

First Church (PCA)

Worship. Love. Serve.



First
Church

(PCA)

**Church and Job Profile
For Our Next Lead Pastor**



Dear Pastor,

First Church PCA of Lansing, Illinois is searching for its next Lead Pastor.

We are confident that God is already working in someone's heart to cultivate a desire to serve here as our Lead Pastor. We are also praying that God is working in and through our search committee to find the right man to shepherd our congregation, as we continue the Kingdom work God has called us to in the Village of Lansing for over 160 years.

This profile should help you discern whether you are being called to serve our church.

On the pages that follow, you will find information about our church's history, congregation, leadership, ministries, and the community we serve. You will also find an assessment of our church's current needs, a description of our vacant Lead Pastor position, and, finally, information about how to apply.

To learn more about First Church PCA, please visit our website at firstchurchpca.org. You can also submit questions to us by emailing them to info@firstchurchpca.org.

In Christ's service,

	The Lead Pastor Search Committee	
Don Kooy, Chair	Mark Plesha, Vice-Chair	Kathy VanderHeyden, Secretary
Jim Dekker	Ryan DeWindt	Ben Ipema
Brenda Vander Molen	Tom VanderHeyden	Brad VanderWoude

Our History at First Church PCA

Our church is rich in history and blessings. With many generations of family members and also many added new members, our church flourishes from the past to the present.

Early Beginnings 1861-1870

- The official beginning date of the Lansing Church, named North Creek of Thornton Holland Reformed Church, was August 1861. It began with 25 members: 15 men and 10 women.
- 2 ½ acres were purchased for a church building and cemetery for \$40 at the exact site where the church is today.

Secession and Reorganization 1870-1883

- 1870 the membership seceded to form a True Holland Reformed Church, now known as Munster Christian Reformed Church.
- 1874 Nine families agreed to reorganize the Lansing church, and named it the Reformed (Dutch) Church in America, Lansing, Illinois.

Early Ministries 1883-1893

- 1887 the church grew to 41 families. Sunday school was organized
- A small steeple was added to the church.

Breaking Out 1919-1944

- 1920 the church grew to 135 families.
- The Christian Endeavor Organization was started in 1920. Much credit was given to this group for making the church vibrant.
- 1936 the church membership grew to 240 families.
- 1937 a daughter church was started, Grace Reformed, in Lansing, with 2/3 of the church joining the new english-speaking church.
- As a way of retaining the Dutch culture, services continued in English and Dutch at separate services.
- In 1942 the services began to use only English as an openness to Americanization.

New Building New Challenges 1944-1988

- 1945 the church was completely destroyed by fire.
- 1947 the new church was built and completed.
- The sanctuary seated approximately 700 people.
- 1956 a second daughter church was formed in Munster, Indiana, named Trinity Reformed Church.
- The church continued to grow with the addition of a three-story education wing, an overflow wing to the sanctuary, and an expanded basement kitchen were added.

Moving Forward 1989- Present

- The church campus was expanded with the addition of separate houses for Pregnancy Aid in the South Suburbs (PASS), Angel Academy Preschool, a youth meeting house, a gathering pavilion, and a sports field.
- 2014 First Reformed Church of Lansing (and other local RCA churches) broke away from the RCA and joined the PCA, and changed its name to First Church PCA.
- 2020 a successful church plant was started in Northwest Indiana named Grace Church.

Our Congregation

The congregation of First Church is multi-generational, including seniors, empty-nesters, young families and singles. We have also enjoyed the addition of many new members in recent years.

Our congregation.

- We have more than 300 members, including both communicant and non-communicant members.
- Our morning worship services average about 220 in attendance currently.
- Our budget for the 2024 ministry year is just over \$679,874.

Our congregation is multi-generational.

- Every age group is well-represented in our congregation.
- The tally of our seniors and youngsters comes to about 150 and 80 respective in each group with our adult membership making up the balance.
- In recent years the number of new members has averaged 15 per year.



“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!” – Psalm 133:1



Our Leadership

We at First Church have found it beneficial to elect a fairly large session and diaconate. There are currently 9 ruling elders on our session and 10 deacons on our diaconate.

In addition to our elected leadership we also have several other staff, including one Assistant Pastor, a full-time administrator, a part-time Financial Manager, part-time media coordinator, secretarial staff, a Director of Music Ministry, Children's Ministry Coordinator, and a retired pastor who does visitation and some adult education.

The organizational structure at First Church follows a task force model led by lay people which includes Adult Spiritual Development, Building and Grounds, Outreach, Fellowship, Christian Instruction, Missions and Youth. Together these groups ensure all the component parts of our church function well together and the members of our congregation have a place to use their gifts.



Ken Wojnarowski
Assistant Pastor



Installation Sunday
2024

Our Ministries

The programs and ministries at First Church are many. First Church also partner with PASS, a pregnancy assistance service. Other ministries that highlight our focus on serving both the church and the community include:



- Sunday School for all ages
- Jr. High/Sr. High Groups
- Vacation Bible School
- Small Group Bible Studies
- Love for Lansing (service projects)
- Outreach events
- Picnics and Outside services



Our Community

Our hometown of Lansing, Illinois is a suburban community on the south side of the city of Chicago, located on the Indiana/Illinois state line. Our blue-collar roots were established by Dutch and German immigrants who farmed, worked in industry and settled this area which is now home to a diverse population of Caucasian, African American and Hispanic people. We believe our call is to love our entire community, share the love of God with them and make fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

The Community We Serve:

- The Village of Lansing has a population of 28,000 as of 2022 and is one of only two suburban communities that increased its population since 2010.
- In addition to the public school system, our community has several Christian elementary and high schools.
- Lansing is home to the “Fox Pointe” concert venue, Lansing Municipal Airport, and the Historic Ford Hangar.

Learn more about Lansing by visiting the Village website: villageoflansing.org



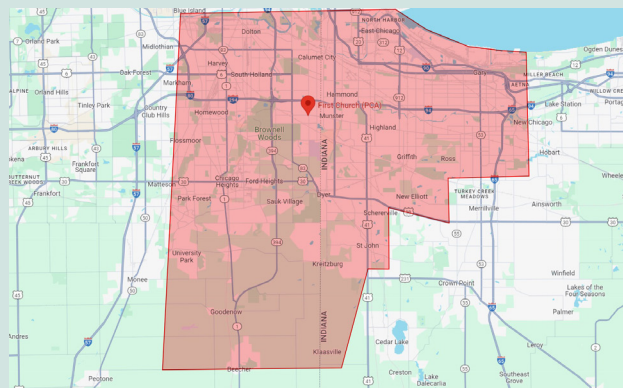
Fox Pointe



Lansing Municipal Airport



Mid-America Reformed Seminary



Our Current Needs

As we reflect on the 160-year history of First Church, we are thankful for the legacy of strong biblical preaching we have enjoyed consistently throughout the decades.

Growing our church, planting new churches, and expanding our ministries are all reasons to rejoice in what God is accomplishing as we strive to remain true to our calling to be “salt and light” in the world.

Although we know our strengths have been family-centered teaching and programing, solid financial support of our ministries, and lively/vibrant worship; we are keenly aware of our need for grace and the Spirit’s leading as we continue to strive for effective kingdom work in Lansing.

We need to:

- Set a fresh vision and goals.
- Find new and creative ways to reach the lost in our community
- Ensure that our pastoral staff is well cared for and supported
- Share one another’s burdens as we also celebrate the victories of successful kingdom work
- Strengthen fellowship across all segments of our congregation
- Maximize the evangelistic aspect of all current and future programs



“You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world... In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:13-16

Our Lead Pastor Position

We are seeking a Lead Pastor who will preach and teach the inerrant Word of God with urgency, conviction, and relevance. He should model Jesus Christ intentionally as a loving spiritual shepherd to First Church and the surrounding community.

The Lead Pastor will be accountable to the Session and work together to provide leadership for the vision and mission of First Church to advance the kingdom of Christ.

Primary Responsibilities

- Priority of time spent on sermon preparation and pastoral teaching roles with understanding and implementation of Reformed doctrine and creeds. Expository preaching style is preferred for the majority of the time.
- Pursue spiritual development and healthy growth of First Church, its leaders and its members.
- Provide leadership with church staff and others in service preparation to develop meaningful corporate worship.
- Seek the lost and encourages the congregation to do the same by sharing his faith in Christ as his personal Savior and helping establish effective evangelism programs to train members.
- Provide supervision and works well with fellow staff members to solve problems and assist in decision making.
- Oversee the training and work of church officers.
- Provide leadership to the congregation with the ability to listen to opposing points of view while focusing on maintaining the peace, purity, and progress of First Church.
- Perform weddings, counseling, and funerals as requested. Visit those in the hospital or emergency situations.
- Represent First Church in the PCA Chicago Metro Presbytery.

Desired Character Traits

- Able to relate well socially and spiritually with people of various ages and stages of Spiritual Development.
- Communicate the Scripture in a clear and compelling way that engages all ages and levels of understanding with practical application.
- Exhibit humility, integrity, and teachability to persevere and grow in wisdom, nurtured by personal devotion to God's Word.
- Lead with a servant's heart. He should be aware of his weaknesses and able to delegate to others gifted in those areas.
- Exhibit empathy and concern, burdened for hurting souls.
- Desires fellowship with the congregation. Is approachable and conversive with existing members as well as visitors.

Required Qualifications

- Masters Degree of Divinity
- Holds to Biblical inerrancy and Biblical sexuality

How to Apply

If you sense that God may be calling you to serve First Church as its next Lead Pastor, we encourage you to apply for the position.

Interested candidates should email pleshamark@gmail.com **and attach the following:**

- Cover Letter
- Resume
- Ministerial Data Form (available upon request from the PCA Administrative Committee)
- Sermons (2–3; URLs or audio files)

Please confirm receipt with Mark Plesha by text/call at (219) 433-9154

Please note that the search committee will ask for references later in the selection process. Candidates should therefore be ready to provide the committee with references upon request.

We look forward to hearing from you!



CHURCH PROFILE FORM

Revised 6-1-24

Check here if you would like to be added to our Ministry Opportunity List
(www.pcaac.org/get-involved/pastoral-job-positions/)

PART I -- BASIC DATA

1. NAME OF CHURCH: First Church PCA

ADDRESS: 3134 Ridge Road, Lansing, IL, 60438

TELEPHONE: (708) 474-9610

PRESBYTERY: Chicago Metro

2. NAME OF PULPIT COMMITTEE CONTACT PERSON: Don Kooy

MAILING ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE: (219) 433-4280

EMAIL: donaldkooy150@gmail.com

3. TYPE OF COMMUNITY

- Inner City -
- Urban (Downtown) -
- Urban (Residential) -
- Suburban
- Small Town -
- Rural -
- College -
- Retirement -
- Resort/Recreational -
- Agriculture -

4. TYPE OF CHURCH

- Church with Multiple Staff
- Church with Solo Pastor -
- Mission Church -
- Non-PCA Church -
- Overseas Church -

5. SIZE CHURCH

- Under 100 members -
- 101-250 members -
- 251-500 members
- 501-800 members -
- 801-1,000 members -
- 1,001-1,600 members -
- Over 1,600 members -

6. TYPE OF POSITION VACANT

- Pastor (Solo)
- Senior Pastor
- Associate Pastor
- Assistant Pastor
- Interim or Supply
- Lay Professional
- (e.g. Educator, Musician)
- Pastoral Counselor

7. CONGREGATIONAL INFORMATION

- Average Attendance 220
- # of Adults over 65 150
- # of Adults under 65 194
- # of Teens 18
- Number of Children 74

8. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Total Income \$660,000
- Benevolent Disbursements \$119,000
- Church Expenses \$480,000
- Ministers Compensation Package (To be determined by First Church PCA Session)

9. MANSE:

(a) Does the church have a manse? Yes No (b) If "yes," is the pastor expected to live in the manse? Yes No

10. SCHOOL:

Does the church own or operate a school? Yes No

11. PROGRAMS AND OUTREACH

(See Attached Sheet)

PART II -- PASTOR CRITERIA DESIRED

(Check all that apply)

A. YEARS OF MINISTRY EXPERIENCE REQUIRED (may include ordained or non ordained experience):

- None needed
- 1-5
- 5-10
- 10-20
- Over 20
- No preference

B. Marital Status:

- Single
- Married
- No preference

First Church PCA Programs and Ministries

Youth Ministries

- Sports Ministry
- Youth Missions
- Sunday School/Catechism
- Jr. High Youth Group
- Senior High Youth Group
- Cadets
- GEMS
- Library
- Vacation Bible School
- Christmas Program
- Nursery
- Worship KidStyle

Adult Spiritual Development

- Women's Ministries
- Tuesday Morning Bible Studies
- Adult Bible Studies
- Small Group Ministries
- Adult Sunday School
- Adult Leadership Training

Fellowship

- Sunday morning fellowship time
- Special events and services fellowship time

Outreach

- Love for Lansing (community assistance)
- Outreach events
- New Member Connection events
- Pregnancy Assistance in the South Suburbs (PASS)

PART III -- CONGREGATIONAL PRIORITIES

THE CONGREGATION PLACES PRIORITIES FOR THIS MINISTER ON THE FOLLOWING:

Check no more than six (6) of the following twenty activities to indicate the highest priorities for this ministerial

position. CHECK NO MORE THAN SIX (6)

1. **WORSHIP LEADERSHIP:** Pastor and Session work to develop a rich worship life, educating the congregation for meaningful participation.
2. **PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD:** The word of God is preached with urgency and conviction, bringing it to bear on the changing needs of individuals, the community, and the world. High priority of the pastor's time is placed on sermon preparation.
3. **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEMBERS:** Pastor shares members' struggles regarding the Christian faith, with opportunity provided for individuals and groups to reflect on beliefs, concerns, doubts regarding Christian understanding of the spiritual dimensions of life.
4. **CONGREGATIONAL VISITATION:** Church officers and pastor develop and carry out a systematic plan for visitation of the entire congregation with special attention to prospective members and those with special needs.
5. **HOSPITAL OR EMERGENCY VISITATION:** Those in hospitals or emergency situations are regularly visited; network developed to keep pastor and others informed of crisis situations; needs of ill or bereaved are met.
6. **CONGREGATIONAL FELLOWSHIP:** Emphasis placed in developing fellowship, helping members to know one another; groups encouraged which give members the opportunity to love and support one another.
7. **COUNSELING SERVICE:** A counseling program initiated for assisting those in and outside the Church; appropriate referrals made when needed.
8. **EVANGELISM:** Pastor and congregation share faith in Christ as personal Savior in total lifestyle; seek to lead others within and outside the Church to accept Jesus Christ; congregation is informed, trained, helped to establish effective evangelism programs for the church.
9. **DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING**
10. **ENCOURAGING THE MINISTRY OF THE LAITY:** Creative ideas and directions developed together with the Session; many persons with appropriate skills stimulated to become involved in services.
11. **MISSION BEYOND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY:** Awareness of the Church's worldwide mission and opportunities for corporate and individual involvement; specific projects identified: persons challenged to support, study and/or visit mission programs on six continents.
12. **DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM:** Session and pastor identify the educational needs of persons of all ages and backgrounds, developing programs to meet needs; church education supported; educational goals are congruent with the total mission of the Church.
13. **TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY:** Pastor accepts an active teaching role, interpreting and teaching the Scriptures, theological concepts, history of the Church and current events; provides instruction for Church Officers; educational leaders, and confirms new members.
14. **INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL COMMUNITY PROBLEMS AND ACTIVITIES:** Concern for identifying social problems in the community; work done with groups seeking solutions. Time and skills committed to community groups. Information and encouragement provided which enable members to become informed and involved.
15. **CONGREGATIONAL COMMUNICATION:** Two-way communication encouraged, information gathered and shared that

will assist problem solving and decision making; varying opinions elicited and all encouraged to listen to opposing points of view.

16. ___ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP: Pastor accepts appropriate administrative responsibilities, in a climate of delegated tasks and shared leadership; volunteers and professional staff encouraged to use their ideas and skills. Work done on developing accountability.
17. ___STEWARDSHIP AND COMMITMENT PROGRAMS: Session and pastor develop a planned stewardship education program to communicate the financial needs of the local church and mission beyond the local church; congregation challenged to commitment to Church's work.
18. ___EVALUATION OF PROGRAM AND STAFF: Systematic procedures used to evaluate programs and staff performance in accord with goals and objectives. Others trained to use these skills. Regular assessment and evaluation.
19. ___CONGREGATIONAL AND DENOMINATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY: Value placed on balance between local church and Assembly responsibilities. Congregation and Session know and are involved in the work of the denomination.
20. ___DIACONAL MINISTRIES: Ministering to the needs of those inside and outside of the Church.

PART IV -- PASTORAL MINISTRY STRENGTHS OR EXPERIENCE DESIRED

Please check **NO MORE THAN SIX (6)** primary pastoral ministry strengths or experience expected for this position.

- Preaching Teaching Evangelism Discipleship Worship Leadership
- Team Work ___Counseling ___Youth Work ___Leadership Training ___Church Administration
- ___Christian Education ___Singles Ministry ___Stewardship ___Diaconal Ministry ___Ministry to Seniors
- ___Pastoral Visitation ___Community Service ___College & Career Ministry