



50 Marshall Ave, Akron, Ohio 44303

MISSION STATEMENT:

"We are a community of grace, called by the Holy Spirit to participate in God's redemptive work. As the body of Christ we learn, grow, and worship together, and reflect the love of Jesus Christ into the lives of the people who surround us."

POSITION AND EXPERIENCE

We are seeking a full-time senior pastor to lead and partner with our congregation as we participate in Christ's kingdom and serve as a merciful and gracious reflection of God's presence in the world. We are open to male and female candidates. The position will be open beginning in May of 2025. Potential candidates should have 3-5 years of ministry experience, preferably in pastoral roles.

[Akron CRC Website](#)

OUR WORSHIP

Worship is at the heart of who we are, and we have often described ourselves as a "sanctuary of grace." A central focus is preaching that is rooted in Scripture and guided by the Holy Spirit to draw us into a deepening relationship with Christ and Christ's Kingdom, both individually and as a faith community. In addition to preaching, five other dimensions are distinctive and vital parts of our worship together.



- The Lord's Supper: We celebrate the Lord's Supper each week. We stand in a circle around the table, elders serve bread and wine (juice available). All are welcome at the table and invited to partake of the elements. Children partake in communion and are blessed by members of the council.
- Liturgy: Our worship is shaped by our liturgies which follow and change with the church calendar. These have been written by the pastor and also members of the congregation. We have Scripture readings from the Old and New Testaments and the Gospels, and music is incorporated throughout.
- Participative: Members are involved in planning and participation in multiple ways. Most of the roles within the worship service (liturgist, scripture reader, congregational prayer leader, musicians) are filled by volunteer members each week. Two different musicians typically lead music within the same service each week: a pianist who plays music and hymns and another musician (or team) who lead choruses or other songs during communion.
- The Church Year: From Advent through Ordinary Time, we follow the church's liturgical calendar, and seasons are marked by changes in our liturgies as well as art that is created and installed by volunteer liturgical artists to align with those seasons.
- Art and Creativity: We elevate creativity in its many forms, allowing its mystical work to illuminate the sometimes hidden features of God. We are grounded in Christian tradition, yet we allow our imaginations to be guided by wonder, questions, and doubts, confident in believing that faith is not just an individual acquisition but also mysteriously born and grown in community.



OUR BUILDING AND LOCATION

We purchased our current building, originally built in the 1930s, in 2007, and the mortgage was fully paid off in March 2025. We renovated our sanctuary to create a versatile seating structure where we sit centered around the communion table. There is an office space and small study/offices for the pastor and for the deacons. Additionally, we renovated our basement area to create spaces for Sunday school, fellowship meals, and our food pantry ministry. In addition to worship services, the building is used throughout the



week by community and church members for activities such as Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous meetings, piano lessons, theater rehearsals, and for the Friday food pantry ministry (the Landing).

The church is in Akron, Ohio, a multicultural metropolitan community with a (static) population of approximately 188,000, surrounded by another 347,000 in the surrounding Summit County suburbs. We are in the Highland Square area, which is home to shops, restaurants, galleries, and diverse neighborhoods. We are also close to various parks, including the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the Towpath biking and hiking trail which runs through it. Downtown Cleveland, center of a major metropolitan area, is just 35 miles north.

OUR DEMOGRAPHICS

We have 100 active adult professing members, with an average Sunday attendance of 50. The majority of our congregation are aged 50+ and our most common occupations are in professional areas. Three-fourths of our congregation have been members for more than 10 years (as Figure 1, below, shows).

As Figure 2 below shows, more than a third of our congregation is aged 65 or older, but another third is between the ages of 35 and 64. Most of these members have been part of our church for a decade or more, as Figure 2 suggests. In an earlier phase of our history we attracted younger new members (including college students from ministries at nearby universities), but those cohorts have aged. Attracting younger members between the ages of 19 and 34 would support the growth of the church for the future.

Figure 1. Percentage of Membership by Years of Membership

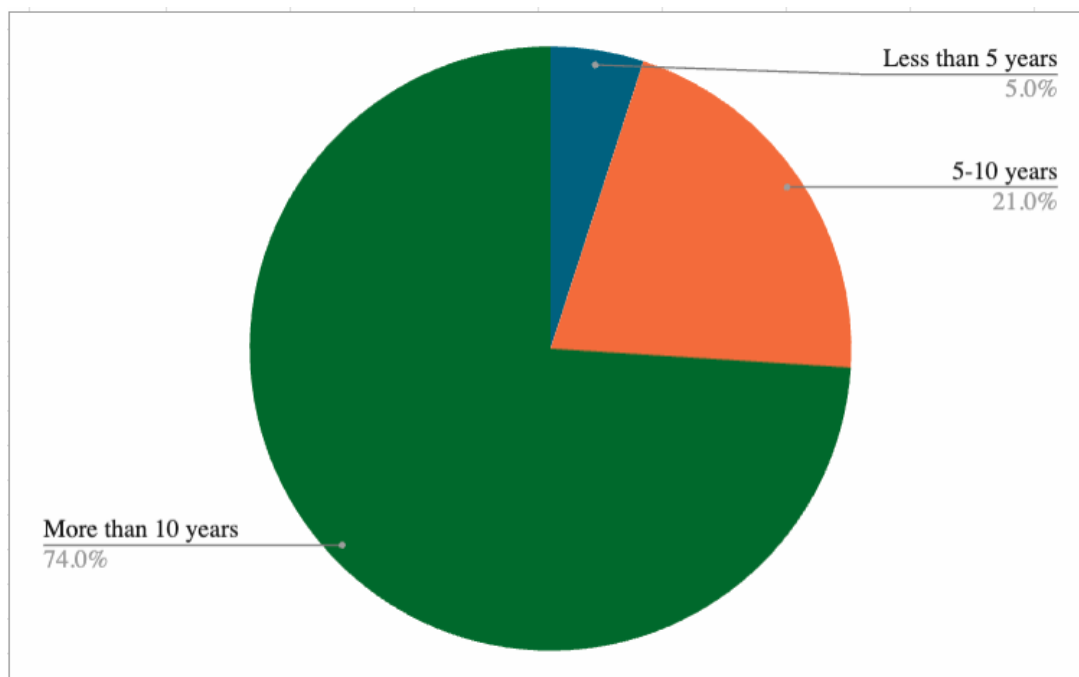
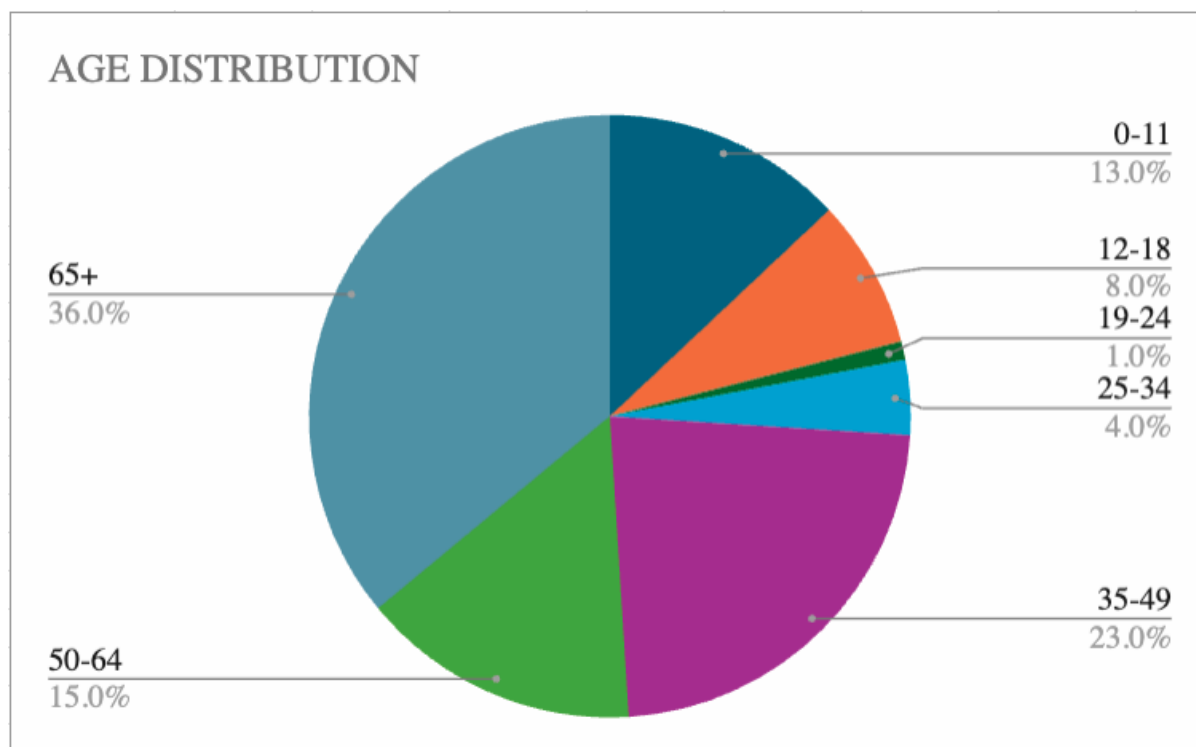


Figure 2. Current Age Range Distribution of Akron Christian Reformed Church



DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICES

As we pursue intentional relationships with God and one another, we share our lives so that together we grow in our knowledge of God, cultivate our new life in Christ, and serve as agents of God's love and grace. Although we are not a heavily programmed church we have some small groups that meet in homes, Sunday school during the school year (Adult and grades pre-K – 6th), youth group, women's fellowship gatherings and retreats, a monthly book club, and opportunities for spiritual direction. We also have regular opportunities throughout the year for congregational fellowship such as meals and seasonal gatherings, and we are looking for ways to increase these kinds of programs.

BUDGET AND FINANCES

Present annual budget:	\$214,423.33
Last year's annual budget:	\$207,133.00

We have met 100% of our financial obligations, and we recently raised approximately \$175,00 for the construction of a lift/elevator to make the building fully accessible.

PASTOR COMPENSATION

The salary range we are prepared to offer our new pastor is based on the CRC Minister Compensation Survey for our area, and the average annual increase for this position over the past three years has been 5%. Other benefits include: housing allowance, pension, medical insurance, social security, travel mileage, continuing education, sabbatical, and annual vacation.

PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY AND ECUMENICAL ACTIVITIES

We have a food pantry ministry (The Landing) to food-insecure members of our local neighborhood and community (who live in our neighborhood's zip code), which served 1 approximately 7,745 families) in 2024. The retiring pastor has participated

ing and certification in spiritual
e Cleveland area. He also took
nd other monasteries.



OUR STRENGTHS AND GIFTS AS A CHURCH

In addition to our worship
and collaborative
commitment to the church
and one another, we lack factions and have historically

offered a thoughtful Reformed faith for people with lots of questions. People feel free to ask questions and often describe our church as a “safe space.” We have a desire to live out our faith in a way that reflects the grace of God to the people who surround us in daily life. Our commitment is to love and honor God by living out the virtues of God's Kingdom. We hope to participate in the thoughts and actions of grace and mercy in this world to ourselves and others. We seek ways to increase the welfare of all people.



WHAT BEING “REFORMED” MEANS TO US

We believe in God's redemptive, liberating work throughout history, made manifest through the Holy Spirit and Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. We seek to convey the clear Spirit of what we believe, how we live that out, and why worship, grace, mercy, and the Kingdom are central to who we are.

We emphasize living out our faith in daily life in everything we do, covenantal theology, reverence for scripture, and a focus on God's providence in the details of our daily lives.

We have gradually evolved from a mostly Dutch ethnic enclave for cradle Christian Reformed members to a more inclusive community connected to our region and representative of our neighborhood (thanks especially to the Landing food pantry ministry, which has brought in new members).

We strive to practice being simply present to others, aware of their needs, affirming mystery, and most of all to stay humble and willing recipients and givers of mercy. We hope people who meet us can feel that we appreciate authenticity over appearance, see flaws and strengths as precious manifestations of God's presence, and embrace what it means to seek Christ's Kingdom as our model of living.

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE CRC

It is with grieving hearts, deep sadness, and disappointment that we have initiated the process of disaffiliation from the CRC. We have done so for the following reasons: the removal of an ability to disagree with Synod's decisions, the violation of church order, disagreement with the interpretations of Synod 2024 regarding the Confessions, and censoring how LGBTQ+ people may participate in the life of our church. We are currently considering what other “Reformed-accent” denominations we

would better align with. As we do so we are determined to maintain our faith priorities, and to work to be unified as we invest time in discussion, prayer, and research.

Akron CRC believes that God's love, forgiveness, and grace are vast and mysterious enough for all of us; they are not limited resources that we must carefully apportion out to some and not to others. We have experienced the Holy Spirit revealing the Kingdom of God through our relationships with *all* God's people.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

We have a Council made up of 5 elders, 5 deacons, and pastoral staff. Elders and deacons serve three-year terms and meet separately once per month; full council meets once per month. In some situations, any or all of these groups might meet more often.

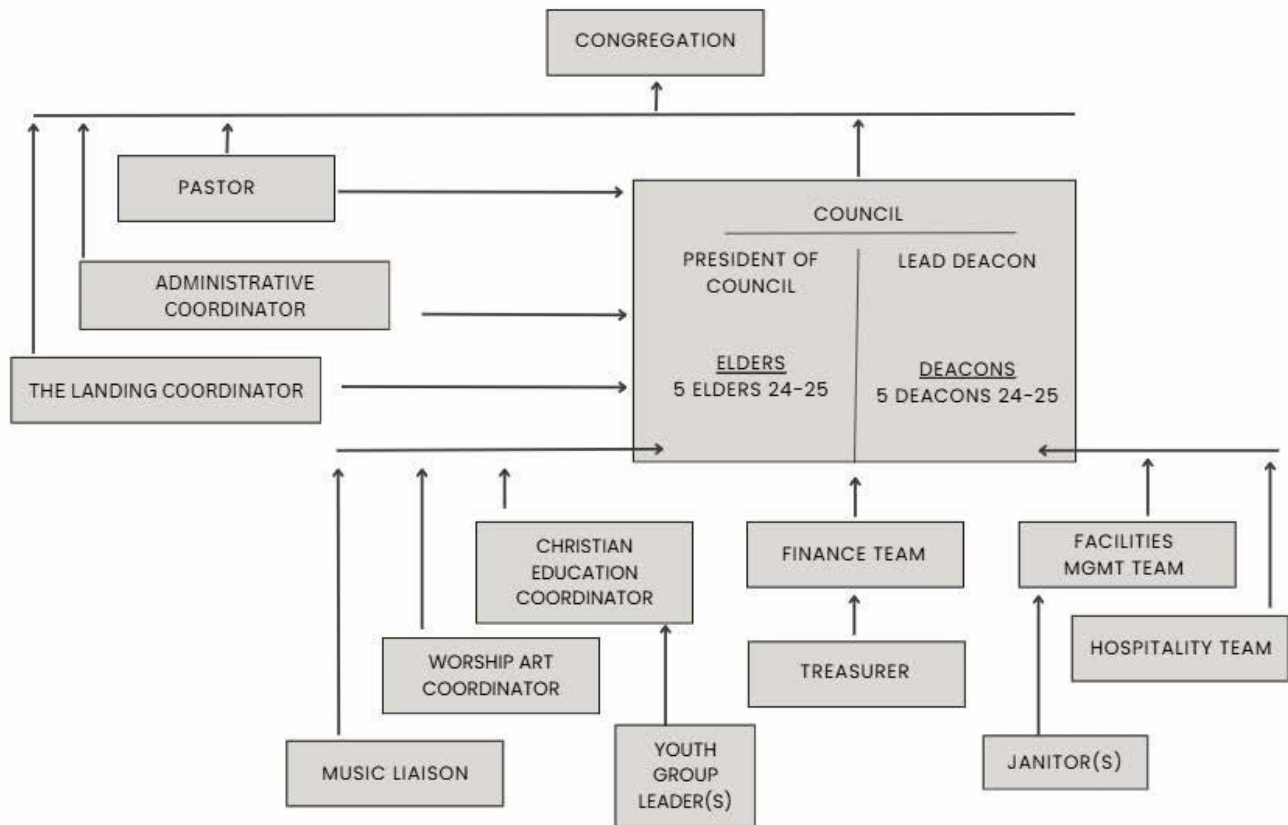
In anticipation of our pastor's retirement, the Council authorized transition teams to consider administrative process, facilities, finance and budget, hospitality, mission and identity, and pastoral search preparation. From those transition teams Facilities, Finance, and Hospitality have become ongoing and active committees.

Figure 3 below depicts our current organizational chart, which includes all committees, voluntary, and paid roles.

Figure 3. Akron Christian Reformed Church Organization Chart



AKRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CHALLENGES FOR OUR CHURCH

We face challenges related to our geography, demographics, accessibility, and identity.

- Geography:
 - We have a geographic dispersion of our members. Although some members live near the church, many other members live 30 minutes or more away in opposite directions from each other
- Demographics:
 - The age distribution of our members: We do not have many but desire more adults in the 19-34 age group.
- Accessibility of our preaching, teaching, and worship to newcomers
 - With many members having been part of the church for a decade or more, we continue to work at helping newer members and visitors, with less history in church, to feel comfortable.
 - While our preaching has been intellectually stimulating for longtime members, it can be a barrier to newer members.
- Disaffiliation:
 - We are in the process of grieving our disaffiliation from the CRC and discerning our next steps for denominational affiliation.