

Senior Pastor: Heritage Presbyterian Church
(Presbyterian Church in America)

Introduction:

Heritage Presbyterian Church (PCA) of Warrenton, VA is seeking an experienced Christian man to serve as our next senior pastor. Our most recent senior pastor, the fourth to lead the congregation in the church's 35-year history, retired September 30, 2020, after more than 17 years of service with this congregation. Also, after a long period of stability, the leadership team faces additional change with the retirement of one of our two associate pastors at the end of 2020, and the second associate pastor is actively seeking a new call. With the COVID-19 impacts, and the retirement of a number of members in the 2020, the church is expecting to have approximately 120 communicant members in 2021.

Church Description:

Heritage is located just outside historic Warrenton in Fauquier County, VA and is part of the PCA's Potomac Presbytery. It is located in the transition zone between the metropolitan Washington, DC area and more rural portions of the state. It has the small-town feel of rural Virginia, with lots of local businesses and shops which employ the local townspeople and from the surrounding county. Yet there are many in town who commute into Washington, DC and the surrounding metropolitan area. They are mostly federal government employees or support contractors with large corporations working in the more congested areas of Virginia, Maryland, or the District of Columbia.

Our congregation currently has 130 communicant members. Typically, there are about 100 people present for Sunday worship; we are impacted by the COVID-19 concerns by our older members. Although predominantly Caucasian, under the leadership of the soon-to-retire associate pastor, the church has had a multi-year ministry to Hispanic families in the area and we have 20 individuals who are regularly ministered to.

The church is relatively traditional Presbyterian / Reformed in worship style; Sunday mornings typically consist of a worship service followed by Sunday School for ages from pre-school to adult. It has a longstanding series of mid-week Bible studies, Home Groups and a monthly fellowship luncheon. Externally, the church is engaged in the community in a number of ministries including two nursing-home worship services (biweekly and monthly), hosting a monthly dinner at a local homeless shelter, leading a local Kids' Club, and participating in several outreach activities through the year in conjunction with other local (non-PCA) churches as part of an organization called the Warrenton Gospel Partnership.

The session has two teaching elders (both associate pastors) and two ruling elders. There are five men in the Diaconate. Financially, the church owns its facility outright, carries no long-term debt, and congregational giving typically meets its budget needs. This has enabled a substantial investment in missionary support over a sustained period, which is an enduring passion of the congregation.

Position Overview:

The church's vision for the role of sr. pastor follows closely the description given in the PCA Book of Church Order and, of course, is based on the characteristics found in I Timothy 3. The sr. pastor will serve as moderator of the session and is expected to lead the majority of church worship services including preaching, lead the establishment of generational ministries, be engaged in leading and equipping others to teach both on Sunday and also in mid-week Bible studies, and be engaged in counseling.

To better understand the congregation's expectations and desires for the sr. pastor, the Pulpit Search Committee surveyed the congregation to understand its priorities for the job *functions* of the sr. pastor. In order of importance, the feedback from the congregation consisted of the top five priorities:

- 1) Preaching of the Word,
- 2) Shepherding, mentoring and discipling the congregation,
- 3) Teaching,
- 4) Leading and providing a vision for the church's future (consistent with a strategic plan developed with the Session), and
- 5) Providing counseling of various forms for the congregation. We expect this to be "small c" counseling; where the pastor provides help for the common problems often faced by teens, young adults, married couples and senior citizens. We do not expect "Capital C" counseling, which would deal with the significant problems faced by some. We would rather have the pastor identify and work with local certified counselors, and assist and encourage any congregant to work with the counselors.

In the same survey, the congregation expressed its desires for the most important *attributes* of our next sr. pastor. Here, the top eight are given in order of importance:

- 1) A rich prayer life as a foundation for service,
- 2) Strong communication skills,
- 3) A compassionate character,
- 4) Preserves and emphasizes the distinctives of Presbyterian practice and Reformed theology,
- 5) Relates to a wide variety of people,
- 6) Handles conflict effectively,
- 7) Is a good listener, and
- 8) Able to stimulate the intellect and touch the heart towards a God-focused life of obedience.

Written comments emphasized several "heart" themes important to a significant part of the congregation, including:

- 1) Being firmly grounded in the reality of God, as exhibited in the pastor's daily spiritual disciplines and displayed in a humble, caring deportment,
- 2) Knowing the congregation well, with a sincere and sustained interest in needs and conditions,
- 3) Having a Gospel focus beyond the congregation on a hurting, suffering world in need of the Gospel and Christian compassion, and
- 4) Aware of and sensitive to the conditions of different groups in the community.

There is significant detail behind these general objectives expressed by the congregation that can be elaborated upon in discussion with qualified candidates.

Specific Position Requirements:

The successful candidate will bring his experience and training in the following areas to meet the general objectives outlined above. The following specific qualifications are grouped by general topical area. The basic professional accomplishments must include:

- 1) At least four years' experience as a pastor (solo, associate, or senior) of a congregation.
- 2) A Master's degree in a relevant discipline from a reformed or multi-denominational seminary; a Master of Divinity or its equivalent is how our Presbytery defines the requirements of the Book of Church Order, 21-4.
- 3) Ordained or easily able to be ordained within the PCA.

As noted above, preaching skills are considered foundational. Specific objectives include:

- 1) Consistent preparation and delivery of compelling messages based directly on the Biblical text.
- 2) Preaching that consistently calls for deeper personal faith in Christ, spiritual growth, and evangelism.
- 3) Preaching that is easily understandable and shows how the Word can be applied and lived out in everyday life.
- 4) Preaching that can engage directly with the perspectives of our diverse community in Warrenton as a means for evangelism. We expect corporate worship on the Lord's Day to be focused on the worship of our Sovereign Lord by God's people, yet be understandable by anyone visiting with us during that time.

We seek a man who can leverage and energize the gifts and abilities within the congregation. Aspects of leadership will include:

- 1) Demonstrated ability to guide and develop church staff, lay leadership and congregants in utilizing their God-given abilities.
- 2) Demonstrated skills in leading church staff and volunteers to accomplish church goals for spiritual growth in the congregation and equipping for ministry, outreach and evangelism.
- 3) Able to collaboratively define and refine a vision for church growth with other members of the session.

Heritage is an engaged community and a successful sr. pastor will build and expand on that aspect of our congregation. Thus, the following objectives are considered important:

- 1) A collaborative leadership style that works well in team settings and, particularly, with elected church leaders.
- 2) Engagement with our Presbytery and the General Assembly is expected, and established relationships within the Presbytery would be a significant plus.
- 3) Demonstrated ability to develop community across generations within the church.
- 4) Able to oversee a strengthening and expansion of ministry to children and youth.

A pastor is, by definition, a shepherd of the local flock. We seek a servant leader who embodies the following:

- 1) Commitment to broadly nurturing a culture that embodies Christ's example of servant leadership and obedient life

- 2) Demonstrated ability to instruct and direct others in performing visitation and pastoral care.
- 3) Effective counseling skills suitable for both families and individuals. Again, we are looking for “small c” counseling, and would want examples of where counseling efforts lead to a satisfactory resolution of problems encountered.

Heritage values strong Biblical teaching. Key characteristics of the sr. pastor should include:

- 1) Strong ability to teach (as distinct from “preach”) the Word.
- 2) Able to help and direct others in their ongoing Christian education and ability to teach.
- 3) Able to teach in an engaging way (not overly didactic) and relates well to those under instruction.

Other Congregation Perspectives:

Our goal with this job description is to provide clarity on the specific objectives that Heritage has for our next senior pastor. With this final section, we hope to give some additional perspective on a few other topics that are particularly important to at least some portion of the congregation.

As with any church, the composition of the congregation has changed over time and today there are a number of families with young children through early teens. Consequently, there is a significant desire for a stronger children’s / youth ministry particularly from those families. Our goal is not that the senior pastor be solely responsible for establishing and growing such a ministry, only that he be prepared to oversee an organized response to this real and growing desire.

Similarly, and as noted above, Heritage has a long-standing relationship with a number of Hispanic families in our area. This has been a primary focus of one of our associate pastors who is planning to retire within the coming year. Again, the establishment and/or continuation of this particular ministry aspect is not intended to be a central focus for the new senior pastor—but it is quite important that the deep relationships that have been formed be recognized and serve as important context in formulating a path ahead.

We recognize that this congregation is weak in performing evangelism, outside of individual efforts. We seek someone who will provide training and encouragement to have effective personal evangelism, as well as either lead or support larger, more coordinated efforts. We do not want someone who expects to use the Lord’s Day corporate worship sermon as the chief evangelism tool.

Leadership for the direction for Heritage’s ministry in music will be an important element for the congregation. We will be hiring a new piano player in late 2020; this will be a temporary solution, as it is likely we will seek to hire a part-time Music Director in 2021. We would expect the senior pastor would incorporate this new person’s assistance into planning for services.

Although we have listed many characteristics and ministry areas, we do not expect a senior pastor to do it all. We have many volunteers, as well as ruling elders and deacons who can share the load. We need someone to provide encouragement and direction to these ministries. We also expect our senior pastor to have a balanced “life/work” priority. We would expect to see approximately 40 to 55 hours a week given to ministry in its various forms, to include work with the Presbytery and General Assembly. We realize that some weeks will be very demanding, while other weeks will be relaxed and undemanding.

Finally, we would expect to provide a total compensation package in the range of \$120,000 to \$140,000 a year. This will be negotiable based on experience and education, and some consideration for family needs.

If interested in pursuing this job opening, or desiring to find out more about this opportunity, please contact the Pulpit Search Committee chairman, Ed Faudree, at edward.faudree@gmail.com, or call his cell phone at 571-239-3554 anytime. Feel free to leave a message.

Upon request, we will send a copy of Heritage's Strategic Plan, to explain the direction our church desires to head.

We would like to receive a resume, a listing of three references, three sermon examples (via CD/DVD, audio online via church / other website, or video online via Youtube / other), and answers to the following three questions:

1. Please describe your journey of faith in coming to profess Christ as your Savior and Lord. How have you seen your faith deepen over the years?
2. Please describe how you have come to know you were being called into Christian ministry. How was this confirmed by others?
3. Please explain any exceptions you hold to the Westminster Standards, and what difficulties you may have with the current BCO. Please provide your rationale as part of the explanation.

We would expect no more than a single page response to each of these three questions.

We will have additional questions once our committee is satisfied with your initial responses and resume and look forward to continuing to work with you regarding this open position.