

CHURCH PROFILE FORM

Georgetown Christian Reformed Church

Attachment A

WORSHIP

How are members involved in planning and participation in the liturgy/worship?

- The Worship Coordinator, together with a team of Worship Planners (approximately 4-5 members) take turns planning the services together with the Pastor.
- Other church members are regularly involved in participating through reading scripture, leading liturgical readings, congregational prayer, etc.
- A Children's Message is created and led by a volunteer before the children leave for Sunday School.
- Praise is led by volunteer musicians – either playing individually or as an ensemble.
- The projection screen and bulletin pictures are designed by various members of the congregation. These images change every season.

Describe the worship services in your church:

- We celebrate one morning service each Sunday.
- Our church follows a traditional Reformed Order of Worship and we observe the liturgical calendar. We use a variety of songs, prayers, scripture, and other readings, etc.
- Services are planned and shaped around the theme or scripture focus of the sermon.
- We use a blend of worship styles, including traditional and contemporary. Some weeks we are led by an organist and other weeks by a group with piano, guitars, drums, etc.
- We celebrate the Lord's Supper once per month. Children are welcome at the Lord's Table.
- Children ages 3 – Grade 4 leave after the Children's Message for Sunday School.
- Children in Grades 5 – 6 are invited to a Sermon Discussion Group led by volunteers following the sermon.

Describe the discipleship practices in your church for all ages of members and attenders:

Children & Youth Programs

Vision: We want our children to become Disciples of Jesus.

Mission: We are disciples who demonstrate Christ's love by creating a loving community where faith is modeled and nurtured in our children and youth.

- A Children's Message is shared during the church service every Sunday.
- Children ages 3 – Grade 4 are invited to attend Sunday School.
- Children in Grades 5 – 6 are invited to attend the Sermon Discussion Group. This group is used as a transition for children between Sunday School and regular service participation. Children meet with a leader to discuss and further engage with the sermon message.
- GEMS and Cadets are available for school-aged children.
- Youth on Fire for youths Grades 7 – 12. Split between two age groups (Grades 7 – 8 and Grades 9 – 12), these small groups provide social time, community, and engaging faith discussions.

Adult Programs

- Journey with Jesus Year – A mentoring program, lasting approximately a year, which prepares those interested in Profession of Faith. A mentee is matched with a mature Christian adult to explore and learn what a healthy faith life looks like.
- Young Adults Group – A Bible study and social group for young adults.
- Coffee Break – A women's Bible study.
- Small groups are also encouraged in our church.
- Additionally, the congregation is disciplined as a whole through the preaching of God's Word on Sunday mornings and by living out our faith lives together in community.

NARRATIVE:

In what ways does your church participate in ecumenical activities?

- Our church is involved in a ministerial project called Community Unity. Examples of outreach include:
 - A spring and fall yard clean-up. Residents of Georgetown who need help raking leaves or other yard work can receive this help, as well as caring conversation and prayer, if requested.
 - Jubilee Care, an initiative developed to provide connections to help individuals and families in Georgetown.
 - Food from the Heart, a program run through the local Food Bank to provide warm meals to families in need.
- Our previous pastors have been members of the Georgetown Ministerial committee.
- Our congregation participates in an annual Ecumenical service with other local churches.
- Along with another church, our church members volunteer in a community garden. The produce harvested is donated to the local Food Bank and other programs addressing food insecurity.

Reflect on your strengths/gifts as a church:

- Our church has a strong and appreciated focus on Scripture.
- The youth are highly valued in our church, and they are encouraged to use and grow their gifts in our congregation and through our ministries.
- Our congregation has a culture of prayerfulness.
- We deeply care and support one another, especially in times of need or crisis.
- Many members volunteer and participate in various local charities and organizations.
- Our congregation is generous in giving, both financially and in time and gifts.
- We have a strong network of volunteer leaders.
- We strive for unity and belonging in our church community.
- Our GEMS and Cadets programs reach out to children and families in the broader community.

Reflect on your passions as a church:

- We are passionate in caring for each other and reaching those in our community.
- We are dedicated in our ministry to children and youth. Many steadfast volunteers give of their time and gifts to serve in the various children and youth programs. Our membership as a whole is deeply committed to the discipleship journey of our youth.

List specific problems with which your congregation struggles:

- While it is our desire as a congregation to reach and care for those in our wider community, we acknowledge the need to grow in our outward expression and engagement with those in Georgetown.
- While we have a large network of volunteers, there is a need for other church members to step up and join the good work taking place to avoid volunteer burnout.
- We have an aging membership and have had declining numbers in the last few years.

What has been the most interesting and challenging event in the life of your church in the last three years?

The COVID-19 pandemic has tried our congregation in many ways, but we also saw many people step up and get involved. Examples include:

- Church at Home – In the early days of the pandemic, our church produced services for congregants to watch at home. There was much participation and involvement from members of all ages. New and different ways of worshipping were shared and gratefully received by the congregation, such as expressing praise to God through dance and presenting the scripture through stop-motion videos created by kids.
- Live Stream – We now live stream the church service every week. This blesses those unable or uncomfortable in attending in person, as well as connecting those who are house bound. We also have a new projection system.

- Repairs to the church – The past two years have allowed us to make needed repairs and conduct other maintenance projects around the church property.
- Ongoing volunteers – While our programming has been different and limited during COVID, we continue to have dedicated volunteers who work to bless our church community and our town.

List major goals that this congregation has set for itself or opportunities the congregation anticipates:

- As we anticipate the end of COVID and the return to normal ministries, we see an opportunity to reach individuals and families in our community. Specifically, we believe many will be hungering for connection, and we want to show them Jesus' love and care through our church community and invite them to join us in serving Him.
- In the spring of 2022, we held a series of Listening Circles to reflect on the Human Sexuality Report. This was an opportunity for our church members to listen, learn, and express their thoughts in a safe environment.
- Over several weeks in the fall of 2022 we conducted an Appreciative Inquiry and engaged in a training program from Go Local/Resonate. This training program is designed to help us learn how to find opportunities to engage and connect with our community, and how to communicate our faith more effectively.
- Following the completion of the Go Local/Resonate training we will conduct an Asset Mapping Exercise with our congregation. This will help us better understand our church's strengths and passions and identify ways that we can use our assets to meet the needs of our community.
- Also refer to the "Discerning His Direction" document for further details.

Describe what being Christians of Reformed accent means to you:

- We believe that salvation is a gift from God, offered solely by God's grace and received through faith in Jesus Christ alone. We believe that the Holy Spirit opens the "eyes" of the unbeliever, transforming their hearts so that they can know God and know that they are participants in His story.
- We believe that Christ is sovereign over all of creation and everything in it. Every square inch of the universe belongs to God.
- We believe that God reveals Himself to humanity in two ways: general revelation and special revelation.
- We believe that we belong to Jesus – each one individually – and belong together – united as members of His body, the Church.
- We believe that Jesus calls and equips each and every believer to do the work that He has already prepared for him or her to do. Together, as the unified Body of Christ and through the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit, we are on a mission to bring God's hope into the community in which we live, knowing that God is working to make all things new.

Describe your understanding of the relationship between the local church and the Christian Reformed denomination:

- As a local congregation within the CRCNA, we are accountable to the denomination. Two ways in which we do this is by participating in our local Classis (Classis Toronto), and through denominational tithing.
- Church members receive complimentary copies of The Banner and the Today devotional.
- Many of our ministries utilize resources and curriculum from CRCNA.
- We acknowledge that younger generations or those not as familiar with the denomination through serving on Council may not be as aware of the story of the CRCNA and of our shared ministry work throughout North America.

Identify some of the cultural challenges facing Christians and Christian churches today:

We believe the following are among the cultural challenges our church and the wider Christian community faces today:

- Moral relativism
- Issues of racism and discrimination
- Declining congregational numbers
- Gender identity and homosexuality conversations
- Insignificance in a post-Christian society
- Apathy

What have been the three most important events in the history of your church?

- Expansion of facilities – Our church's past building projects sparked enthusiasm amongst our church family. We were able to expand our ministries and projects and also bless the larger community through facility rentals.
- Youth and adult participation in serve/mission projects – Sending out our church members to tangibly serve as Christ's ambassadors richly blessed the participants. The congregation was blessed in supporting them financially and through prayer. We were also connected with our wider Church family in other parts of the world.
- Discerning His Direction project – Our church took part in a visioning process where we listened and witnessed what the Holy Spirit was doing in our church family and where He might be leading. We were knit together as a church family and inspired by the amazing things God is and will continue to do with, through, and in us.