



Gainesville Presbyterian Church

Church Information Packet

2023

Dear Pastoral Candidate,

Greetings in Christ from Gainesville Presbyterian Church (GPC)! Our current pastor will retire in 2024 after 40 years of faithful ministry, and we are searching for the man who will teach and shepherd us in the next season of our church's life. We are confident that the Lord is already preparing this man to further the Kingdom work God has called GPC to here in Gainesville, VA.

Since it began in 1979, GPC has seen its membership rolls swell and ebb as any church might over a many-decade history. We are currently in a season of regrowth, having said goodbye to members who moved away during the pandemic, and have welcomed several new families and individuals into membership in recent months. Though small, we have a healthy mix of all ages and a warm, friendly atmosphere. We deeply value the community of the church body and strive to treat everyone like family.

We desire to find a pastor who can help us grow both inward and outward. We are a congregation of mature believers who need leadership and discipleship to use our gifts within the church body as well as our local community. We have a strong desire to foster intergenerational relationships within our membership and also to see our children and youth ministries expand to support our growing population of young member families. We are prayerfully looking for a pastor who can lead, train, and encourage us in evangelism efforts within our local community, an area of Kingdom work where we acknowledge ourselves to be weak. Our greatest desire is to find a pastor who is an excellent teacher, a faithful shepherd, and a man of prayer.

The pages that follow contain a comprehensive profile of our church's history, congregation, core values, ministries, and the community we serve. You will also find an assessment of our current needs, a description of the pastor position, and application requirements. We hope that it helps you discern whether you are being called to serve our church. As you read this and consider whether you are right for the position, we ask that you please not be discouraged by the list of responsibilities and characteristics we have developed in pursuit of the next man to fill the pulpit at GPC. Just like there are no perfect spouses in a marriage, we understand that there are also no perfect pastors or congregations in a church. It is our deep and prayerful desire to grow together in our relationship with our new pastor as a body of Christ over time. To that end, we simply ask that you consider our assessment of our church's current needs and determine if you believe you would be a good fit for us.

We look forward to getting to know you as we consider who will be our next pastor.

In Christ's service,

Pastoral Search Committee
Gainesville Presbyterian Church

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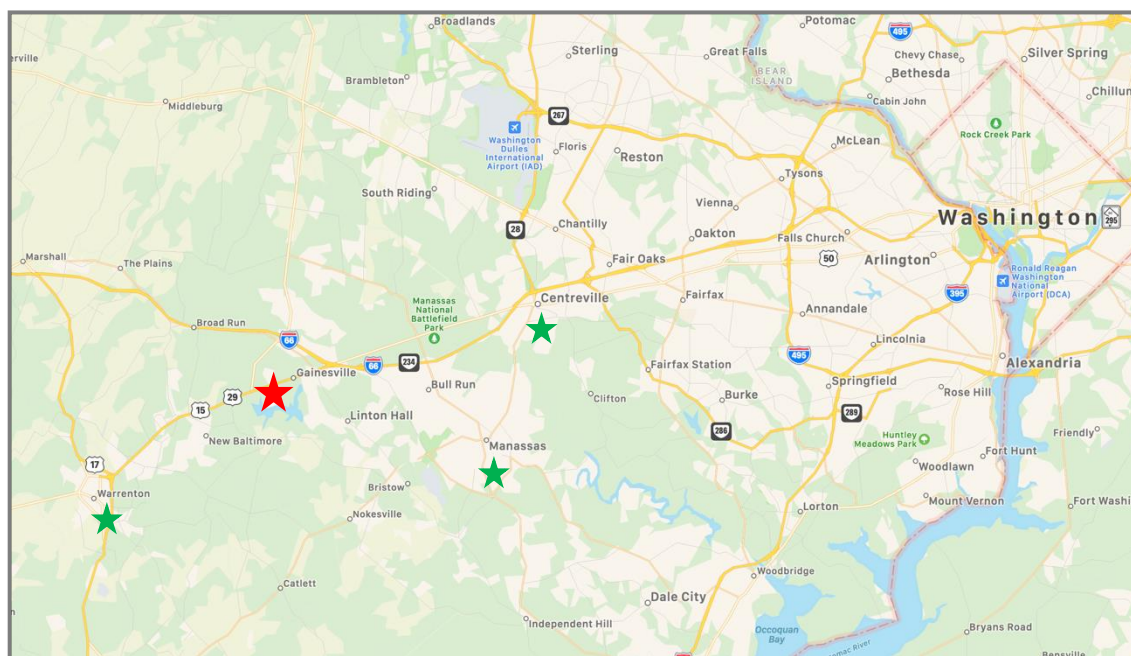
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Northern Virginia

Northern Virginia (often referred to by locals as NOVA or NoVA) encompasses a region of several counties radiating westward and southward from Washington, DC. The Northern Virginia Regional Commission places the 2022 population estimate at roughly 2.5 million, forecasting the region will surpass 3-million people by 2040. Because of its proximity to the nation's capital as well as several military bases, the region is rich in history and has a diverse population. An estimated 35 percent of those over the age of 5 speak a language other than English in their homes.

Gainesville

Gainesville Presbyterian Church is located in western Prince William County, VA, and is part of the PCA's Potomac Presbytery. As one of the westernmost commuting suburbs in Northern Virginia, the town of Gainesville is in the transition zone between the metropolitan Washington, DC area and more rural portions of the state. Sitting adjacent to Manassas Battlefield National Park and Conway Robinson State Forrest, the area is rich in history and offers access to both urban and rural communities and their varied amenities. There are many locally run businesses that employ local residents, though many area residents commute into Washington, DC and the surrounding metropolitan area. The latter are mostly federal government employees or support contractors with large corporations working in the more congested areas of Northern Virginia, Maryland, or the District of Columbia.



Although GPC is located in Gainesville (population 16.4k), many of its members live and work in the surrounding towns and boroughs, to include Centreville (population 74.2k), Manassas (population 41.03k), and Warrenton (population 9.93k). The median age in Gainesville and the surrounding boroughs range between 34.7 (Manassas) and 39.2 (Warrenton). The median household income range between \$74,003 (Warrenton) and \$143,490 (Gainesville). Poverty levels in these towns and the surrounding area range between 3.62 (Gainesville) and 7.01 percent (Manassas).

The area surrounding GPC is a growing and increasingly diverse population, with U.S. citizenship ranging from 84.1% (Manassas) to 96% (Warrenton). In 2020, 21% of Gainesville residents alone (3.44k people) were born outside of the United States, which is higher than the national average (13.5%). Moreover, the following table demonstrates the multi-ethnic tapestry of our neighborhoods and communities:

	White (Non-Hispanic)	Black (Non-Hispanic)	White (Hispanic)	Asian	Other (Hispanic)	2+ (Non-Hispanic)
Centreville	41.6%	7.07%	8.6%	29.6%	-	4.6%
Gainesville	53.5%	11%	7.69%	18.8%	-	5.86%
Manassas	39.6%	11%	22.6%	-	7.62%	6.37%
Warrenton	73%	8.67%	7.01%	4.24%	-	3.07%

Source: <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/gainesville-va>

Gainesville and the surrounding area have a broad and growing job sector. In Gainesville alone, the most common employment sectors are Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services, Public Administration, and Health Care & Social Assistance.



Source: <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/gainesville-va>

These and many more statistics demonstrate how Gainesville Presbyterian Church has the world at its front door. Our church and its members live among people of numerous nationalities, ethnicities, languages, economic conditions, education levels, and more. GPC is truly located in a gateway city to the world.

History

In 1979, when folks first began gathering for worship in what would become Gainesville Presbyterian Church, Gainesville, Virginia was where I-66 ended. The most prominent feature on the landscape was Atlas Iron Works (where Atlas Walk now is), where the largest beams of NYC's World Trade Center were made. A giant automotive junkyard, a few gas stations, and two tiny stores called Phil's Market and Happy Jack's Ham House were the only other business establishments in sight.

Seven families began meeting together in a Bible study in 1978. One of the members of the Bible study (the late Jerry Botkin) gently and persuasively steered the group toward the Reformed faith and the PCA. They contacted the local PCA presbytery, which sent out Ron Bossom, pastor of the Harvester PCA in Springfield, VA to begin teaching the Bible Study at the Kines Motel (where Battlefield Baptist is now). The presbytery also put the group in contact with a young pastor named Phil Douglass (associate pastor at Fairlington Presbyterian) who was interested in planting a church in northern Virginia for the PCA. The group trekked out to Fairlington Presbyterian Church to hear him preach and liked what they heard.

Soon Phil was called by Delmarva Presbytery to begin a mission church in Gainesville. (Originally, they wanted to start the church in Manassas, but there was another PCA church in Manassas at the time – which has since left the PCA – and so the church was started in Gainesville.)

The group began meeting for worship at Gainesville Elementary School on Rt. 55 just outside of Haymarket in the spring of 1979. In May of 1980, Gainesville Presbyterian Church became an official church of the PCA, pastored by Phil Douglass. The church met for 3 years in the school gymnasium under the basketball hoops, with no AC, using the hall as a nursery.

In June of 1980, Jack Lash (a student at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) was called to intern for the summer, with his wife Mary Ann and baby Timmy in tow. When Jack graduated from Seminary in August of 1982 he was then called to return to Gainesville as a full-time intern. That fall he was called by the congregation as Associate Pastor and ordained in March 1983.

In the meantime, the congregation had begun looking for land, so that the church might have a more permanent location. In the end, they bought their present lot from the late Early Griffith, the man who opened Gainesville Elementary each Sunday, who had heard we were looking for land and offered to sell nine of his eleven acres. The building was designed and constructed with as much in-house help as possible, being finished in August of 1983. In 2000, the congregation worked together to renovate the sanctuary and narthex, and in 2001 the Griffith house itself was purchased from Early's widow.

While pastoring the church from 1980 through 1985, Phil Douglass' heart was in church planting right from the beginning. He was instrumental in the planting of many other PCA churches in northern Virginia. In the fall of 1983, Phil began a new church plant in Manassas (formerly Cornerstone PCA, which has now merged and moved and been

renamed Spriggs Road PCA). And then in June of 1985 Phil helped begin a church plant in Warrenton (Heritage PCA). In November of 1985 GPC and the two mission churches were under one session (body of elders). At that time the session decided to restructure the churches. Phil would stop being a head pastor and focus on church-planting, Jack would begin to lead the Gainesville congregation, and both Cornerstone and Heritage would become separate PCA churches. In October of 1986 Jack was elected the new senior pastor of Gainesville Presbyterian Church.

Some of our present members who were at GPC back in those Phil Douglass days: the Boltons, the Fitzpatricks, the Hines, the Johnsons, the Lashes, the Murphys, the Peaches, the Poes, the Rices, Bob Sowers, the Trudeaus and the Wheatleys.

Since then, God has continued to bring us men, women and children who want to worship Him and learn of Him, people dearly loved by the Lord Himself. Each person He has called to be with us has an important role to play. Each has been given a gift the rest of us need.

From the very beginning God's blessing has rested upon this congregation. There has always been a sense of Christian community and closeness, a desire to put Christ first in everything, a commitment to do everything according to the Bible. There have been sad times and hard times, but very few compared to the pleasant and precious times we have enjoyed as a fellowship of the Lord's people. We have much to be grateful for. As with all churches, our story is a story of God's grace more-than-compensating for our sinfulness. He is the One building our church, for ultimately this is His church, not our church. He is building it out of discarded materials, turning the rocks themselves into living stones, which He is fashioning into a beautiful temple where He dwells. It's Him. It's not the pastor, it's not the leaders, it's not the church. Our story is a story of what He has done. We are so privileged to have been a part of what our great God has been doing here in this corner of His big, beautiful earth.

And yet our story is not over. We pray that God has even greater things in store for us in the future. And yet the sweetest thing of all will be to join with all of those from GPC – past, present, and future – and with all our sister churches to sing praises to our blessed Redeemer in the heavenly places. It is His grace that has led us safe thus far, and His grace will lead us home.

Life Together

Historically, GPC has been a very close-knit congregation. Our membership numbers have ebbed and flowed over the years, but our commitment to community is one of the constants that has never changed. We are currently in a season of regrowth, with 100 communicant members and roughly 60 worshipers each Sunday. Our congregation is blessed to have many long-time members still worshipping at GPC alongside newer families and individuals. In the



past 18 months we have welcomed several young families, newly married couples, and singles into membership. Our church continues to grow together, becoming ever more united in our commitment to serve and love one another under our common vision.



At GPC we enjoy gathering on the Lord's Day to worship, prayer, fellowship and to be challenged from God's word. As the Lord has commanded, we joyfully raise our voices in praise, as we are a singing church. We want to see members being equipped to live for Christ in the homes, community, and workplaces of the area. We strive to support strong healthy marriages that create environments where children can be disciplined into mature followers of Christ. We deeply believe that people need community and a sense of belonging. As such, building community within our church body is a hallmark of GPC. To that end we seek to create additional opportunities for fellowship outside of our ministries. On the first Sunday of every month, we host a Family Feast potluck and fellowship lunch following the service as a community of believers. Additionally, we encourage and support members who regularly organize game nights, contra dances, bonfires and other opportunities for fellowship.



Most families live within a 15-20 minute drive of our building and reflect the areas of Gainesville, Haymarket, as well as the surrounding communities of Warrenton, Manassas, and Centreville. As such, we are predominately a middle-and-working class church. We desire to become more multicultural, reflecting the diverse ethnicity of our greater area. It is our hope that all people will find our church welcoming, friendly, and Christ-centered.

GPC has a relatively traditional Presbyterian/Reformed worship style, with a rich music history comprised of both hymns and contemporary Christian songs. We are blessed with a congregation that is musically gifted and enjoys praising the Lord in song. We follow an order of worship that lends order and a gentle formality to our services but is still relevant and friendly. Our service includes weekly partaking of the Lord's Supper. We utilize historic confessions, creeds and catechisms, and seek to stay within the guidelines for worship found in our PCA Book of Church Order. Sunday mornings typically consist of Sunday School classes for a wide variety of ages ranging from pre-school to adult, followed by a worship service.



Financially, the church owns its facility outright, carries no long-term debt, and congregational giving typically meets or exceeds its budget needs. This has enabled a substantial investment in missionary support over a sustained period, which is an enduring passion of the congregation.

Mission Statement

Gainesville Presbyterian Church is a Christ-centered, Bible-based church whose purpose is to joyfully worship the triune God of grace, and to go into all the world in love, proclaiming the word of Christ, gathering people in all their diversity into loving unity, helping them to mature spiritually and to serve their family, church, community, and world in the power of the Spirit until our Lord returns.

Core Values

FIRST THINGS: The Gospel of Grace, Core of Our Core Values

At its core, the Christian religion is a story - a love story. It is a story of the God of the universe sending His son Jesus to redeem for Himself a bride: namely His people - His Church. It is the story of the coming of this One to lay down His life for her, taking her place on the cross—the innocent for the guilty, the righteous for the unrighteous—in order that He might take the stain of her sin and the penalty for her guilt upon Himself, thereby

clothing her in the pure white robe of His righteousness. Now He builds a glorious new home for her where He will one day live with her happily ever after. This story is called the gospel (which means “good news”). It is the heart of the Christian faith as revealed in the Scriptures. Everything else flows out from it.

Worship is the celebration of the gospel. Doctrine is the explanation of the gospel. Love is the demonstration of the gospel. Evangelism is the propagation of the gospel. The Church is the family of the gospel. Marriage is the symbol of the gospel. The Christian family is the training ground of the gospel for the next generation. The fruit of the Spirit is the character produced by the gospel. The gifts of the Spirit are the tools of the gospel. Other Biblical truths can be accurately expressed and defined, but if the gospel is left out there is only an empty shell, a lifeless corpse. Even if the gospel becomes just another spoke in the wheel instead of the hub itself, the glory of Christ is undermined at best, and ruined at worst.

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I. Worship is the celebration of the gospel

- A. Worship of the triune God is the Church’s first reasonable response to the saving power of the gospel, and therefore its first corporate calling. ([Rom. 12:1](#))
- B. Biblical worship can only be in and through Christ, and the attention and affection of true worshipers is always anchored to His saving work on the cross.
- C. We believe that worship should be regulated according to Scripture.
- D. We believe that the worship service should strive to address both the minds and the hearts of the worshipers, bringing the life-changing truth of God’s word to bear in our lives. ([Heb. 4:12](#))
- E. We believe in the weekly celebration of the riches of God’s grace in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. We believe in covenantal baptism.
- F. We believe that a rich treasury of worship music, which is invaluable for use in worship, has been handed down to us from our forefathers in the faith. We believe it is also appropriate and wise for the church to sing sound, Biblical, contemporary songs in worship. ([Eph. 5:19](#); [Psalm 33:3](#))
- G. We believe that in worship “all things should be done decently and in order.” ([1 Cor. 14:40](#)) We also believe that there should be freedom, joy, and expressiveness in worship. ([Psalm 27:6](#); [1 Cor. 14:26](#))
- H. We aspire to have active congregational participation in worship. Worship is not a congregation observing a performance like spectators at a show.

- I. We believe that worship is for all members of God's household - even children - and we not only allow them in the service but work to facilitate the meaningfulness of their worship experience.
- J. We believe that worship is a way of life, not just something we do corporately on Sunday morning. It involves the deference to and enjoyment of God in every moment and activity of life. ([Rom. 12:1-2](#))

II. Love is the demonstration of the gospel.

- A. Jesus said that after loving God there is no higher law than to love our neighbor. In fact, the Bible says that the one who does not love others also does not love God. We show Jesus to others when we show love because He was the epitome of love and One reflected by all true acts of love.
- B. We believe that part of the calling to love is for believers to act as the salt of the earth and light of the world, working against the corruption of this world for the glory of God and as a witness to their neighbors.
- C. We believe that our example of godly living (by the way we speak to and treat other people with respect, patience, kindness and compassion, by our good deeds and acts of service, and by our example of integrity and dignity) is the first and best tool in this endeavor.
- D. We believe that Christians are called upon to seek justice in this world for those who are denied it.
 - 1. We believe in the humanity of the unborn and therefore that abortion is a violation of God's law.
 - 2. We stand in solidarity with the persecuted Christians around the world: to pray for them, to encourage them, to seek to alleviate their suffering.
 - 3. We repudiate racism and seek to demonstrate our human oneness with all mankind and our spiritual oneness with believers from every race, color, nation and language.
 - 4. We believe Christ's people - reflecting His heart - have a special obligation to the lowly, the needy, the elderly, the weak, and the poor.
 - 5. We abhor the abuse/mistreatment of women and children.
 - 6. We believe God calls us to have a special love for widows and orphans, and gladly support and encourage parents who feel led by the Lord to adopt.
- E. We believe God leads His people to use the political process to promote good in society, though we do not believe it is appropriate for the church to endorse any certain politician, candidate for office, piece of legislation, or political party. We also believe it is important for these efforts to be conducted in a spirit of humility and love, as opposed to a spirit of superiority and self-interest.

III. Evangelism is the propagation of the gospel

- A. One of the greatest ways to love our neighbor is by communicating to him the good news of the gospel.
- B. This Christian calling begins with a duty to love the world in the sense of [John 3:16](#) (though believers in Christ must never love the world in the sense of [James 4:4](#) and

[1 John 2:15](#)), which means longing for those who are lost to not perish but receive eternal life through faith in Christ.

- C. Jesus was the friend of sinners. When filled with His Spirit, His Church will have the same love He had— and this same reputation. We believe in praying for and striving to have this heart of Christ for sinners.
- D. If a Christian or a Christian church is not active in evangelism, or is not burdened for the salvation of the lost, or is not praying for the salvation of nonbelievers, then that Christian or Christian church is not acting in accord with the gospel. The gospel leads us and compels us to evangelize. Propagation of the gospel is not just a Christian duty; it is the natural product of the acceptance of the gospel. Christ makes His people into fishers of men.
- E. The world without Christ is in desperate need of the gospel. Believers also have a need to share the gospel, outreach being an essential ingredient in a healthy Christian life and in the life of a healthy church. Without outreach, the gospel and its power to save and to transform lives are too easily forgotten.
- F. There is a great temptation for us as Christians to think of ourselves as better than others. This attitude of superiority is deadly to outreach and to spiritual life itself.
- G. We believe in the duty of the church to go into all the world and make disciples in every nation, tribe, and language ([Matt. 28:18-10](#)). We believe that one major way for this to be done is through sending out and supporting missionaries to every people around the world for short and long-term ministry. ([Rom. 10:14-15](#))
- H. We believe it is the responsibility of Christians and Christian churches to welcome those who come to their land from other countries and to receive them as believers in Christ or seek to love them to Christ.
- I. We believe that outreach is an aspect of the normal, everyday, individual Christian life, and not primarily a church program. We believe that it is the privilege of every believer to be a part of Christ's gospel enterprise by living a life that reflects Him, by practicing acts of love which commend the Savior to the unbeliever, by being ready to give a reason for a life which does so, and by proclaiming the love of Christ in word when opportunity affords, and by praying for the conversion of those outside of Christ. ([Acts 8:4](#); [2 Tim 4:5](#); [Col. 4:5](#); [1 Pet. 3:15](#))
- J. The church must preach the gospel from the pulpit and through other means, seeking to bring nonbelievers to faith and working to engraft visitors and new believers into the church, including baptism and church membership.
- K. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the One who truly converts sinners to Christ. All our efforts are in vain unless He changes the heart.

IV. The Christian family is the training ground of the gospel for the next generation.

- A. We believe that God instituted the family, and that He did so for many important purposes, none of which is more important than to communicate to the next generation through word and example the truth of the gospel of grace in Christ.
- B. We believe that the Bible is our primary source of guidance for family life, including marriage and childrearing (e.g. [Eph. 5:22-6:4](#)).
- C. We believe that marriage is a precious gift of and a high calling by God and should therefore be nourished, protected and supported by the family, the church, and the society. The church has a special role in marriages and families through instruction, prayer, counseling, encouragement, and accountability.

- D. We believe that the family is the first place we are called to exemplify Christ in love, in nurture, in patience, in honor & respect, in mutual encouragement, in kindness, in humility, in faithfulness, in generosity, in service, and in striving for unity and harmony.
- E. We believe the church must reflect Jesus' attitude toward children, welcoming, embracing, and blessing them. ([Matt. 19:13-15](#)) We believe that this requires churches to be diligent to protect children from all kinds of abuse.
- F. We believe education of children is the responsibility of parents, and choices must be made before Christ, and according to a conscience which is informed by the word of God and the realities of the present culture. We urge believers to avoid being judgmental of one another regarding these choices, for each must stand before His own Master ([Romans 14:4](#)). The church is committed to supporting the parents as they make educational decisions and strive to raise their children in the instruction and nurture of the Lord.
- G. We believe it is important for the church to help its young people to realize that it is their church, and that their gifts and energies are needed just like everyone else's, and to help young people discover their spiritual gifts and find ways to use them in the body, and to train the next generation to become leaders in the church.
- H. We believe it is healthy and important for the young people of the church to establish a network of Christian friendships which will point them to and support them in the way of the Lord as they grow into adults and leave home.

V. Doctrine is the explanation of the gospel

- A. We believe all Biblical truth ultimately points to and glorifies Christ and His coming to die for the salvation and glorification of man, and we believe in teaching the whole Bible with this in view.
- B. Without neglecting the law of God or denying its place in the deposit of truth given us by Christ, we proclaim the good news of God's grace in Christ.
- C. Believing the Bible to be the infallible word of God, we accept it and proclaim it as our final authority in all matters of faith and life.
- D. We believe that the word of God is God's living and powerful instrument for imparting new life to sinners and remaking them into the image of Christ.
- E. We teach Christian doctrine in the tradition of the Protestant Reformation, because we believe that movement articulated the gospel of Christ in a way which was most faithful to Scripture.
- F. Recognizing the fallibility of human creeds, we nevertheless believe that creeds of the church can be very helpful as expressions of the Bible's truths. We are especially grateful for the Westminster Standards, and find them very useful as a faithful expression of the teaching of the word of God.
- G. We believe that Biblical doctrine, Biblical practice, and a right heart toward God are all essential. We believe that the Bible should be taught in a way which seeks the transformation of the heart and the life, as well as informing the mind of the listener.
- H. Since we know that only the Holy Spirit can make God's word effective in our lives, we believe it is essential to approach the task of teaching and preaching with prayer.
- I. We teach the truths of God in the recognition that our enemy is crafty and often tempts us to overreact to one sin or error, thereby falling into an opposite sin or

error.

VI. The church is the family of the gospel

A. The church

1. We believe that Christ is not only redeeming and sanctifying individuals, but churches as well.
2. We believe that the church is not peripheral but central to what the Lord is doing on the earth. Using the living stones of individual believers, He is building His Church, making something greater than the sum of its parts.
3. We believe it is the duty of every believer to be a member of a local church if it is within his/her power. We believe church membership is taught in the Bible. Just as each body part is a member of the body, so each Christian should be a member of a local body of believers. (See our Bible study on church membership.)

B. Church leaders

1. We believe that the Bible gives us guidance about the proper form of church government and that a structure of elders (both teaching and ruling) and deacons, and connectedness to other churches is the Biblical church model.
2. We believe that God has called local congregations to elect Biblically-qualified leaders to serve in the church. (E.g. Acts 6; [1 Tim.3:1-13](#); [Titus 1:6-9](#))
3. We believe that elders are called by Scripture to teach God's people, to model godly living, to watch over the flock like a shepherd, to act as judges when necessary, and to pray for the people. ([Acts 6:3](#); [1 Tim. 5:17, 18](#); [1 Pet. 5:1-5](#); [Titus 1:5-9](#))
4. We believe that church leaders, like all of those in authority, must struggle against the temptation to abuse their authority, and must constantly strive to be servant leaders, relying on their good example as the primary instrument of ministry ([1 Pet. 5:3](#)), making use of authority only as necessary and only for the good of God's people ([1 Thes. 2:6](#) ff), reflecting the heart of Christ for His sheep, and treating them with tenderness and sincerity in His love.
5. We believe that church leaders, like everyone else, must be accountable and subject: to each other, to the presbytery (the local network of churches), and to the denominational body.
6. Though Christ invests authority in the leaders of the church, we believe it is crucial for those leaders to remember that the adults of the congregation are not children and must not be treated as such, and that the members have much wisdom and important insights which must be heard and considered in the decisions and actions of the leadership.

C. Relationships with other churches and believers

1. We grieve over the fractured state of the modern church and believe it is a Christian duty to work and pray for unity and purity. To this end, we work to cooperate with sister churches as much as we can. We do not view other Christ-loving, Bible-believing churches as our enemies or our competitors, but try to view them as sister churches, co-laboring with us in the kingdom of Christ.
2. We are a part of a denomination, not by accident but by conviction. We grieve over the shattered state of the church because we believe our Lord created

the church to be one. And yet in light of the present, unfortunate, fragmented state of the church, we believe it is better for a church to align with a body of other churches for encouragement and accountability rather than remain alone. By so doing, we do not intend to cut ourselves off from other evangelical churches which are not a part of our denomination. We are eager to fellowship and work with them as much as possible. And we believe that all churches should be praying and working toward unity in the body of Christ. We believe the “us/them” attitude is unhealthy and unbiblical.

3. Though we warmly and enthusiastically embrace the truths of reformed theology, we also recognize that there are other true Christians - equally sincere and committed to the truth of Christ - who disagree with some of our convictions. We want to warmly accept them as our brothers and sisters in Christ and welcome them as members into our church. We want them to use their spiritual gifts and even exercise whatever forms of leadership in the church are appropriate and possible without undermining the doctrinal beliefs of the PCA or the unity of the congregation.

D. Body life and the gifts of the Spirit

1. We believe in the need for regular Christian gathering - in large groups and small - for mutual encouragement, prayer support, instruction, inspiration, accountability and exhortation, stirring one another up to love and good works. ([Acts 2:42-47](#))
2. We believe in the importance of Biblical accountability and, when necessary, church discipline. ([Matt. 18:15-17](#); [1 Cor. 5:1-2](#); [1 Tim. 5:19](#)). However, accountability and church discipline must always be done without judgmentalism, self-righteousness or superiority.
3. We believe in the importance of Christian hospitality, where believers open their homes and hearts to one another for fellowship in love.
4. We believe that men and women are co-heirs of the glorious riches of Christ. We believe that women have needed gifts in the body of Christ, along with much wisdom and insight important to the church and its leaders.
5. The gifts of the Spirit are the gifts given by the Spirit to the believer by which he is enabled to minister the gospel of grace to the brethren. We believe that every member of the body of Christ is gifted by the Holy Spirit to serve the body by means of at least one spiritual gift. We believe that it is sinful and scandalous for the church to say to any Christian, “we have no need of you.” All the parts of the body are needed.
6. We believe that the whole counsel of God is expressly set down in Scripture and that nothing may be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men. Therefore, we believe the apostolic office and the gift of prophecy have ceased.
7. We believe that diversity is healthy in a church. God has made His people different from one another for a reason, just as the parts of the body are different from one another. We believe that the human impulse to focus on befriending those who are like us, therefore, is often an unhealthy impulse and leads to the reinforcing of our blindnesses and prejudices. We believe that Christian relationships across age, ethnic, or personality barriers can be among the most enriching relationships we can have.
8. We believe that we owe special love to those who are weak, sick, elderly, grieving, handicapped, or otherwise have special needs. We want to welcome

and not spurn those whom Christ brings to us in need, and teach our children to do so as well.

9. We believe that one of the most important callings of pastor/teachers in the church is the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry ([Eph. 4:12-13](#)). The church has a vital role in helping the members discover, develop and employ their gifts in the church and in the world.
10. We recognize that it is not easy to work together and get along in Christ's church, and believe that Christians must bear with one another's weakness, being slow to anger, quick to forgive and longsuffering with others as God is with us. We must strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
11. We believe strongly in Biblical peacemaking and conflict resolution. We believe it dishonors Christ when believers tolerate alienation from one another.
12. We believe that God's people have a duty to care for each other even in material things, as the church in Acts did. ([1 John 3:17,18](#)) We believe that God has ordained the office of deacons in order to oversee this process in the church.
13. We believe that older women have a special role in teaching and mentoring the younger women in the church ([Titus 2:3-5](#)). This is also true for older men and younger men.

VII. The fruit of the Spirit and the Christian life

- A. We believe that true doctrine must coexist with the fruit of the Spirit. Gratitude, love, humility, joy and a spirit of self-denial are essential to godliness.
- B. The fruit of the Spirit is the Spirit-induced result of the gospel in the life of the believer, whereby the believer is transformed into the image of Christ in His love, joy, peace, etc.
- C. We believe that there is equal danger in legalism and in lawlessness, and that Christians and churches must be alert to temptations in both directions.
- D. We believe that believers are called to have wholehearted passion for the Lord and His cause. However, we also recognize that it is possible to have great zeal for the Lord and yet be self-righteous. ([Rom. 10:2-3](#))
- E. Though God invites us to pray for deliverance from specific troubles we face, we believe in the expectation of suffering in this life and the ultimate acceptance of it as from the Lord for His good purposes in our lives. We believe that hardship and pain are powerful tools in the hands of the Lord to work toward our maturity, godliness and growth in faith.
- F. We believe in a real and personal devil, who desires to thwart the Lord's purposes in our lives, in the church and in the world. He is the Christian's true enemy. Our enemy therefore is not flesh and blood ([Eph. 6:12](#)), and our weapons are not earthly ([2 Cor. 10:3ff](#)).
- G. Christian freedom
 1. We are committed to upholding, proclaiming and obeying the laws of God. We are also committed to not making laws where God has left men free, and we repudiate human efforts to improve divine law.
 2. We believe that in matters of Christian law, the believer is obligated to obey God no matter the consequences. However, in matters of Christian freedom,

the believer is obligated to prayerfully consider and do what he or she believes is wisest and best and most honoring to God, keeping all the relevant Biblical principles in mind. In addition, the believer must be careful not to judge other believers in matters of Christian freedom or impose his or her convictions on others.

VIII. Marriage is the symbol of the gospel.

- A. We believe that marriage was created by the almighty, living, and only true God for the sake of mankind: for companionship, for procreation, for accountability.
- B. We believe that God also created marriage for an even higher purpose: to teach man about Jesus Christ. Though He had all honor and glory as God the Son, He came to the earth as a man, lived a life of humiliation and servanthood, and eventually laid down His life upon the cross – in order to win Himself a bride, a people (His church).
- C. This explains many of the Bible's instructions concerning marriage, instructions many have difficulty understanding and accepting. In loving their wives, husbands are called to imitate Christ in His love for His church. And wives are called to imitate the duties of the church toward Christ in the way they love their husbands. In this way, couples are called to display the love between Christ and His church in the way they love one another.
- D. We believe that marriage is a valuable gift God gives to many, and should be cherished and cultivated with humility, tenderness, and compassion. We despise brutality, domination, manipulation, coercion, humiliation, and violence in marriage.
- E. We believe it is the duty of every human being, as a creature of God, to submit to God in all things, including His instructions regarding sexuality and marriage.
- F. We believe that human sexuality is a precious and beautiful gift God has given mankind, for their joy and for the bringing forth of children.
- G. We believe that sex belongs only in the context of the covenant of marriage. We believe that all sexual acts outside of the context of marriage are forbidden in the Bible as sexual immorality.
- H. We believe that true marriage, as God designed it from the beginning, is between a male and a female.
- I. We believe that a person's gender/sex is assigned at conception/birth by God's providence, and that every person is called to live within the context of God's assignment.
- J. We also understand that in this broken and bewildering world, some people experience feelings and impulses contrary to this. We have deep compassion for them and despise all the ways they have been mistreated and hated (especially when it has been done in the name of Christ). They need to be shown Christian love like everybody else. However, we also believe that these feelings are contrary to God's design for gender and/or sexuality, and that pursuing these feelings is therefore contrary to human well-being. We all have feelings and impulses contrary to the way of God, but God in His grace can forgive each sin through Christ and help us to walk in His way.

Ministries

GPC's current ministries include:

- Nursery (for infants and toddlers)
- Sunday School
- Children's Church
- 1st Saturday Prayer Meeting
- Women's Bible Study
- Men's Bible Study (new this year)
- Nokesville/Catlett Area Fellowship & Bible Study
- Newly Married Couples' Bible Study
- Men's Monthly Fellowship Breakfast
- Vacation Bible School (new this year)

Missions

One of the greatest ways to love our neighbor is to share the good news of the Gospel. We believe it is the duty of the church to go into all the world and make disciples in every nation, tribe, and language. (Matthew 28:18-20). We believe that one major way for this to be done is through sending out and supporting missionaries to every people around the world for short and long-term ministry. (Romans 10:14-15)

To that end, GPC is committed to supporting missions and missionaries through our prayers, financial support, and by sending members of our congregation on mission trips in the U.S. and overseas. It is a duty we take very seriously.

Our goal is to support ministries and individuals who are committed to promoting, spreading, and perpetuating the Gospel of Christ in word and deed with an emphasis on one or more of the following:

- Proclaiming the Gospel and planting Christ-centered, doctrinally-sound churches among unreached people groups
- Planting Reformed churches
- Teaching, training, equipping, and mobilizing Reformed pastors
- Supporting Gospel-centered mercy ministries that provide health care, hospitality, famine relief, and ministry to the physically and mentally challenged, orphans, widows, refugees, those that are physically abused and/or persecuted Christians.

We currently support missionary families who are serving in Japan, West Africa, Kenya, Paraguay, Scotland, and France.

Paid Staff

Jack Lash – Pastor & Teaching Elder (retiring 2024)

Sarah Morgan – Church Administrator (part time)

Kathy Johnson – Church Administrator (part-time)

David and Kayleen Chenette – Bookkeepers (part-time)

Lay leader volunteers comprise the rest of the roles

Church Officers

GPC currently has (2) active ruling elders:

Mike DeMichele (Treasurer & Children's Ministries)

Jordan Morgan (Clerk of Session & Missions Committee Chairman)

GPC currently has (5) active deacons:

Chris Trudeau

Kurt Wellington

Brian Wheatley

Mark Grant

Search Committee

Stephen Cook (Vice-Chairman)

Janet Cooper

Heather Gray

Sarah Morgan

Alex Murphy

Larry Poe (Chairman, retired ruling elder)

Scott Rice (retired ruling elder)

Pastor Role Overview

GPC seeks an experienced Christian man to serve as our next solo pastor. Our current pastor, the second to lead the congregation in the church's 43-year history, will retire in September, 2024, after 40 years of service with this congregation.

The church's vision for the role of pastor is based on the characteristics found in I Timothy 3 and closely follows the description given in the PCA Book of Church Order. The pastor will serve as moderator of the session and will: lead the majority of church worship services including preaching, be engaged in leading and equipping others to teach both on Sunday and also in mid-week Bible studies. We have a strong desire to grow in the area of Evangelism and see the establishment of evangelistic ministries, and we are looking for a pastor who can help lead us in this area.

To better understand the congregation's expectations and desires for the pastor, our Pastor Search Committee surveyed the congregation to understand our priorities for the job functions of the pastor. In order of importance, the feedback from the congregation consisted of the top seven out of eighteen priorities:

1. Proclamation of the Word and Teaching
2. Spiritual Development and Shepherding
3. Visitation
4. Congregational Fellowship
5. Leadership and Worship
6. Evangelism
7. Congregational Communications

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

1. Compassionate
2. Outstanding teacher
3. Relates to a wide variety of people
4. Good listener
5. Handles conflict effectively

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 topics. The basic professional accomplishments must include:

1. At least four years' experience as a pastor (solo, associate, or senior) of a congregation or other ministerial experience involving preaching and teaching such as missionary work.

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 Gainesville and the surrounding area 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 but be generally understandable by anyone visiting with us during that time.

GPC values strong Biblical teaching. Key characteristics of the 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 with appropriate application and relates well to those under instruction.

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 spiritual counseling skills suitable for both families and individuals intended to help them grow in their relationship with the Lord.

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.

GPC is an engaged community, and a successful 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.

Congregation Perspectives

In this section, we hope to give some additional perspective on a few other topics that are particularly important to at least some portions 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 desire for a stronger children's / youth ministry, and a desire for it to grow. We do not expect our future pastor to 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, GPC has a desire to continue fostering inter-generational relationships within our church body. We want to see discipleship flourish, and we see our pastor as a chief individual to lead or support that effort.

We recognize that evangelism is a vital aspect of the Church's mission. We seek someone to lead as a role model in this area, and who can provide 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 and sermon as the chief evangelism tool.

We also desire a pastor with administrative ability who can communicate openly and transparently with staff and church members. We want to provide strong direction from leadership but emphasize the importance of enabling the congregation to take a significant role in church efforts.

Although we have listed many characteristics and ministry areas, we do not expect a 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 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.

Compensation

The candidate may select 1 of 2 compensation packages as described below. Starting compensation will be based on experience, education, and with consideration for family needs. We desire to re-evaluate and possibly increase compensation as the church grows and our finances are able.

Package 1: \$90K - \$125K to be distributed as negotiated between salary, housing allowance, retirement plan, and medical plus a \$6,500 expense account for ministry related expenses.

Package 2: \$70K - \$105K to be distributed as negotiated between salary, retirement plan, medical, and GPC-provided housing in our manse situated on a 1.8 acre property adjacent to the GPC building, plus a \$6,500 expense account for ministry related expenses.

Application Requirements

If interested in pursuing this job opening, or desire to find out more about this opportunity, please contact the Pulpit Search Committee chairman, Larry Poe, at ls Poe@comcast.net, or call him at 540-788-9503 anytime. Feel free to leave a message.

Applications should include:

- a resume,
- three references,
- three sermon examples (via CD/DVD, audio online via church / other website, or video online via YouTube / other).

Applicants should also submit 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 knew 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 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 we look forward to continuing to work with you regarding this open position.