

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

Sweeney plays dual roles
as a pastor and an actor

BY NANCY MCCARTHY

He once was a frenetic Roman slave, a grumpy old man and a robust Irish cop — each at a different point in his life.

Within 20 years, David Sweeney has played at least 60 roles at the Coaster Theatre Playhouse. But offstage, he takes on a different role: pastor of Seaside Episcopal Church.

Sweeney is comfortable wearing costumes, performing onstage Friday and Saturday nights, then donning religious vestments and leading worship on Sunday mornings.

“I’m able to maintain a separation between the two worlds,” Sweeney said. “But it’s still me. At some level, the character is coming out of the same person as the fellow in the pulpit on Sunday morning.”

As a child, Sweeney participated in middle school and high school plays in McHenry, Illinois. At Northwestern University, he earned a degree in speech education — combining theater, public speaking and interpretation of literature. After ordination, he acted in community theater in North Carolina and on the southern Oregon Coast, where he served at churches in Port Orford and Bandon.

Because his move to Seaside brought him to the area where his father grew up, Sweeney was naturally drawn to Coaster Theatre, he said.

Playing the part

Sweeney enjoys creating various characters.

“I’m not a skilled writer of fiction, and I’m not a particularly adept playwright, so (I like) the interpretive side of it as an actor, making choices with the help of a director and cast mates,” Sweeney said.



George Vetter

See Page 2 David Sweeney played Bob Cratchit in the Coaster Theatre Playhouse’s production of ‘A Christmas Carol: The Musical’ in 2017.

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