

NARRATIVE QUESTIONS MIF

1. What is the congregation's vision for ministry? [1441]

Our vision for ministry is encapsulated in our vision statement: "Inspiring Disciples...Engaging the World." As a multi-generational congregation with diverse religious and secular views, we welcome all explorers of the Christian faith. We prioritize hospitality, grace, and unity by grounding our worship and ministries in holy scripture and reformed theology. The core of our vision is a worship experience guided by excellent pastors who preach memorable sermons complemented by beautiful music in a variety of worship forms. We nurture our members and others through inclusive programming, extensive Christian education, and congregational care efforts. This richness of worship and programming prepares and compels us to serve the world beyond our congregation. We primarily seek to serve those who lack access to necessities like food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, and education. We recognize that when we serve others, we are transformed and enriched by their lives. Our vision is to continue to expand this exchange of grace.

We value our connections to the PCUSA, the larger Christian church, and other faith traditions. We seek to deepen our local connections with these groups to do God's work and to facilitate reconciliation. We continue to thrive and welcome new members at a steady pace, and we desire a leader who shares our vision of deep faith, profound engagement with the world around us, and loving, inclusive leadership.

2. How do you feel called to reach out to address the emerging needs of your community or constituency? [1498]

We are located in downtown Fort Worth. This diverse area includes office buildings, parks, restaurants, entertainment venues, museums, and new multifamily residences. It also includes low-income neighborhoods and homeless communities. In this setting, we feel called to serve the homeless and people who lack basic necessities. We operate Community Crossroads, an outreach center where we offer worship, communal meals, a dental clinic, clothing closet, food pantry, baby formula and diapers, and educational classes. Other efforts include Habitat for Humanity, Project Homeless Connect, and a permanent-supportive housing initiative. We also feel called to serve young children and their working families by offering faith-enriched childcare and education through our Early Education Center. We feel called to offer an authentic, meaningful church home to the ever-growing number of young adults and demographically diverse people who live near us. Internationally, we feel called to support mission coworkers in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and by maintaining a covenant relationship with two churches in Cuba.

Our church has a history of identifying emerging needs in our community and working to address them. For example, we contributed to the founding of the Presbyterian Night Shelter for the homeless, the James L. West Center for Dementia Care, and the Trinity Terrace retirement home. We continue to support these organizations with our time, board involvement, and financial support.

3. How will this position help you to reach your vision and mission goals? [1467]

We want a pastor to help us spiritually grow in our love of God and for one another. We want this person to share the riches and doubts of an authentic spiritual life through excellent sermons that instruct, challenge, and inspire us. We want this person to befriend us, proactively nurture and encourage us, promote inclusiveness among us, and engage more of us in our ministries. We also want this person to set an example and sustain an atmosphere of spiritual growth throughout the daily activities of the church.

We want a pastor to cultivate our vision and mission goals. We want this person to help us clarify our current vision and goals, identify initiatives that are no longer pertinent, efficiently allocate our resources, update our vision over time, and keep us relevant to our community and future generations.

We want a pastor to enable our staff. We want this person to practice servant-leadership so that he or she can organize, guide, nurture, and leverage our staff to maximum effect and minimal stress.

We want a pastor to interact with our community. This position is the visible leader of our church. We want this person to advance our vision by advising organizations with close ties to our church and by building and maintaining relationships with service-minded groups in our broader community. We want this person to help us share our vision with people seeking an inclusive church home and to sustainably and responsibly grow our membership.

4. Provide a description of the characteristics needed by the person who is open to being called to this congregation and/or organization.

[1489]

Our pastor needs spiritual maturity acquired from extensive scholarship, intellectual curiosity, and introspection. Our pastor needs a thorough knowledge of holy scripture and should value Presbyterian tradition, the Book of Confessions, the Book of Order and the lectionary. While we are traditional, we strive not to be staid. Our pastor needs to have foresight to help us stay relevant over time.

Our pastor needs compassion, which is the foundation for the generosity, inclusivity, loving relationships, and partnership with community that we strive to embody.

Our pastor needs to communicate naturally from the pulpit, at staff meetings, and in the hospital room. We seek a person with a gift to craft a message that is easily heard, who enthusiastically conveys the joy of religious life to us, and who shares that message beyond our church.

Our pastor needs to be outgoing and energized to meet new people and form meaningful relationships. This interconnectedness with others in and beyond the congregation will serve our ministries and mission in the community.

Our pastor needs leadership skills to help discern important tasks, embrace and motivate people, unify rather than divide, and promote what is best for our whole church over the long term.

A person with intelligence, wit, humility, humor and warmth will easily unite with our joyful church and connect with us through learning, fellowship, prayer, food, conversation, laughing, music and our very "Presbyterian-ness".

5. What specific tasks, assignments and program areas will this person have responsibility over? [1456]

Provide spiritual guidance:

- Lead worship services and preach the Word
- Proclaim biblical, reformed, and Presbyterian theology
- Administer the sacraments
- Develop lay leadership
- Evaluate church programs and new initiatives for the church and its ministries
- Partner with the Session, lay leaders, and church staff to nurture the spiritual development of the congregation

Lead our associate pastors and staff in partnership with the personnel committee:

- Assign responsibilities
- Provide for professional staff development
- Interview and make recommendations for hiring
- Recommend compensation adjustments
- Mediate staff conflict and discipline staff when necessary

Provide congregational care:

- Oversee congregational care and communications
- Visit members of the congregation in hospitals, nursing homes, private homes, and by phone
- Counsel members of the congregation
- Perform wedding and funeral ceremonies and memorial services

Provide stewardship for the church's finances:

- Inspire membership giving
- Advise the board of trustees
- Participate in the annual budget process
- Solicit gifts and endowments

Seek community support and fellowship:

- Participate in the work of the PCUSA through the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly
- Serve on community boards in association with the church
- Respond to media inquiries
- Maintain good relationships with media
- Advise community organizations
- Establish and grow relationships with other faith-based groups