

Pastor Marlow Paul Carrels was born in FT Riley, KS. After some years as an Army Brat his family settled in Belgrade, MT where he was a semi-proud Panther and member of Peace Lutheran Church (now LCMC). He joined the Montana Army National Guard in 2005 and was assigned to the 631st Chemical Company in Butte, MT. He graduated from Montana State University - Bozeman in 2008 with a BA in English Literature, commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Chemical Corps and went on Active Duty. He served in the 110th CM Battalion - Technical Escort at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington and returned to Montana to live in Townsend, work at Canyon Ferry Dam, and begin seminary at Wartburg Theological Seminary through the Distributive Learning (online) model. He also returned to the MTARNG and served as a Company Commander and Brigade Chemical Officer before transferring to the Reserve to become a Chaplain in 2016. After breaking his back, Pastor Carrels ended his military career in late 2019.

Pastor Carrels graduated from Wartburg with a Master of Divinity in 2017 and is currently working on his thesis project for a Sacred Theology Masters with a focus on violence and theology at the Institute of Lutheran Theology. In the church he has served the communities of Jordan, MT (lay pastor), Prairie du Sac, WI (Intern / Vicar) and Westby, MT. His current favorite scripture verse is James 4.8: "Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded." He currently serves on the NRIT Advisory Committee, the Chico Pastor's Retreat Planning Board, and has four ministries of special interest: Veterans, the Homeless Population, Just War Tradition, and Historical Theology. Three interesting facts about Marlow: he has sung opera professionally, was a meat cutter, and has stepped foot on every continent except Antarctica. Pastor Marlow is an avid fisherman, hiker, camper, skier, museum goer, and bibliophile.

Pastor Marlow is married to Nikki Pontier-Carrels, who hails from Great Falls (Go Bison!). The two met at MSU and were married in 2009. Nikki is an advocate for the environment, believing in minimal packaging, recycling, upcycling, and creating as little garbage as possible. She thoroughly enjoys her practices of yoga, reading, and simplicity. Interesting facts about Nikki: she was a one-room school-house teacher, has published multiple children's books, and is an art teacher. Her favorite medium is oil on canvas, but she also enjoys drawing and watercolor. Nikki is also an avid fisherwoman, hiker, camper, museum goer, and bibliophile.

Sammie Jean Carrels is an amazing eight-year old who enjoys cats, wearing pretty dresses and doing messy science experiments, and building / engineering / creating traps, machines, and living spaces. Interesting facts about Sammie: she has lived in 3 states and 5 cities and she is super excited to move to Butte!

Final interesting fact for the whole family: Between the three of us we have lived in Helena, Great Falls, Bozeman, Belgrade, Townsend, Sand Springs, Westby, and Conrad, MT.