

CHURCH PROFILE FORM

Church Information:

Name: Plymouth Heights Christian Reformed Church
Location of church [City, State/Province]: Grand Rapids, MI
Classical Church Counselor: Rev. Rebecca Jordan Heys

Search Committee Contact:

Name: Deb Feys
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Community Setting:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Growth</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Rural	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Growing
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Town	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College/University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Static
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metropolitan	<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Declining
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreational	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inner City	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	
<input type="checkbox"/> Small City	<input type="checkbox"/> Bedroom community	

Approximate population of community: City of Grand Rapids 200,370 Church community ~14,000

Church Profile:

1. Church Demographics
 - a. Average sunday attendance since COVID has been difficult to ascertain
 - b. Active adult professing members 248

2. We are open to:
 - a. **Male and Female pastors X**
 - b. Female pastors only
 - c. Male pastors only

3. List all staff positions:
 - a. Minister of Congregational Care and Life
 - b. Minister of Children and Youth
 - c. Minister of Music
 - d. Church Secretary
 - e. Building and Grounds Manager

4. Position Available:
 - a. Minister of Worship and Leadership
 - b. Date of vacancy: August 2021

5. General position description: See Job Description pdf

6. Full-time or Part-time [F or P]: **Full time**

7. Bi-vocational position [Y or N]: **N**

8. Number of years preferred of ministry experience of potential candidate: **Experience preferred**

9. Required languages: **English**

10. Have you completed the Denominational Survey conducted by the Center for Social Research: **No**

Church Demographics:

1. Profile of church members:

a. Age:

- i. **15%** 0-11
- ii. **1%** 12-18
- iii. **3%** 19-24
- iv. **9%** 25-34
- v. **16%** 35-49
- vi. **21%** 50-64
- vii. **34%** 65+

b. Occupation:

- i. **20%** Business
- ii. **30%** Professional
- iii. **5%** Trades
- iv. **3%** Stay-at-home parent
- v. **0%** Agriculture
- vi. **31%** Retired
- vii. **10%** Student
- viii. **1%** Other

2. Percentage of members belonging to the congregation:

- a. Less than 5 years = **13%**
- b. 5-10 years = **22%**
- c. 10 or more years = **65%**

3. Racial/Ethnic composition of congregation and surrounding community:

	PHCRC	City of Grand Rapids
White	92%	67.2%
Black	1%	18.6%
Hispanic/Latino	1%	16.1%
Asian	5%	2.4%
Other	1%	.4%

4. Composition of congregation:
 - a. Mono-Cultural
 - b. Multi-Cultural
 - c. Specific Ethnicity (specify: _____)

5. List the last three persons in this position:
 - a. Rev. Steve De Vries
 - b. Dr. Russell Palsrok
 - c. Rev. Peter Van Elderen

Worship:

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

A significant amount of planning is done by the Minister of Music and the Minister of Worship and Leadership with assistance from the church accompanist and participating musicians. Additionally, many members of our congregation lead the liturgy and music during church services. Participants come from all generations, backgrounds, and talents. We also have a number of members who handle the Audio/Video technological aspects of worship. Their contributions have been vital during the pandemic as we have added live-stream worship due to the pandemic.

2. Describe the worship services in your church:

Plymouth Heights CRC worship services are liturgical and orderly, doctrinal and sacramental in structure. We experience worship together as the body of Christ. Worship is a time to praise and honor God for his presence in our lives and grow our personal relationships with him. The services intentionally include adults and children. Many members of our Friendship group (people with intellectual disability) participate as well.

Music incorporates pipe organ, piano, and additional brass, strings, woodwinds, and percussion instruments. This variety of instruments allows for musical opportunities using blended styles. Typically, the services use a traditional style of music; however, contemporary music is included from time to time.

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

For our younger members, we have Choristers, Praise and Play, and Children in Worship on Sundays. For preschool-1st grade, we have recently begun the Dwell program, which takes place on Wednesday evening with GEMS and Cadets for 2nd-8th grade. We have

also started offering a Wednesday night catechism class for 4th-7th grade. Middle and High School Youth Groups meet on Sunday evenings. Often these programs will take a break during the summer month.

Friendship Group, prior to the pandemic, met weekly and allowed people with intellectual disabilities and other members of the church to praise and socialize together. With the decrease of Covid positivity rates, we hope to see this group meeting again soon and regularly.

Equip Groups (or small groups) are a time for adults to come together, intergenerationally, to build relationships throughout the congregation. Additionally, we have book clubs and Bible studies for men and women.

Finally, we have a seasonal adult choir, which rehearses on Sundays before the service and provides singing during some of the worship services.

Building/Financial:

1. Present annual budget: \$677,817.11
2. Last year's annual budget: \$709,524.06
3. Percentage of financial obligations met (last complete year reported):
 - a. Budget - 100%
 - b. Denominational Ministry Shares - 100%
 - c. Classical Ministry Shares - 100%

4. Facilities:

We have a sanctuary with a 550 seat capacity. Several of the pews have been shortened to accommodate wheelchairs rather than expecting wheelchair bound members to sit at the back of the sanctuary or in the main aisle. The building is ADA compliant with an elevator to access the upper and lower levels. The church building includes a community room on the upper level and a fellowship room on the lower level. We have a library and media room along with several classrooms. Additionally, we have a dedicated meeting space for our middle school and high school youth groups. We also have a craft and workshop room for GEMS and Cadets. Finally, we have a functioning kitchen on each level and a nursery on the upper level.

5. Are your buildings adequate for your ministries?

- a. **Yes - X**
- b. No

Is a building program projected?

- c. Yes
- d. **No - X**

- 6. Does the church own a parsonage? Yes, but the parsonage is currently occupied by the Minister of Congregational Care and Life.
 - a. **Yes - X**
 - b. No
- 7. Location of office or study: An office for each minister's usage is attached to the main church office.

Compensation:

- 1. The salary range we are prepared to offer our new pastor is based on the CRC Minister Compensation Survey for our area: **Yes**
- 2. The average annual increase for this position over the past three years is: **Annual COLA increase %**
- 3. Housing:
 - a. **Housing allowance - X**
 - b. Parsonage only
 - c. Either of the above
- 4. Benefits and expenses:
 - a. Pension - **Yes**
 - b. Medical insurance - **Yes**
 - c. Life insurance - N/A
 - d. Social Security or Canada Pension - **Yes**
 - e. Travel/mileage - **Yes**
 - f. Continuing Education funds - **Yes**
 - g. Continuing Education time allotted - **Yes**
 - h. Sabbatical policy in place - **Yes**
- 5. Annual vacation (# weeks): **4 weeks**

6. Other (please specify): **Health Savings Account (HSA)**

Church Characteristics:

1. Presently, the FOCUS OF OUR CHURCH'S MINISTRY is:
 - a. The community exclusively
 - b. The community primarily
 - c. The community & current members/participants equally - X**
 - d. The current members/participants primarily
 - e. The current members/participants exclusively

2. In our church, the worship service is designed for:
 - a. Designed for the unchurched
 - b. Emphasis on the unchurched
 - c. Unchurched and believers
 - d. Emphasis on believers - X**
 - e. Designed for believers

3. In our church, the style of music in the worship service is:
 - a. Contemporary
 - b. Mostly contemporary
 - c. Blended
 - d. Mostly traditional - X**
 - e. Traditional

4. In our church, leadership is generally provided by the:
 - a. Predominantly lay leaders
 - b. Frequently lay leader
 - c. Lay leaders & pastors staff share leadership - X**
 - d. Lay leaders function under pastoral staff
 - e. Predominantly pastoral staff

5. Our church seeks to encourage spiritual growth through:
 - a. No specific ministries
 - b. Ministries for a few groups
 - c. Ministries for selected groups
 - d. Ministries for most groups - X**
 - e. Ministries for all groups

6. In our church, evangelism strategies and methods are:
 - a. Predominantly unplanned
 - b. Generally unplanned
 - c. Equal emphasis
 - d. Generally planned - X**
 - e. Predominantly planned

7. Our church is representative of the economic diversity of our community:
 - a. Strongly representative
 - b. Mostly representative
 - c. Moderately representative
 - d. **Mildly representative - X**
 - e. Weakly representative

8. Our church is representative of the ethnic diversity of our community:
 - a. Strongly representative
 - b. Mostly representative
 - c. Moderately representative
 - d. **Mildly representative - X**
 - e. Weakly representative

9. Our church's response to compassion, mercy, and justice needs is:
 - a. Commitment to church-based action
 - b. Encouragement of church-based action
 - c. **Church-based and personal action - X**
 - d. Encouragement of personal action
 - e. Commitment to personal action

10. Our church's missional focus is:
 - a. All local
 - b. Mostly local
 - c. **Equally local and global - X**
 - d. Mostly global
 - e. All global

Narrative:

1. **Do you have a recently articulated mission/vision for ministry?** [Y or N] Y
 - a. EQUIPPING DISCIPLES TO BECOME NEIGHBORS; INVITING NEIGHBORS TO BECOME DISCIPLES

2. **In what ways does your church participate in ecumenical activities?**

Our musicians use a variety of music sources and participate in area worship conferences.

Plymouth Heights's pastors participate in area-wide focus groups, featured speaker gatherings, conferences, and online national and international clergy groups.

The church's members take part in small group conversations with neighboring churches on relevant or cultural challenges and neighborhood involvement.

3. **Reflect on your strengths/gifts as a church:**

Our church has many gifts. One area where we see those gifts is in the number of people willing to mentor other members of the church. We are fortunate to have people in our church who volunteer their time one-on-one or with larger groups. With an increasing number of children in the congregation, we are fortunate to have so many people willing to help with our youth programs. We also have people who are willing to take on roles of leadership within the church. These mentors, volunteers, and leaders share their wisdom and energy, providing a sense of stability and consistency.

One of our strengths is the value we place on diversity. We have diversity in forms of age, gifts, talents, and viewpoints. We work to be respectful of differing opinions while remaining committed to loving all God's children. We recognize this is an area where we can always improve, but we are fortunate to have a strong foundation for valuing diversity in all its forms.

Another strength we have is our worship service – we have a beautiful order of worship. The music pairs so well with the order of worship. There is cohesion to our services, and many of our members' gifts are incorporated seamlessly. We also appreciate the human component in worship. There are unexpected moments of tears or laughter, and if things don't go as planned, our congregation delights in the spontaneity of those moments.

Our church's commitment to being present in our community is one more strength and gift we possess. We enjoy the opportunities to share experiences with our neighbors in the form of community nights in the parking lot, GEMS and Cadets, and neighborhood prayer walks. We are committed to serving the larger Grand Rapids community as well. We have partnered in the past with area organizations to help address food insecurity through a monthly food pantry. Working with Family Promise, we have also shared our facilities with families working to find permanent housing. We also help support families who want to provide a Christian education to their children through a financial commitment.

4. List specific problems with which your congregation struggles:

Like any church, we have areas where we struggle or could improve. Here is a list of those areas with an opportunity for growth:

- a. We welcome people, but we do not always ensure that new members feel part of the congregation.
- b. While we have a large group of younger members, we do have some age gaps in our church population. We have had ebbs and flows in our demographics, which means certain voices are missing.

- c. With all of the responsibilities and commitments facing people today, church is sometimes removed as a priority. Because people cannot commit beyond a Sunday morning, members can find it difficult to feel a sense of belonging.
- d. No one worship style will work for all members, so we struggle with how to meet the worship needs of everyone.
- e. Along with missing certain age groups, we are also missing the voices and experiences of non-traditional or blended families, those with alternative lifestyles, and those from different ethnicities.

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

Like many congregations all over the world, the Covid-19 pandemic and the disruption that it caused in worship and fellowship has had a lasting impact on our church. In many areas, our church staff and leadership stepped up and committed themselves to seeing the congregation through the difficult months. A Covid-19 response team was formed to provide building usage, meeting guidelines, and mask requirements based on CDC and county guidelines; they were diligent in communicating any decisions and updates with members. Our existing livestream technology was adapted for worship needs, ensuring that households were able to continue hearing the Word. Committee meetings, small group meetings, and staff meetings moved to the Zoom platform in order to allow members to interact safely. The monthly food pantry was modified to meet the needs of our neighbors with a drive-up distribution.

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

- a. Expand and grow our kids and youth programs, with increased emphasis on faith formation, for our young members
- b. Work on expanding our diversity and enfolding different kinds of people into Plymouth Heights. We are in a diverse neighborhood and want to reflect that.
- c. We want to continue to grow our community outreach through programs and interacting with the people around us.

7. Describe what being Christians of Reformed accent means to you:

First and foremost, God is in charge; consequently, this gives us assurance and comfort in all circumstances. God's sovereignty and compassion give us confidence in our salvation and motivate us to be agents of renewal in the world. Being Christians of a reformed accent means a commitment to Christian discipleship at all times.

We understand Christian discipleship through Scripture, which is God's word and the

only final rule for what to believe and what to do. We read the Bible guided by the Reformed Confessions. We are committed to the education of our children as disciples of Jesus. Finally, we are governed by elders who lead in Christ's name.

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

PHCRC has been and still is supportive of the denomination, which is evident from the consistent payment of full ministry shares, not only classical but denominational. We are fortunate to have a number of members who work for the denomination, either in “headquarter” positions or at the CRC educational institutions (Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary).

PHCRC regularly participates in Grand Rapids East Classis meetings as well as some leadership positions in the past. Increasingly though Plymouth Heights, as many churches, is finding itself more removed from the denomination, acting more congregational rather than in lock-step with either the traditional CRC ways of doing things or with the details of church polity.

Plymouth Heights will support its next pastor being involved in denominational matters but will not expect that to be her/his priority.

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

- a. Busy lives for children and adults alike, which results in competing priorities
- b. Societal expectations and pressures
- c. Bringing in, welcoming, and committing to the inclusion of the community members into church life
- d. Nurturing young people to join, participate, and grow into lifelong, active church members
- e. Recognizing and understanding the issues surrounding gender identification and non-traditional relationships

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

- a. Mission movement: An increasing commitment to lean into our mission statement in recent years has given us purposeful passion in reaching out to our local community. Some of our neighborhood engagements are providing food and fellowship at our monthly food pantries, providing shelter and meals for families that are homeless, and meeting our neighbors at parking lot events.
- b. Friendship program development for people with disabilities: Not only has this provided resources for faith formation and given opportunities for meaningful relationships, but our friends' inclusion in our worship services and life of the

church has brought immeasurable blessings for all of us.

- c. Building addition of the community room: This expansive, versatile space has provided a place for community events, church meals and fellowship, service opportunities, celebrations, sports, and more.

Leadership:

1. How many council members does your church have? **10 elders and 10 deacons**
2. What is the length of term for council members? **3 years**
3. How often does the full council meet? **10 times per year**
4. What subgroups of council exist, how do they function and how often do they meet?
 - a. Administrative Council **10 times per year**
 - b. Elders meet monthly **10 times per year**
 - c. Deacons meet monthly **10 times per year**
 - d. Committees generally meet 3-4 times a year, sometimes alternatively by email:
 - i. Worship
 - ii. Youth & Education
 - iii. Neighborhood Engagement Team
 - iv. Global Engagement Team
 - v. Congregational Life
 - vi. Endowment
 - vii. Finance
 - viii. Properties
 - ix. Personnel