

**Rev. Dr. Karen H. Webster**

701 South Columbia Drive, Box 234

Decatur, GA, 30030

[thehshc@gmail.com](mailto:thehshc@gmail.com)

(803) 873-1682

**QUALIFICATION SUMMARY:**

- 17+ years serving with faith-based organizations
- 14+ years working in the health and wellness industry
- 12+ years ordination as a PC(USA) pastor
- 6+ years engaging seminarians, clergy, and congregations in health and wellness initiatives
- Extremely self-motivated, well organized, and flexible, and relates well with people of all ages

**RECENT EXPERIENCE:**

**Healthy Seminarians – Healthy Church Initiative (HSHC): Decatur, GA** July 2012 - present

***Co-founder/Executive Director***

- Turned a June 2012 conversation into a 501(c)(3) organization and validated ministry of Trinity Presbytery by Fall 2014.
- Current responsibilities include:
  - Overseeing the administration, programs, and strategic plan of the organization.
  - Designing and leading health-oriented experiences in a variety of educational contexts.
  - Serving as HSHC's primary spokesperson to the organization's constituents, the media, and the general public.
  - Establishing and sustaining good working relationships with seminaries, churches, other PC(USA) entities (local and national), and faith-based/health-based organizations outside of the denomination.
  - Creating and maintaining HSHC's social media presence, fundraising, and grant writing.

**Webster's Wellness: Decatur, GA**

Sept. 2014 - present

***Owner***

- Established my own mobile (in-person and online) fitness, nutrition, and wellness coaching business to complement the work I am doing with HSHC.

**Pinnacle Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Specialists: Columbia, SC**

Feb. 2009 - Aug. 2014

***Exercise Physiologist***

- Provided strength-training workouts as well as overall health and nutritional information to clients of various ages and levels of physical ability, flexibly responding to a diverse and ever-changing array of needs.
- Assisted the owner/lead physical trainer with hiring and assessing staff.
- Adapted to the diverse daily needs of clients in a multiple-staff environment.
- Served unofficially as chaplain of the clinic.
- Performed administrative and management responsibilities as an independent contractor, including: scheduling all appointments, billing clients, processing payments, recruiting new clients, and maintaining good relationships with those who had been training for years.

**Forest Lake Presbyterian Church: Columbia, SC**

May 2009 - Aug. 2014

***Co-founder/Director of Kids' Garden***

- Designed and oversaw the building of the garden, shed, and irrigation system.
- Created a partnership between the church and the local food bank.
- Recruited and trained adult volunteers.
- Taught "kids" of all ages about biblical plants, organic gardening, and other sustainable practices inspired by God's mandate to care for all of creation

***Pastoral Volunteer***

Feb. 2009 - Aug. 2014

- Served on the Wednesday night educational programming planning team, taught Sunday school to all ages, and provided worship leadership as requested.
- Served on the Advent Retreat leadership team for four years and was the keynote speaker for one of the retreats.
- Helped organize and lead Forest Lake's Conflict Transformation Workshop for Church Officers.
- Served as a teaching elder on Trinity Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry (Feb. 2010 - Dec. 2015).

**First Presbyterian Church: Meadville, PA**

Aug. 2005 - Dec. 2008

***Associate Pastor for Congregational Life***

- Oversaw the 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade youth ministry program; taught the high school Sunday school class, recruited and directed adult volunteers, provided pastoral care, and led mission trips.
- Created and directed a one-week Christian sports camp for 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades each summer.
- Provided congregational outreach opportunities to the college students in our community.
- Established and led a health ministry committee, which held such events as:
  - An intergenerational walking program and health fair.
  - Several presentations, including "Fitness as We Age" and "Food for the Spiritual Life."
  - Vegetarian/vegan cooking classes for the local college students.
- Other responsibilities included: maintaining several of the church's webpages, recruiting volunteers, overseeing Sunday night meals, and providing worship leadership in the traditional, contemporary, and Taizé-style services.
- Served as a teaching elder on the Presbytery of Lake Erie's Committee on Preparation for Ministry (Jan. 2006 - Dec. 2008).

**EDUCATION**

- **Columbia Theological Seminary: Decatur, GA** May 2017  
***Doctor of Ministry: Christian Spirituality***  
Project Title: "Fit to Serve: Making Seminaries Models of Health and Wholeness"
- **Eberhard-Karls Universität: Tübingen, Germany** Sept. 2004 - June 2005  
***Exchange student***
- **Princeton Theological Seminary: Princeton, NJ** May 2004  
***Master of Divinity***
- **University of California: Berkeley, CA** May 1998  
***Bachelor of Arts in Exercise Physiology***

## **ADDITIONAL TRAINING/SKILLS/ CERTIFICATIONS:**

- **WELCOA Faculty Status**, WELCOA, July 2018
- **Plant-Based Nutrition Certificate**, eCornell & T. Colin Campbell Center for Nutrition Studies, Dec. 2016
- **Green Faith Fellowship**, GreenFaith: Interfaith Partners for the Environment, Sept. 2014 - May 2016
- **Health and Wellness Coach**, Real Balance Global Wellness Services, Aug. 2015
- **Clergy Clinic in Family Emotional Process**, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, Oct. 2012 - May 2013
- **Certified Nutrition Manager**, American Academy of Sports Dietitians and Nutritionists, Aug. 2012
- **Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders**, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, May 2012
- **Certificate in Spiritual Formation**, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, May 2011
- **Certified South Carolina Master Gardener**, Columbia, SC, May 2010
- **Certified Exercise Physiologist**, American College of Sports Medicine, June 1998

## **PUBLICATIONS**

- Campbell, Kelly, and Karen Webster. "Making Libraries an Unexpected Space and Place Supporting Health and Wholeness." In *Summary of Proceedings: Seventy-First Annual Conference of the American Theological Library Association*, edited by Miranda Bennett, 153-162. Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 2017.
- Webster, Karen H. "Fit to Serve: Making Seminaries Models of Health and Wholeness." DMin diss., Columbia Theological Seminary, 2016.
- Webster, Karen H. "Genesis 1: A Call to Clean Up our Act!" *Georgia Interfaith Power and Light Blog*, Apr. 23, 2015. <http://www.gipl.org/hello-world/>

## **PRESENTATIONS, LECTURES, AND OTHER PUBLIC SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS (SELECTED)**

- "Benefits of Whole-Foods Plant-Based: Individuals, Communities, & God's Creation" May 2018  
Decatur Area Clergy Cluster, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, Columbia Theological Seminary, (Decatur, GA) – Presenter
- "Whole Foods Plant-Based Cooking Demo & Food Tasting" Apr. 2017 & 2018  
Earth Day Sunday, Forest Lake Presbyterian Church (Columbia, SC) – Workshop Presenter
- "Nutritional Navigation" Mar. 2018  
Spouses of Seminarians Retreat, Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA) – Workshop Presenter
- "Teaching Health and Wholeness in Seminaries" Mar. 2018  
Southeast Symposium on Ecologically Informed Theological Education (part of the Seminary Environmental Leadership Initiative), Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA) – Workshop Presenter
- "Resources for Resilience: Pastoral Care" Mar. 2018  
Columbia Theological Seminary Alumni Reunion (Decatur, GA) – Workshop Presenter
- "Current Health of Clergy and Seminarians" Nov. 2017  
Resilience & Imagination Class, Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA) – Guest Lecturer
- "Intersections: Food, Agriculture, Health, Community and Hospitality" Nov. 2017

- American Public Health Association National Conference (Atlanta, GA) – Workshop Leader

• “Working Out: Self-Care” Sept. 2017  
Training and Counseling Center (Atlanta, GA) – Retreat Workshop Leader
- “Staying Sane in Seminary” Aug. 2017  
New Student Orientation, Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA) – Panelist
- “Cultivating a Healthier Church Culture for a Healthier World” Aug. 2017  
STEPS Leadership Conference (Charleston Atlantic Presbytery, SC) – Featured Leader
- Cooking Demonstration on the show “Grow” aired Aug. 6, 2017  
Atlanta Interfaith Broadcast  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qm4BxG4L8oA&t=1046s> (starting at 16:16)
- Cooking Demonstration and Interview on the show “Grow” aired Oct. 1, 2017  
Atlanta Interfaith Broadcast  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfVsogdVNfs> (starting at 16:42)
- “Self-Care CPE Didactic” Apr. & Oct. 2017  
Training and Counseling Center (Atlanta, GA) – Workshop Facilitator
- “Fit to Serve: Defining and Exploring the Importance of Self-Care” Mar. 2017  
PC501: An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling, Emory (Atlanta, GA) – Guest Lecturer
- “Healthier Congregations for a Healthier World” Mar. 2017  
Stone Church of Willow Glen (San Jose, CA) – Presenter
- “Cultivating Healthier Seminaries for a Healthier World” Oct. 2016  
Seminary Stewardship Alliance National Conference (Portland, OR) – Plenary Speaker
- “Fit to Serve: Making Seminaries Models of Health and Wholeness” Sept. 2016  
Forum, Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA) – Presenter
- “Motivation for Movement” (2 week class) July 2016  
Decatur Presbyterian Church (Decatur, GA) – Presenter
- “10 Tips for Starting a Church Community Garden” Apr. 2016  
United Methodist National Creation Care Conference (Atlanta, GA) – Workshop Presenter
- “A Theological Rationale & Practical Tips for Environmental Stewardship,” Mar. 2016  
Presbyterian Women’s Annual Gathering (Columbia, SC) – Presenter
- “Grounded for Movement” Jan. 2016  
Columbia Theological Seminary Lifelong Learning “Grounded” Conference (Decatur, GA) –  
Workshop Presenter
- “Motivation for Movement” Sept./Oct. 2015  
North Decatur Presbyterian Church (Decatur, GA) – Presenter (4 week series)
- “Nutritional Navigation” June 2015  
Decatur Active Living (Decatur, GA) – Presenter
- “Moving Towards Greater Health and Wholeness: Biblical and Theological Rationale” May 2015  
Exploration Class, Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA) – Presenter
- “Moving in Wholeness: Theological Reflection & Practical Tips” Apr. 2015  
Saint Andrew’s Presbyterian Church (Tucker, GA) – Presenter
- “Worshipful(ly): Movement for When You’re Stretched!” Oct. 2014  
Forum, Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA) – Presenter

## **AWARDS AND HONORS:**

- Presbyterian Women Thank Offering Grant Award, on behalf of HSHC, Mar. 2018  
Project Title: *Feed My People*
- Wabash Center Small Project Grant, on behalf of HSHC, Jan. 2018  
Project Title: *Exercising Our Faith: Making Seminaries Models of Health and Wholeness*
- Presbyterian Women Honorary Life Membership, in memory and honor of Linda J. Hagan, Feb. 2017
- Young Nonprofit Professionals Network grant recipient, on behalf of HSHC, Sept. 2015
- Western Athletic Clubs, Service Star (Employee of the Year), Jun. 2000
- Youth Advisory Delegate, PC(USA), General Assembly, Jun. 1997

## **ORDINATION**

Oct. 2, 2005

- **PC(USA) Minister of Word and Sacrament**, Stone Church of Willow Glen (San Jose, CA)

## **COMMUNITY BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMUNITY SERVICE**

- Global Growers Advisory Committee (Decatur, GA), May 2018 - present
- Alternative Gifts International (Wichita, KS), Board of Directors, June 2017 - present
- Food Waste Weekend, (AmpleHarvest.org), Steering Committee, 2017, 2018
- Presbyterians for Earth Care Membership Committee (Asheville, NC), Jan. 2016 - Mar. 2017
- Committee on Preparation for Ministry, (Trinity Presbytery, SC), 2010-2016
- Committee on Preparation for Ministry, (Lake Erie Presbytery, PA), 2006-2008
- Lakeside Presbyterian Church Volunteer Youth Group Advisor (San Francisco, CA), 1998-2001
- PC(USA) Young Adult Volunteer, Berkeley, CA, 1998-1999

## **MEMBERSHIPS/ASSOCIATIONS**

- American College of Sports Medicine
- American Academy of Sports Dietitians and Nutritionists
- Wellness Council of America

## **INTERESTS/HOBBIES**

- Marathon trail running, hiking, cycling, and yoga
- Whole foods plant-based cooking and baking
- Organic gardening