was raised in Durham as an Episcopalian at St. Titus' Church. I graduated Jordan High School and became a hairstylist after graduating from beauty school in Raleigh in 1990. I moved to Charlotte in 1995 where I continued to do hair until I decided to return to school and get my bachelor's degree in nursing. I have been working as a nurse in dermatology for nine years. I moved back to Durham in August 2018 where I have continued working as a nurse at Duke Dermatology and still do hair part-time after 26 years. I have loved my move back and I am closer to my family, again. I am a people person by nature. I love working in my community helping, serving, giving back what I can and loving on others. This always brings me great joy!



### Amanda Ann Godwin

I'm a massage therapist and life coach who loves quilting, art journaling, the sea, sharing food and encouraging each other's spirits into wider spaces. My work has almost always had to do with human bodies, (which I love!)-massage, yoga teaching, child birth education and labor coaching, tree planting, volume cooking. Peace and Justice are important to me in my community and the world. My commitment is to keeping Love as the main note in my life and relationships. I grew up in San Francisco and moved east for my love of year-round rain. I live in Hillsborough with my husband Steve where we

love offering hospitality. I'm excited to meet each of the corps members! Peace to us All!



### Meisha Davis

Born and raised in Miami, Florida, I moved to North Carolina in 2012 and to Raleigh in 2014. I attended undergrad at Morris Brown College and Georgia State University in Atlanta, Georgia, earning a BS in Biology and a BA in Theatre. I also received an MBA with a focus in Marketing from Wake Forest University and am a Senior Content Strategist at IBM (we used to make computers). When I'm not working, I enjoy

travelling, reading, yoga, working in my community and new experiences. Health and wellness are extremely important to me, and I have been a plant-based vegan since 2016.

While I am a cradle Episcopalian and attend St Titus' Episcopal in Durham, I consistently seek spiritual knowledge. At the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration in Miami Gardens, I have served as a vestry member and participated in a number of organizations. My personal spiritual journey is very important to me, and I am always looking to learn and grow more. I look forward to working with you as you continue on your spiritual journey and am here to support you as you grow over the next year.