

Pastoral Profile for
Senior Pastor Vacancy
Louisville Presbyterian Church (ARP)
824 Walnut St
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SEARCH COMMITTEE BACKGROUND WORK

Our committee has done a substantial amount of researching and soul searching to identify with some specificity the kind of pastor we believe would be a good fit for our congregation and our community. We have a Search Committee made up of 6 congregants (3 men and 3 women) who represent a cross-section of the ages, the preferences, and the offices of our church. We conducted a survey of our congregation, consisting of a 3-page questionnaire, which included several open-ended questions asking for written responses. This gave all respondents an invitation to discuss any subject they believed was relevant. We have also had frequent discussions with other folks in our church to ascertain what they believed are the qualities required to help our church thrive again.

DESCRIPTION OF LOUISVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Our church differs somewhat from the small-town ARP church you might typically encounter. We have about 85 people on our rolls, and we normally have from 30-40 worshippers in attendance each Sunday. This number has declined somewhat since the departure of our previous pastor. We have an older contingent of folks, who for the most part provide the church's leadership. But there are also quite a few younger people—both single adults, as well as, families with children. Our church has a ministry focused on drug and alcohol addiction recovery, including operating a sober living house, so there are young clients of this ministry who also are regular attendees.

Fundamentally, we are on a firm financial footing, mostly because of generous gifts from past mature members who have established sizable trusts. But because of some recent deaths in this cohort, as well as our decreased attendance, the annual giving has dropped. We would also add that the events surrounding our most recent pastor's departure had a profound unifying effect on our church. The Session, the Search Committee, the Deaconate, and the Congregation could fairly be described as resolutely sharing a commitment to the attributes detailed in this senior pastor profile.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: The candidate should possess a sound, Bible-based, theologically Reformed education, attested to by an advanced degree earned at a reputable, recognized institution.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE: Whether the candidate is older or younger, is married or unmarried, or has younger or older children (or has children at all) are less important than that he possesses the personal, intellectual, leadership, and spiritual qualities required to preach and to teach the Gospel and to effectively shepherd the flock.

PREACHING CHARACTERISTICS

- Because our congregation is quite diverse in terms of each person's Christian education, we are in need of a pastor who can speak effectively to those who are relatively new to the faith, as well as those who are further along in their spiritual development. As Paul reminds the Corinthians, at first, "I had to talk as though you were infants in Christ. I had to feed you with milk, not with solid food, because you weren't ready for anything stronger." We have some Christians needing milk, while others desire solid food.
- Our survey reflects the need for sermons that encourage greater Christian unity, a deeper fellowship within the Congregation, and the development of a more intimate relationship with God. These preferences are the result of the responders' conviction that in the past there was too much emphasis on sin, punishment, and God's wrath.
- Preaching should be Bible-based and reflect the Reformed traditions' theological points of emphasis.
- Respondents want the new pastor to more clearly demonstrate how scripture can be applied to the daily struggles of life.

AN EMPHASIS ON PASTORAL CARE: Those surveyed believe that pastoral care—specifically, meeting with congregants who are sick or need special attention and those who are prospective members, needs a special emphasis at our church. We are looking for a pastor who has the humility to relate to people one-on-one with personal attention.

GOALS FOR CHURCH GROWTH: Those responding to the survey want to see us grow our membership through concentrating on recruiting young families with children.

LEADERSHIP STYLE: Our congregants insist that the new pastor display a "team player" leadership style. Our pastor needs to be a man who sees himself as a *servant* of both the Session and the Congregation. Moreover, the respondents want to see a strong focus on the development of the Body of Christ.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

- A transparent, honest man who has a heart for evangelism.
- A man who can balance an inward focus on his flock and an outward focus on evangelism in the broader community.
- A compassionate, empathetic shepherd for our flock.
- A man with effective communication skills, both when speaking to an audience and interacting with individuals.
- And, most importantly, a man who is filled with the Holy Spirit.