Dear Senior Pastor Candidate,

We at Faith Reformed Church are delighted that you have taken the time to browse our profile and gain some familiarity with our church family!

Faith Reformed is a small-town church in Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, with about 250 members. The past several years have been eventful in the life of our congregation. We have flourished spiritually, so that now, more than ever, our people are hungry for God and His Word. At the same time, in 2019 we transferred our denominational membership from the Reformed Church in America (RCA) to the PCA. Our previous senior pastor, who was instrumental in both our spiritual growth and our denominational transition, has recently retired, leaving our senior pastor position open. We are excited for what God has in store for us in this next phase of our church’s ministry.

We are likewise excited about the possibility of getting to know you better, should you choose to apply for our position. The following profile is designed to help you become better acquainted with our church. There are two main sections. First, for the sake of convenience, we have supplied some basic information by including the standard PCA Church Profile Form (pp. 2-4). Second, if you would like to learn more about Faith Reformed, we have also taken the liberty of providing a more detailed account of our church’s

1. Core values (p. 5)
2. Ministries (pp. 5-9)
3. Staff (pp. 9-10)
4. Facilities (pp. 10-11)
5. Finances (p. 11)
6. History (p. 12)
7. Geographic context (p. 13)
8. Denominational transfer to the PCA (p. 14)

A wealth of other information—including our bylaws, bulletins, sermon archive, and so forth—is available online at our website, www.faithreformedchurch.org.

As a search committee, our earnest prayer and heartfelt aspiration is that God would lead us to the man of His choosing—a man of character who meets the biblical qualifications for a pastor-elder. To this end, we have devoted ourselves to a process that is Scripture-directed, prayer-saturated, and Spirit-guided. Our commitment to you is that your name and any sensitive information you entrust us with will remain strictly confidential. We also pledge to communicate clearly with you, keeping you updated on our progress as it relates to you.

If you would like to apply for our senior pastor position, please send your contact information, cover letter, resume, and PCA Ministerial Data Form to Frcpastoralsearch@yahoo.com. (If you do not currently belong to the PCA, we will still accept your application, as long as you embrace PCA doctrine and are willing to be ordained in the PCA.) We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,

FRC Pastoral Search Committee
CHURCH PROFILE FORM
Revised 8/2017

PART I -- BASIC DATA

1. NAME OF CHURCH: _______________ Faith Reformed Church

ADDRESS: _______________ 243 South Fourth Street

_______________________________________

Cedar Grove, WI 53013

TELEPHONE: ___________ 920-668-6725 ________ PRESBYTERY: ________ Wisconsin

2. NAME OF PULPIT COMMITTEE CONTACT PERSON: _____________ Dan Weiss

MAILING ADDRESS: _____________ 124 Linden Lane / Cedar Grove, WI 53013

TELEPHONE: ___________ 920-918-1386 ________ EMAIL: __________ Frcpastoralsearch@yahoo.com

*Dan Weiss is our committee’s point person for communicating with applicants. If for some reason you would like to contact our chair person, B.J. Hilbelink, his e-mail address is bhilbelink@gmail.com.

3. TYPE OF COMMUNITY
   Inner City
   Urban (Downtown)
   Urban (Residential)
   Suburban
   Small Town ___ X __________
   Rural
   College
   Retirement
   Resort/Recreational
   Agriculture

* See 7. Geographic Context (p. 13) below for further details

4. TYPE OF CHURCH
   Church with Multiple Staff ___ X __________
   Church with Solo Pastor
   Mission Church
   Non-PCA Church
   Overseas Church

* See 3. “Staff” (pp. 9-10] below for further details

5. SIZE CHURCH
   Under 100 members
   101-250 members
   251-500 members ___ 262 __________
   501-800 members
   801-1,000 members
   1,001-1,600 members
   Over 1,600 members


6. TYPE OF POSITION VACANT
Senior Pastor ___ X ___

7. CONGREGATIONAL INFORMATION
Average Attendance ___ 189 ___
# of Adults over 65 ___ 57 ___
# of Adults under 65 ___ 150 ___
# of Teens ___ 32 ___
Number of Children ___ 53 ___
Number of Shut-Ins ___ 6 ___

8. FINANCIAL INFORMATION
Total Income ___ $318,000 ___ * See 5. Finances (p. 11) below for further details
Benevolent Disbursements ___ $33,000 ___
Church Expenses ___ $285,000 ___

Minister’s Compensation Package: Faith Reformed Church offers compensation for its senior pastor commensurate with his qualifications and experience; our church’s size and location; and PCA Retirement & Benefits Package Guidelines. Above all, we pledge to follow Paul’s admonition to “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching” (1 Timothy 5:17).

9. MANSE:
(a) Does the church have a manse? ___ X ___ Yes ___ No ___
(b) If “yes,” is the pastor expected to live in the manse? ___ Yes ___ X ___ No ___

*We are giving our next pastor the option of choosing between our manse or a housing allowance.

10. SCHOOL:
Does the church own or operate a school? ___ Yes ___ X ___ No ___

11. PROGRAMS AND OUTREACH
1. Sunday School
2. K-5 “Adventure Island” (Wed. nights)
3. K-5 Vacation Bible School
4. 6-12 “Core” Group Bible Studies (Sun. nights)
5. 6-12 “Connect” Gathering (Wed. nights)
6. Post-High Monthly Gathering
7. Adult Discipleship “D” Groups
8. Women’s and Men’s Ministries
9. Food Pantry (hosted by Faith Reformed)
10. First Hope Community Meal (@ Hope Reformed, Sheboygan)
11. Love, Inc. (Sheboygan Branch)
12. Anchor of Hope (Pro-Life organization in Sheboygan)

* See 2. Ministries (pp. 5-9) for further details

PART II -- PASTOR CRITERIA DESIRED
(Check all that apply)

A. YEARS OF MINISTRY EXPERIENCE REQUIRED (may include ordained or nonordained experience):
None needed _____
1-5 _____
5-10 _____
10-20 _____
Over 20 _____
No preference ___ X ___

B. Marital Status:
Single _____
Married _____
No preference ___ X ___
Note: The following two sections should not be read as a strict set of necessary credentials. We do not want to discourage would-be candidates from applying for our position. Our goal is to allow Scripture's guidelines for pastors/elders to be the primary criteria by which we assess pastoral candidates. Accordingly, we place our strongest emphasis on character, followed by preaching/teaching and one’s capacity to shepherd the congregation. The following sections simply reflect our current understanding of which qualities would be preferable in our next pastor, based on a congregational survey and input from the Session.

PART III -- CONGREGATIONAL PRIORITIES

THE CONGREGATION PLACES PRIORITIES FOR THIS MINISTER ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. **PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**: The word of God is preached with urgency and conviction, bringing it to bear on the changing needs of individuals, the community, and the world. High priority of pastor’s time placed on sermon preparation.

2. **TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY**: Pastor accepts an active teaching role, interpreting and teaching the Scriptures, theological concepts, history of the Church and current events; provides instruction for Church Officers; educational leaders, and confirms new members.

3. **WORSHIP LEADERSHIP**: Pastor and Session work to develop a rich worship life, educating the congregation for meaningful participation.

4. **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEMBERS**: Pastor shares members’ struggles regarding the Christian faith, with opportunity provided for individuals and groups to reflect on beliefs, concerns, doubts regarding Christian understanding of the spiritual dimensions of life.

5. **DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING**: Pastor prioritizes group and/or one-on-one discipleship initiatives and is able to train disciple-makers within the congregation; emphasis on leadership development, mentoring, and multiplying disciples to carry out the Great Commission.

6. **EVANGELISM**: Pastor and congregation share faith in Christ as personal Savior in total lifestyle; seek to lead others within and outside the Church to accept Jesus Christ; congregation is informed, trained, helped to establish effective evangelism programs for the church.

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**PART IV -- PASTORAL MINISTRY STRENGTHS OR EXPERIENCE DESIRED**

1. Preaching
2. Teaching
3. Worship Leadership
4. Discipleship
5. Team Work
6. Youth Work
7. Counseling
8. Leadership Training
9. Christian Education
10. Singles Ministry
11. Stewardship
12. Diaconal Ministry
13. Ministry to Seniors
14. Pastoral Visitation
15. Community Service
16. College & Career Ministry

---

4
1. Core Values

**Mission Statement:** Faith Reformed Church is a community of believers in Jesus Christ committed to deeply loving God, authentically loving others, and boldly living God’s Word in our personal lives and in the world.

We strive as a congregation to embody the core values of being: God-centered, Christ-exalting, Spirit-empowered, Bible-saturated, Church-edifying, mission-mobilizing, soul-winning, disciple-making, and justice-pursuing. We live this out with a spirit of grace and a humble dependence upon God through prayer.

- We are a **church family**, not just a church of families.
- We are a **multi-generational** congregation where each generation is valued and respected. Our worship and ministry reflect our unity and diversity.
- We are a warm, simple, straightforward, approachable church, centered on the **Word of God**. We are hungry for good, simple verse-by-verse exposition of the Bible.

Members and friends gather for Faith Church’s 50th anniversary in 2014

2. Ministries

The ministries of Faith Reformed are overseen by **six ministry teams**. Each team has an appointed elder and deacon. Ministry teams only have the authority to act on behalf of the congregation insofar as their responsibilities have been delegated to them by the Session.

A. Worship Team

The **Worship Team** exists to provide opportunities to celebrate God’s presence by magnifying the Lord and exalting God’s name: to advise and assist the pastor and other worship leaders in the planning and evaluation of congregational worship services, as well as to consider whether new opportunities for worship need to be offered to the church and community.
Faith Reformed aims for **God-exalting, Christ-centered, Gospel-focused** worship, as well as lyrics that reflect these values. Our worship style is blended, featuring both contemporary praise songs and hymns. The laity of Faith Reformed are heavily involved during worship services. Members lead the congregation in song with their voices and many musical instruments: organ, piano, guitar, drums, violin, ukulele, and more. Lay people also regularly lead the call to worship and children’s sermon. Weekly worship takes place on Sunday mornings from 9:00 to approximately 10:15 and progresses through three movements: Approach to God, the Word of God, and Response to God. Although we do not hold a Sunday evening service, we provide many other opportunities for discipleship throughout the week.

***We hold to **complementarianism**, and agree with PCA polity that the church offices are for men. At the same time, we place a high value on the gifts and ministries of women in the life of the church. Women serve on the six ministry teams, teach youth of all ages, and lead women’s Bible studies. On Sunday morning services, they frequently participate in the praise band, issue the call to worship, and deliver the children’s sermon.

**B. Discipleship Team**

The Discipleship Team: *exists to help members become disciples who make disciples: to encourage and oversee the lifelong process of growing to maturity in the Christian faith and passing it on to others by ensuring that appropriate and attractive growth opportunities are offered for all age groups in the congregation.*

Significant discipleship ministries include:

- **Sunday School** – From age 3 through 8th grade, Sunday School aims to teach our youth the full story of the Bible. Grades 9-12 cover catechism and worldview. We also offer adult Sunday school—sometimes led by the senior pastor and other times led by congregants—which has covered several different topics.

- **K-5 Children’s Ministry** – Faith Reformed offers a Wednesday night children’s ministry called Adventure Island that brings in many children from the community.

- **6-12 Youth Ministry** – Starting in the 2018-2019 school year, Faith Reformed joined with the other Presbyterian churches in Cedar Grove—Calvary Orthodox and First Evangelical—in cooperative youth ministry for grades 6-12. While Faith’s youth director, Jon Damkot, oversees the ministry, the vision and responsibilities of the ministry are shared between the churches. A committee comprised of members from each congregation meet several times per year to plan ministries, events, mission trips, fundraisers and more. On Sunday night, our youth gather for small group Bible studies called Core groups. Our Wednesday night ministry, called Connect, covers pressing issues from a biblical viewpoint. Annual summer mission trips allow high school students to gain experience in personal evangelism and world missions. In recent years our youth went to Puerto Rico with Praying Pelicans Missions (2017); to Cleveland, OH, to work alongside an RCA church plant (2018); and to JAARS, a Wycliffe support center in Waxhaw, NC (2019, pictured to the left).
The various ministries of the joint youth group give our students the opportunity to build relationships with a broad range of Christian students while also inviting unchurched youth, who often attend. All in all, the joint youth ministry is a blessing to all three churches involved, in that it fosters unity in the body of Christ and allows us to pool our resources, gifts and facilities to shepherd the youth of our churches together. One year in, this new partnership is just starting to hit its stride, and our prayer is that it continues to grow stronger.

- **Post-High Ministry** – Young adults gather monthly for fellowship, and involvement in small group Bible studies is promoted. We also hold an annual weekend retreat.

- **Men’s and Women’s “D-Groups”** – D-Groups consist of 3-5 men or 3-5 women who meet regularly for Bible study, prayer, and life updates. The “D” in D-Group stands for “disciple-making”: after 12-18 months, the groups disband, with each member (or pair of members) seeking to launch a new D-Group and multiply disciples in the process. D-Groups are not a “program” per se, because they form organically, by invitation. Our previous pastor and his wife spearheaded the first D-Groups in 2015, and approximately three dozen people have participated since then.

- **Women’s Ministry** – A newly formed group seeks to advance the gospel by equipping women to grow in Christ through small group Bible studies (including D-Groups), a Sunday school class, an annual retreat, and several other venues.

- **Men’s Ministry** – Several men’s small group Bible studies exist (including D-Groups), and an effort to consolidate our men’s ministry is in-progress.

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**C. Outreach Team**

The Outreach Team: exists to advance the Gospel within Cedar Grove and the neighboring communities through proclamation of the Word and deeds of mercy: by assisting the congregation in engaging with local unchurched residents and coordinating advertising and promotion of the church.

Significant outreach ministries include:

- **Cedar Grove Area Food Pantry** – Faith Reformed manages a food pantry that assists approximately 30 local families once per month. Every other month, we also hold a meal during distribution hours to promote fellowship with those who attend.

- **First Hope Community Meal** – Congregants help serve a monthly meal at a soup kitchen at Hope Reformed Church in Sheboygan.

- **Love, Inc.** – Congregants are involved in the Sheboygan County branch of this ministry which mobilizes churches to work together to help those in need in the name of Christ.

- **Anchor of Hope** – Faith Reformed financially supports this pro-life organization (located in Sheboygan) that assists women and men through pregnancy.

- **Kettle Moraine Correctional Institute** – A few men assist in this prison ministry on a weekly basis.

- Faith Reformed also financially supports **River Rock**, a Sheboygan church plant of the Reformed Church in America, and **Pine Haven Christian Home**, a nursing home.
D. Fellowship Team

The Fellowship Team: exists to include members fully within the church, the Body of Christ: to encourage congregational fellowship and care, to provide hospitality ministries to attendees and church functions, and to assimilate new participants and members fully into all aspects of church life.

The fellowship team hosts several events throughout the year to promote fellowship within the congregation, such as periodic game nights and a once-monthly breakfast before Sunday morning service.

Faith Church’s largest fellowship event is our annual Fall Fest, which features a dinner; an auction with proceeds going toward major projects or renovations; games for children; and other festivities.

E. Management Team

The Management Team: exists to provide the necessary support to carry out the biblical purposes of the church: to oversee the physical resources of the congregation, employing all church resources in a manner that is consistent with biblical notions of stewardship and care for all God’s possessions given for use in fulfilling the purposes of the Church of Jesus Christ.

The management team oversees all maintenance of the church and manse as well as facility improvements. For more information, see section 4 (“Facilities”) below.

F. Mission Team

The Mission Team: exists to advance the gospel and support disciple-making primarily among least-reached and unreached people groups: by maintaining regular communication with, encouraging, and learning from our supported missionaries and mission agencies; educating our congregation about and encouraging participation in mission; and developing a strategy and guidelines for mission support and trips.

Missionaries We Support

A. Stateside

InterVarsity: A campus ministry that establishes and advances witnessing communities of students and faculty who follow Jesus as Savior and Lord. One of the sons of Faith Reformed Church serves as a university campus staff worker. He coaches and equips students in prayer, evangelism, and discipleship.

Resonate Church: Another former member of Faith Reformed leads a church planting team whose aim is to restore, love, support, and encourage families in the Janesville, WI area. They have planted Resonate Church and aspire to plant other churches in the area. After 2019, our financial support will no longer be needed since Resonate is now self-sustaining.

*Our church has also hosted and provided scholarships for Perspectives on the World Christian Movement courses.

1 In order to protect our missionaries, we have chosen to omit their names and only list their organizations.
B. International

**Arab World Media (through Pioneers):** Utilizes strategic digital media to present the gospel to Muslims. They also provide online discipleship opportunities and help believers connect with other believers in their area. We support a missionary who programs digital apps to reach Muslims throughout the Middle East.

**Compassion International:** A church-based evangelical organization that sponsors children in greatest need around the world. Our Sunday School students sponsor two children through their weekly offerings.

**India Transformed!:** A gospel-based ministry that seeks to transform impoverished Indian communities. IT! offers a number of holistic programs designed to teach people skills that will be sustainable for a lifetime.

**To Every Tribe:** Exists to extend the worship of Christ among all peoples by mobilizing the church, training disciple-makers, and sending missionary teams to plant churches among the unreached. We support two families serving long-term in an unreached First Nations community in Northwest Ontario that is only accessible by plane. Their hope is to plant a self-sustaining, self-reproducing, native-led church founded on the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, in a culturally appropriate way. In 2017, one of our elders made a 10-day trip to Cat Lake to help with construction.

**WILD:** An international and interdenominational spiritual leadership ministry whose acronym stands for Wise, Intentional Leadership Development. WILD offers biblical leadership material that is simple, understandable, and culturally transferable for youth in Africa and Nepal. Faith Reformed Church partners with WILD’s executive director.

**Words of Hope:** Proclaims the gospel through media in order to build the church in places that are hard to reach due to poverty, geography, or social antagonism toward Christianity. Their aspiration is for people everywhere to be able to hear the gospel in their own language.

**Wycliffe Bible Translators:** Aims to translate the Bible into all languages where it is not yet known. Faith Reformed partners with a married couple stationed at JAARS, the Wycliffe support center in North Carolina, where they work in the shipping department and provide goods and services to all of Wycliffe’s overseas members. In June, 2019, the youth group embarked on a short-term mission trip to JAARS.

3. **Staff**

**Director of Youth Ministries: Jon Damkot** (age 39) was born and raised in Cedar Grove. After earning a degree in actuarial science and working in the insurance field, Jon changed courses and worked a variety of jobs for several years, which freed up more time for him to serve as a Sunday School teacher, youth leader, deacon, and elder at Faith Reformed. In late 2017, Jon followed his passions and gifts to the role of youth director and has devoted himself to serving the youth of Faith Reformed and the joint youth ministry ever since. Jon enjoys watching sports, playing board games and card games, and fellowship at local restaurants or coffee shops. Jon is most passionate about shepherding God’s people and seeing youth develop an unshakeable faith in Christ. His ministry passage is 1 Peter 5:1-4.
Administrative Assistant: Debbie Meeusen (pictured to the right) was born and raised in Cedar Grove, although she has also lived in New York, Pennsylvania, and Iowa. Her 29 years of experience as secretary of Faith Reformed are the reason why the church office runs efficiently and communicates effectively. Debbie is married to Gary and has three married children. She enjoys reading, walking, shopping, and family trips.

Treasurer: Kris Kettenhoven, also a native of Cedar Grove and member at Faith, has served as our church’s treasurer for six years. She and her husband John have two adult children.

Custodians: Linda Dykstra has been a custodian at Faith Reformed Church for 10 years. Linda and her husband Rich have five adult children. Laurie Holle has likewise served as custodian at Faith for 10 years. She is married to Phil and has three adult children. Both Linda and Laurie are long-time active members at Faith Church.

Groundskeeper: Bruce Lukens has been tending to the grounds at Faith Reformed Church for the last five years. Bruce and his wife Barb have three adult children and are members at Faith.

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4. Facilities

Grounds: The church and the manse (circled in yellow) reside on 3.5 acres in the center of the village of Cedar Grove as pictured below:

Addition: In 2009, we completed an air-conditioned addition that includes a Great Room (pictured above) with a max capacity of 180; youth classrooms; fully-stocked kitchen; nursery; office; bathrooms and elevator.

Sanctuary: Our sanctuary (pictured on the right) seats approximately 250. It was remodeled in 2019 in order to provide additional seating towards the front of the sanctuary as well as to provide an expanded space for praise and worship instruments and musicians.

Education: The lower level is elevator-accessible and houses educational classrooms, including the junior/senior high recreation room, a large multi-purpose room, and seven additional classrooms.
Manse: The manse is an approximately 3,000 square foot, two-story colonial, built around 1980, with 4 bedrooms, 2 ½ bathrooms, large living room, dining/family room with fireplace, fully finished basement, and an attached two-car garage. It is mostly unfurnished, but appliances are included.

5. Finances

2018 Budget & Final Expenditures

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Budget</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evangelism:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Outreach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship Service</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Bar chart showing Evangelism details](image-url)
6. History

In the late 1950’s and early 1960’s, overcrowding created problems for Cedar Grove’s First Reformed Church, whose sanctuary could no longer accommodate its 700+ communicant members. This situation led a small group of members from First Reformed to begin drafting plans for a new RCA church plant in the community. On July 12, 1964, they held their first worship service in Cedar Grove’s elementary school gymnasium (which is now the public library).

On January 12, 1965, charter members representing approximately forty families met with the RCA’s Classis of Wisconsin to formally organize Cedar Grove’s newest congregation. They adopted the name Faith Reformed Church and installed its first twelve-member consistory of elders and deacons. Faith’s first pastor, Rev. John Van Mantgem, was installed five days later, on July 17, 1965.

The purchase of a plot of land (for $1) in the same year allowed Faith Reformed to construct a church building (pictured to the right), whose unique swooshing roof line would direct attention upward to the heavens and the glory of God.

Under the leadership of Rev. R. “Van” Rathbun from 1989-2001, the Lord was pleased to increase the number of young families at our church significantly.

This set the stage for the ministries of our first youth director, Tom Davila (1998-2010), and his successor, Eric Lashbrook (2011-2017), both of whom built up the youth group and put in place a small group structure that is still alive and well today. In November of 2017, Jon Damkot took over as youth director and, together with leaders from Cedar Grove’s two Presbyterian churches, launched a new joint youth ministry.

In 2009, under the oversight of Rev. Earl Slotman (2002-2012), we completed an air-conditioned addition that doubled our building’s usable space (see section 4 [“Facilities”] above).

Our most recent pastor, Rev. Ron Sanford, accepted a call to Faith Reformed Church in 2013 after serving as Executive Director of To Every Tribe (a mission training and sending agency). During the six years of Ron’s pastorate, our church experienced significant growth, not only in numbers, but in our knowledge of God’s Word, depth of discipleship, and missional outlook.

In 2019, Faith Reformed Church transferred its denominational membership from the Reformed Church in America to the Presbyterian Church in America (on which, see section 8 [“Denominational Transfer to the PCA”] below).

Faith Reformed Church Pastors:

Rev. Earl Slotman: 2002-2012
Rev. Ron Sanford: 2013-2019

2 Some elements of this section were adapted from the book Cedar Grove, Wisconsin (Est. 1847): More than 150 Years of Dutch-American Tradition, edited in part by long-time Faith Reformed Church member Rich Dykstra.
Cedar Grove, WI, is a village of approximately 2200 people, situated 1.5 miles off the shores of Lake Michigan. Although surrounded by rural townships, Cedar Grove is not far from some of Wisconsin’s larger population centers: it is a 45-minute drive south to downtown Milwaukee, 15 minutes north to Sheboygan, and just over an hour north to Lambeau Field in Green Bay. Cedar Grove is also a short drive from a handful of beautiful state parks that offer a variety of outdoor recreational activities.

The historical roots of Faith Church sink deeply into the soil of the Dutch Reformation and its legacy in Cedar Grove. In the 1840’s, overcrowding and potato shortages, as well as concerns about liberalism in the Reformed Church of the Netherlands, led many Dutch families to cross the Atlantic Ocean in hopes of a better life in America. In 1847, a small band of immigrants led by Rev. Pieter Zonne reached the shores of Lake Michigan, founding the village of Cedar Grove.

Cedar Grove celebrates its Dutch heritage annually during the last weekend of July at a festival called Holland Fest (pictured above; see www.hollandfest.com). Like Oostburg—another traditionally Dutch village located just five miles north—Cedar Grove is a conservative, tight-knit, hard-working, family-oriented, upper middle-class community.

Nevertheless, recent decades have witnessed an influx of new families to the area, so that there are more unchurched and economically disadvantaged people than ever in Cedar Grove. Belgium, a village of 2400 souls which lies just to the south, is largely unchurched (although some new churches have emerged in recent years). Sheboygan, to the north, is a diverse city in which crime and spiritual darkness are on the rise. And nearby Milwaukee, by some estimations, is the most segregated city in the country and second only to Detroit in terms of poverty. Thus, opportunities for outreach and kingdom work abound.

There are three other churches in Cedar Grove: First Reformed (RCA), Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian (OPC) and First Evangelical Presbyterian (EPC). Given the tight-knit nature of the community, and the theological homogeneity of its churches, cooperation is highly valued.

Cedar Grove partners with Belgium to form a single school district whose grounds are located in Cedar Grove. The district is of high quality and was recently recognized as a five-star district by the state of Wisconsin. Some 350 students attend the public high school. Thankfully, the school has a good working relationship with area churches. They have allowed youth pastors to visit with students during lunch hours, and they are willing to donate food items to Faith Reformed Church’s food pantry. Additionally, several members of our church hold administrative or teaching positions in the school system. For more information, see www.cedargrovebelgium.k12.wi.us.

Cedar Grove is also home to two banks, two gas stations, two restaurants, a pizzeria, a grocery store, a fire station, a community workout facility, an indoor swimming pool, a hardware store, two hair salons, two auto repair shops, a canning factory, a medical clinic, a library, a post office, and a veterinary clinic.
8. Denominational Transfer to the PCA

For a number of years, leaders in our congregation were concerned about doctrinal shifts in the RCA. Many within the denomination, and especially in the seminaries, advocated a progressive biblical hermeneutic. As a result, the RCA began ordaining women in 1979. More alarmingly, a number of classes adopted a gay-affirming position, and some churches even conducted homosexual marriages, without discipline from other classes (which was impossible under the RCA’s Book of Church Order). In time, Faith Reformed Church no longer felt at home in the RCA, and our elders believed that denominational battles were diverting our energies away from outreach and mission.

In April of 2017, the Consistory voted to initiate a Denomination Assessment Process to inquire, “What is the best denominational fit for the future of Faith Reformed Church?” At the end of that process, 90.5% of the congregation voted to approve a denominational transfer request to the PCA; and in March of 2019, the RCA Classis of Wisconsin approved our request to transfer to the PCA without dissent. Thankfully, our transfer to the PCA was one in which the unity of our congregation remained intact.

9. Challenges Moving Forward

The last seven years—starting with our last interim period and carrying through Pastor Ron Sanford’s ministry—have been a season of spiritual renewal and growth at Faith Reformed Church. We feel that by God’s grace we are a healthy church. However, there are some specific challenges that we face moving forward. While it is unlikely for any pastor to be strong in all of these areas, and none of these challenges falls squarely on the shoulders of the pastor alone, it is to a candidate’s advantage to consider how his passions, gifts, and experience might be of benefit to Faith Reformed.

During early 2019, the congregation engaged in a Church Health Assessment through Flourish Coaching. Over 100 congregants participated in an in-depth survey. The results from the survey led to healthy discussion by elders and deacons, and six potential areas of growth were identified:

1) **Disciple-Making and Mentoring** – Faith Reformed has grown considerably in this area since Pastor Ron began promoting D-Groups in 2015, but there are still many people who are not intentionally engaged in disciple-making.

2) **Evangelism** – Our congregation needs to become more outward-focused with the intention of making new disciples. There is a great need for the Gospel in our community, but many of us do not feel adequate in personal evangelism.

3) **Prayer** – Responses to our survey indicated that there is much room for improvement when it comes to individual and corporate prayer.

4) **Leadership Development** – We have increased our investment into Elder training, but see the need to nurture a broader and deeper base of spiritual leaders in the congregation, especially among men.
5) **Shepherding Mentality** – Our Session needs to go beyond merely being a decision-making board, and grow in our ability to shepherd the congregation, strengthening the personal and relational components of congregational life.

6) **Hospitality towards Newcomers** – New people usually feel welcomed, but Faith Reformed needs to be more intentional about incorporating them fully into the life of the congregation. Fellowship sometimes takes place in cliques, which makes it difficult for cultural outsiders to develop strong relationships with our members.

One additional challenge is our **recent transition from the RCA to the PCA**. We don’t expect much to change on the ground level, but it will take time for us to become accustomed to the culture and polity of the PCA. In particular, the PCA is more committed to its doctrinal standards than the RCA. This has required us to clarify and confirm some of our doctrinal positions. A few of our committed and godly members found this process uncomfortable and challenging. While a small number of members were not in favor of joining the PCA, no one has left the church, and all appear to be supportive of the congregation. Continuing to walk through this time of transition with grace and sensitivity will be of great importance.