



**New Life Christian Reformed Church  
3010 Ridge Road  
Highland, Indiana**

**Church Profile – Pastor Search**

Dear Prospective Pastor,

On behalf of the Council and congregation, we are so glad that you have taken the time to allow us an introduction of New Life Christian Reformed Church.

By God's grace, we have been serving Highland Indiana and the surrounding area since 1953. We have been blessed with a congregation marked with a passion for evangelism, community service, and creating an inviting environment where people of all ages can come together, grow in faith, and build meaningful relationships with each other and God. We are a close-knit community that is committed to worshiping God together, equipping each other to develop spiritual gifts and care deeply for people - body and soul. We are a place where one can hear the truth of God's word as it is written through sound preaching, worship in song, and prayer.

As you begin your journey with us, we hope that you find our church profile to be helpful in expanding upon who we are and what we stand for.

We believe that God has a plan for us at the corner of Fifth and Ridge, and we are committed to working together to fulfill that plan. We look forward to finding a pastor who will partner with us to achieve our shared vision and make a positive impact on the lives of those around us.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to serve with us. We look forward to getting to know you better as we discern God's calling for our next pastor.

Kind regards,

The New Life CRC Search Committee

## Community

Northwest Indiana is a vibrant community that offers all the advantages of life in the big city with a wide selection of shopping, cultural events, and outstanding accessibility. NWI is just 25 miles from Chicago on the south shore of Lake Michigan. Residents of NWI access large city resources, but with none of the headaches and disadvantages that typically come with life in larger cities. From NWI one can access world-class museums, sports entertainment, and excellent cultural options. There are two hospitals within the primary ministry area that have relationships with teaching hospitals in Chicago.



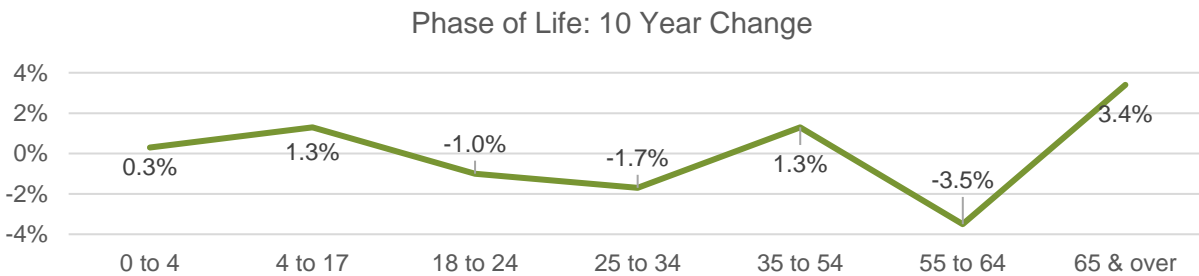
At New Life, our primary ministry area is the towns of Highland, Griffith and Munster. This stable, educated, middle class community is home to 64,000. Whether professionals who work in Chicago, local business owners, young families or retirees, our community reflects a diverse population. However, most of them are not engaged with a local church and do not know the life-transforming power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We invite you to learn more about how we serve as Christ's family to our community.

Nearby are many other Reformed-background churches so colleagues in ministry are not far away. Next door to New Life is Highland Christian School, a growing Christian school with over 600 students from Pre-school through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Many of their graduates go on to Illiana Christian High School, an established school with a new building on a new campus. They have also been growing and have over 500 students.

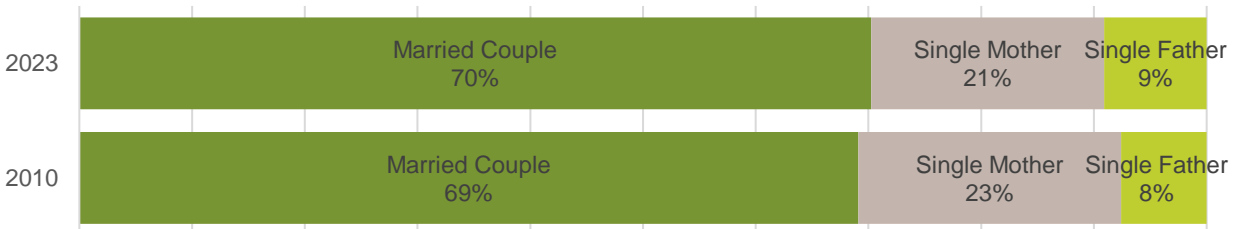
We have used the results of a recent study to share information about our ministry area (prepared using the [Mosaic](#) Lifestyle Segmentation Types). No one group represents more than 15% of the community. The top five segments, which accounted for nearly 47% of the community, are

- Autumn Years– Established retired couples living comfortable suburban lifestyles.
- Suburban Style – Upper middle-class family units living comfortably in established suburbs.
- Thriving Boomers – Older, established multi-generational households in suburban areas.
- Sophisticated City Dwellers – Wealthy boomer-aged couples living in cities and closed-in suburbs.
- Hard Working Values – Established families in smaller cities and towns with solid blue-collar jobs.

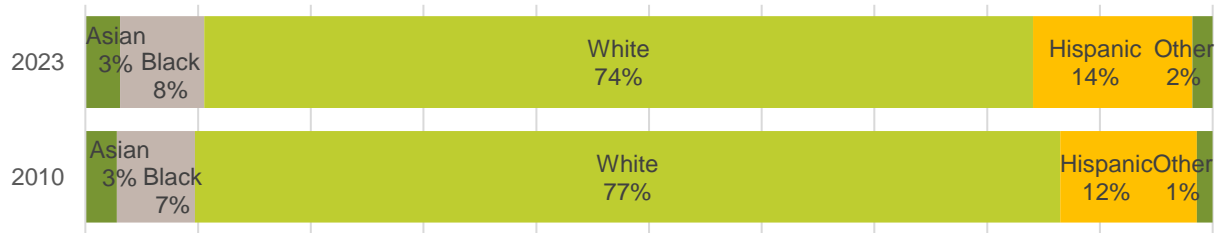
There are two demographic trends concurrent in our community: the aging of the Baby Boomers and some increased level of births is expected over the next decade. Over the next 10 years, our community is expected to see significant growth in the over-65 cohort with mild growth in the number of children.



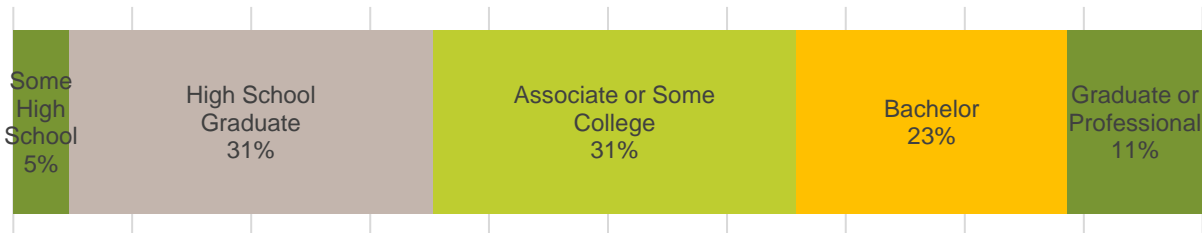
In our community, family households with children have not seen significant changes in composition. Traditional married couples are the primary family structure in which children are being raised.



Diversity in our community has been growing and is shaped by the racial/ethnic composition of people as well as income and education.



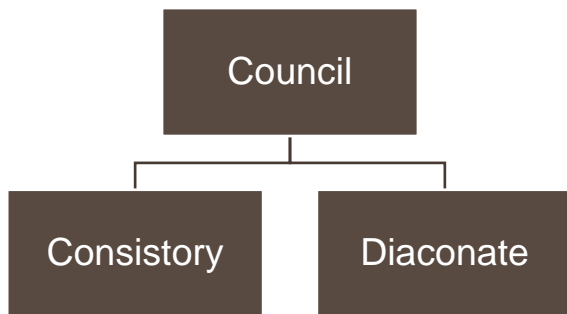
|   | 2010     | 2023     | 2028      |
|---|----------|----------|-----------|
| Average Household Income                  | \$74,695 | \$98,913 | \$109,682 |
| Median Household Income                   | 62,341   | 78,630   | 88,150    |
| Per Capita Income                         | 29,735   | 39,381   | 43,671    |
| Percentage of Families Below Poverty Line | 2.8%     | 5.7%     |           |



Data Sources: US Census Bureau, Synergos Technologies Inc., Experian

### Congregational Leadership, Standing Committees and Staff

Our Council consists of 6 elders and 6 deacons who serve three-years terms. The Council, Consistory and Diaconate each meet monthly.



The Council is assisted by 7 committees, most of which meet monthly:

- Administrative Committee
- Building and Grounds Committee
- Education Committee
- Fellowship Committee
- Member Care Committee
- Mission Outreach Committee
- Worship Committee

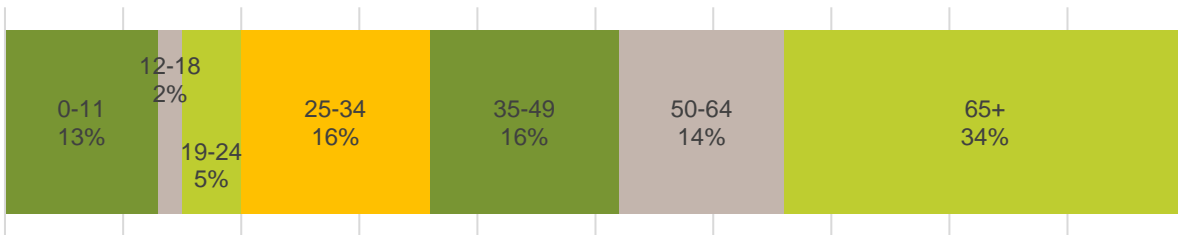
In addition, we have the following staff positions:

- Secretary (full time)
- Custodian (part time)
- Accountant (part time)
- Music Coordinator (part time)

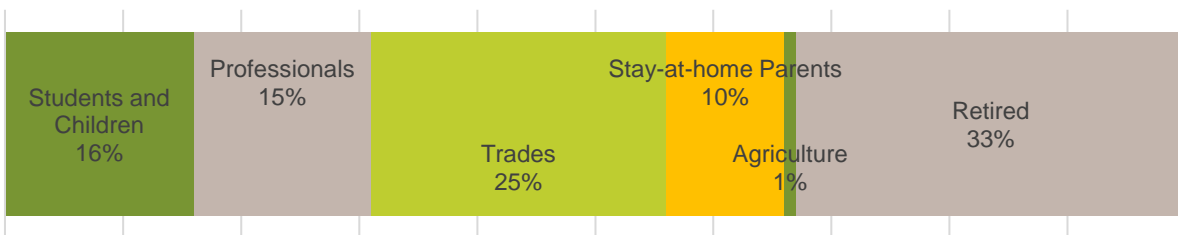
## Church Demographics

Every Sunday, we joyfully gather for worship with approximately 115 people attending in person, the majority of whom are members. Additionally, we stream our services on YouTube, and on average, we receive 50 views over the following week, which has remained consistent during and before our pastoral vacancy.

Our congregation has a diverse range of ages with a noted growing children's population. We are excited by the ways God is working in our congregation with new families joining us and established families welcoming new children born into their homes.



We have an educated and skilled congregation of various gifts, competencies, passions and talents.



New Life is an established and committed congregation with a long history of membership as well as a number of recurrent visitors that we have welcomed into our church family.



## Our Classis

We are part of the 18 congregations of Classis Illiana, which stretches about 100 miles from South Holland, Illinois along the Illinois-Indiana border to Lafayette, Indiana. Eight of the congregations within our classis are within 10 miles of our location. The fall meeting is combined with Classes Chicago South (17 congregations) and Northern Illinois (15 congregations). The classis meetings are congenial, attending to classical matters for the good of the church and upholding historic interpretations of the confessions.

## Who We Are

We have recently completed a two-year project with Rev. Larry Doornbos, formerly of Vibrant Congregations and now the [Church Leadership Center](#), to recognize our church's strengths and to re-articulate our purpose, vision and mission. We look forward to working with our next pastor as we seek to live out our hope-filled future in alignment with God's plan for us at Fifth and Ridge.

### Foundations

#### *Jesus Christ*

Jesus Christ is the foundation on which our faith is built. Paul speaks in Ephesians 2 saying that God's people are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

#### *The Bible/Scripture*

The Bible is the word of God, the record and tool of his redeeming work. It is fully reliable in leading us to know God and walk in his ways.

#### *Creeds and Confessions:*

The church's early creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds) have been used for hundreds of years to differentiate false teaching from true teaching. We join the church of the ages in affirming these creeds.

New Life traces its roots to the 16th century reformation. The creeds of the Reformation (Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession, and Canons of Dort) inform the way we understand the Bible. In addition, our denomination has statements of faith such as "Our World Belongs to God" that give us important insights into faith and life.



## Church Characteristics

We believe in one holy catholic church, and each local congregation uniquely reflects God and the people he has called to it. We invite you to visit and learn more about us. Here is some basic information about how we engage in ministry.

Presently, the focus of our church's ministry is



Our primary focus in our ministry is internal, we also have numerous external ministries. The following is a list of our various programs.

| External                  |                    | Internal                       |                              |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Coffee Break            | • Kid's Hope USA   | • Sunday Adult Education Class | • Catechism (grades 9-12)    |
| • Love INC                | • Community Picnic | • Men's Bible Study            | • Sunday School (grades 3-8) |
| • State Street Lunch      | • GEMS             | • Women's Bible Study          | • Children's Worship         |
| • Hammond Warming Shelter |                    |                                | • Nursery                    |

In our church, the worship service is designed for the



Because of our traditional order of worship and liturgies, we are more designed for the churched. We are flexible in these traditions and make services comfortable and accessible. Everything is displayed on the screen for all to follow. Visitors are also told that they are not obligated to give during the offering.

In our church, the style of music used in the worship service is



Our music tends to be more traditional. Our Praise Team sings once or twice a month at the beginning of the service. The congregational singing is accompanied primarily by the organ or piano. We also have a variety of other groups (Choir, Handbells, Men's Chorus, and Women's Chorus) that play and sing in various musical styles.

In our church, leadership is generally provided by the



Leadership is largely provided by the Elders and Deacons. Congregational members provide leadership in Bible studies, Children's Worship, on committees, and in various ministries.

Our church seeks to encourage spiritual growth



In our church, evangelism strategies and methods are



Planned evangelism includes supporting missionaries, the GEMS program, and Coffee Break.

Our church is representative of the economic diversity of our community



Our church is representative of the ethnic diversity of our community



Whereas the church is changing, it is not changing at the pace of the surrounding community.

Our church's response to compassion, mercy and justice needs is



Our church has many service-based programs and our members are very responsive to individual and community need.

Our church's missional focus is



## Resources and Financial Information

After worshipping in rented space for several years, the young congregation of Second CRC (now New Life) built our current building at the corner of Fifth and Ridge in 1957. Across from the town square and next to Highland Christian School, the red brick edifice with six-story copper steeple has stood as a landmark in the community for six decades. The sanctuary seats approximately 350 with excellent acoustics and original stained glass. The main level has three offices (including pastor study), Council room, nursery, four classrooms and fireside parlor room with kitchen. The lower level contains four additional classrooms, another office, large fellowship hall with commercial kitchen, Cadet room and GEMS room. In the past three years, we have undertaken significant renovations and believe our facilities are appropriate for current and planned ministries.

The parsonage was built in the early 1950s. Around 2,300 sq ft with 4 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms, the parsonage has an additional pastor study, partially finished basement and over-sized attached garage.

### *Budget*

|               |            |                |            |
|---------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| Current Year: | \$ 421,000 | Previous Year: | \$ 416,000 |
|---------------|------------|----------------|------------|

### *Obligations Met*

|               |                    |          |                    |
|---------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|
| Denomination: | 100% of commitment | Classis: | 100% of commitment |
| Missionaries: | 100% of commitment |          |                    |

In addition to our baseline budget, we also take regular offerings for our supported missionaries and mission activities, as well as for denominational functions.



## Previous Ministers

|           |                      |           |                                   |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 1954-1960 | C. Oliver Buus       | 1997-2000 | Melvin J. Jonkman                 |
| 1960-1964 | Alexander C. De Jong | 2001-2007 | Stephan R. Van Eck                |
| 1964-1969 | William H. Rutgers   | 2007-2008 | James E. De Vries, <i>interim</i> |
| 1969-1976 | James E. De Vries    | 2008-2023 | William R. Sytsma                 |
| 1977-1987 | George P. Holwerda   | 2024-     | Timothy B. Toeset, <i>interim</i> |
| 1988-1996 | Ronald J. Meyer      |           |                                   |

Pastor Bill Sytsma's last service, prior to taking his new call, was October 15, 2023. We are currently blessed to have a variety of retired ministers, seminary professors, visiting ministers and licensed exhorters providing pulpit supply. Rev. Tim Toeset will be joining us as interim minister starting August 2024.

## Position Description and Compensation & Benefits Information

### Description

We are looking for an ordained minister who will disciple and equip the people of God through:

- Preaching 40%
  - 1x per week
  - Pulpit exchange as discussed by Elders
- Pastoral Care 20%
  - Fosters, by participation and the oversight of the Elders, regular visitation of the congregational members
  - Primarily hospital visits. Pastor should respond to other requests as needed.
  - Long-term counseling concerns should be referred to professional counselors.
  - Staff Development – Discipleship
  - Visit Nursing homes annually
  - Provide Guidance for Weddings and Funerals as requested
  - Elders are expected to take the primary lead in responding to chronic concerns and caring for the elderly
- Teaching 15%
  - High School Catechism
  - New Members Classes as needed
  - Pre-profession of Faith Class as needed
  - Speak at Chapels/Bible Studies/Other venues as requested
- Administration 25%
  - Council, Elders, Worship Committee, Staff
  - Class/Denominational Assignments
  - Involved in Community Outreach Opportunities

### Qualifications

- A deep personal faith in Jesus Christ and belief in the doctrines contained in the Old and the New Testaments, expressed through the ecumenical creeds, the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed, and the Reformed confessions, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort.

- Meet or exceed the requirements for ordination as a Minister of the Word in the CRCNA. Candidates from other Reformed or Presbyterian denominations willing to complete the Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy will be considered as well.
- Strong communication skills with the ability to explain biblical truths effectively and knowledgeably with wisdom and compassion to diverse audiences.
- A shepherd's heart for pastoral care and a willingness and ability to engage and successfully communicate with people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Adherence to high ethical standards and a commitment to integrity in ministry and life.

### ***Compensation & Benefits***

We know that pastors do not enter the ministry for earthly riches, but a laborer deserves his wages. We've prepared a comprehensive benefits and compensation package that we believe will recognize and support you. Accordingly, this is a full-time position and we do not anticipate a successful candidate will be bi-vocational.

#### *Compensation*

The salary range we are prepared to offer is in line with information in the CRC Minister Compensation Survey.

#### *Housing*

We are prepared to offer either a housing allowance or use of the parsonage with provision for all utilities, insurance and maintenance.

#### *Refreshment and Leave Benefits*

We provide:

- Continuing education and professional development expenses
- Paid time off (4 weeks per year)
- Additional Sundays off (one per quarter)

#### *Other Benefits*

We provide:

- Retirement benefits
  - Participation in the denominational pension plan
  - Participation in the denominationally sponsored 403(b)(9) plan with a 5% dollar-for-dollar matching contribution
- Health benefits
  - Participation in the denominational plans through Reformed Benefits Association
  - Medical insurance with no premium contribution requirement (if you opt out due to other coverage, we will share a portion of the savings)
  - Dental insurance
  - Vision insurance
- Self-Employment Contributions Act (SECA) tax assistance (half, "employer" portion)
- Travel/mileage expense reimbursement
- Professional expense reimbursement

We do not engage in unlawful discrimination in hiring on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or other characteristics protected by federal, state or local statute or ordinance. As a congregation of the Christian Reformed Church, we reserve the right to give preference in employment based on sex and religion. Consistent with the recognized theological

perspectives of the CRCNA and our convictions, we only ordain qualified male members of the church to the offices of minister, commissioned pastor, elder and deacon.

Consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable state and local laws, we provide reasonable accommodation when requested by a qualified applicant or employee with a disability, unless such accommodation would cause an undue hardship. This practice of reasonable accommodation applies to all aspects of employment, including the application process.

## Contact Information

### Church

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