

Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP) Bethel Presbyterian Church, April 2024

Mission/Vision Statement

We raise our sail of faith, God fills it, and we go where we need to be: forward together in friendship, kindness, humility, mutual respect, and toleration; listening, seeking, studying, singing, praying, and breaking bread; embracing our traditions, opening ourselves and our resources to new callings and newcomers; serving our church family, our community, and the world.

Tasks, Expectations, and Responsibilities

- Working closely with session, the pastor will plan, lead, and facilitate meaningful weekly worship services that effectively blend Scripture, preaching, music, liturgy, and prayer.
- Lead Bethel's staff including one full time church office administrator and a part time staff of nursery workers, a church musician, and a handyman.
- Work collaboratively with elders, teams, and lay leaders to share responsibilities throughout the congregation to help us live into our mission and vision.
- Work collaboratively with our community to understand resources and needs so that we can discern how Bethel might best serve.
- Foster robust and diverse Christian education, especially for adults.
- An outgoing and engaging pastor who includes children and cares for their spiritual education and challenges all of us to grow in faith and live into Christ's teachings.
- Work collaboratively to expand our outreach on social media platforms to ensure we have a strong presence in our community.
- Represent the church while working to expand our relationships with other denominations and organizations.
- Train the Elders.
- Provide pastoral care to the congregation.
- Moderate the Session.
- Teach and facilitate confirmation classes.

1. How would you describe the congregation's specific vision for ministry? How will this vision impact the community? Is the congregation part of a ministry vision or program?

In 2023, Bethel conducted a poll of the congregation seeking to define our church's mission. The main themes of the responses were acceptance, welcoming, caring, community, connection, worship, spiritual growth, and service to our community. Additional themes included study, multigenerational interaction, and outreach beyond our area. Most responses can be grouped into one of three categories: Welcome, Community, and Service. Based on the number of responses in each category, Bethel places great importance on being a place of welcoming and acceptance.

Bethel's ministries tend to focus on service and education. We have hosted speakers, spiritual leaders from other faith traditions, Bible studies, music performances and instruction, book

clubs, artists and crafters, financial literacy courses, grief support groups, Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children (CASA), a Parkinson's support group, ESL classes, Boy and Girl Scouts, Tai Chi, and yoga. We participate in the Family Promise Program. We have shared our full-sized outdoor nativity scene with the community for half a century. We have contributed monthly to the Grace School in Limuru, Kenya for over 20 years; and we have provided support to the Camp John Knox Center since its inception in the 1960s. Bethel is not part of a formal ministry vision, although we are a designated Earth-Care Congregation. For 205 years, Bethel has been a place to gather, pray, sing, teach, listen, eat, play, give, shelter, and grow.

2. What is the nature and context of the community in which your congregation lives out its mission/vision? How will you address the emerging needs that are impacting your community?

Bethel is situated in the heart of Kingston next to a beautiful lake and walking trail. During the summer months, it is common for there to be numerous water and recreational activities near the church building.

As a bedroom community for the greater Knoxville and Oak Ridge area, Kingston has been attracting younger families and out-of-state residents. Since 2010, there has been an increase in people identifying as two or more races and a rise in those identifying as Hispanic or Latino.

Our members are leaders of ecumenical community-wide social services. We take pride in the active and continuous commitment to serve others. Our most prominent connection to community leadership is through these efforts. We further enhance the Kingston cultural scene by hosting renowned musical performances and ongoing art and tai chi activities.

The emerging needs we see include food insecurity, affordable housing, and social isolation. Ways we are addressing these are Free Laundry Nights, Family Promise, Roane County Cooperative Ministries, monthly collections for the local food bank, and the Kingston Farmer's Market.

3. How will this call help complement the responsibilities of other staff/volunteer positions, and the life of the congregation, so that you may accomplish your short- and long-term goals for ministry?

Our next pastor will share leadership responsibilities with the Ruling Elders and Ministry Teams seeking to work side-by-side with them while providing inspiration and encouragement to the congregation. We desire a servant leader we can walk with while we discern God's will for Bethel now and in the future. We seek a pastor who will be a compassionate friend to our aging congregants and an energetic mentor to our small but mighty younger congregants. ~~Hopefully,~~ We hope our next pastor will choose to live in or near beautiful, historic Kingston so that they may be fully immersed and engaged with the community and other local ministries. Bethel seeks to grow partnerships with other churches in the area with the goal of combining resources to be the hands and feet of Jesus in our community and beyond.

The Pastor/Head of Staff will communicate and coordinate with the Church Office Administrator and respective Teams in the day-to-day operations of the church; will partner with the Faith Team, the Church Musician and others, to prepare spiritually nourishing and thoughtful worship services; will inspire and energize the congregation with more robust and diverse theological studies led by the pastor and other lay leaders who receive guidance and support from the pastor. We seek a pastor who is excited about social media and possibly has experience to help us harness and grow our online presence in the world.

4. Provide a description of the skills, gifts, and training the person you hope will become a part of your ministry must have, to lead the congregation towards the vision and mission established.

- Preach well-prepared, intellectually challenging, and relevant sermons
- Balance leading with delegating
- Help us connect our areas of ministry that grow membership
- Direct staff with firmness and courtesy
- Equip and develop leaders within the congregation
- Collaborate with the Church Musician to select hymns and responses
- Understand and appreciate traditional worship and music while being open to modern anthems and hymns
- Help us develop a more robust and diverse Christian education, not necessarily as a teacher
- Expand our relationships with other denominations and faiths

5. What areas of ministry do you expect the person called to be responsible for? Share specific tasks, assignments, and programs.

- Preach the Word, teach the Scriptures, administer the sacraments, and engage the congregation in study and witness.
- Partner with the Faith Team and others to find meaningful ways of worship that allow members and the community to participate.
- Plan and lead an overall worship experience that faithfully forms us as God's people
- Engage the children in the worship service.
- Create a church culture that increasingly embodies Christ's example of servant leadership.
- Facilitate classes from traditional Bible Studies to Special Topics Classes and engage and encourage members in their spiritual growth.
- Lead and encourage members to live out their faith within the membership and among their neighbors.
- Encourage the partnership of Bethel with the mission and ministry of the PCUSA and the Presbytery of East Tennessee.
- Be involved in ecumenical relationships in the community.

- Provide pastoral care for congregants.
- Visit congregants in their homes, assisted living, and hospitals.
- Officiate at funerals and memorial services.
- Officiate at weddings and provide pre-marital counseling.
- Prepare congregants for membership in the church.
- Partner with the Personnel Team and others to direct a small staff.