

# Living Hope Community Church

## CHURCH PROFILE FORM

### Church Information:

Name: Living Hope Church

- Location of church [City, State/Province]: Fox Lake, WI

Classical Church Counselor: Dr. Greg Schuringa, 1<sup>st</sup> CRC, Waupun, WI

### Search Committee Contact:

Name: Scott De Young

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Email address: LHCSearchTeam@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: 2,400 Town of Fox Lake, 40,000 in 15-minute drive

## Living Hope Church Profile

### Position Description:

We are open to:

Male and Female pastors

Female pastors only

Male pastors only

List all staff positions:

- Senior Pastor – Full Time
- Worship Director – Full Time
- Administrative Assistant – Part Time
- Church Janitor – Part Time

Position Available: **Senior Pastor**

Date of vacancy: **06/01/2023**

General position description:

Full-time

Part-time

#### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

- A man of faith with a passion to inspire others
- Ordained, or able to be ordained, in the CRCNA or RCA
- Demonstrates strong preaching and leadership skills
- A visionary with a drive to share and achieve the vision
- Creative, visual presenter
- A passion to reach the unchurched and de-churched for Christ
- Servant Leader who is approachable, humble, and compassionate

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Preparation of weekly and special messages
- Preach biblical, relevant messages that mature Christians, seekers and the unsaved can apply to daily lives
- Plan relevant sermon series with input of Leadership Team and Worship Team
- Assist Worship Team in planning Sunday worship
- Give direction and encouragement to the Worship Leader and the Administrative Assistant
- Develop and strengthen volunteer leaders
- Equip congregation to engage the surrounding community
- Support and assist Leadership Team with pastoral care and administrative duties
- Complete other pastoral functions ex. Weddings, funerals, etc.

Bi-vocational position?

Yes

No

Number of years preferred of ministry experience of potential candidate: **No Preference**

Required languages: **English**

## Living Hope Church Profile

### Church Demographics:

Average Sunday attendance: **120** (171 people connected via online, occasional attendance, etc.)

Active adult professing members: **100**

Profile of church members:

#### Age:

17%	0-11	12%	12-18	3%	19-24	11%	25-34
19%	35-49	18%	50-64	20%	65+		

#### Occupation:

19.3%	Business	12.3%	Professional	8.8%	Trades	2.9%	Stay-at-home parent
5.3%	Agriculture	17.5%	Retired	24%	Student	9.9%	Other/Child

#### Percentage of members belonging to the congregation:

Less than 5 years	21%
5-10 years	23%
10 or more years	55%

Racial/Ethnic composition of congregation and surrounding community:

- **Congregation** - 95% White (Non-Hispanic), 3% Hispanic, 2% Black/African
- **Surrounding Community** – White (Non-Hispanic) 74.5%, Multi Racial (Non-Hispanic) 15.8%, White (Hispanic) 4.66%, Black/African American 4.28%, Asian 0.65%

Composition of congregation:

Mono-Cultural

Multi-Cultural

Specific Ethnicity (specify:

)



List the last three persons in this position:

1. **Pastor Rod Galindo** – April 2016 to May 2023.
  - Interim Pastor – Rev Sam Hamstra 2015 to 2016
  - Interim Pastor – Justin Douglas was Youth Director from 2008 to 2012, then took on interim through 2015.
2. **Pastor Verlan Van Ee** – Sept 2005 to January 2012
3. **Pastor Andy Geleynse** - 2002 to 2004

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### Worship:

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

Our full-time paid Worship Director leads and organizes the service with the Senior Pastor. They meet weekly along with the Administrative Assistant planning out at least two Sundays in advance and looking out further toward any special services. The overall goal of the service is thematic where the songs, readings, skits, special music and prayer are all centered around the main point of the sermon.

Every week the Worship Director leads a practice with the team consisting of instrumental (piano, guitar, bass, drums, and others as needed) and vocalists. The group can range from 1 or 2 people to as many as 5 or 6 depending on the service. The Audio/Visual Team is also present at the practice to ensure all are on the same page. Slides for songs and the sermon are developed and prepared and reviewed during the practice.

Announcements, Offerings, Communion, Baptism, and special visitors (missionaries or other organizations) are planned into the proper place within the order of worship.

LHC believes in freedom of worship and encourages involvement of members and our youth in different aspects of the service. This could include children's sermons, elders leading congregational prayer, skits, creative arts, laying on of hands for special prayer needs, testimonies, and various other ideas that bring the service and the message to life.

#### **Describe the worship services in your church:**

As described by two different members of our team.

**Rachel:** Grew up in Baptist Church, Young working Mother, Father is a minister, has been attending LHC for 5 Years.

Worship Services begin with a warm welcome from our volunteer entrance greeters who are waiting to meet members, newcomers, and visitors alike with a friendly hug or handshake. Greeters hand out current bulletin information and provide entry assistance if needed. A countdown clock is displayed in the sanctuary to ensure services begin promptly.

As we enter a time of worship, led by our dedicated worship leader and worship team, we commence with announcements, an invitation from the word of God, and spend a few extra moments greeting one another. No two services are identical. Intimate lighting is then initiated by our tech team to encourage a personal and expressive time of contemporary worship. This is followed by a Spirit led congregational prayer provided by church leadership. The Pastor's message is inspirational, challenging, and relevant and often times is thematic to our worship.

## **Living Hope Church Profile**

Services conclude with a final time of worship, congregational blessing, and time of fellowship over coffee and desserts. This time of fellowship also facilitates a time for individuals to pray for one another and small groups to meet.

**Matt:** Grew up CRC, Christian School teacher, son is a Pastor, has attended LHC for 30 years.

We at LHC feel that worship of our Triune God is vital to our spiritual health, both individually and collectively. The Sunday morning worship service has been an integral part of who Living Hope Community is and what makes us unique since our inception. A desire for a more expressive, celebratory, and contemporary worship service that involved a wider variety of congregation members was a driving force behind the formation of LHC.

To that end, LHC has been at the forefront of churches in our area moving to projection equipment, a Worship Team, and contemporary music in addition to the familiar and time-honored hymns. Congregation members feel the freedom to raise their hands along with their voices and even burst into spontaneous applause during some songs. LHC is willing to “get out of the box” with other worship elements, including skits and liturgical dance. LHC is comfortable with celebrating the sacraments in a variety of ways also; for example, receiving Communion in small groups at the front of the sanctuary.

The Worship Director works closely with the Pastor to ensure that all elements of the worship service are connected thematically. While emphasizing praise in worship, LHC still sees the reading and dissemination of the Holy Scriptures as the centerpiece of any worship service. Our very first mission statement stated that “we express our Living Hope in a setting of celebration and participation that reflects our daily lives.” While many things have changed in three decades at LHC, that has remained constant.

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

At Living Hope we strive to provide discipleship practices at all ages and all levels of Christian maturity. During the school year, Walk out Worship (WOW) is available for 3-5 year-olds as the sermon is preached. Prior to the service, Sunday School is available from K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade as well as adults. There are also youth groups available for Middle and High School age students during the week.

Adults are encouraged to participate in Men's and Women's Bible studies each week. Living in Victory (formerly called Celebrate Recovery) is provided as an outreach Bible study to our community.

Small Groups (or Life Groups) are a staple of LHC. The goal is to have most of our congregation involved as this allows families/young adults to connect, study the word, pray and support each other in a safe and confidential setting. Currently 67% of our members are active in small group and consider this a strength of LHC.

## Living Hope Church Profile

### Building/Financial:

Present annual budget: **\$250,347**

Last year's annual budget: **\$244,761**

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

Budget: **95.5%**

Denominational Ministry Shares: **100% of Pledged.**

Classical Ministry Shares: **100% of Pledged.**

Amount contributed above budget and ministry shares: N/A

Specify (optional):

### **Facilities:**

The first 13 years of LHC's history involved meeting in the town hall, then renting the Presbyterian Church in Randolph, and then moving to the Fox Lake Elementary gym. In 2005 a long-term commitment was made to build a new church facility on the west side of Fox Lake. We moved into our new church home in early 2006.

The church is built on 5.5 acres of land. The facility is 11,060 square feet and was designed as a multi-functional space that is handicap accessible and is visitor friendly with key aspects (kitchen, nursery, bathrooms, and the sanctuary) readily available when you walk in the main entrance. Key attributes of the space include:

- Sanctuary – Is designed for around 350 chairs. The space allows for flexible arrangement. There is a large stage with a back, handicap accessible ramp. There is a full audio/visual booth with a large screen up front and one in back.
- Kitchen – is a fully functioning kitchen centered between the foyer, the sanctuary, and the youth room. Allows for easy serving to all areas. Coffee and cookies are served every Sunday 😊.
- Nursery and Mother's room are dedicated spaces for young families. These rooms are located directly behind the foyer and easily accessible.
- There are 5 adequately sized classrooms and a larger Youth Room that is also used for Adult Ed on Sunday morning and for other church meetings.
- Office space for staff includes 2 offices and a general open area for copying and office supplies.

The facility was also designed with the future in mind, including future expansion when needed for both facilities and parking. The interior was recently updated with a fresh / modern look.

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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: Technically we do not have a building expansion program planned. However, we are in the middle of a “Thrive” capital campaign to fund a few specific projects. We have raised \$230,000 of our \$250,000 goal over and above the General Fund Budget. These funds will be used for the following:

- The parking lot at church needed an upgrade. We just resurfaced the entire parking lot including striping (with pickle ball court and / basketball arch). Total cost: \$110,000 .
- Pay off final debt on church. We currently owe \$150,000 on the mortgage balance. We plan to have this completely paid off in 3 years once the campaign funds are received. This will free up \$18,000 per year of General Fund expenses that are being paid at a rate of \$1,500 per month.
- Upgrades to the Parsonage – new flooring, carpet, paint, deck, landscaping, etc. are all being completed. This will be covered through the General Fund in 2023-24.

Does the church own a parsonage?  Yes  No

Location of office or study:

- LHC has two options for a Study. There is a private office in the church, with a nice desk and abundant room for books with multiple bookshelves. The parsonage also has multiple options for a study either upstairs or in the basement.

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### 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: Commensurate to Experience / Classical Profile

The average annual increase for this position over the past three years is: **2.54%**

Housing:

- Housing Allowance
- Parsonage
- Both

Benefits and expenses:

- Pension (CRC Plan)
- Medical Insurance including Dental
- Life Insurance
- Social Security (SETA Match)
- Travel / Mileage
- Continuing Education Funds
- Continuing Education time allotted
- Sabbatical Policy in Place
- Annual Vacation (**4 Weeks**)
- Other

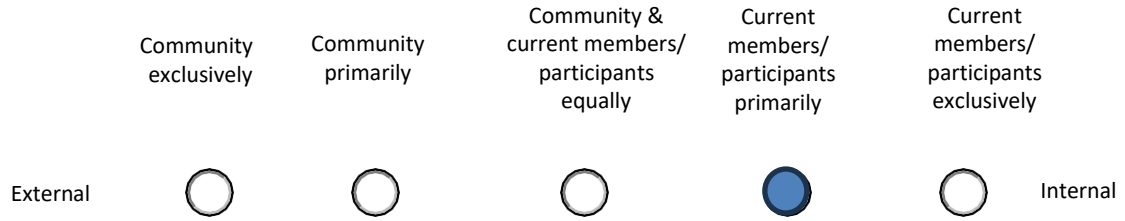


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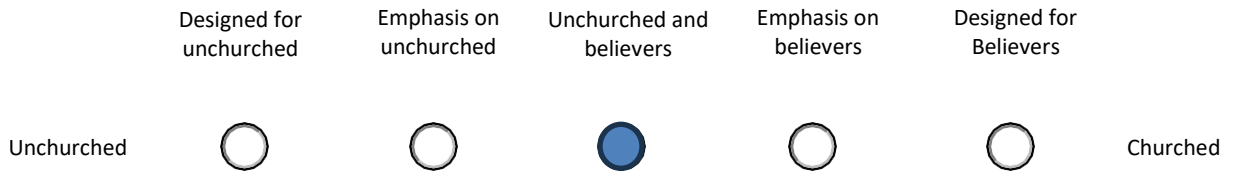
## Church Characteristics:

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

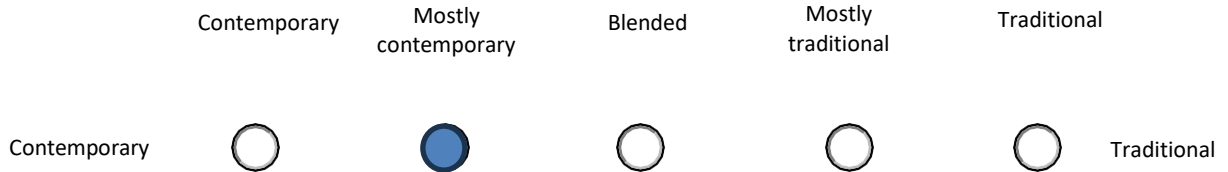
Presently, the FOCUS OF OUR CHURCH'S MINISTRY is



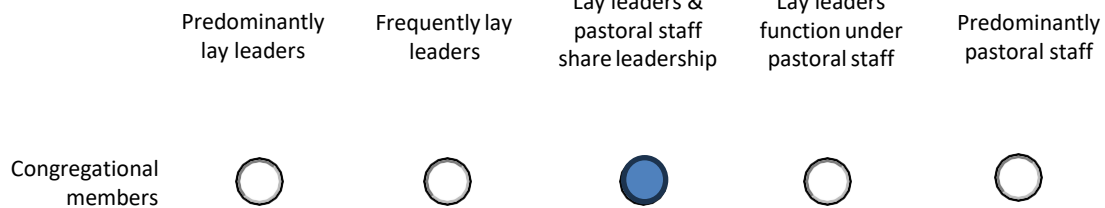
In our church, the WORSHIP SERVICE IS DESIGNED FOR



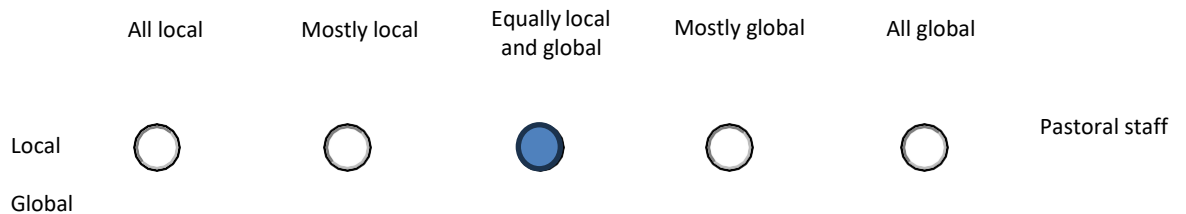
In our church, the STYLE OF MUSIC used in the worship service is



In our church, LEADERSHIP is generally provided by the



Our church's MISSIONAL FOCUS is

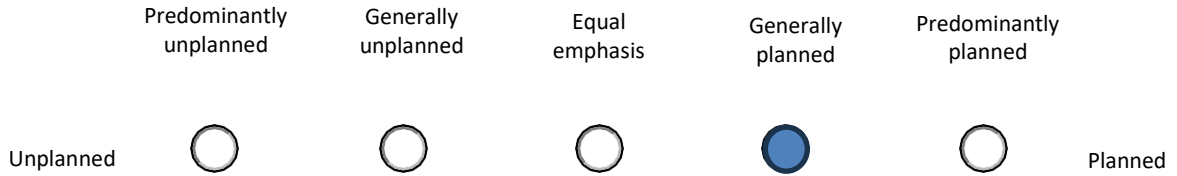


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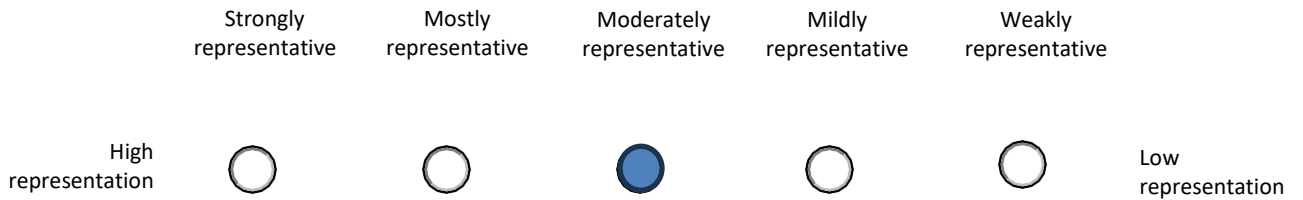
Our church seeks to ENCOURAGE SPIRITUAL GROWTH through



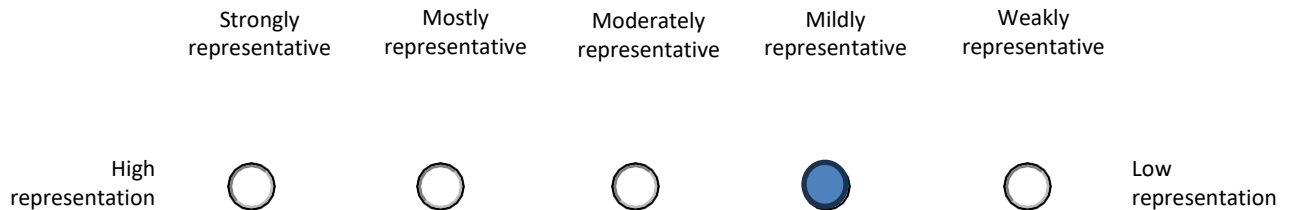
In our church, EVANGELISM STRATEGIES AND METHODS are



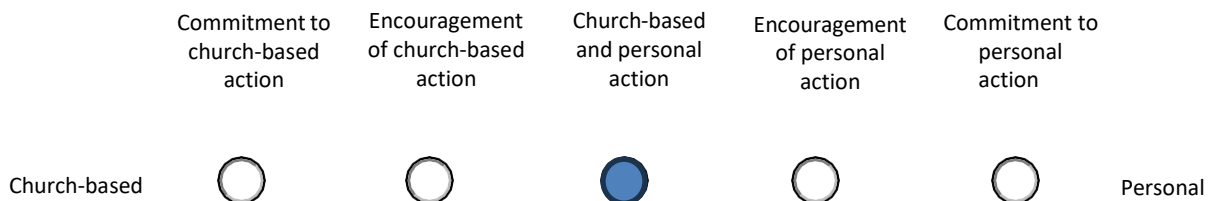
Our church is representative of the ECONOMIC DIVERSITY of our community



Our church is representative of the ETHNIC DIVERSITY of our community



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



## Living Hope Church Profile

### Narrative:

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

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

Our church and our members are involved in several ecumenical activities in the city of Fox Lake and surrounding areas. We established a Food Pantry that operated out of our building for several years and now has its own facility. Our members have contributed to and even spearheaded the Mission Backpack program, providing meals to school-aged children on weekends. Former pastors, along with church lay people, have been instrumental in providing worship services at local nursing homes. We have offered our facility as a host site for Red Cross blood drives. We have also organized and led community-wide worship nights. We participate in the annual Fox Lake Christmas Parade. In addition, members of our congregation are actively involved in organizations like the Gideons, Cadets and GEMS, local Christian schools, and an annual Easter Cantata that includes participants from many local communities.

### **Reflect on your strengths/gifts as a church:**

We are a young church with a renewed vision to love God, love people and make disciples! Our facility is all one level, handicap accessible and possesses a tailored layout to meet all our current needs with room to grow. We remain open to new ideas, which has recently led us to an increased investment in our local community with exciting new outreach opportunities. We are made up of a diverse age range of attendees and members with a variety of small group ministries applicable to all of them from a nurturing nursery to a senior pickleball league. We love the fact that we have been consistently described as a very welcoming church. We hold on strongly to the freedom to worship in the contemporary style with which we began.

### **Reflect on your passions as a church:**

Our passions as a church are reflected in our Mission.

As a church we want to show that we LOVE GOD. We work towards creating a church culture, environment, ministries, and worship where we encounter God in a way that we can't avoid him. This is evident in our worship services through the expressive and passionate display of emotion as we praise God.

Additionally, our goal is to LOVE PEOPLE, and encourage them into becoming strong Christians through sermons, small groups, Sunday School and being part of the church family.

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We believe we are also called to MAKE DISCIPLES. If our lives can reflect Christ, it is because of the Holy Spirit working in us. We show the love of Christ through giving our time, service, and resources. This is happening because of the renewed energy flowing through our church. Our Ministry Events team has been working on specific events to reach out to our community hosting movie nights, fund raiser for the community park, harvest fun night and others. Recently our Missions Team took a group of teenagers and adults to Rehoboth NM for service work and outreach.

### **List specific problems with which your congregation struggles:**

Even though LHC is considered a friendly church with a mission of reaching our community, we have been struggling to retain families/members. Over the years we've seen a lot of visiting families seeking a church home. In fact, it wasn't long ago that the normal attendance was close to 200 people.

Over the past few years, newer families who maybe haven't made good connections seem to come and go frequently. We've also lost some long-standing, core members who moved on for various reasons. As with many churches across the country, COVID didn't help as a few families did not return. Regular attendance recently dropped to 120 people.

With that being said, we believe LHC has a lot to offer with a solid core of members who are excited and passionate about moving forward. In the last few months, we've seen some positive momentum (and, yes, even growth). We are working hard to get people connected and involved. A new, inspiring leader will help, but we've also learned it takes the entire church to work together, not just the pastor.

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

Like most churches COVID was one of our most challenging times in the last few years. We were able to start having services online immediately after everything was locked down. The leadership in the church saw this as an opportunity to reach more than our congregation. With the help of staff and volunteers we were able to purchase the necessary equipment to do a live stream. This was a great way for us to not only provide a service for our own congregation but also made it available to anyone that wanted to view.

Losing a pastor is another challenge that we are facing. This can always be difficult and create anxiety in a congregation. During this time our church body has been able to take a step back and look at what our church has matured into over the timeframe of our last pastor. We have been able to reach out to the congregation and see what they are feeling during this time. With good feedback we are able to learn what we are good at and what we need to work on. The goal would be to find the correct pastor to help us become a more mature church able to serve the community and congregation to the fullest.

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

We have recently launched a campaign to pay off our debt as well as improve our facilities over the next 3 years with the goal that we are able to invest more in future ministries. This will also help us accomplish two of our other goals, the first of which is to be more involved in the community. The Fox Lake community makes up a lower percentage of our membership and we believe we can serve our community more effectively by being more involved. The second is to expand our youth program. We are blessed with many families with small children. This is our future, and we need to continue investing in this area.

We also are in the process of searching for a new pastor and we are praying that God leads us to the right pastor who is gifted in teaching and helps us grow spiritually. We are seeking a pastor that is approachable as a good friend, and is compassionate in caring for others.

### **Describe what being Christians of Reformed accent means to you:**

Like other churches in the CRCNA, our Reformed roots mean placing an emphasis on the Word, our sovereign God, our salvation by grace alone, God's covenant faithfulness, His Kingdom, and our role in it.

We believe in God's sovereignty and that He is in control of all areas of His Kingdom. He will work things out according to His divine plan. His mercy and love for us as evidenced by the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ, is what leads to our salvation.

Our experiences come from His sovereign will and His plan. We believe in God's covenants and the promises that He makes and always keeps with us. He is firm in his promises to love, care for, and protect us. We live within those promises and strive to be promise keepers of our own by training up our children in God's way, to love God above all, to love our neighbors, and to give cheerfully as we have been blessed.

We believe that God's Kingdom is already here but not fully realized yet. God is still working today to redeem the world. While He reigns over all things, He asks us to join Him in His redemptive work. We must proceed without borders and seek to redeem all aspects of life. We believe His will is done in churches, schools, institutions, politics, actions, lives, technology, and artistry. He has given us the Holy Spirit to engage in any aspect of our culture to spread His word and take action to serve as a 7-day-a-week Christian. It is our mission to further His kingdom.

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

From the very beginning of Living Hope Community Church, our members have seen the value of being connected to the Christian Reformed denomination. Even during those early years, before we were officially “organized”, we described ourselves as being “affiliated with” the CRC. We appreciate the history of tradition and consistency of foundational theological beliefs that the CRC represents.

Jesus said “I am the vine, you are the branches.” (John 15:5) While He is the foundation and the very source of life, it is the branches that do the job of producing the fruit. Perhaps the relationship between congregation and denomination could be thought of in a similar way: while the denomination provides the foundation, it is the local congregation that has the boots on the ground and is doing the work of the church. Being a part of a denomination means having a family to support you when necessary and rejoice with you in your successes. It means having access to resources for worship, education, and ministry. Because we are part of the CRC and Classis Wisconsin, a counselor in this time of vacancy has been appointed to us.

Beside all these benefits, our relationship with the CRC means being accountable to a larger body of believers, having others who help us be responsible for our actions. It means giving our support, both financially and spiritually, to the other churches in our Classis and denomination. Through our ministry shares and other giving, we can pool resources and have a bigger impact on God’s world.

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

Living Hope Church acknowledges the ever-changing cultural challenges that face the Christian church and Christians in general today. Some of those are listed below:

- Internet and social media that offers the ability to quickly reach and often negatively influence people and spread negativity in general
- A mostly toxic political landscape that is void of compromise
- Materialism that leads to unethical behaviors or absenteeism from one’s faith, family and friends to obtain ‘more’
- The need for inclusion that sometimes comes with compromising one’s beliefs or behaviors for the negative
- Increase of unconfessed sin and lack of remorse or guilt over those sinful behaviors
- Decline of self-identified Christians and in-person attendance for those that do identify as Christians...less “church”
- Decline in leadership and the burnout that accompanies it and the decline of effectiveness and impact of community events/gatherings and serving others
- Prioritization of life
- Mental health
- LGBTQ+

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While many of these items above prove quite challenging, Living Hope Church steadfastly believes in the guidance and love of God and the healing power that He offers directly and through His believers and their service in His mission. We endeavor to provide guidance through cultural challenges with pastoral care, shepherd-like leadership from our elders and church leaders, small groups, biblically based resources, benevolence assistance and prayer for all. At the center of all of it is messages and teachings that are based on the biblical truths that God created us in His image and that who we are is who we are intended to be. We believe that living out a life of purpose, that is in line with the reformed accent of sovereignty, covenant promises and a furthering His Kingdom mindset and related action, will always overcome the cultural challenges we face.

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

One of the most important events in the history of LHC is no doubt our beginning. Living Hope was born in 1993 when a group of committed members desired more freedom in worship. The Spirit led this group to approach their current church body seeking more creativity and expression of our faith in God. This was a very difficult time as all members did not agree and it caused a split in the church body. Eventually, a small group broke off and began Living Hope Church. Today, many of those same founding members still attend LHC.

In early 2003 the Leadership of LHC acted on the calling to relocate our ministry to the town of Fox Lake. We felt led to reach a new community. This commitment to outreach was further cemented when we agreed to “Get out of the Boat” with a campaign to build our church home in Fox Lake. The total cost of the building was nearly \$1,300,000, a very large commitment for a group of 42 families. We raised nearly \$600,000 in pledges, received several service commitments keeping costs down, and arranged financing. By establishing a permanent church home in Fox Lake, we have become more visible in our community and more committed to those who live here. Ministries like our Food Pantry, Go Sunday, local mission trips, weekly adult education, harvest fun nights and others have helped LHC connect to our community.

One of the more difficult events in our short history occurred between 2012 and 2015. Our Pastor at the time, Verlan Van Ee, gave his resignation and we went through an Article 17 separation. There was friction at that time between the Pastor and certain members. We not only lost a Pastor, we also lost a number of long-standing members. Over the next few years, we worked with the Classis, attempting to have our Youth Pastor ordained/approved to lead our church. Justin Douglas was very talented and was well liked. He had already grown our Youth Group to around 60 students. During his three years as interim pastor, Justin preached and led our services. Our church grew and things seemed to be going very well. However, Justin struggled with one Reformed teaching - infant baptism. He grew up Baptist and was convinced that Believers’ Baptism was more

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biblical, even though he never really challenged infant baptism publicly. When we approached Classis for their blessing, with certain guidelines suggested, Justin was denied the right to lead our church. This was a very difficult decision for LHC at that time. Some questioned whether we should even stay a part of the denomination, but we held true to the CRC and trusted God. Eventually Justin received a call elsewhere.

Over the past years, we firmly believe that God has a plan for LHC as we move forward. That passion and vision have been very evident over the past few months as we are looking for a new Pastor. A new energy is evident, and people are excited about the future of LHC.

### Leadership:

How many council members does your church have? **6 Elders / 6 Deacons**

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?**

**Education Team:** We have several levels of education to reach the entire congregation. All of these programs run from mid-September to mid-May. WOW (Walk out Worship) meets during the service for our 3- to 5-year-old children. Sunday School is held prior to the service. We have classes for all levels including adults. Our youth group meets on Wednesday nights. Middle School from 5:30-7 and High School from 7-8:30. We have a women's ministry that meets 2 times a month and a men's ministry that meets every Saturday morning year-round. Small Groups and Living in Victory are other active study groups.

**Worship Team:** We have a worship director that organizes the songs for our services. He will coordinate with team members that volunteer when they meet for practices during the week. They also meet before the service on Sunday mornings to finalize any adjustments that need to be made.

**Property Team:** We have volunteers that regularly check our property to make sure all things look good and will make sure things are in good working order. These individuals will report to members of the leadership team if anything needs to be addressed or if purchases need to be made for upgrades.



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**Events & Ministry Team:** Seeks to organize and plan regular events that help us reach our community. It also provides fellowship opportunities for congregants.

**Nursery:** Our nursery is made up of 100% volunteers. Families can sign up using a web database for the Sunday that they are able to serve in the nursery.

**SERT (Safety Emergency Response Team):** – Is responsible for church safety including monitoring the facility, background checks, and establishing policies that protect our attendees.