

NEW HOPE CHURCH PROFILE

CHURCH INFORMATION

Name: New Hope Church

Location of church: Bangor, Maine

Classical Church Counselor: Rev. William S. Johnson, PhD

SEARCH COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRMEN CONTACT:

Name: Dan McGovern 100 Forest Ave. Bangor, ME 04401

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COMMUNITY SETTING:

Location	Function	Growth
<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 type="checkbox"/> Metropolitan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Declining
<input type="checkbox"/> Suburban	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreational	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inner City	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small City	<input type="checkbox"/> Bedroom Community	

Approximate population of community: Bangor 32,000, Greater Bangor Area 154,000

CHURCH PROFILE:

We are open to:

- Male and Female pastors Female pastors only Male pastors only

List all staff positions:

Pastor

Administrative Coordinator

Position available: Pastor

Date of vacancy: June 2022

GENERAL POSITION DESCRIPTION:

- Preach and lead worship, bring biblical, practical messages to all ages which teach and convict those who are searching, while also challenging the more spiritually mature.
- Partner with the council and members to ensure pastoral care for all members and regular attenders (including visits to shut-ins and hospitalized).
- Work alongside the Clerk of Council and Administrative Assistant to ensure organized and efficient administration and communication.
- Provide direction, support, and assistance to ministry groups and leaders.
- Provide counseling (ie. premarital, grief, conflict resolution), and referrals as needed.
- Fulfill community, ministerial, classis, and denominational responsibilities, and be a positive liaison with our broader mission partners.
- Other duties in keeping with pastoral ministry as determined by partnership of the pastor and the Council.

Full Time Part-time

Bi-vocational position? Yes No Would consider

CHURCH DEMOGRAPHICS

Average Sunday attendance: 60—70 adults and children

Active adult professing members: 40

Profile of church members:

35% ages 0-11	4% ages 12-18	3% ages 19-24	21% ages 25-34
15% ages 35-49	2% ages 50-64	20% ages 65+	

Occupation:

35% Business/Professional	5% Trades	20% Stay at home parent
5% Agriculture	15% Retired	15% Student

Percentage of members belonging to the congregation:

Less than 5 years	40%
5-10 years	35%
10 or more years	25%

Racial/ethnic composition of congregation and surrounding community:

Congregation: 100% Caucasian

Bangor: 89% Caucasian

Composition of congregation:

Mono-cultural

Multi-cultural

Specific Ethnicity (specify)

List the last three persons in this position:

1. Roger Sparks (STM Interim Pastor) - February 2023-Present
2. Jonathan Fischer - March 2014-May 2022
3. Carl Bergman - March 2005-March 2014

WORSHIP

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

Worship at New Hope church is primarily elder and pastor led. Over the past several years our primary worship leaders have been two of the elders who do the welcome, call to worship, instrumental and vocals, and the prayer of confession. The pastor typically takes over for the remainder of the service, including announcements, prayer for the offering, congregational prayer, scripture reading, sermon, and benediction. Congregants often do announcements, play instruments or vocals as part of the worship team, and share prayer requests and praises.

Describe the worship services at your church:

Worship at NHC is fairly traditional in the elements of the service. The weekly liturgy contains many historical elements, song, hymns and spiritual songs, prayer of confession and assurance of pardon, congregational prayer, the Lord's Prayer, responsive reading, giving of offering, scripture reading, preaching, twice monthly Communion, and benediction. Our musical flavor is a blended contemporary style which is typically guitar led. When possible we add keyboard, drums, bass and sometimes violin and multiple vocalists. Most weeks we sing four songs which range from traditional hymns to contemporary praise songs to re-instrumented hymns. Our intention is to be very much content-based with the songs tied in to themes in the Scripture reading or sermon, or elements of the service (communion, baptism, confession, etc).

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

Because NHC is a small church we have to be judicious in how we prioritize discipleship opportunities each year. We have a large number of young children and offer two Sunday school classes. The younger class is focused on understanding Scripture and learning to

trust in the Lord for Salvation. The older class is focused on developing systematic theology, learning the tenants of the Reformed understanding of scripture and growing a well established confidence in the centrality of Scripture. Our oldest kids transition into serving the church in a variety of ways but rely on youth programs at other churches to fill in for gaps in our offerings. We have offered a number of different Bible Studies over the past several years, from women's studies, elder/deacon training, Dave Ramsey's FPU, small groups, weekly prayer meetings and church wide Bible studies. We have also focused on reading through the Bible as a congregation the past two years. We have experimented with adult Sunday School classes with limited success since being without a pastor.

BUILDING/FINANCIAL:

Present annual budget: \$129,600

Last year's annual budget: \$140,000

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

Budget: 100%

Denominational Ministry Shares: 100%

Classical Ministry Shares: 100%

Amount contributed above budget and ministry shares:

Our annual budget included the following ministry giving:

Compassion Int'l: \$314

The Navigators: \$800

Anchor New England: \$1,000

Manna Ministries: \$500

Deacon's Fund: \$600

Capital Expenditures: \$781

Building Fund: \$10,400

First Step Pregnancy Center: \$500

Church Plant: \$500

Operation Christmas Child: \$1,335

FACILITIES:

Describe facilities: Rented worship space in the gym of a private Christian school.

Are your buildings adequate for your ministries? Yes No

If no, please explain: Our long term goal is to obtain our own building to provide us space for consistent weekly use. No pre-service set up or post-service tear-down would be required.

Is a building program projected? Yes No

If yes, describe what and when: Build/buy a church building

Does the church own a parsonage? No

Location of office or study:

Previously rented office space in downtown Bangor. Currently, study space is located in a rented parsonage.

COMPENSATION:

The salary range we are prepared to offer our new pastor is based on the CRC Minister Compensation Survey for our area:

The average annual increase for this position over the past three years has been in keeping with Social Security COLA increases.

HOUSING:

- Housing allowance
- Parsonage only
- Either of the above

BENEFITS AND EXPENSES:

- Pension
- Medical Insurance
- Life insurance
- Social Security
- Travel/mileage
- Continuing Education funds
- Continuing Education time allotted
- Sabbatical policy in place
- Annual vacation: 4 weeks

CHURCH CHARACTERISTICS:

Presently, the **focus of our church's ministry** is:

	Community exclusively	Community primarily	Community & current members/ participants equally	Current members/ participants primarily	Current members/ participants exclusively	
External				✓		Internal

In our church, the **worship service is designed for:**

	Designed for the unchurched	Emphasis on unchurched	Unchurched and believers	Emphasis on believers	Designed for believers	
Unchurched				✓		Churched

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

	Contemporary	Mostly Contemporary	Blended	Mostly traditional	Traditional	
Contemporary		✓				Traditional

In our church, **leadership** is generally provided by the:

	Predominantly lay leaders	Frequently lay leaders	Lay leaders and pastoral staff share leadership	Lay leaders function under pastoral staff	Predominantly pastoral staff	
Congregational members			✓			Pastoral staff

Our church seeks to **encourage spiritual growth** through:

	No specific ministries	Ministries for a few groups	Ministries for selected groups	Ministries for most groups	Ministries for all groups	
Informal			✓			Formal

In our church, **evangelism strategies and methods** are:

	Predominantly unplanned	Generally unplanned	Equal emphasis	Generally planned	Predominantly planned	
Unplanned		✓				Planned

Our church is representative of the **economic diversity** of our community

	Strongly representative	Mostly representative	Moderately representative	Mildly representative	Weakly representative	
High representation			✓			Low representation

Our church is representative of the **ethnic diversity** of our community

	Strongly representative	Mostly representative	Moderately representative	Mildly representative	Weakly representative	
High representation		✓				Low representation

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

	Commitment to church-based action	Encouragement of church-based action	Church-based and personal action	Encouragement of personal action	Commitment to personal action	
Church-based			✓			Personal

Our church's **missional focus** is

	All local	Mostly local	Equally local and global	Mostly global	All global	
Local			✓			Global

NARRATIVE:

In what ways does your church participate in ecumenical activities?

New Hope Church members currently participate throughout our community through:

- Good Friday service
- Christmas Eve service

- Coffee Break women's weekly Bible study
- Manna Ministries: serving meals to the hungry
- Gen Rev (General Revelation) outdoor activities group
- VBS (NHC volunteers helped at another local church)
- Gospel Alliance of Maine
- Workshops and speaking events at other churches

Past Activities:

- Street Pastors
- Celebrate Recovery
- Alpha Program
- Pentecost and Ascension Day services
- "Grill the Pastor" Q & A with university students (sponsored by Navigators)
- NHC Pastor attended monthly meetings with local pastors

Reflect on your strengths/gifts as a church:

- Emphasis on fellowship and a sense of community (ie. monthly potluck meal)
- Strong emphasis on God's word
- Conscientious, committed, and gifted music team
- Large number of young families and members span a range of ages
- Welcoming congregation

List specific problems with which your congregation struggles:

- Rented worship space precludes developing and sustaining certain ministries and activities.
- Weekly "set up" and "take down" tasks are burdensome for a core group of church members/attendees.
- Unfilled volunteer positions Need for intergenerational, shared ministries and activities.
- Congregants represent Bangor and outlying communities.
- Building fund growth is slower than desired.

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

To make more and fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

[See attached document for our detailed mission statement.]

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

In the past three years New Hope has gone through several challenges. Like most churches we struggled through navigating COVID and the challenges of gathered worship and ongoing fellowship. We also have been pursuing the purchase of a permanent building and have made offers on two building, were under contract on one briefly and investigated several others, yet remain at our current rental location. However, the most challenging chapter in the life of NHC in the past three years was going through an Article 17 Separation with our pastor. To protect the privacy of all involved, we will not capture the details here but will share those with any pastor pursuing a possible call to NHC. We arrived at the decision to proceed with Article 17 Separation after much prayer, counseling, and discussion with our Classis. It was completed with heavy hearts and hopes of future restoration. In the two intervening years we relied heavily on the support of the classis, more than a dozen local pastors who provided pulpit supply, and we most recently brought in an STM (interim pastor) to support the church through the healing process and the transition to a new pastor. As with many Article 17's the details are complicated and sensitive and will be shared as it is necessary to do so.

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

1. Hiring a pastor
2. Developing a strong comprehensive children's ministry for all ages
3. Acquiring a church building

Describe what being Christians of Reformed accent means to you:

Our church understands that we are a collection of sinners who fully rely on Christ to redeem us. We strive to have scripture faithfully interpreted and applied in worship. Our church strives to present the reformed principles that all fall short of God's glory, that Man does nothing to earn salvation, God's plan for redemption is perfectly fulfilled in Christ and it is a gracious gift given freely through belief. We try to bring those principles to our community. Our tagline for many years has been "a hospital, not a fortress," and we try to carry that out in presenting a free gospel that all need spiritual healing and that it is only Christ who heals us.

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

New Hope Church participates in Classis Atlantic Northeast. Our geographical location makes us the farthest church from the center of Classis in South Windsor, CT, and at a distance from other CRC churches.

New Hope received funding from the CRC as a fledgling church as well as support from our sister church in Hamilton, NY. New Hope Church has experienced a tremendous amount of support, encouragement, prayer, council, and direction from Classis. The congregation is very thankful for that support and for the STM program.

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

As New Hope seeks to be salt and light in our community and our world we face many challenges. The State of Maine is a liberal leaning state with the lowest number of regular church attenders. We in many ways live in a post-Christian culture. Many churches are shrinking in size, are filled with elderly congregants or have gone the direction of many mainline denominations. Our state more and more aligns with LGBTQ+ ideology, embraces post modern thought, and strays from traditional values. Maine also is famous for its rugged, frontier spirit, our individualism, and our self-reliance. In this environment it can be hard for a church to grow and see an obvious impact in our culture. Maine is also home to a growing homeless population, increasing drug use, and often deep depression. Into this landscape of brokenness the church does the work of sharing the good news of the gospel. New Hope continues to maintain a focus on clear preaching of the Word of God, vibrant and authentic worship, and the building of community and fellowship as we call out to a broken world to be made new and made whole by the only One who can bring healing.

What have been the four most important events in the history of your church.

1. The formation of New Hope Church from a core group of committed believers led by Pastor Carl Bergman (March 8, 2005).
2. New Hope Church's first (Grand Opening) worship service at the Bangor Motor Inn (October 30, 2005).
3. Founding Pastor Carl Bergman retired March 1, 2014 and interning pastor Jonathan Fischer formally assumed the role of pastor April 2014.
4. Pastor Fischer's ministry at New Hope Church ended in May 2022.

Leadership

How many council members does your church have?

Pastor + 5 members (3 Elders and 2 Deacons)

What is the length of term for the council members?

2 years

How often does the full council meet?

Monthly

What subgroups of council exist?

- Children's Education & Ministry Coordinator
- Safe Church Team
- Outreach Coordinator
- Administrative Coordinator
- Worship Coordinator
- Prayer Coordinator



Mission

Our mission: To make more and fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

“Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountains where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, until the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:16-20, NIV)

Notice that this is **our** mission: This is not only the mission of the leadership, but is to be the shared mission of every member.

This is our **mission**: The Church is not static or aimless; if you are a Christian, you have the privilege and responsibility to engage in the mission of the Church. You are to be on mission in your church, family, workplace, and neighborhood.

Our mission involves making **more** followers of Jesus Christ: We work and pray towards the goal that God will bring others into His family and kingdom through us as we follow Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. Our aim is that people who don't yet know Jesus as Savior and King will turn from their own way to Him and find new life and purpose in belonging and following Him. You are to live as active representatives of Jesus among those who don't yet know Him.

Our mission involves making **more fully devoted** followers of Jesus Christ: Becoming a Christian is just the beginning; our whole life should be one of maturation, greater enjoyment of God, and growth in effectiveness in engaging His work in the world. We each have a part in each others' lives, as God works through us to grow each other.

Our mission is to make more and fully devoted followers **of Jesus Christ**: The aim of our lives must be to know Jesus. Apart from believing in and following Him, every success in life will ultimately fade away, every gain will be lost, every relationship fall apart, every pleasure will disappear. He is our Savior and sovereign, and knowing Him is our aim. (See Philippians 3:7-14)

Results of Vision/Values Survey

Below you will find a “word cloud” which includes results of a survey. From a list of values, members and regular attenders were invited to select their top ten. A few added a value not on the list such as Gospel-Preaching. Had it been on the list, more people would likely have selected it!

In case you don't know how a word cloud works, the values selected more often are in larger type. Values selected least often are in smallest type. If you hold the page at arms' length, the words you most easily read give you a sense of the **most shared values** of those who participated. The other values are important, too, but may not be as equally shared. For us at New Hope, this exercise was a bit like looking in a mirror!

