

## **Biography Document The Rev. J. Edson Way Ph. D**

The Reverend J. Edson Way, Ph.D. was born May 18th, 1947, in Chicago where his father was attending the University of Chicago on the G.I. Bill after the Second World War. His mother and father had met at Stanford University during the war, she having recently arrived in the United States from Shanghai, China, her birthplace, the daughter of British missionaries and businessmen in the Far East. Edson's maternal grandparents, devout members of the Church of England, spent the war years in a Japanese concentration camp. Following their liberation by American paratroopers led by a Lieutenant from Texas (!) they relocated to Canada, and Edson and his brother Douglas spent their childhood in the suburbs of Chicago with regular visits to their grandparents in Toronto.

Edson earned his B.A. in anthropology from Beloit College, Wisconsin, where he met his wife Jenny Ellwood Chappell. She was born on her grandmother's ranch, the Renderbrook Spade near Colorado City, and grew up in Lubbock before being sent first to St. Mary's Hall in San Antonio, and then to boarding school in Massachusetts. She says that they met in a pit on an archaeology dig, and it went down from there...

Edson and Jenny both attended graduate school at the University of Toronto in Canada where she earned a Master's degree in museum studies and he received a Master's and Ph.D. in biological anthropology, specializing in prehistoric Eskimo populations of the Eastern Arctic. They returned to Beloit College where he taught anthropology for 13 years and their three children, Sarah, Rebecca, and Jacob were active in 4H.

In 1985 Edson was invited to become the Director of the Wheelwright Museum in Santa Fe, and after almost five years there, he became a "trouble shooter" for the State Museum system in New Mexico, finally being appointed State Cultural Affairs Officer by the Governor. During most of these years Jenny, a cradle Episcopalian, and Edson, unchurched but strongly influenced by his maternal Anglican relatives, were active as Quakers in Meetings in Wisconsin and New Mexico.

Finally, while Jenny was on a ranch business trip to Texas from their home in Santa Fe, Edson was led to join the Episcopal Church of the Holy Faith, much to her astonishment when she learned of it upon her return. Subsequently, after a retreat for men led by the Bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande, Edson heard a call to seminary to become a priest, an event that seemed not to surprise Jenny at all. That can't be said for their children. "So, are we going to be expected to call you 'Father Daddy'?" asked one.....

Three years at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin ensued, during which time Edson was "released" by the new Bishop of the Rio Grande. Following an initial meeting with Bishop Ohl, the Holy Spirit put the "pedal to the metal" and Edson became the first in his seminary class to be called to a church, St. Christopher's, Lubbock. He has recounted the "signs" given in

**that process in these pages already. Edson and Jenny are delighted, and feel so blessed, to be here.**