

All Souls Pastor Job Post

[All Souls Church](#), located in beautiful [Missoula, Montana](#), is looking to find God's choice for our next pastor. This unique opportunity offers the challenge to help grow and disciple a young PCA church in the context of one of the best small cities in the country.

Interested applicants will need to understand the colorful and dynamic history of the church to determine if they might be called to build on what God has started at All Souls.

Our History

All Souls was founded by two high energy church planters with a passion for Missoula in 2006. In a Q & A interview they described their original call:

- **Q: Who are you guys, anyway?** Good question. We're a team, actually: pastors [Christian Cryder](#) and [Ryan Sutherland](#). Both of us grew up in Montana, became friends at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, graduated in 2006, and felt God's call to bring our families back out west to plant a church from scratch in Missoula, MT. Crazy, huh?
- **Q: Why Missoula?** It's tempting to link to pictures of huge trout, soaring vistas, with elk bugling in the distance (but we won't :-). The short answer is that we love this place, and the people who call it home. We desire to plant a church that connects with postmodern, de-churched, unbelievers, because these are the kinds of people we enjoy as friends. We have been very intentional about NOT planting a church that just recruits Christians from other churches.

The church planting team spent many hours in coffee shops and bars meeting these postmodern unbelievers and they also connected with many in the art and music community of Missoula. To support the arts community, the church planters hired several musicians to participate in worship.

Skeptics were invited into the church community and robust discussions frequently took place with occasional conversions. Many parties going late into the night were a part of the All-Souls culture in the beginning. Edgy papers were put out on the church website with titles like, "You Might be Sinning if You Don't

Smoke Marijuana,” with the idea being, if you take pride in what you don’t do, you might be the Elder brother looking down on the Prodigal Son.

The church usually began Sunday worship with a statement, “You don’t need to share our convictions to be our friend.” However, weekly communion was established from the founding of worship services. As a result, even though skeptics were welcome, weekly communion confronted those who were attending, but not yet believers, because they could not participate in the sacred meal of Jesus.

A tag line for the church became “Ancient Faith, Fresh Encounter” to summarize the church’s deep roots in historic Christian truth, but without some of the baggage commonly associated with modern churches.

Both founding pastors were heavily influenced by Timothy Keller and his encouragement to Christians to “love the city.” As a result, the church sought ways to love the city including participating in river cleanup efforts, serving beer at music festivals and other visible expressions of love for the city. The church even formed a nonprofit called Imagine Missoula which organized neighbors helping neighbors and partnered with Big Sky Brewery to create All Souls Ale as a fundraiser.

In addition to new converts, the church also attracted Christians from PCA backgrounds as well as other non-reformed Christians. As a result, the church was able to Particularize in 2014 with two Ruling Elders (currently at three) joining the two church planting Teaching Elders as a Session.

As outside sources of support began to dry up, Christian Cryder moved to Austin, Texas, and Ryan Sutherland became the sole pastor in 2014. Ryan developed a new vision and the church secured a permanent location in the heart of downtown in a store front location.

This location became known as the “Public House.” The space was used for Sunday worship, but during the week it was also used to rent out to many parts of the Missoula community that needed a meeting space. Among clients of the Public House were the City of Missoula, art shows, weddings, musical events and film festivals. It was an important new avenue by which the church loved the city

and made new connections while also generating rental income to offset the cost of the new space.

Ryan felt called to move to Colorado in 2019. At that time the church hired a new manager of the Public House which was renamed "Gather at All Souls." Gather had some initial success, but when Covid hit, the rentals dried up, straining church finances as the rent remained the same. Eventually the rental business was closed.

A new pastor was hired in May of 2020. However, Covid made ministry very challenging his first year and very little church activity occurred. When church resumed meeting regularly, the preaching was good and the church moved worship in a more liturgical direction.

After his second year the pastor's ministry was reviewed. The Session and Presbytery Shepherding committee involved in the review determined he was not a good fit for the church and he resigned in July of 2022.

The church's three ruling elders, along with help from Montana Presbytery churches, and the active members of the church have kept All Souls functioning since July 2022 without a pastor. Ben Melli became Stated Supply, or Interim pastor, in August 2023 and has been warmly embraced by the church.

Current Status

The finances of the church have been rejuvenated since the low point in August of 2022 and substantial progress has been made to reduce church expenses, including passing on the lease of our current meeting space to a different entity, which allows us to meet as usual on Sundays at the location. Offerings and pledges have been strong to support the call of a new pastor.

The Search committee believes the church has a solid base of supporters and is positioned to see God grow the church in our next phase. In order to maintain an openness to who God is preparing for our next pastor, the committee will accept applications from interested candidates who are seeking a full-time paid position, bi-vocational pastors and pastors who may have outside funding to support the position.

The next pastor will play a key role in church leadership and in defining the future direction of the church. Thoughtful discussions will be required to balance the ongoing desire to reach the unchurched in Missoula with the growing need to assist in discipleship of current members, youth and children.

The current church resources will only support one full time minister, but consideration would be given to a team of two or more pastors if partial self-funding for each was an option.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Applicants interested in learning more detailed information about the church will gain insight by reading the analysis below evaluating the church through the lens of a SWOT analysis. The Search committee provides the information on how we believe we can build on our strengths, weaknesses that will need to be mitigated, opportunities we think can be seized, and threats to our community of believers that move us to pray. Below is a summary of each:

Our strengths

In summary, All Souls has a very high view of the importance of community among the members, welcoming of non-churched inquirers, biblical worship, and Sessional leadership. We strive to excel in these areas.

We are a tight knit community of believers. We have roughly 40 to 50 adult engaged members and friends who are active in each other's lives through mid-week home groups, informal before work coffee, after-work beer, weekend parties, hikes and dinners.

In addition, All Souls enjoys a growing congregation of children. We have opportunities for discipleship for the almost 30 children in the church.

We are centered on our Lord Jesus throughout the week and on our liturgical worship on Sundays. Worship is focused on glorifying God through the singing of hymns and songs, passing of the peace to one another, scriptural readings, expositional preaching and weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper.

All Souls is exceptionally participatory and will be very responsive to pastoral leadership in development of a shared vision of worship, community life and service. We highly value the active participation of women in the worship service

and other aspects of church life while adhering to established guidelines in the PCA that do not permit women to serve as elders. We are hoping to add deaconesses as church officers in the future.

The reputation of All Souls is generally good in Missoula. Our intense involvement in the community in the early years of the church plant and the “Public House” visibility gave All Souls a positive reputation in the community.

The demographics of the church are balanced. Approximately 45% of the church is under 30, 29% is between 30 and 50, and 26% is over 50. Approximately 46 adults are either members or regularly attenders while 27 children attend.

The leadership of All Souls is strong with seasoned elders who have kept the church together through both good and difficult times. Elder Jesse Barnett is particularly gifted in leading worship in music and the liturgy. Elders Hauer and Kesler also provide leadership and assist in pulpit supply in the absence of a teaching elder. Karen Curren is the church administrative officer and is very capable in maintaining church communications both within and outside the church.

The Montana churches have been very supportive of All Souls. Recently, Faith Covenant church in Kalispell gave us notice that their Session has voted to grant us \$40,000 over three years to assist in our pastor search.

Weaknesses

All Souls is experiencing the predictable growth pains that result from a church plant. The early exclusive focus on growing the church through evangelism and community involvement has given way to a need to also support discipleship of members and their children. The church needs to find a way to reinvigorate the outreach to the community with the gospel, while also serving the existing needs to grow disciples within the church.

The current session functions adequately, but two of the three elders are semi-retired and travel often. There are no deacons in the church. Development of deacons and new elders will be a high priority for the next pastor.

The financial stability of the church is currently good, but the growth in giving has not always been sufficient to maintain adequate funds when paying a full-time pastor.

The church's current location at 130 E. Broadway was chosen by a previous pastor with a distinct vision to love the city downtown. This vision is no longer embraced by the majority of the church, but alternative locations are rare and expensive. A new vision of our mission will need to be developed and the decision of what location fits the vision may be challenging to secure.

Opportunities

With almost 30 children in the church, All Souls has an immediate opportunity to make disciples of our own children. We currently do not have a Sunday School or other church sponsored learning program for children.

The church is located in the heart of downtown Missoula in which homeless folks are common. We frequently have homeless visitors in the church and have an opportunity to partner with Hope Rescue Mission to assist in helping these visitors to our church.

Missoula is home to Montana's flagship university, the University of Montana. Discussions have occurred in the past with Reformed University Fellowship to begin a program in Missoula. We believe this is an ongoing opportunity and should be pursued in the future.

Missoula is primarily unchurched. Opportunities abound to train our existing church to be more evangelistic and focus on outreach to neighbors and friends.

There are many in the church who have the character traits to become an elder or deacon. Training classes with a goal of adding deacons, deaconesses and elders is a need and opportunity.

Threats

The Search committee believes another short-term pastor tenure would be very detrimental to the church. The constant changing of visions by rotating pastors over the past few years has not been healthy. Our next pastor will play a significant role in developing a new vision. The permanence of the next pastor

and commitment to the mission of the church for a substantial time period is critical.

Affordable housing is a major issue in Missoula. In the past few months, the church has lost two families who were impacted by the rapid rise in real estate.

Other Information

Current Mission Statement: All Souls exists to be used by God to make followers of Jesus through transformative worship, spiritual friendships, and being a faithful presence in our city.

Why is Missoula rated a top place to live? This link provides some good information [Missoula, Montana](#). In addition, Search committee members would add Missoula has multiple rivers for fishing, swimming, and floating, a ski resort in our backyard with 4 others within a two-hour radius, the community is literally surrounded by mountains with easy access to dozens of trails, a high quality of life with the healthcare system, high ranking schools, many city life features in a small-town setting including a great cultural setting with music, art, science, multiculturalism, restaurants.

Compensation package: All Souls will negotiate a competitive salary with the successful applicant. Current capacity to pay one pastor within PCA salary survey compensation guidelines is doable. The committee would also consider more than one pastor coming as a team if sufficient outside funding were available to support the combined team.

Ministry experience: The Search committee would prefer five or more years of experience in pastoral ministry, or a comparable level of workplace experience which included communication and workplace skills.

Next Steps

If you have additional questions about All Souls Church in Missoula before applying for the Teaching Elder position, please feel free to reach out to Joe Kesler, Chair of Search Committee at Kesler_joe@yahoo.com or call at 406-396-6372.

If you are ready to submit an application, please review the “Requirements to Apply” section below and send your resume along with the requested information to Joe Kesler. Thank you for your consideration of our church opening.

Requirements to apply:

- The committee will only consider applicants who are either ordained in the PCA, or who are willing to be ordained in the PCA. All Souls is a member of the Rocky Mountain Presbytery and candidates will need to be approved by them.
 - Please include with your application your history of community involvement, any partnerships with other churches and potential timeline for beginning service at All Souls.
 - Briefly share your personal testimony and critical life experiences that have shaped you up to this time.
 - Describe the development of your sense of calling to ministry.
 - Describe how you view the relationships between members of a church staff.
 - Define or state why you prefer the presbyterian or elder form of church government.
 - How do you describe your management style?
 - How do you feel about living in Missoula?
 - What are your strengths and weaknesses as a person?
 - What do you like to do in your spare time?
 - What books have you enjoyed lately?
 - What people in ministry do you admire and seek to emulate? Why?
 - How do you approach and nurture your own spiritual development?
 - If married, describe your relationship with your wife and children. What is your role as husband and father?
 - Do you agree with and endorse the PCA confessional documents?
 - Why are you leaving your current position? Have you ever left a ministry position involuntarily? If yes, explain.
 - Include a link to two recent sermons.
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