



**HOPE**

PRESBYTERIAN

LEAD PASTOR PACKET

**NEW BRAUNFELS, TX**



New Braunfels, TX

# *Lead Pastor Packet*

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[hopeNB.com](http://hopeNB.com)

# LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

*Dear Pastor,*

Thank you for investing your time to learn about what God is doing among the people of Hope. We hope that you will enjoy hearing something of our story and that this might encourage you to apply for the position of Lead Pastor if the Lord so leads.

For eight years and counting, Hope has been a gospel-preaching voice in fast-growing Comal County. We are well-established, enjoy rich community, and dream of acquiring our own facility.

Our founding pastor, Derek McCollum, did a great job planting the church and helping establish it along with the rest of our elders. He has moved on to a new ministry challenge with our blessing, though we will miss him greatly. His family will remain a part of the Hope congregation while he transitions to his new role with Reformed University Fellowship.

Our Session is well-trained and equipped to lead us through this time of transition and the challenges ahead. The Executive Director of *Flourish Coaching*, PCA Pastor Matt Bohling, has come alongside the Session to prepare and guide us as we conduct this search.

We are seeking a new Lead Pastor who is passionate about preaching God's Word, shepherding God's flock, and equipping God's people to live out the gospel. He'll do this with empathy, emotional intelligence, wisdom, and a servant's heart. We are praying for you as you consider this opportunity.

This Lead Pastor Packet has three main sections: **Our Story** (page 4), **Our Lead Pastor Profile** (page 10), and **Our Community** (page 15). You will also find Our Application Process near the end of the document. Enjoy reading and please do not hesitate to reach out to us or to Flourish Coaching for further information!

Grace and peace be with you,

The Pastoral Search Committee:

*Erik Abrahamsen* (Ruling Elder)

*Doug Culpepper* (Deacon)

*Lauren Lambert*

*Sandee Petta*

*Ed Wuensch*

*Amanda Armstrong*

*Luke Hemphill*

*Jason Payne*

*Kathy Teuton* (Staff Member)



# Part 1: Our Story

ORIGINS, PRESENT REALITY, FUTURE ASPIRATIONS and MORE

## OUR ORIGINS

Hope began January 2017 when Derek and Joy McCollum moved to New Braunfels to join a small launch team which had been meeting together to ask the Lord to begin a new work in their city. The McCollums moved from Baton Rouge, LA where Derek was on the staff of First Presbyterian Church, and prior to that, served as the RUF Campus Minister at the University of Texas.

After a series of vision meetings in the McCollums' living room, several Sunday evenings at New Braunfels Christian Academy's Upper Campus and a couple of great parties, Hope Presbyterian held its first public worship service in September of 2017. The church met in the Landa Park Recreation Center, right in the heart of New Braunfels. That desire—to be a church that exists not only at the heart of New Braunfels but for the hearts of New Braunfels—has grown and strengthened over the past nine years.

After working through the early launch grind and the global COVID pandemic, Hope became a particular church in 2022, electing Erik Abrahamsen and Clay Robison as elders. The church has added three other ruling elders since, plus Mike Haberkorn as Associate Pastor.



# OUR PRESENT REALITY

We are glad that we can say Hope is a healthy church with very good leadership. The morale of our congregation is strong and our people are energetic and filled with confidence in the Lord's plan for us.



## WHAT OUR PEOPLE LOVE MOST ABOUT HOPE

### Community & Fellowship



The people of Hope make up a close-knit church family. Our warm fellowship gives our people a sense of belonging—of knowing one another—as well as the opportunity to make new friends. We seek to be warm and approachable and to welcome new people into our community. This makes Hope a safe and inviting place to be!

Being well-grounded in the essentials of the Faith enables us to be accepting of our cultural and theological differences. This gives us a healthy blend of unity and diversity. Perhaps that is why Hope sees such active participation and engagement from a broad cross-section of our people as we learn and serve together and enjoy time with each other in our home groups as well.

### Faithful Teaching & Preaching

The Word of God has primacy and relevance among us. We are a church that is gospel-centered, rooted in Scripture, and appreciative of rich theology. Thus we value a conversational preaching style that equips us also with practical applications. That helps aid our spiritual formation as we seek to integrate our faith into daily life and live out our soft edges, solid center core value.

### Authenticity & Humility

Our rich community is modeled from the top, with pastors pointing to Jesus, not themselves, and relationally healthy, humble leaders guiding all of the ministries of the church. This helps us to be Christ-centered and to love each other well.



### Worship Services

In addition to the centrality of the Word of God in our worship, we also love the excellent quality of Hope's music ministry. We are eager to gather each week to sing to the Lord in a reverent yet contemporary worship style. We are blessed to have a creative and talented worship leader on staff that thoughtfully integrates music into each worship service.





## CHALLENGES AHEAD (with potential solutions)

	CHALLENGE	SOLUTION
<b>Administrative Execution</b>	Organizational agility will become increasingly important as the church navigates growing into a permanent facility and greater complexity with staffing, officers, and lay leaders.	This could be mitigated by delegation, clear direction, and a unified approach with regular communication coming from the Session.
<b>Managing Change and Conflict Resolution</b>	While unity and fellowship are highly valued at Hope, we also recognize that people often need to work toward reconciliation and forgiveness in their relationships. Following a founding pastor isn't always easy, and our search for a meeting place of our own will inevitably create some disruptions to our fellowship with one another.	Expectation-setting with the congregation is vital to helping the incoming pastor succeed as he navigates the learning curve of embracing our roots while gradually leading effective and needed change.
<b>External-Facing Leadership and Outreach</b>	We do not want to become ingrown at Hope. A lack of evangelism and outward engagement may limit momentum as the church moves from being a close-knit community since its founding to a more public, visible, and geographically-rooted presence.	Being very specific and clear about how Hope will continue to face outward during this period is critical to the continued fulfillment of the Great Commission so that we can make a difference in this rapidly growing city in which the Lord has placed us.
<b>Continual Leadership Development</b>	Founding Sessions, like founding pastors, must mature as a congregation grows, and their role as shepherds will be challenged by that growth.	Hope Presbyterian will need to help current officers to keep advancing together while also implementing strategies to identify and train new leaders.

# OUR BELIEFS AND VISION

**BELIEFS** As a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America, we hold to the centrality of God’s Word and to the Reformed system of doctrine summarized in the Westminster Confession of Faith. You can visit [www.pcanet.org](http://www.pcanet.org) to explore the beliefs of our denomination.



## OUR CORE VALUES

We are a church that loves to see the Gospel take root in, among, and through those connected to our church. This shapes our five Core Values.



01

### Everybody needs Jesus

“At Hope, you don’t have to have it all together to belong, because none of us do—we just all need Jesus.”



02

### Truth experienced in community produces change

“Truth without community can be cold; community without truth can be shallow. Together, they are transformative.”



03

### Toward people but away from their worldview

“We can disagree deeply on a worldview level while still loving someone deeply on a personal level.”



04

### Soft edges, solid center

“You’ll find that we can be firm in our convictions while being gentle in our tone, creating a space where people can explore faith without feeling judged.”



05

### Expressive and Formative

“Our worship is heartfelt, creative, and vibrant. But also formative; the liturgy, the preaching, and the songs are shaping us into the image of Christ.”



Find short videos on our values at [About Hope](#).

# BEAUTY BELONGING HOSPITALITY GRACE

## Our Culture: *Beauty, Belonging, Hospitality, Grace*

A culture of welcome and belonging, of honesty and grace, and of warmth and friendship.

## Our Vision Statement

We desire to be a church that proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ and connects people to God, to one another, and to their neighbors.

## OUR NUMBERS

**234**

MEMBERSHIP

Includes non-communing kids



**160-170**

ATTENDANCE

Average worship attendance



**250**

AFFILIATED

Those who call Hope their home



Members, kids, regular attenders

**74**

FAMILY UNITS



**5**

RULING ELDERS



**4**

DEACONS



**4**

MINISTRY STAFF

Assoc. pastor + 3 ministry directors



**1**

SUPPORT STAFF

F/T Director of Operations



**\$750,000**

OUR GIVING

Projected for 2026





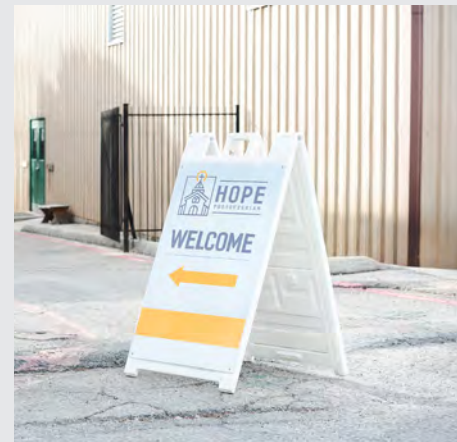
# OUR FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

## VISION FOR A PLACE

We do not yet have our own building. Grateful as we are to share the space at New Braunfels Christian Academy, we look forward to the day when the Lord provides a permanent place for us to gather together and to welcome even more guests into our midst. To that end, we have been engaged in a vision campaign for a little over two years now. Grow Deep is more than a building fund—it is a comprehensive plan that unites us in faith as we seek the Lord and His will for Hope. The session is actively

pursuing property at the same time as we search for our next Senior Pastor, trusting the Lord to guide Hope through both pursuits in unity.

We want our great-grandchildren to attend Hope!



We believe that a permanent church home is an important piece to loving our city and proclaiming the good news of Jesus for many years to come. We want our great-grandchildren to attend Hope! To be a gospel witness in New Braunfels for the next 100 years, we believe a physical place, rooted in our city, is key.

## A SPIRIT OF SERVICE



We should clarify a couple of things at this point. First, we are putting faith into action in our present situation. Hope leads meaningful worship services, enjoys community life together, and consistently seeks ways to serve the Lord, each other, and our community. By God's grace, we are a vibrant church even without a traditional building, and we have not pinned all of our hopes on having a future facility. Ultimately, like you, we are looking for a Better Country—a heavenly one.



## THE CALL FOR LEADERSHIP

While we're at it, we can say that we've adopted a similar attitude toward the Lord leading us to our next Senior Pastor. We do not view obtaining a Lead Pastor as a panacea who will be the cure-all for all of life's challenges. Instead, we believe that the Lord is gracious to give gifts to His church, including pastor-teachers, who equip God's people for service. And while we have a deep, abiding appreciation for Pastor Derek and his ministry among us over the past decade, he and the rest of the staff have taught us to be a Christ-centered church—not a pastor-centered one.



**With that said,** we'd love to describe for you what we desire in our next pastor. The Session worked hard at listening to the people of Hope and then crafted a profile that should give you a good idea of how we view the equipping work of the Senior Pastor.

## *Part 2: Our Lead Pastor Profile*

### WHO IS OUR NEXT PASTOR and WHAT WILL HE DO?

#### Who Is Our Next Pastor?



The Senior Pastor of Hope Presbyterian will be a spiritually mature, shepherd-leader who guides the congregation with clarity, humility, and wisdom.

He will model Christlike character, have a heart for missions, and cultivate a warm, invitational community while leading this growing church into its next chapter without disrupting its relational and theological center.

This role requires the next Senior Pastor to balance vision and leadership with patience and deep pastoral presence.



# What Will Our Next Pastor Do?

## SENIOR PASTOR ROLE SUMMARY

**REPORTS TO:** The Session

**SUPERVISES:** Associate/Assistant Pastors, Ministry Directors, and Staff

**STATUS:** **FULL-TIME, EXEMPT**



## PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

### PREACHING & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

**DELIVER** Christ-centered sermons, rooted in Scripture, that connect faith to everyday life.

**FORM** a biblical worldview through clear, practical teaching rather than cultural commentary or partisan agendas.

**PRIORITIZE** discipleship that shapes marriages, families, & vocational life.

### SHEPHERDING & COMMUNITY

**MAINTAIN** a visible presence, knowing the congregation by name and story.

**PROVIDE** pastoral care through prayer, counsel, and support during crises or transitions.

**MAINTAIN** and strengthen the church's culture of warmth, hospitality, and relational health through shared life and small groups as expressions of community.

**FOSTER** an outward-facing, invitational culture that welcomes people from diverse backgrounds, both inside and outside the PCA.

**ENSURE** continued engagement and support of missions.

## VISION & DIRECTION

**LEAD** the church with a clear sense of direction rooted in prayerful discernment of God's calling for Hope.

**BUILD ON** the existing foundation rather than pursuing disruptive change.

**TRANSLATE** vision into achievable steps that the congregation can embrace, suited for a maturing church seeking rootedness and a church home in a fast-growing city.

## LEADERSHIP & TEAM DEVELOPMENT

**LEAD** collaboratively with the Session through dialogue and shared discernment and empower deacons, staff, and volunteers through effective delegation.

**INVEST IN** developing leaders and sustain a healthy staff culture marked by fellowship, trust, and spiritual leadership.

## GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS

**MODERATE** the Session, be actively engaged in the South Texas Presbytery, and regularly attend General Assembly.

**WISELY STEWARD** church resources to support ministry as the church grows, pursues facilities, and increases in organizational complexity.

**LEAD** meetings and decision-making processes with clarity, organization, and respect for volunteers' time.

**PREACH** Christ-centered sermons  
**SHEPHERD** through prayer & counsel  
**LEAD** with a clear sense of direction  
**DEVELOP** a healthy staff culture  
**STEWARD** church resources wisely



# QUALIFICATIONS



## Character & Theology

**Spiritual Maturity:** Evident love for Jesus marked by humility, integrity, and emotional security under pressure. Leads with character and is emotionally mature.

**Theological Alignment:** Confessionally reformed (PCA) with gracious, clear positions on the essentials of the faith while being non-dogmatic on non-essentials in alignment with the values and mission of Hope. Biblically faithful and theologically grounded.



## Education & Experience

**Credentials:** Ordained/ordainable in the PCA with an M.Div. or equivalent theological education.

**Experience:** Demonstrated experience in pastoral ministry, including preaching, leadership, and shepherding with a minimum of seven years. Prior service in a collaborative leadership context and experience leading or being part of a church moving from founding and growth to rootedness and early maturity.



## Key Skills & Attributes

**Faithful.** Gifted, biblically-faithful preacher who connects Scripture to real life.

**Mature.** Relational awareness, high emotional intelligence, and navigates conflict redemptively.

**Adaptive.** Ability to lead a growing, diverse congregation still forming its long-term identity.

**Teachable.** Humble, teachable, and willing to listen before leading change.

**Collaborative.** Effective team leader who encourages, equips, and multiplies others.



# SUCCESS PROFILE (First 12-18 Months)

The transition from qualifications to healthy ministry requires a clear roadmap for the first season of leadership. The following success profile outlines the strategic milestones intended to guide our next Senior Pastor through his first 12–18 months at Hope.



## A WEEKLY RHYTHM

We want to help you establish a focus that is both effective and sustainable. In addition to teaching & preaching for 12-15 hours, 28 hours are allotted to these other “Big Bucket” areas.



## COMPENSATION

Hope Presbyterian will offer a total package (i.e. salary, housing allowance, plus benefits including insurance, social security, and retirement) of \$140,000 - \$190,000 (based on experience) to our new pastor. Also, a paid Sabbatical with financial support will be provided every 7 years.

# Part 3: Our Community

New Braunfels offers young families a rare blend of small-town warmth and everyday livability, all grounded in a culture that still values faith, family, and neighborliness. Nestled between San Antonio and Austin and at the edge of Texas hill country, the city feels comfortably rooted rather than rushed, making it an appealing place to raise children, even while being one of the fastest growing cities in the United States. Many families are drawn to the strong sense of community here—people show up for school events, youth sports, church functions, and for one another. It's the kind of place where children are known by name and parents feel supported rather than isolated.



The city is also a welcoming environment for all ages and stages, from young families to retirees. Safe neighborhoods, respected schools, and abundant outdoor spaces make it an environment in which children can blossom. The Guadalupe and Comal Rivers attract vacationers and offer wholesome recreation, while parks, trails, and community events encourage all walks of life to spend time together. Local traditions, festivals (including the German-heritage “Wurstfest”), markets, and seasonal gatherings foster joy, celebration, and a sense of belonging that spans the generations.

Finally, New Braunfels balances growth with character. While the city continues to expand, it has retained a strong moral compass shaped by its history, faith communities,



and commitment to family life. The area has become a melting pot that includes people from all walks of life. From traditional Texans to newcomers, we are growing in new ways. New Braunfels offers not just a place to live, but a place to put down roots and thrive together.

## DEMOGRAPHICS & DESCRIPTION

Originally founded by German immigrants, New Braunfels is experiencing explosive growth and now has around 125,000 residents, with the surging population of Comal County nearing the 200K mark. The area has seen an influx of transplants from California in recent years. In terms of ethnic makeup, New Braunfels is predominantly White (~ 57%), with a very substantial Hispanic community (~35–37%), while Black and Asian residents make up smaller shares of the population. The cost of living is slightly lower than the national average, with median home values ranging from \$350-400K. There is no state income tax in Texas.

In short, New Braunfels combines a favorable cost-of-living profile with rapid growth, a strong community of families, and access to quality schools and services—making it a compelling choice for value-oriented, family-focused households. San Antonio’s historic Alamo landmark and famous Riverwalk are only 30 miles to the southwest of New Braunfels. Austin, a melting pot of music and culture, is an easy hour drive up I-35 and is home to the main campus of the University of Texas. The growth of this booming corridor consistently ranks in the top five to ten areas in the United States.



The area surrounding New Braunfels offers diverse higher education opportunities with four major universities located within easy reach. **Texas A&M University** in College Station is the largest of these, hosting approximately 79,000 students and situated less than three hours away. For those looking even closer to home, **Texas State University** sits just 20 miles to the north, while **UT San Antonio** is a convenient 45-minute drive south. Along with **UT Austin**, these institutions provide a wealth of academic options while deeply enriching the local culture.

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# Our Application Process

## OUR QUESTIONS

We want to get to know you, your heart, and your life with Christ. Please provide a response in no more than a paragraph or two to each of the following:

1. Describe your spiritual journey.
2. Tell us about a failure in your pastoral ministry and what you learned from it.
3. What aspects of serving the church energize you? What drains you?
4. What are the greatest dangers to the peace and purity of the local church?
5. Where would you say you fit theologically under the “Big Tent” of the PCA— (i.e from more broadly evangelical - to middle of the road – to classically confessional)?
6. Are you on social media? In what context?
7. Our church embraces the value of ‘solid center, soft edges.’ What would you consider part of the ‘solid center,’ and where should the church allow for ‘soft edges’? How has this shaped your ministry?
8. As you consider a call to Hope in New Braunfels, what draws you to this church and region, and what factors would you weigh most carefully in discerning this move?

## OUR APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Please send your materials to [psc@hopenb.com](mailto:psc@hopenb.com) and you will be contacted with next steps, which may include requests for additional information or scheduling conversations.

- Cover Letter, Resume, & PCA Ministerial Data Form (MDF)
- Completed, typed-out responses to the eight questions identified above.

Please use the following format to label all attachments:

- JohnSmith\_CoverLetter
- JohnSmith\_Resume
- JohnSmith\_MDF
- JohnSmith\_Questionnaire

Thank you for your interest in Hope Presbyterian Church. We look forward to hearing your story & exploring God’s plans for you & your possible relationship with our church family. May the Lord grant you wisdom as you seek His face in this process of discernment.

# Our Team

## Search Committee Member Bios

(listed alphabetically)



### Erik Abrahamsen

Hope is a community of believers that truly cares for each other and desires to share the Good News of the gospel with others as we grow together in Christian maturity. Since we started attending back in 2017, Hope feels like home every Sunday morning to me and Sherrie. We have been married for 37 years, have lived in New Braunfels for 30 years, and have three adult children who have given us five grandchildren. I am a ruling elder on the Session and serve as point person for worship setup and takedown in the Christian school where we meet. I was raised in a Christian home and my dad was in the Navy, so I didn't spend more than a few years in one place growing up. Most of my childhood memories come from time spent in Vancouver, Canada (where I came to love hockey and soccer) and San Diego, CA. I work in Corporate Finance mostly focused on budgeting, forecasting and planning.



### Amanda Armstrong

I grew up nearby in Wimberley, TX and have been married for 11.5 years to Billy, who serves on the worship team. I homeschool our four kids: William (9), Samuel (8), Anna (5), and Ruth (4). We also have a golden retriever, Ada (10). We have been at Hope ever since we moved to New Braunfels in 2017. I have been involved with the Children and Youth ministries at Hope and attend a community group as well. We have stayed at Hope because we believe and want to be part of the work God is doing in and through Hope and we love the people. I am praying that this search process is encouraging and renewing for you as well, and am eager to hear how God is at work in your life.



## Doug Culpepper

My wife, Janet, and I have been part of the PCA for 30 of our 33 years of marriage. That includes a decade here at Hope as part of the core group that initially called our church planter. We wanted to be a part of helping start this church and seeing it grow. These days I am involved in a Men's Group, as a Deacon, and on the Setup AV Team. Outside of Hope, I am engaged with Young Life and also Options for Life (unplanned pregnancy services). We have two daughters, one son-in-law, and two dogs that are like having young children again! I'm originally from El Paso and I work in Printing and Direct Mail services.



## Luke Hemphill

My wife, Noelle, and I have been attending Hope since January 2024 (shortly after we got married!). Immediately, we were welcomed and felt right at home. We love how the church is very Gospel-centered. We believe this place will continue to be a light to New Braunfels and feel it will be a great place to raise our children. We have a baby girl on the way and due in June 2026, and we also have a German Shepherd and a Goldendoodle. At Hope, I am on the setup team, coffee/greeters, and involved in our community group. I'm a big fan of Minnesota sports since I grew up in Elk River, MN. Currently an MBA Student at University of Texas at Austin, I will be a Product Manager at USAA (in San Antonio) starting in June. My wife and I are trying to visit all the US National Parks, and I find myself doing a lot of home improvement/house projects these days.



## Lauren Lambert

I'm a single woman never married from Pearsall, Texas who's been at Hope for about five years now. The Lord continues to draw me closer to Him, revealing more and more of His faithfulness over the years. At Hope I'm involved with Women's ministry, greeting, making coffee, Sunday school, community group, and care team. Outside of Hope I seek to serve wherever there is a need and love the global church - having spent a lot of time in Uganda. My deepest desire is for the Kingdom to grow and people to know Him intimately.



## Jason Payne

We have attended Hope since 2019 and stayed because we love the Biblical teaching, culture, intentional community, worship, and the people. I have been blessed to have been married to Alyssa for 20 wonderful years! We have three kids, aged 16, 14, and 11; and we have one dog named Rio (our boys wanted to name him The Greatest Showman, but they got vetoed by mom and dad). Originally from Houston, I'm a Biomedical Engineer. Hope is a wonderful church with amazing and faithful staff members. Participating in churchwide events such as the chili and pie cookoffs shouldn't be missed. Christmas in the park and Maundy Thursday are wonderful church traditions as well. I'm involved in things like Home group, Sunday School, and missions trips.



## Sandee Petta

For the past six years we've loved being part of building a church in New Braunfels where the sense of community remains strong, and we absolutely love the people God has brought together at Hope. Married to Jim since 1987, we have three adult children. I'm from Houston and we've moved frequently but returned to New Braunfels in 2020, having attended mostly PCA churches since 1993. I'm active with many of Hope's ministries such as those for women and children, and am in a small group and go on missions trips as well.



## Kathy Teuton

I was part of the initial core group that founded Hope and have served as Director of Operations for the last eight years. I was previously an Office Manager/Assistant to the pastor at another church and have experience in event planning and teaching in both Children's and Women's ministries. Originally from New Boston, Texas (near Texarkana), I have been married to Robert, a football coach at Smithson Valley High School, for almost 50 years. We are blessed to have three children and seven grandchildren.



## Ed Wuensch

We have been at Hope for about two years and have stayed because of the community, the wonderful mix of young and wise, and the liturgy/theology. I married my high school sweetheart, Pamela, eight years ago and grew up here in New Braunfels. We have three kids: Bear (M/7), Evie (F/5), and Hank (M/eight months). In previous churches I've been involved in set-up, worship team, and greeting. I'll be starting to help with set-up at Hope this month. Career-wise, I work in Business Development and entrepreneurship.

