

Local Church Profile for Churches Seeking an Interim Pastor

Church Information

Full Name: Plymouth Congregational Church
Address: 582 Pleasant Street, Belmont, MA 02478
Phone: 617-484-5257
Website: <http://www.plymouthchurch.net>

Additional Denominational Affiliations:

UCC Conference: Southern New England
Association: Metropolitan Boston
Area Conference Minister Name: Rev. Alex Shea Will
ACM phone: 508-244-4769
ACM email: SheaWillA@sneucc.org

Position Details

In a paragraph or two for each item, please answer the following prompts.

- e Church website beginning with <http://www.plymouthchurch.net>
- b. the Church Facebook page --again beginning with <http://www.facebook.com/PCCBelmont>
- c. the Church Instagram page-- none
- d. the Church YouTube page--again beginning with <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI6-Y0j8eV4SnpxdrNo4vdg>

1. Describe the ministry position for which you are seeking a pastor.

Our departing pastor has been with us for 10 years and has enjoyed a very successful ministry. He is departing our church in June 2024 to move his family back to his home state. We are looking for an Interim Minister who has strong communication abilities and who will help us maintain our dedication to the major tasks of ministry while we search for a new permanent pastor. We hope that the Interim preaches sermons that place an emphasis on the meaning of Scripture in our current world. We want an Interim who will be comfortable with children and will enjoy the unscripted gifts and joy that Children's Moments/Sermons bring to our Congregation. We want our Interim to work collaboratively with our existing staff (Office Administrator, Music Director and Sexton) and with the lay leadership of the Congregation. Although we are a very healthy Congregation, we hope the Interim Minister will examine our structure and leadership and make suggestions for an improved Church. We also will look to our Interim to help us

prepare for our new settled pastor. Any successful minister in our midst will need a healthy sense of humor.

2. Name 3 core competencies that you feel you will need in your Interim Pastor.

We need an Interim Pastor who is a good communicator both in and out of the pulpit, can examine our leadership structure and mission and offer suggestions for improvement, and works collaboratively with the lay leadership and other church staff.

3. What aspects of the 5 tasks of interim ministry (listed in the instructions sheet) do you anticipate being the focus of your interim time?

Mission, Leadership and Future.

We think we should continue to focus on the mission of our Church. Why do we go to Church? What do we expect out of our Church life? Where should we help our community? What services should we offer our community? We are getting along well but we should think about the basic goals of Church life. We have an active Church leadership but we need to focus on selecting leaders who have specific leadership qualities and who can enjoy and learn from leadership roles. What is our future? What do we want to be in the near future? How will our Church attract new members? We should focus on our future and the Interim Pastor should offer guidance in this area.

4. **Position Scope:** Fulltime 3/4 time 1/2 time 1/4 time

5. **Position Duration:** 12 months 18 months other _____

Who We Are

In a paragraph or two for each item, please provide the following.

1. Church's Mission Statement (or name that one needs to be developed):

Our Mission Statement is as follows: "Plymouth Church of Belmont is a joyful community of God, which in our commonalities and diversities, responds to the spirit of Christ through caring and service, teaching and learning, worship and celebration."

Mission and justice/service are central to our community. We fund our mission life by placing 10% of our pledges under the control of our mission committee. This committee directs these funds to be used as gifts for others. In addition to our financial support of other causes, our membership has been active in supporting the Belmont Food Bank and the Waltham House and Home for Little Wanderers, a home for LGBTQ+ youth. We have donated our time and money to furniture drives for immigrants and our members

have been active in Habitat for Humanity. Plymouth has a strong lay leadership with a large portion of members serving on committees or other volunteer roles.

2. Brief Church History:

The Church began in 1899 and held services in a fairly standard church building. That building burned to the ground just before WW2 and the Church met during the war in Belmont school buildings. The current Church was constructed in the early 1950's. The Church reflects the culture and mores of its members and has moved through the years from a place of traditional conservative values and outlook to a place of liberal thought.

3. 2-3 Significant Events:

1. The destruction of the Church by fire, the maintenance of our religious life during World War 2 with the absence of our permanent minister who served as a chaplain during the war and the certitude and strength and belief in the future that led to the construction of our current physical church. All of this occurred beyond the memory of 99% of our members but that history teaches all of us that our predecessors had faith in God and in themselves.

2. This is not a singular event but a singular change. As late as the early 1970's this Church reflected with rare exceptions male roles and female roles. Men and women worshiped on Sundays together but there was a separation of functions. Services were primarily men in suits and women in furs. The leadership of this Church today reflects the world we live in and men and women share equally in deciding the work of the Church.

3. The Church became open and affirming about 10 years ago. This was done enthusiastically and without conflict. This either would have been impossible or the occasion of major conflict 25 years ago. We have been blessed by the presence of folks who identify as queer and we support, through our mission program, kids who identify as LGBTQ+.

4. Fifteen years ago, we had a minister who struggled to connect with a majority of the congregation, so they left after a short tenure. The discussions between supporters and non-supporters were sometimes disrespectful and self-centered. In response, we implemented a communications covenant that's now a standard part of our meetings and daily church life.

4. Church Strengths:

Plymouth has a strong lay leadership. The Congregation is generally pleased with the operation of the Church, the Sunday Services, the social aspects of the Church and the mission life of the Church. The Church and its members give in service and money to many other charities and causes. The Sunday School and children's programs provide a place where children can grow spiritually and gain confidence. Lasting friendships are

made amongst our members and these are fostered by basic Church committee structure, the “joys and concerns” portion of our services, coffee hours and “Kids Night In/Parent’s Night Out” where kids are watched over by other Church members.

5. Church Challenges:

The secularization of America is part of our community so local churches need to make their gifts known to young families. We need younger members who want to become part of a church community that will benefit them and their children. The older members of the Church contribute with enthusiasm to the Church and provide a larger share of financial support than younger members. But growth comes from the young.

We have incurred large expenses in the past year and were planning to raise endowment funds in connection with the celebration of our 125th anniversary. When our minister announced his departure, we decided to delay that fundraising effort. We need to plan for a major capital campaign and would welcome the Interim Ministers views with this planning.

6. Experience of Conflict: Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. On a scale of 1-5, where would you rank your church’s level of conflict?

Level of conflict: 1- As discussed above, the Church has had conflicts occasioned by divergent views on the performance of permanent ministers. This conflict occurred more than 10 years ago and some of it was ugly. The current 10 year ministry has been a very successful ministry and our Church life has been devoid of major conflict. However, minor disagreements arise in all committees of the Church. For example, the Church faces decisions on where we spend our money and who we hire to do the work. Because the Church physical structure was built in the early 1950’s, we are having large outlays of funds for roofing, heating system, brickwork and plumbing. Each of those projects requires decisions and good active members disagree on details. Similar disagreements occur in the missions committee where various members want our dedication to competing causes. And disagreements can arise with who performs a given job in the Church.. We really think that the communications covenant of the Church is followed in spirit. We have learned from prior conflicts.

1. Please explain why you chose this level. See above
2. Describe your congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict. See above

Basic Church Statistics *Yearly average*

	Church Membership	Weekly Worship Attendance	Children & Youth Participation	Adult Ed Participation
Pre-pandemic	@200	70	8-10	@10
Current year	@200	75	10-15	@10

	Income	Overall Budget	Mission Giving	Reserves & Endowment Principals
Pre-pandemic	\$375,000	\$375,000	\$38,000	\$835,000 on 12/31/19
Current year	\$410,000	\$425,000	\$42,000	\$980,000 on 12/31/23

Compensation

Total Compensation Package Amount or Range: \$90,000-\$115,000 commensurate with experience, inclusive of all benefits

Package offered: _____ Total Package, no additional monetary benefits offered (We will structure the package so that part of it includes a housing allowance)
(choose only one) Total Package includes optional benefits to be negotiated (if you wish, list here what those optional benefits may be- All benefits are subject to negotiation)

Housing:

- Housing allowance only
 Parsonage only
 Either Parsonage or Housing Allowance Provided

Please explain briefly your process in discerning your compensation. The range of salaries reflects the experience level of applicants. This salary is based on our 2024 church budget and is comparable to other churches in the metro-Boston area.

Church body responsible for hiring the Interim Pastor is: Kristen Rodehorst, a member of the Board of Christian Education, Wilson Lowry, the outgoing Moderator , and James Rice, the outgoing Chair of Trustees.

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Statement of Consent

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information

is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this document that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates. As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending a suitable leader for the interim time for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates.

We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

Kristen Rodehorst, James Rice, Wilson Lowry
Signature of Search Committee Chairperson
(typed or Jpeg is sufficient)

05/29/2024
Date