ANNEMARIE HARTNER COOK - FEATURED VAN MEMBER

The mission of Valparaiso University is to “provide a community of learning dedicated to excellence and grounded in the Lutheran tradition of scholarship, freedom, and faith, and prepare students to lead and serve in both church and society”. Annemarie Hartner Cook, graduate of Valparaiso in the class of 2003 with a double major of Theology and Sociology, took this to heart.

Before coming to Valpo, Annemarie knew that she was called to be a pastor. Through the Center for Church Vocations she was able to claim that call and be confident in her skills as a future leader in the church. As she continued onto seminary, it was clear that her Valpo experience enabled her to tackle theological and practical challenges thoughtfully and tactfully.

Some of Annemarie’s fondest memories of Valpo are from working in the Office of Admission as an Ambassador in Admissions and giving tours to prospective students, helping them learn more about the Valpo experience. She also loved being a part of the staff at the Chapel of the Resurrection; leading weekly worship during chapel break gave her a head-start for seminary.

Several moments at Valpo have left a lasting effect on Annemarie. During the final senior ceremonies and worship services, she was honored to be asked to help assist and share a reflection at the Senior Worship Service, and then asked to carry the flag to lead the Baccalaureate and Commencement processions. She reflects that “these two events culminated four years of service and leadership to the University in a way that made me feel like I had really contributed to the community. I knew that I would always be able to be proud of myself and the university that shaped me into the person that I am today”.

Annemarie is currently an ordained Lutheran pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and serves as Associate Pastor at St. Thomas Lutheran Church in Brick, NJ. She is married to her husband Tom, and they live in Toms River, NJ with their two cats Marty and Katie.