

CHURCH PROFILE FORM

Church Information:

Name: Pleasant Street Christian Reformed Church

Location of Church (city, state, province): Whitinsville, MA

Classical Church Councilor: Joel Vande Werken

Search Committee Contact:

Name: Christine Epplett

Address: 740 Douglas Street, Uxbridge, MA 01569

Home: 508-278-3409 Cell: 617-314-0891 Work:

Email address: cjepplett@gmail.com

Community Setting:

Location

- ☒ Rural
- ☒ Small Town
- ☐ Metropolitan
- ☒ Suburban
- ☐ Inner City
- ☐ Small City

Function

- ☒ Industrial
- ☐ College/University
- ☒ Agricultural
- ☒ Recreational
- ☐ Military
- ☒ Bedroom Community

Growth

- ☒ Growing
- ☐ Static
- ☐ Declining

Approximate population of community: 16,630 Northbridge, MA (2017)

Church Profile:

We are open to:

☒ Male and Female pastors ☐ Female pastors only ☐ Male pastors only

List all staff positions:

Senior Pastor (full time)
Pastor of Care Ministries (part time)
Director of Student Ministries (part time)
Director of Children's Ministry (part time)
Director of Worship (part time)
Financial & Administrative Secretary (part time)
Custodians (part time)

Position Available: Senior Pastor

Date of vacancy: November 2018

General position description:

To preach, teach, lead worship, and foster spiritual formation.
To counsel and provide pastoral care for the congregation.
To provide leadership and coaching of staff and lay leaders.
To promote outreach to the community and unchurched.
To support and encourage commitment to denominational efforts.

Expected Hours:

☒ Full-time ☐ Part-time

Bi-vocational position?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Number of years preferred of ministry experience of potential candidate: 5+

Required languages: English

Church Demographics:

Average Sunday attendance: 170

Active adult professing members: 304

Profile of church members:

Age

9% 0-11	11% 12-18	8% 19-24	8% 25-34
10% 35-49	28% 50-64	27% 65+	

Occupation

25% Business	27% Professional	6% Trades	2% Stay-at-home parent
0% Agriculture	32% Retired	4% Students	4% Other

Percentage of members belonging to the congregation:

Less than 5 years	10 %
5-10 years	30 %
10 or more years	70 %

Racial/Ethnic composition of congregation and surrounding community:

The congregation is majority white with a few black, Hispanic, and Asian members and attendees. Although our Dutch heritage is still evident, we are becoming more diverse. The community is also becoming more diverse in both racial and ethnic background.

Composition of congregation:

Monocultural	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multicultural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Specific Ethnicity (specify:)	<input type="checkbox"/>

List the last three persons in this position:

1. Derek Zeyl (2010 - 2018)
2. Kenneth Nydam (2004 - 2008)
3. William Vis (1993 - 2003)

Worship:

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

We have a Director of Worship who works with the Sr. Pastor to plan the worship services. Church members are encouraged to be a part of the liturgy/worship in a variety of ways. We have many folks who serve regularly on the worship team (singers, instrumentalists), tech team (sound, projection, camera), and reading team (read scripture at each service). We also have people who are involved on special occasions such as reading and lighting candles during Advent.

Describe the worship services in your church.

We describe the worship services at Pleasant Street as "liturgical and blended". We follow a basic liturgy of "gather, renewal, word, (table), commit, and send. We use hymns and modern songs, with both the organ and worship team. We are unique in that we use the organ with the band to add a depth of experience and sound. We celebrate the Lord's Supper once a month, and baptisms and professions of faith as needed. We strive to have the worship space reflect the sermon series or liturgical year by using banners and other decorations. We do not have a strong "liturgical arts" focus, though we'd love to incorporate it more.

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

- KidStreet – ages 4 - 2nd grade; After attending the first part of the Sunday morning service, the kids go to KidStreet for a time of worship during which they wonder, imagine, marvel, and dive into God's story.
- Echo – grades 3 – 5; at the end of the worship service, the kids meet with an elder to discuss the sermon and talk about how it applies to their lives.
- GEMS – girls grades 1 – 5; GEMS club works to equip, motivate, and engage girls in living out their faith and growing in their relationship with Christ. This is done through Bible lessons, crafts, and other fun social activities. Partner with Fairlawn CRC
- Cadets – boys grades 1 – 6; Through Bible lessons, crafts, service projects, and outdoor activities, Cadets helps boys grow spiritually in all areas of life and develop a living relationship with Jesus Christ. Partner with Fairlawn CRC
- Middle School Youth Group – grades 6 – 8; A safe place for students to explore their identity, belonging, and purpose in Christ. Activities include bi-weekly meetings to dig into God's word, a weekend retreat, service projects, and fun events.
- High School Youth Group – grades 9 – 12; A place for students to grow deeper in their faith and be challenged to live their lives for Christ. They enjoy monthly fellowship events and service projects, 3 retreats during the year, and Sunday morning breakfast and life groups before the worship service.
- Adult Bible studies and small groups

Building/Financials:

Present annual budget: \$566,848

Last year's annual budget: \$549,611

Percentage of financial obligations met (last complete year reported)

Budget 95%

Denomination Ministry Shares 85% (goal is to give 10% of collections & income)

Classical Ministry Shares 100%

Amount contributed above budget and ministry shares: \$54,700

Specify: Faith Promise for missions

Describe Facilities:

1929 building - large sanctuary with recently renovated lower level with classrooms, kitchen, and open rec space

1996 addition - large fellowship hall, kitchen, and office suite with classrooms on the lower level

Are your buildings adequate for your ministries?

☒

Yes

☐

No

If no, please explain: _____

Is a building program projected?

☒

Yes

☐

No

If yes, describe what and when: Building Restoration/Renovation 2019-2022

Does the church own a parsonage?

☒

Yes

☐

No

Location of office or study: Church

Compensation:

The salary range we are prepared to offer our new pastor is based on the CRC Minister

Compensation Survey for our area: ☒

If other, please specify: _____

The average annual increase for this position over the past three years is: 2%

Housing:

- ☐ Housing allowance
- ☒ Parsonage only
- ☐ Either of the above

Benefits and expenses:

- ☒ Pension
- ☒ Medical insurance
- ☐ Life insurance
- ☒ Social Security or Canada
- ☒ Pension Travel/mileage
- ☒ Continuing Education funds
- ☐ Continuing Education time allotted
- ☐ Sabbatical policy in place
- ☒ Annual vacation (4 weeks)
- ☒ Other (Parsonage included all utilities, yard maintenance and snow removal)

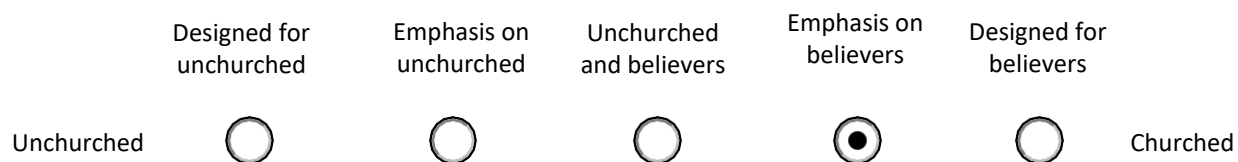
Church Characteristics:

[Check which one(s) are closest to your church's characteristics]

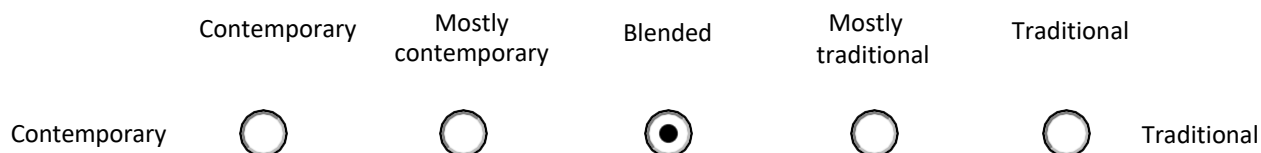
Presently, the FOCUS OF OUR CHURCH'S MINISTRY is



In our church, the WORSHIP SERVICE IS DESIGNED FOR



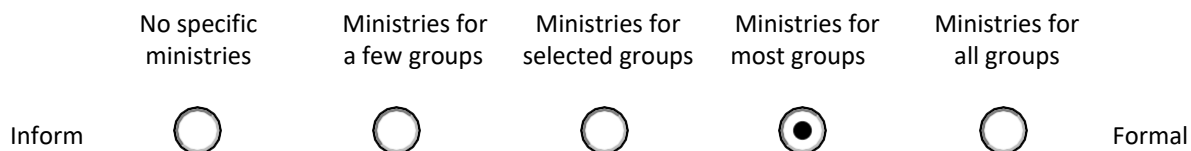
In our church, the STYLE OF MUSIC used in the worship service is



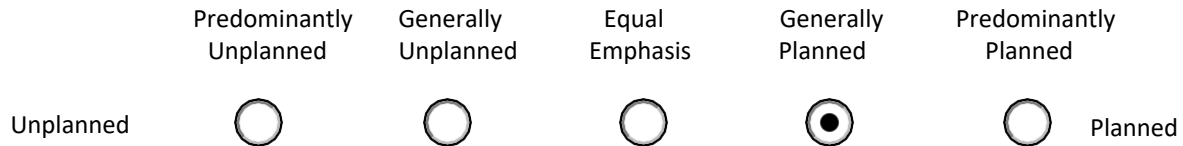
In our church, LEADERSHIP is generally provided by the



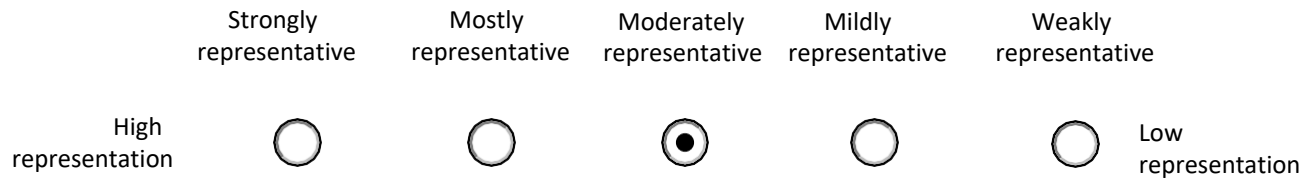
Our church seeks to ENCOURAGE SPIRITUAL GROWTH through



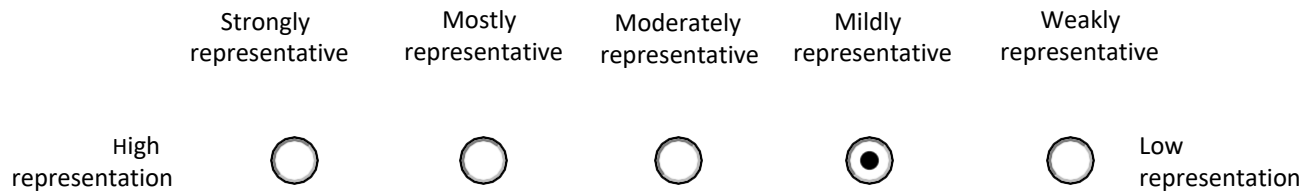
In our church, EVANGELISM STRATEGIES AND METHODS are



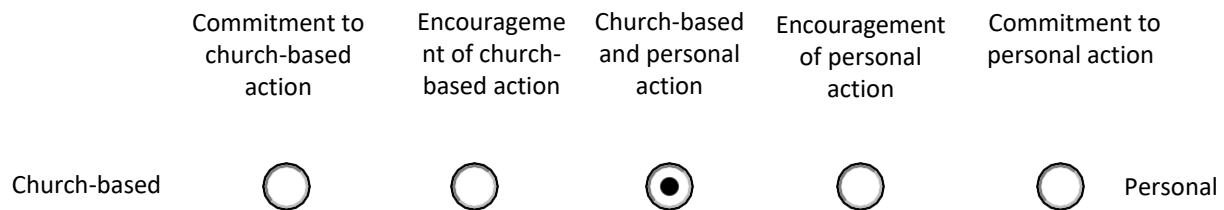
Our church is representative of the ECONOMIC DIVERSITY of our community



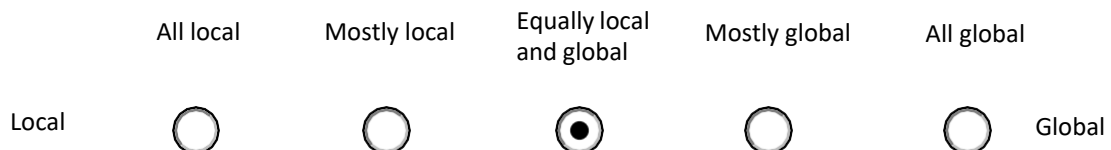
Our church is representative of the ETHNIC DIVERSITY of our community



Our church's RESPONSE TO COMPASSION, MERCY, AND JUSTICE NEEDS is



Our church's MISSIONAL FOCUS is



Narrative:

In what ways does your church participate in ecumenical activities?

PSCRC is a member of the Northbridge Association of Churches (NAC) which is made up of 11 churches of various denominations. Its mission is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in both word and deed. Programs which we participate in include collecting and distributing Easter food gift cards, back to school supplies, Thanksgiving food baskets, and Christmas gifts for needy families in the community. The NAC also has an annual CROP walk, Vacation Bible School, emergency homeless shelter in the winter, food pantry, Peace of Bread Community Kitchen, and ecumenical services (Easter, Thanksgiving, high school graduation). In addition, we are a sponsor of the food pantry at the local public high school and have an Open Door Student ministry for middle and high school students.

Reflect on your strengths/gifts as a church:

Strengths of our church include:

- Multi-generational congregation which is caring, friendly, and welcoming
- Blended Sunday morning worship with Biblical preaching, vibrant music and singing, and participation by members of the congregation
- Ministry programs for a wide range of ages (Gems, Cadets, Youth Groups, Bible studies, etc.)
- Active outreach programs to help people in both the church and community who are in need (Grief Share, Divorce Care, Divorce Care for Kids, Celebrate Recovery)
- Open Door after school ministry for students in grades 7-12. Here students can hang out in a safe place, grab a bite to eat, talk with compassionate adults, do homework, and be encouraged, held accountable, and loved.
- Many people serve as volunteers on Sunday mornings and throughout the week leading various programs and ministries.
- Member of the Northbridge Associations of Churches which work together to help people in need in the community.

Reflect on your passions as a church:

Our church has developed a passion for outreach and has numerous programs and care ministries to help those in both the church and community. These include Celebrate Recovery, Grief Share, Divorce Care, Divorce Care for Kids, Fresh Start Divorce Recovery, Open Door and Bible Basics for middle and high school kids in the community, and a Young Adults Coffee House. In addition, 2019 was our fourth year hosting SERVE and we plan to do it again in 2020. This has been a positive experience for both the students who participate and the volunteers who plan and implement the program.

We also have a passion for building God's kingdom. PSCRC has launched and supports a number of new CRC churches in New England. We also provide support to 12 missionaries around the world.

List specific challenges that your church is working to address:

1. Developing a sense of inter-generational community: PSCRC has a strong sense of being an extended family. While we love to welcome newcomers into the congregation, most members recognize that the church is not aiming to become a mega-church. Instead we are discovering that our ministry specialty is to offer a sense of inter-generational “family” not found in larger contemporary churches. This involves finding ways to blend and build community across all demographics.
2. Maintaining an older building: The church was built in 1929 and needs repairs. After a thorough evaluation, a restoration plan has been developed and we have begun a capital campaign to help fund the construction work. The first phase of the project is expected to begin early in 2020.
3. Developing effective leadership and teams: As a traditional church, PSCRC ministries tend to function in separate “silos” limiting the benefits of working together and helping each other. The churches leaders are discovering the untapped potential that can be gained by developing leaders and finding ways for ministries to partner more effectively.

Do you have a recently articulated mission/vision for ministry?



Yes



No

Why are we here: Following Christ, we devote ourselves to living out God’s transforming story at Pleasant Street Christian Reformed Church and beyond.

We live out this mission by:

- Worshipping - Celebrating what God is doing in his Kingdom
- Caring - Coming alongside others to encourage, pray for, and support
- Growing - Cultivating our faith to become more and more like Jesus
- Serving - Contributing our talents and resources to be used in God’s Kingdom
- Telling - Communicating the Gospel in everything we do and say

We strive to live life to the fullest by passionately worshipping God with our whole lives, intentionally connecting in life-giving relationships with others in our community, and striving to be agents of grace and truth in the spheres of influence we find ourselves.

We strive for Pleasant Street to be:

- a place of hospitality and community
- a place where you can grow in your faith and contribute with the strengths God has given you
- a place to belong and be needed
- a place to worship and be discipled

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

SERVE - For the past 4 years, PSCRC has hosted SERVE. Although this has been challenging due to the amount of time and number of volunteers required to plan and implement the program, it has also been a positive, faith building experience for both the students and volunteers. We will be doing SERVE again in 2020.

Building restoration - Our church building is 90 years old and some major restoration to the structure is required. We have started a fund-raising campaign to support a 5-year restoration project.

Women elders - After much prayer, thoughtful discussion, studying the topic, and taking into consideration input from the congregation, Council approved the motion to open the office of elder to women in 2018.

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

A strategic plan has been developed which focuses on 3 areas:

1. Deepen our Sunday worship experience - develop planning calendars, begin pastor preaching planning and list of expectations for worship volunteers
2. Deepen our sense of community with each other and those around us - each ministry will develop goals to reach beyond their current participants to move across generational and other social/cultural lines
3. Deepen our leadership partnerships
 - Identify the leader/mentor for each staff member, council member, and volunteer
 - Define each person's role (brief descriptions)
 - Begin leader training for staff and teams

A timeline has been established identifying monthly goals and a long-term trajectory has been defined.

After discussion and input from the congregation, Council recently adopted the "Growing Young" initiative to engage, equip, and retain young people, bridge the generation gap, and bring new vibrancy to the church. This will be coordinated by our Director of Youth Ministries.

Describe what being Christians of Reformed accent means to you:

- Being reformed means we believe in creation, fall and redemption. God created the world. Humans brought in sin. Jesus began the work of redemption. We can now join with Christ in the rebuilding.
- Being reformed means that we believe in the total grace of God and that we cannot save ourselves. We believe that God made a covenant with Abraham that extends to us in which God promised that He would be our loving God and we would be his loved people.
- Being reformed means that we respond to that deep and everlasting love by adhering to the infallible Word of God. Scripture assures us that our only comfort in life is belonging to God. Our lives then are a response of gratitude to God.
- Being reformed means that we see our church body as integral to our faith walk. The preaching of the Word instructs in how to live for Christ. The church becomes a place where we struggle and we heal, we teach and we learn, we serve and are served. It is in the church where we are reminded of the promises of the covenant as rehearsed in the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper that we celebrate together as family.
- Being reformed means we let the Spirit teach us about Scripture, assure us of God's love and motivate us to serve God and others. Being reformed means that we are attempting to bring transformation to God's world.

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

- PSCRC and the Christian Reformed Denomination have a very close relationship. The denomination supports its churches both nationally and internationally. The local church, by contrast, is much more centered on its own members and neighborhood. Each, however, is trying to further the kingdom of God.
- The CRC serves the whole denomination. PSCRC serves its local congregation.
- The CRC works to discern God's will as found in Scripture. Through synodical meetings and position statements it guides churches in doctrine and practice. PSCRC listens to the denomination and applies those decisions and policies.
- The CRC organizes large scale mission projects. PSCRC is a mission agency in Whitinsville and surrounding towns.
- The CRC creates materials for education for all ages. PSCRC may use those materials for its educational programs.

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

- Gender identity and sexual orientation – Many young people are asking questions about these topics. How does the church support individuals struggling with these issues and help them find answers to their questions? How do Christians relate to members of the LGBTQ community?
- Abuse (physical, sexual, emotional) – There seems to be a new story of abuse in the news every day. This is a chronic problem that affects many people. What steps should the church take to prevent abuse within the community and church family? How does the church help both the abused and the abuser?
- Busyness – Many people are very busy and have many demands placed on them. How do we set priorities and balance family, church, work, school, health, recreation, etc.?
- Digital age and social media – We gather information via Google searches and on-line reviews. We stay in touch with others via Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and texting. How can we use these platforms to connect with others and grow the church rather than letting them replace meaningful relationships and at times lead to low self-esteem?
- Consumerism – We are bombarded with advertisements for new products and services that will make our lives better. We often let the mentality of “what’s in it for me” control our decision making and how we spend our time and money. Too often we put ourselves first and get consumed with material possessions. As Christians, how do we minimize our self-importance, re-focus on Jesus, and make helping others and growing God’s kingdom the priority?

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

1. PSCRC was organized on October 20, 1896 and became the first Christian Reformed Church in New England.
2. In 1928 the church launched the Whitinsville Christian School by holding classes in the basement of their building on Willow St in Whitinsville. The cornerstone of the church building was laid in October 1929, several days before the Black Friday stock market crash. When the local bank refused to grant the church a loan for construction, church members began to withdraw their savings from the bank in order to self-fund the building project. The bank soon approved their mortgage.
3. In the late 1990’s a number of new churches were planted in the areas, including the New England Chapel, a Christian Reformed Church plant. These churches drew some members from the more traditional churches in the area. The PSCRC congregation began to decline in size but increase in commitment as families were choosing what they were looking for in a church home.

Leadership:

How many council members does your church have?	16
What is the length of term for council members?	3 years
How often does the full council meet?	Monthly

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

- Council - meets monthly; administers and governs the overall mission and ministry of the church
- Elders - meet monthly; responsible for the spiritual well-being of God's people
- Deacons - meet monthly; serve by showing mercy to church members and people in the community
- Executive Team - meets monthly; manages the logistics including financials and facilities
- Ministry Team - meets monthly; oversees and coordinates the ministries and outreach programs
- Shepherding Pastorates - elder/deacon partners oversee the care and shepherding of the congregation
- Faith Promise - meets quarterly; communicates with the missionaries that we support and oversees financial contributions