

## The Rev. Kenneth H. Brannon Biographical Statement

The Rev. Kenneth H. Brannon has served as Rector of St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Sun Valley, Idaho since the summer of 2007. He brings to his work a love of Episcopal liturgy, an awareness of personal and group dynamics, and a commitment to open and honest communication. He is active in the Church at local, diocesan, and national levels.

Ken was born in Fort Collins, Colorado, but moved to Mandeville, Louisiana at the age of one. He spent the first thirteen years of his life enjoying small town life, picking up pecans from the big tree outside his house, biking with his friends, and being nourished by a loving, non-denominational Christian church about eight blocks away.

His life changed radically when his father took a job at a teaching hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and he found himself attending an international boarding school in Kodaikanal, South India. Once the shock of being in India wore off, he embraced this mountaintop oasis. He shared living and learning with children from over fifty different countries and developed an abiding respect for cultural views and religious practices different from his own. He graduated from high school in 1986.

Following in the footsteps of his older brother, he attended Wheaton College in Illinois. Although his major was psychology, he spent many hours making theater. Ken discovered the Episcopal Church while at Wheaton and was grateful for the elegant liturgy, the appreciation for mystery, and the emphasis on ancient spiritual practices. To earn money for college, Ken worked as a counselor on an adolescent psychiatric unit. He graduated cum laude in 1990.

Following college, Ken spent two years living in intentional Christian community and working with the homeless in Washington, DC. He coordinated administrative activities at Christ House, a mission of Church of the Saviour, and was active in medical and social outreach to those living in the shadows of our nation's monuments.

In 1993, Ken began drama therapy studies at New York University and graduated cum laude in 1997. His passion for psychology and theater came together in group work with children and adults at sites throughout the city, ranging from therapeutic schools, psychiatric hospitals, homeless shelters, and prisons. He is still a registered Drama Therapist, but his therapeutic skills are now expressed primarily in pastoral counseling sessions, Stephen Ministry leadership, and assistance with groups experiencing conflict.

In 2000, Ken was called to holy orders while co-coordinating the children's program with his wife, Rachel, at The Church of the Holy Trinity in New York City. He attended Virginia Theological Seminary and graduated cum laude in 2003. He served as Associate Rector at The Church of St. Barnabas in Irvington, New York, before moving to Sun Valley in 2007.

In the Diocese of Idaho, Ken is active in all aspects of church life, having served a Chair of the Commission on Ministry, President of the Standing Committee, and Chair of the Idaho Deputation to General Convention. Ken believes that serving in the rural and geographically vast Diocese of Idaho has prepared him well for episcopal ministry in Maine.

Father Ken is married to Rachel Miller Brannon, a clinical social worker at St. Luke's Medical Center in Ketchum, Idaho, and therapist in private practice. He is also father to two outstanding young adults, Lucy and Isaac.