

**Church Information:**

Name: Faith Church, a ministry of the Christian Reformed Church

Location of church: Nashville, Tennessee

Classical Church Counselor: Rev. Herm Schutt

**Search Committee Contact:**

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**Community Setting:**

Location: Metropolitan

Function: College/University; Recreational/Tourism; Military

Growth: Growing

Approximate population of community: 1.8 million in the Nashville MSA

**Church Profile:**

We are open to: Male pastors only

List all staff positions: Pastor

Position available: Pastor

Date of vacancy: 9/15/2018

**General position description:**

The pastor shares and promotes the mission, core values, and ministry of the church to the congregation and its community. The pastor supports all the church ministries in order to fulfill the calling to build up God's people and share the good news of Jesus. The pastor is also a catalyst to consider new ministries that flow from the church's vision.

In his full-time role, the pastor is a leader in the council, church and community. At the same time, he is accountable to the council in doctrine, life and responsibilities. Supervision by the council will include teamwork, counsel, encouragement and an annual evaluation.

The pastor's specific responsibilities may be grouped into five general areas:

1. Worship: The pastor will partner with worship planners, but hold final responsibility, on behalf of the elders who oversee worship, for the flow and content of worship services. The pastor will provide primary leadership in the worship hour, while encouraging gifted members to lead as well: with prayers, reading scripture, music, a children's message etc.

The pastor will devote ample time to preparing sermons that are biblical, Christ-centered, fresh, relevant and concise. The pastor will be a key member of the worship committee, which assesses overall worship dynamics and sets worship guidelines and policies.

2. Education: The pastor will take a major role in the education ministry of the church. This will include helping train new elders or deacons. And it may include teaching Sunday school, profession of faith classes, new member classes and pre-marriage classes.
3. Pastoral care: The pastor will partner with the elders to provide needed care to everyone in the church family. This includes the sick, those hospitalized, those shut in by health issues, those grieving a loss. The pastor will regularly and readily be available in the church study for consultation. The pastor will offer counseling as needed- whether to those seeking guidance in a decision, struggling with a difficult relationship or simply hurting. When issues are long-term and complicated, he will refer them to a trained professional. The pastor will also nurture the ministry of prayer for God's grace in the lives of those who need his tender care.
4. Leadership: The pastor will give key leadership in discerning the Spirit's leading and vision for the church's ministry. Then the pastor will promote that vision and ministry. The pastor will be a key leader in growing the outreach of the church: to serve human needs in the community and share the gospel of Jesus. The pastor will lead in helping the church carry out its various ministries faithfully. The pastor will help tackle key issues that arise. By the pastor's central role, his gifts, and his commitment, he must be a respected leader among God's people.
5. Administration: Faith Church currently has no paid secretary or administrator. So it will be helpful for the pastor to have solid administrative abilities: ensuring good communication within the church, prompting committees to fulfill their responsibilities, covering inevitable details with the council chair and others. While Faith Church is modest in size, it carries on a variety of ministries; so the pastor will need to provide overall encouragement. The pastor will also attend and offer a voice at the two annual meetings of Classis Illiana.

The pastor must also be committed to demonstrating the Mission and Core Values of Faith Church -

Our Mission: Faith Church is a dynamic and diverse Christian community. We seek not only to proclaim and teach the whole Word of God faithfully, but to apply it to all of life. We celebrate God's grace in Jesus Christ through our worship, fellowship and ministry, seeking out others whom God is calling to grow with us.

#### Our Core Values

We are:

- Christ-centered – We love Christ because He loved us. In gratitude, we hunger to know Him more deeply. We earnestly seek His will in Scripture; we are passionate in prayer. We seek to make our whole lives – and our life together – a testimony to His work in us.
- Discerning – We honor the gifts of knowledge and wisdom among us. We strive to understand our world and our culture, so that we can speak God's Word to it fully. This is our calling.

- Open – As followers of Christ, who loved and welcomed all, we celebrate our rich diversity. We hold firmly to Truth, as revealed in Scripture, but we acknowledge that faithful men and women may differ on how God’s Word is to be interpreted and applied. We make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.
- Humble – We are sinners redeemed by grace alone. We follow the example and call of our Lord Jesus, Who lived among us as a servant and laid down His life for us.
- Joyful – We are loved with a great love, and we respond with astonished joy. We celebrate life’s goodness and seek to meet trials with humor, resilience, and hope, knowing the richness of God’s faithfulness.
- Caring – We belong not only to God but to each other. We listen with open hearts. We look for ways to strengthen one another. We rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn, and encourage those who struggle. With an agile servant’s heart, we seek ways to put hands and feet to our love.
- Faithful – We heed Christ’s call to be holy, to pursue peace, to work for justice, and to embody His sacrificial love. We hunger to live authentic lives before Him. Having experienced His faithfulness among us, we persevere in our commitment to Him, to each other, and to a hurting world.

Full-time position

Bi-vocational position? No

Number of years preferred of ministry experience of potential candidate: prefer 5 or more years of experience

Required languages: English; Spanish or some other second language helpful

**Church Demographics:**

Profile of church members:

Age:

15% 0 – 11

6% 12 – 18

8% 19 – 24

12% 25 – 34

12% 35 – 49

27% 50 – 64

20% 65+

Occupation:

25% Business

16% Professional

12% Trades

7% Stay-at-home parent

0% Agriculture

36% Retired

4% Student

0% Other

Percentage of members belonging to the congregation:

Less than 5 years: 14%

5 -10 years: 22%

10 or more years: 64%

Racial/Ethnic composition of congregation and surrounding community:

Congregation is 75% Caucasian, 20% African-American and 5% other ethnicities. A center for immigrant and refugee settlement, Nashville (particularly our area) is increasingly multi-cultural. Students in Metro schools are from 120 countries, speaking more than 95 languages. One in eight current Nashville residents was born outside the United States. The Nashville MSA is approximately 73% white, 16% African-American, 8% Hispanic and 4% other ethnicities.

Community Setting:

In 2019 the metropolitan area of Nashville has a population of 1.8 million people. It is the fastest growing metropolitan area in the country. Its per capita income is 6.5% higher than the national average. One in eight residents of the city is foreign-born, including concentrations of Hispanic, Burmese, and Kurdish residents near Faith Church. An Eritrean congregation currently uses Faith Church on Sunday afternoons. Monday through Thursday, a Spanish immersion preschool program uses our fellowship pod.

Nashville has been described as the #1 business area for professional + business jobs. Because one half of the population of the United States lives within 650 miles of Nashville, it is the national headquarters for numerous corporations, including Nissan North America, Tractor Supply, Bridgestone, and Hospital Corporation of America. Amazon has also announced plans to build a significant business center in Nashville. The largest economic drivers are health care, music and entertainment, advanced manufacturing, and tourism.

Nashville has a rich educational heritage, featuring 18 college and universities that enroll more than 123,000 students; 60% of graduates remain in the area. It has an internationally acclaimed symphony orchestra, along with professional opera and ballet companies and numerous professional theater groups.

It is home to the Tennessee Titans (NFL), the Nashville Predators (NHL), the Nashville Sounds (AAA baseball team), and the newly formed Nashville Soccer Club (MLS). The area offers 56 public and private golf courses as well as wonderful hiking trails.

Composition of congregation: Multi-Cultural

List the last three persons in the position: (only two pastors in our CRC history)

1. Gerald Hoek
2. Randy Brower

**Worship:**

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

The pastor outlines services a few months in advance, indicating sermon topic and Scripture passage; he generally chooses 2 hymns and passages for the Call to Worship, Call to Confession and Assurance of Pardon. Musicians and praise leaders then choose and prepare other music. (In the pastor's absence, Worship Team members plan the services entirely.) The Music and Worship Team includes a number of musicians, singers and song leaders who rotate responsibilities throughout the month. Elders lead the times of confession and the congregational prayer; deacons lead the offertory prayer and take up offerings. PowerPoint slides provide song lyrics, Scripture texts and responsive readings, along with images and texts throughout the pastor's sermon.

Describe the worship services in your church:

Services have an informal feeling but a definite structure and rhythm, based on the Reformed principles of God's speaking and the people's response. Music is a blend of contemporary praise music and traditional hymns, with songs chosen both for their meaning and appropriateness at a particular point in the service: praise, confession, gratitude, reflection, prayer, etc. Congregational matters of concern and thanksgiving are shared and prayed for by the elder in the congregational prayer. Sermons are expository, with series generally following a theological theme or Book of the Bible and are approximately 25 minutes long. The congregation loves to sing, and there are generally 5-7 songs throughout each service. Special services throughout the year follow their own patterns: Advent, an Advent Lessons and Carols service, Christmas, New Year's, Lent, Maundy Thursday, and Easter.

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

Sunday School classes are held for all ages, including adults. Members are encouraged to attend small-group Bible studies held in member's homes, usually twice a month; these often include a meal or other fellowship opportunities as well. A Men's Bible Study, a Women's Group and a weekly prayer group meet for fellowship and discussion.

**Building/Financial:**

Present annual budget: \$130,000

Last year's annual budget: \$141,038

Percentage of financial obligations met (last complete year reported):

- Budget: 100%
- Denominational ministry shares: 1%
- Classical ministry shares: 3%

Amount contributed above budget and ministry shares: \$6,852

- Specify: local benevolence - \$4,020

## Facilities:

Describe facilities: Faith Church's building was completed in 1988. Located at 15512 Old Hickory Blvd, it features 10,187 square feet of space and sits on 4.25 acres on a major five lane road on the south end of Nashville. One pod/area includes a sanctuary which seats up to 150 people, with a church office, a pastor's study, a library and an adult classroom all located off the sanctuary. Another pod/area includes five classrooms, a nursery/childcare area and a full kitchen located off a large fellowship hall. The grounds feature 48 garden beds that are available for use by the residents of the neighborhood. Nearby is a large commercial intersection. The housing in the area is largely comprised of homeowner, condo and apartment complexes.

Are your buildings adequate for your ministries? Yes

Is a building program projected? No

Does the church own a parsonage? No

Location of office or study: In church building, off narthex

## Compensation:

The salary range we are prepared to offer our new pastor is high 40's to mid 50's (base)

The average annual increase for this position over the past three years is: 3%

## Housing:

✓ Housing allowance

## Benefits and expenses:

- ✓ Pension
  - ✓ Medical insurance
  - ✓ Life insurance
  - ✓ Social security
  - ✓ Travel/mileage
  - ✓ Continuing education funds
  - ✓ Continuing education time allotted
  - ✓ Sabbatical policy in place
- 4 weeks annual vacation

**Church Characteristics:**

Presently, the FOCUS OF OUR CHURCH'S MINISTRY is: Current members/participants primarily (External – Internal)

In our church, the WORSHIP SERVICE IS DESIGNED FOR: Emphasis on believers (Unchurched – Churchd)

In our church, the STYLE OF MUSIC used in the worship service is: Blended  
(Contemporary – Traditional)

In our church, LEADERSHIP is generally provided by the: Lay leaders & pastoral staff share leadership  
(Congregational members – Pastoral Staff)

Our church seeks to ENCOURAGE SPIRITUAL GROWTH through: Ministries for selected groups  
(Informal – Formal)

In our church, EVANGELISM STRATEGIES AND METHODS are: Predominately unplanned  
(Unplanned – Planned)

Our church is representative of the ECONOMIC DIVERSITY of our community: Mostly representative  
(High representation – Low representation)

Our church's RESPONSE TO COMPASSION, MERCY, AND JUSTICE NEEDS is: Church-based and personal action  
(Church-based – Personal)

Our church's MISSIONAL FOCUS is: Mostly local  
(Local – Global)

**Narrative:**

Do you have a recently articulated mission/vision for ministry? No

In what ways does your church participate in ecumenical activities?

Very limited involvement, though we would like to do more. We occasionally have had joint services with the Eritrean church that worships in our building, as we did with a Korean Presbyterian church that formerly used our facilities. South Nashville has a large and growing number of ecumenical groups working on foreign missions and world service projects; we have discussed how we might align our efforts with these. With Grace Village now meeting in our facility on a weekly basis, we also hope to engage with them in further outreach to the community.

Reflect on your strengths/gifts as a church:

Our true strengths as a congregation are probably best seen in our Values Statement: historically, we have striven to be Christ-centered, discerning, open, humble, joyful, caring and faithful. These values have shaped our ministry and our life together. We have a heart for worship and a love for God. If we have always done a better job of caring for each other than reaching out into the community, our love and acceptance of one another has always been evident to visitors, and we genuinely welcome the considerable diversity among us.

Our history is another source of strength for us. For more than 50 years we have been a witness to God's faithfulness and grace in our lives. And while scores of families have worshiped with us for a while before moving elsewhere, we have enjoyed considerable continuity. Remarkably for a church of our size, five of the charter families who established Faith Church as a CRC congregation some 35 years ago still attend regularly – including children and grandchildren of the original members. We have always been a teaching church, hungry for God's Word in worship, Sunday School, and home Bible study groups. We have always been a multiracial congregation. We have always maintained a distinctive Reformed world view. Having wrestled with these issues for half a century, we have much to share with other believers who struggle with them today.

From a purely practical and strategic standpoint, we enjoy:

- A flexible building adaptable to different uses
- A highly visible location on a major traffic artery in Nashville
- A paid-off mortgage
- A bank balance with some contingency funds for the future
- Property estimated to be worth well over a million dollars
- Location in a fast-growing part of town — in one of the country's "hot" cities
- A suburban location that also offers considerable ministry opportunities to Nashville's huge – and constantly growing – multiethnic refugee and immigrant population.

Gifts evident among the current congregation include preaching, teaching, leadership, wisdom, discernment, worship, music, hospitality, fellowship, missions, prayer, encouragement, service, and compassion.

Reflect on your passions as a church:

The passion of Faith Church is to show God's love to the people of our community in practical and tangible ways. We provide food, clothing, and support to needy refugee children and their families in our partnership with the local elementary school they attend. Through our community garden, the residents of our area's many apartment complexes have the opportunity to cultivate a garden with their families. In addition to these ongoing ministries, our member-stocked food pantry and benevolent fund giving ensures that we are equipped to meet various needs in our area and congregation as we become aware of them.

List specific problems with which your congregation struggles:

1. Difficulty in attracting and keeping new members.
2. Our small size means that our resources – people, finances, time and energy – are limited.
3. There is a hole in our Youth ministry; the majority of our members are older.
4. We have always been spread out geographically over the city and beyond – a large area.
5. Even though the congregation is small, having a one-person staff is a challenge.
6. Having been in maintenance mode for years, we have limited vision for our future.



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

There have been several, including the ministry challenges involved with Pastor Hoek's extended absence during the bone marrow transplant for his wife and his subsequent decision to retire after 26 years with us.

A significant question we are currently addressing is the role of women in leadership roles within the church. When Faith Church was established in 1983, the historic conviction - that only men were to assume roles of leadership/authority - was the unquestioned stance of the CRC. In 1995, Synod acknowledged that there are two convictions on this matter and both are based on a scriptural foundation. Over the years, members at Faith Church, like the Christian Reformed Church at large, have come to differing convictions. During our time of transition, the elders have decided to present two teaching forums to listen afresh to God's Word and the biblical grounds for each conviction. After listening to God's Word and listening to each other, the elders will seek the Spirit's wisdom on how to best move forward together in unity.

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

Our goals for the next one to three years are to fulfill our mission by:

1. Calling a pastor with good gifts of preaching, leadership, and outreach
2. Growing in the power of the Spirit so that Faith Church is sustainable in size, leadership and finances
3. Shaping such growth so that we maintain the core aspects of our identity, as defined in our Mission and Values
4. Using wisely the valuable resources of our building, perhaps by sharing space with new or smaller churches of like mind and mission.

Describe what being Christians of Reformed accent means to you:

Our focus is, first and foremost, on God and the Word of God; these shape not only ministry but our daily lives and our relationship to the world. Within the rich heritage of the Reformation, we are a doctrinal and confessional body, bound together with God's covenant people throughout history. We believe that our lives are to be self-reforming and self-transforming on a daily basis, informed with a growing knowledge and trust in the Word of God.

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

A church and its denomination provide mutual kingdom resources and accountability. The denominational ministries, including classis, provide key resources to local churches, along with accountability on major matters of doctrine or church decisions. In turn, local churches provide resources to denominational ministries through ministry shares and prayers. And our local church's relationship with the denomination has been partly shaped by Nashville's geographic distance from most other CRC congregations.

This has certainly been the case in the history of Faith Church. Through the support of Home Missions, a fledgling group was established as a congregation in 1983. With Home Missions savvy and finances, our property was purchased and developed. Two pastors called from the Christian Reformed Church have faithfully served Faith Church. We have been blessed with significant support from our denomination in the form of long-term volunteers, pastoral supply and conference speakers. Over the years denominational Sunday School material has been used with benefit. Most recently, when Faith's pastor of twenty-six years retired, Faith found a Specialized Transitional Minister to come and help. In turn Faith Church has sent ministry shares, sent delegates to classis, and offered prayers for denominational ministries.

Identify some of the cultural challenges facing Christians and Christian churches today: The Church in America has always struggled to maintain its values and defend its teaching in an increasingly diverse marketplace of ideas. Its traditional opponents are still out there, and in full force. Casual agnosticism and atheism, often confused in the popular mind with "science" or "the scientific world-view," are today being fueled and supported by aggressively atheistic writers and media sources. Other major religions become more familiar and approachable every day in our pluralistic society, along with vague spirituality and a wide range of cults (from Mormonism and Jehovah's Witness to Scientology and others) that offer "Christianity with Improvements." All of these are afforded protection and tolerance under America's tradition of religious freedom, with the result that many careless observers have come to believe that "they're all the same." More and more, what we read and watch as Americans suggests that various faith systems are not equally meaningful and valuable, but equally meaningless and valueless.

Far more dangerous is the growing tendency not to think about issues and ideas at all, but to form beliefs and allegiances along emotional and partisan lines. The Church's largest challenge may prove to be how it preaches Truth in an era when truth itself is challenged or denied. It's been three years since the Oxford Dictionaries named "post-truth" as its word of the year, defining it as "denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief."

Such appeals to emotion and belief (along with deeply held cultural values) are increasingly politicized, fracturing our unity and our ability to work toward solutions. We are becoming, politically and culturally, a nation of strangers and "enemies." One recent poll claimed that 10 percent of both conservatives and liberals were inclined to find their opponents "less than human." Our growing divisiveness – often along racial, economic, gender, and generational as well as political lines – needs to be a matter of much work and prayer.

One further challenge facing the Church in this highly politicized climate is a general perception among unbelievers that almost all Christians feel and believe the same things – often things the observers disagree with. Christians of all stamps – both liberal and conservative – have too often confused the Gospel with a political agenda, and we will deal with the repercussions of that sin for a long time. Our divisiveness hinders our ability to address the pressing social needs of our time, as well as the ever-present call of Christ to deal with our own sin and brokenness.

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

1. Becoming a CRC congregation – Faith Church became a congregation of the CRC in 1983 after a long history with the RPCES. Originally founded in the late sixties, the congregation met on the Vanderbilt campus and then moved to East Nashville and met in a house repurposed as a worship space. Having lost our pastor in 1979, the congregation petitioned the CRC to become a mission church of the denomination.
2. Our building – Faith Church completed construction of our current building in 1988 with the formal opening in August of that year and subsequently paid off the mortgage approximately 10 years ago.
3. Navigating our transition after the 26-year pastorate of Rev. Jerry Hoek.

**Leadership:**

How many council members does your church have? 3 Elders and 3 Deacons plus the pastor

What is the length of term for council members? 3 years

How often does the full council meet? Once a month

What subgroups of council exist, how do they function and how often do they meet?

The six-member Council generally acts as a Council of the whole. Individual Council members, as well as the pastor, serve as members and liaisons for various church teams: Worship, Education, Missions and Outreach, Fellowship, and Facilities. The active teams aim to meet anywhere from 2 - 6 times a year; coordination of teams is done by group emails when feasible.