

Lake Street Church of Evanston

seeks a new senior minister.

CHURCH PROFILE

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Founded in Evanston, Illinois in 1858, our diverse and inclusive community opens its doors to anyone who seeks a meaningful and relevant spiritual experience in a church setting. We practice a progressive, non-dogmatic Christian theology that embraces people from various religious denominations and traditions. Lake Street Church cherishes its non-creedal tradition: we affirm that every person has soul liberty—the complete freedom and responsibility to seek and embody God in one’s life. We are an autonomous congregation affiliated with the American Baptist Churches USA.

We are seeking a spiritual leader who:

- Delivers inspiring and well-articulated sermons
- Approaches faith matters in a spirit of inquiry and openness
- Works alongside lay leaders in our congregationally-driven community
- Is committed to community outreach with social justice issues
- Has excellent listening and interpersonal skills used to maintain the connectedness of the community
- Provides direction, support and encouragement to staff

If you feel drawn to Lake Street Church, then we welcome a dialogue about your capabilities and this exciting opportunity.

Our Essential Beliefs

Our vision—Love in Action—is reflected in who we are, what we believe, and what we do.

Soul Liberty & Diversity of Beliefs

Lake Street Church cherishes and embodies the concept of **Soul Liberty**, which is the freedom to choose what to believe and to determine one's own path to the divine. The concept of Soul Liberty is founded on the idea that we all have free will to determine our individual spiritual paths. At Lake Street Church, Soul Liberty leads to creative "This I Believe" testimonials from adult congregants and the choice to make enlightened confirmation statements of belief from our youth during our Palm Sunday full-immersion baptisms.

We encompass a diversity of beliefs, are **non-creedal**, and are united by our **Covenant**. We look to our minister for inspiration, spiritual leadership, and the ability to recognize and encourage this diversity within our congregation. Our variety of beliefs is also reflected in our desire to learn from the wisdom of other faith traditions to deepen our faith experience and better understand Christianity itself. We seek to understand the richness of all faiths and the common threads among them.

Inclusivity

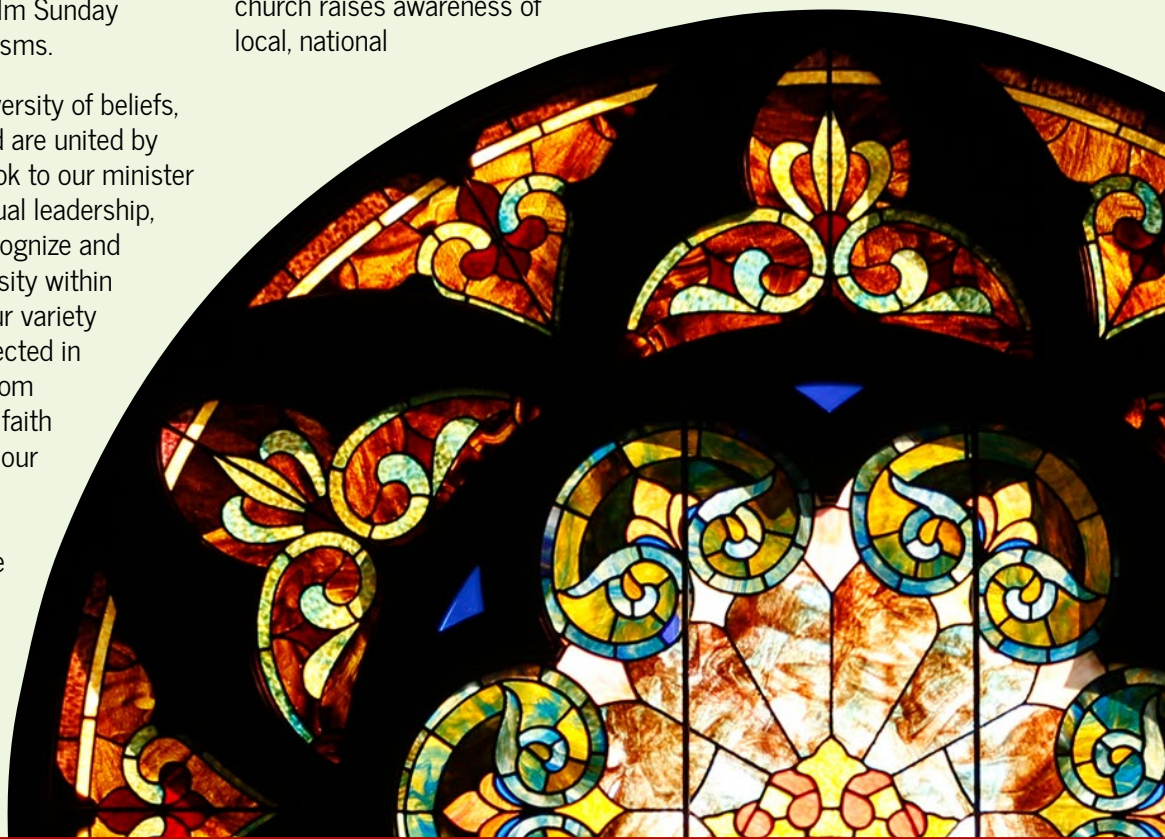
As our Covenant states, we welcome the excluded and care for the vulnerable. We have a long-standing tradition of being a **welcoming and affirming church**. Those who are marginalized based on sexual orientation and/or gender are welcome as members of the church and into leadership positions at Lake Street. We welcome the spiritual union of all couples and same-sex wedding ceremonies.

Social Justice

Through social justice work we move from contemplation to action. The church raises awareness of local, national

and international issues, and acts to promote peace, further economic and social justice, practice Earth stewardship and alleviate hunger and homelessness. We voted to become a **sanctuary church** in 2015 and continue to support the Interfaith Community of Detained Immigrants.

The diversity of thought and level of active participation at Lake Street Church offers a rich and valuable tapestry of spiritual creativity. We seek a minister with a breadth of belief and heart to encourage our continued spiritual growth and enlightenment.





Our Covenant

We stand together in celebration of the divine that moves within, among, and around us.

As a spiritual community, we affirm our kinship with the earth and all of its people.

Our covenant with one another is **rooted** in the Christian tradition and the living practice of Jesus to welcome the excluded and care for the vulnerable.

We are **connected** by our respect for soul liberty which challenges us to embody God in the world each in our own way.

We seek to be **transformed** as we wake to the hidden wholeness of life.

We promise to be mutually helpful one to the other, bearing one another's burdens, participating in one another's joys, and supporting the church community that nurtures us all.

We promise to make this church a womb of contemplation and action, so as to clarify our vision and strengthen our resolve to act against injustice and for peace.

We promise to be stewards of the earth, sustaining it for future generations by cultivating self-discipline and gratitude.

We pray together to love justice, act kindly, and walk humbly with God.

*The Lake Street Church covenant was written and adopted by our congregation in 2006.
It is a touchstone that grounds all aspects of our life together.*



Worship

Sunday worship begins at 10:30 in our 143 year-old sanctuary. Although many parts of our service are traditional—an ancient witness reading, choral music, an offering, a 15–20 minute sermon—we also embrace non-traditional elements. There is a moment for meditation prior to the sermon, readings may be from contemporary sources or sacred texts from other religions, and music can include African drumming or a Native American flute solo.

Sermons often focus on finding the Divine in unlikely places or on social issues such as immigration, LGBTQ rights, or the Black Lives Matter movement. Our language is inclusive. “God” is often referred to as Divine Spirit or “higher power.” Regarding Jesus, most in our church are inspired by his teachings. However, others question the idea of Jesus as a deity.

On the first Sunday of every month we celebrate communion as an open table. Everyone who chooses to may participate regardless of age, race, ethnicity, creed, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Music is an integral part of our worship service. Congregants participate as singers, instrumentalists, and listeners. The music inspires and motivates us toward growth and action and deepens our awareness of the Divine and our connection to each other. Our classically trained Music and Choir Directors and four professional singers support the choir, and all who love to sing are welcome to participate. Instrumental music may include our Crystal Ringers Tone Chimes ensemble, a middle schooler playing the piano or violin for the Prelude, or a congregant accompanying the choir on guitar. Our music director also revises hymn lyrics to reflect more inclusive language.

Besides the music, congregants are very active in other aspects of the service as well. They make announcements, serve as greeters and readers, assist with communion, and sometimes preach or provide testimonials. The Worship Committee meets monthly to advise and assist the Senior Minister and staff in

planning Sunday services and special events.

Children stay for the first part of the service and then attend Sunday School classes following the Moment for Children prior to the sermon. Children under the age of five play happily in our Nursery and Rainbow Rooms, while older children (kindergarten/1st grade; 2nd through 5th; and middle/high schoolers) attend their own classes. After the service, children and their parents gather in MacLeish Hall for coffee, treats, and friendly conversation.



Special Sunday Services

Instead of Worldwide Communion Sunday, we celebrate World Community Sunday where religious leaders from faiths including Buddhism, Islam, and Judaism are invited to speak. On Palm Sunday our Middle Schoolers who choose to are confirmed and baptized by full immersion. Other special services include Los Dias de los Muertos/All Souls Day in November and the Daniel Jones Memorial Concert, which is a full music service performed by the LSC choir.

Education

We provide a variety of classes and learning opportunities for all ages.



gathering to [learn](#) about such topics as the mystical traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, or to discuss the teachings of compassion from a Buddhist perspective.

The opportunity to participate in prayer and meditation groups occurs at the Sunday Prayer Circle, Meditation Mondays or Sadhana Saturdays.

Book discussions occur throughout the month. Recent selections have included *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* by Marcus Borg and *Prayers of the Cosmos* by Neil Douglas-Klotz. Personal growth and spiritual development occur within the monthly Women's Circle as well as the Let's Be Frank Improv Group.

Adult

The best way to encounter the diverse spiritual expressions of Lake Street Church members is through small group gatherings. While the Sunday service is rooted in the Christian tradition, before church activities include congregants

Children and Youth

We have an active and growing children's program. [Daycare](#) is provided for children under age 5, and formal [Sunday School](#) classes start in kindergarten. Our "Beginners" use *The Family Story Bible* as an introduction to the stories of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Children in second through fifth grade use the *Joyful Path* curriculum and supplemental materials to explore themes of compassion, interconnectedness, and world

religions. Middle and high school classes are discussion based as youth relate the teachings of biblical figures and contemporary leaders to their own lives and faith journeys.

In alternating years we offer confirmation classes for our 7th and 8th graders and *Our Whole Lives* (a human sexuality curriculum) for our 5th and 6th graders. The Senior Minister and Director of Youth teach the 10-week confirmation classes, while trained volunteers teach *Our Whole Lives*.

Youth Activities



Children

In addition to regular Sunday School classes and special family programs, the children also engage in service projects throughout the year, which have included sandwich making for the Night Ministry, packing food to ship overseas at Feed My Starving Children, and helping distribute clothes and school supplies at Cradles to Crayons.



Youth

The middle and high schoolers have social events on Friday evenings once a month and also have the opportunity to attend a week long Adventure Camp in the summer that introduces them to social service agencies throughout the Chicago area.





Organization and Governance

LSC's governance relies on a successful collaboration among the congregants and pastor reflecting the non-hierarchical nature of the American Baptist tradition. Guided by and working with the governing board, committees, and an engaged staff, the church is a vibrant and busy congregation called to action. We look to our pastor for spiritual leadership and inspiration.

The Board

While the congregation retains ultimate decision-making authority, it delegates powers and duties to the Church Board. Composed of 19 members, the Board oversees such responsibilities as short and long term goals, recommending an annual budget and approving certain expenditures and calling church staff. The Board meets once per month and is comprised of a diverse cross section of the community and its committees. If a decision falls into the powers reserved for the congregation, members vote on the issue, usually in one of two congregational business meetings each year (June and January).

The Budget

Our 2018 budget is approximately \$600,000. While we carry a

structural deficit, we have been able to supplement our income by using reserves. Longer term, the Board's plan is to increase revenue through a more targeted campaign to increase membership as well as increase use of our historic, mortgage-free building.

Committees

The richness of the church's volunteerism is found in the over 18 standing and special [committees](#) at Lake Street Church. Some, like Staff Relations, and Deacons involve governance and the functioning of the Church, while others such as Peace and Justice and Spiritual Pathways actualize our progressive vision in the community.

Our Staff

Our staff is comprised of a: Senior Minister, Church Administrator, Music Director, a Director of Children's and Family Programming, Director of Youth, Administrative Assistant, and Sexton. In addition to the staff, we have several [paid positions](#) within our music program.

Membership

Several times a year, the congregation welcomes new members during a Sunday service. Prior to becoming a member, these newcomers participate in a three-part Adult Inquiry series on what it means to join Lake Street Church.



Membership means committing to our Covenant and supporting LSC through active participation and financial giving. No one must adhere to a particular creed. Our youth may join the church at about 13–14 years old after completing confirmation classes. In addition, we have many active participants within the congregation who have chosen not to become formal members.

Congregational Life

Lake Street Church has some 396 participants comprising both members (83%) and non-members (17%) living in 211 households including 53 households with 101 children.

Participants

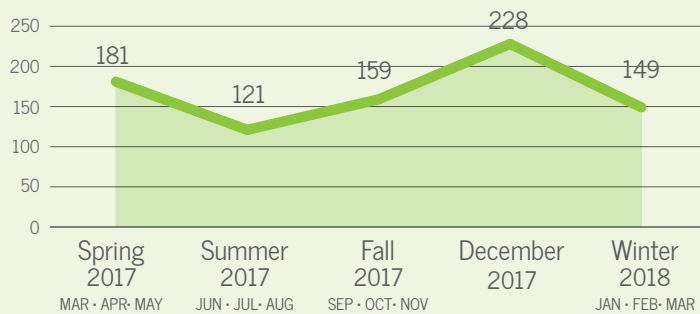
The table below shows how the composition of our regular attendees, based on February 2018 data, compared to similar percentages derived from the church rolls. (Only the church rolls have information on race and ethnicity.) In general,

	Sunday Worship Participation	Church Rolls
Women	58%	59%
Men	41%	40%
Other	1%	1%
Children and Youth	27%	26%
Adults	38%	44%
Adults (60+)	35%	30%
White (Euro-Amer)	–	96%
African-American	–	2%
Asian	–	1%
Latino	–	1%

the percentages of attendees and those on the church rolls are remarkably similar, with a slight tendency for older congregants to show up on Sundays. Although this information is not formally recorded, we are well educated with many members and friends holding advanced degrees and working as teachers, professors, therapists, medical professionals, attorneys, consultants,

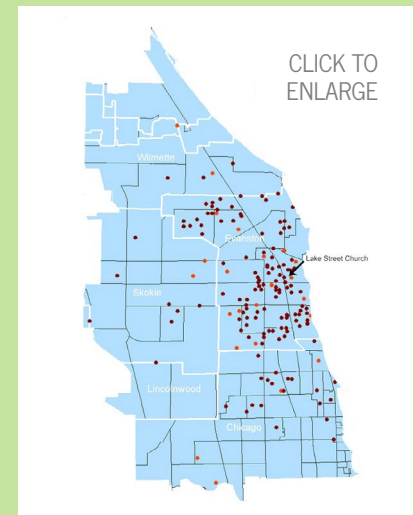
business owners, etc. We also have a sizeable number of congregants who are employed in the creative arts as writers, photographers, actors and filmmakers.

Average Weekly Worship Participation



The Church's Community

Close examination of the church rolls reveals that 83% of our members/participants live within 5 miles of the church. However, many members commute much greater distances to participate in our community.



The coverage of this map corresponds to our ministry area as defined in a 2011 study. Within Evanston, 47% of the population are male, and 53% are female. Regarding age, 25% of Evanston residents are under 20, 62% are between 20 and 64, and 13% are 65 and older. Like other church populations our congregation is slightly more female, and noticeably older than the surrounding community.

The population of Evanston is approximately 17% African-American and 11% Latino. Through initiatives like the Second Baptist Church Collaboration Committee and other efforts, we hope to create a population in the pews that "looks more like Evanston."

Partners

Lake Street Church engages with a set of diverse partners both locally and globally.

Connections for the Homeless



In 1984, Lake Street Church in collaboration with Center for Public Ministry, now known as Connections for the Homeless, opened the only shelter located in the Northshore area—Hilda’s Place. In addition to providing transitional shelter, Connections for the Homeless provides much needed services to the disadvantaged through Hilda’s Place:

- Employment counseling
- Education enhancement
- Permanent housing

- Medical and psychiatric referrals and services

Since 2012, a task force comprised of Lake Street Church members has collaborated with Partners for Sacred Places. Currently, Partners is investigating a potential capital campaign that would underwrite the cost of upgrading our kitchen. This improvement would enable LSC to continue its tradition of serving as a year-round community kitchen to both Hilda’s Place and other nonprofit organizations such as the YWCA.

Ninos Ministry

Lake Street Church has an ongoing collaboration with Fabretto Foundation to support an orphanage in Nicaragua. Fabretto’s mission is to empower underserved children and their families. Ninos activities include:

- A 2016 pilgrimage to Nicaragua by 10 Lake Street Church members
- Regular collections to support purchase of Christmas gifts for our sponsored children
- A worship service and celebration of Los Dias de los Muertos/All Souls Day
- LSC children raising funds during Lent in support of Fabretto



Second Baptist Church



In early 2017, Lake Street Church and the predominantly African-American Second Baptist Church moved to enrich and enhance their relationship and programs through mutual collaboration. This work has resulted in:

- Several joint outings (annual picnic, prayer groups)
- A week-long youth camp outing
- A community book discussion group on racism
- Combined Lenten bible studies

- Joint services in which ministers and choirs were exchanged

Future plans include:

- Increased joint ministry and programming
- Developing Race Relations Circles
- Social justice activities including improving relations between local police and black youth and monitoring and influencing public policy impacts on the disadvantaged



History

The origins of Lake Street Church date back to 1856 when Frances Iglehart began a Sunday school in her home for children of various Christian backgrounds. Mrs. Iglehart, a Baptist, was joined by five other individuals who formally organized the Evanston Baptist Church (later First Baptist Church of Evanston) in 1858.

The journey began from gathering around Mrs. Iglehart's sewing machine, which served as the first pulpit, to a historic Sanctuary building has included many expressions of the Social Gospel movement with its emphasis on efforts to better the lives of all people, support for the ecumenical movement, and a more recent emphasis on spirituality and interfaith dialog.

In 1927 Reverend Dr. James M. Stifler highlighted the church's emphasis on the Social Gospel with his statement: "At the bottom of every human problem, personal or social, lies a moral, a spiritual question. The real religious question is not what can I believe, but how fine a life am I willing to live?"

There are many examples through the years of Lake Street Church working to help others. One is the establishment of the Delano Chapel, which the church ran as a neighborhood settlement house in an underserved area of

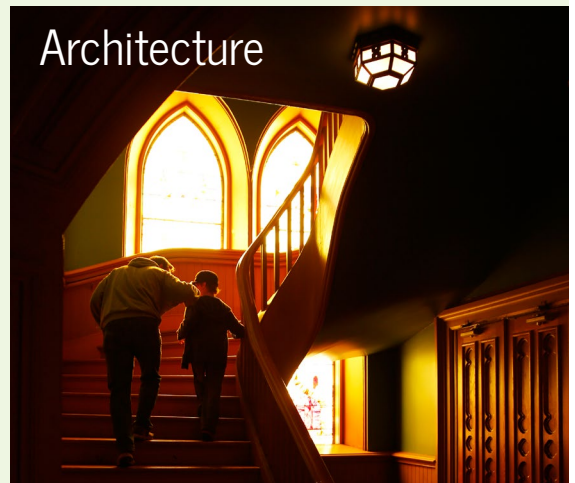
Evanston from 1897 to 1922. This was the site of training classes for youth, mothers' groups, bible study, worship and other positive activities.

In 1984, Senior Minister Reverend Robert Thompson led the community in a controversial effort to establish a shelter for homeless people in the church basement. Today Hilda's Place, one of the programs of Connections for the Homeless, is still the only such shelter from Chicago's northern border up to Wisconsin. LSC members continue to support the shelter by cooking dinner for residents two nights a month and providing additional volunteer and financial assistance.

One of the reasons First Baptist Church of Evanston changed its name to Lake Street Church in 1995 was to "let the community know we are an ecumenical congregation," according to Rev. Thompson. Not only is the church supportive of all Christian faiths, but also has a history of tolerance, respect, and involvement with other faiths. In 1954 it was a host church for religious leaders attending the World Council of Churches. During the 1970's and 1980's, Lake Street Church shared its space with Hispanic, Korean and Jewish congregations. In the 1990's the church started regular interfaith worship services involving representatives of Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish and other faith traditions.

In 1993, Lake Street Church was one of the first congregations to join the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptist Churches in support of all people regardless of sexual orientation. In 2015 LSC became a sanctuary church and continues to actively support immigration rights.

Architecture



Our copper-clad Victorian Gothic building opened its doors in 1875. It is Evanston's oldest public building, has been designated an Evanston landmark building, and is on the annual Chicago Architectural Foundation tour.

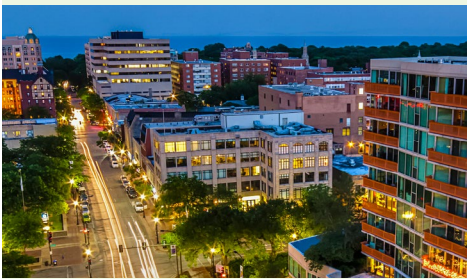
To this day Lake Street Church supports all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, immigration status, socioeconomic status, and sexual or gender identification.



This [timeline](#), created in 2011, provides a much more detailed history of LSC.

Evanston Community Profile

Our church sits at the northwest corner of Lake Street and Chicago Avenue in the Chicago suburb of Evanston. Located on the Lake Michigan shore 13 miles north of downtown Chicago, [Evanston](#) is a growing city of over 75,000 residents. A vibrant community with strong neighborhoods, Evanston incorporates a diversity of races, religions, and income levels. Recently, Evanston has been a subject of feature stories in the [NY Times](#) and [Politico](#). It is also home to [Northwestern University](#), ranked as one of the world's top twenty universities.



In addition to over 200 restaurants, there are a multitude of cultural, recreational, and entertainment opportunities in our town. Residents enjoy summer music festivals and concerts, five public swimming beaches, boating and sailing, a weekly farmers' market, a modern library, and one of Illinois' most diverse arts communities. Evanston is also home to [Garrett-Evangelical Theological](#)



[Seminary](#), the world headquarters of [Rotary International](#), and the [Frances Willard](#) historical site.

The area is well-served by public transportation and is thirty minutes from downtown Chicago via the [Metra](#) passenger train or the [Chicago Transit Authority](#) ("el"). [O'Hare International Airport](#) is easily accessible by automobile or transit and provides non-stop service to over 200 domestic and world-wide destinations.

The [North Shore University Health System](#) maintains four medical offices in the city and operates one of its four major hospitals here, along with a medical research institute.

Evanston is also home to St. Francis Hospital, part of the [Presence Health](#) network.

Schools

There are two public school districts in Evanston, [District 65](#), which provides K-8 education, and [District 202](#), which oversees Evanston Township High School (ETHS). The former operates eight elementary schools, three middle schools, two

K-8 magnet schools, and other centers and schools serving students with special needs and pre-school age children. ETHS is ranked in the top 2% of high schools nationally by US News and World Reports. In addition, there are two parochial K-8 schools, three Montessori elementary schools, and one Montessori high school.



City of Chicago

A half-hour drive south brings you to downtown Chicago, a city known for its superlative architecture and world class, music, art, and theater offerings. Chicago is also home to major league sports franchises in baseball, basketball, football, hockey, and soccer.

Weather

Evanston enjoys a four-season climate typical of the Southern Great Lakes region. Our proximity to Lake Michigan produces a moderating influence resulting in somewhat cooler summers and warmer winters than occur in communities farther from the lakefront.

An Open Letter to Pastoral Candidates



I was called to serve Lake Street Church as the Interim Pastor on March 1, 2017. This is the fifth church I have served as Interim.

I have fallen in love with Lake Street Church. One of the great joys—and challenges—of this church is the highly engaged congregation. They give me lots of feedback and appreciate conversations with their minister.

LSC is fundamentally a Christian church, although there are many different faith traditions embraced by congregants. They appreciate learning about other faiths and are stimulated and engaged when worship incorporates such wisdom. Congregants helped me expand my interfaith ministry as I came to this church with very little experience in this area. The theological unity among congregants is the recognition that we are all on a spiritual journey. Each journey may look different from the next, but the path of spiritual exploration, growth, and change is universal. My own personal theology has been greatly enriched and continues to grow at LSC.

There is superb leadership among the laity. This is a congregation of smart and accomplished people. Many congregants work in social service organizations outside of LSC, while still being significantly involved with the workings of the church. It is virtually impossible to be involved with everything at LSC, consequently I manage this by serving as a "shadow consultant" to committee chairs and others. I trust the congregation to make good decisions and they do.

This church needs a loving, caring pastoral presence. During this interim time, the congregation, not unlike others I have worked with, has faced the angst and uncertainty of ministerial change. I have worked to prepare them for a new pastor and they are ready to move ahead. A spirit of unity and excitement about the future can be felt at LSC.

LSC's children and youth programs are growing. One of my favorite moments during worship is when the children and youth leave for Sunday School. The thundering of little (or bigger) feet is music to my ears. Unlike many churches that are struggling to attract young families, our children and youth programs continue to grow.

In addition, all of the church staff—the music and choir directors, children and youth directors, and office administrators—are hardworking and conscientious.

LSC is a wonderful opportunity for any pastor who is friendly and welcoming, is theologically open and flexible, has a social justice focus, enjoys collaborating with the local community, and is interested in other faith traditions.

I hope and pray that whoever is the next Senior Minister at LSC will find it as fun and as rewarding as I have.

As we say at Lake Street Church, Blessed Be as we give thanks to the Divine!

Rev. Beth Dickerson

Rev. Beth Dickerson, Interim Pastor

How to Apply

If you are interested in pursuing this opportunity, please send a letter of interest answering the two questions below, and attach a pastoral profile from your denomination. We will begin reviewing applications as we receive them, and we encourage you to submit yours by August 15, 2018.

Please e-mail your responses and materials to us at ministersearch@lakestreet.org. If you have any questions, you may send them to the same email address. If you would rather mail your application, please send c/o Bill Bridges at Lake Street Church of Evanston, 607 Lake Street, Evanston, IL 60201.

In the letter of interest, please let us know how you heard about this opportunity and how you prefer to be contacted. Please respond to the following questions in 250 words (or fewer) per question.

- 1) What attracts you to Lake Street Church?
- 2) How would you minister to a theologically diverse congregation?

The Senior Minister Search Committee will acknowledge all applications and keep you informed about the process. Thank you for considering Lake Street Church.

For more information or questions, please contact the Co-chairs of the Search Committee:

Jane Tufts (773) 750-5263
Beth Negronida (847) 982-0648

You can also e-mail us at:
ministersearch@lakestreet.org

Or as a resource:
Doug Harris or Carol McVetty, Interim Executive Ministers
American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago
4401 West Irving Park Road
Chicago, IL 60641
(773) 634-1495



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