Highland Park Presbyterian Church is Seeking its next Pastor

Highland Park Presbyterian Church
330 Laurel Avenue
Highland Park, IL 60035
847-432-1695

Candidates interested in being considered for this call should contact:

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The information below is intended to help candidates discern whether God is calling them to serve our church.

Our Mission Statement

We are Christ’s followers, moved by the Spirit, to God’s service. As members of the body of Christ, we carry on faithfully the ministry of Jesus. Since we encounter God in each person, we are committed to treating others with trust, love, care, and respect. We are joyfully partnering with God to reimagine, adapt, and re-energize our church and its impact on our community while maintaining a sense of tradition and respect for our history.

What is the congregation’s or organization’s vision for ministry? Additionally describe how this vision is lived out.

HPPC, a historic church currently celebrating its 150th anniversary year, is located on the North Shore of suburban Chicago in the lakefront community of Highland Park, IL. Our congregation includes multi-generational families and inter-faith couples, and enjoys an amazingly rich and vibrant music ministry. Many church members are active in civic organizations within our community of 30,000.

Our vision for ministry is to promote growth and revitalization within our congregation and be more active in our community by:
• Continuing a meaningful and engaging worship environment where all generations have opportunities to learn and grow and participate in Christian faith, and where those from other religious and social backgrounds feel comfortable and welcome to participate in our community of faith
• Seeking to embrace and build upon our youth and adult education programs to foster connections within the congregation and community
• Leading community outreach by actively supporting and expanding local mission initiatives such as PADS (homeless shelter) and Rebuilding Together (home repair) through gifts of time, energy and financial support

How do you feel called to reach out to address the emerging needs of your community or constituency?

Based on feedback from a recent congregational survey, we developed and are implementing a strategic plan to expand the spiritual vitality, leadership and ministry of our congregation. It embraces clear goals, milestones and steps for execution. One focus is to acquire ways to foster participation within our congregation, as well as to strengthen our relationship with the surrounding community. Social and demographic changes demand we rethink our approach and find new ways to share God’s love. We expect change as we broaden our outreach.

We also recognize the future need to revisit our church’s mission statement to better understand and articulate our core purposes. Focusing on inclusivity and service, we have much to offer our multi-faith, multi-cultural community, and we seek to increase visibility of God’s work performed through HPPC members. We plan to meet new people where they are, through activities designed to engage those who may not currently have a church home. Bolstering our interfaith relationships within our local community will remain a priority.

We continue involvement with and support for our existing mission initiatives with over a dozen local service organizations. Our church building provides meeting space for several community and social service groups. Several times we have opened our church to accommodate fledgling congregations. Our annual rummage sale generates interaction with the community and serves as a source of affordable clothing and supplies.

How will this position help you to reach your vision and mission goals?

We will look to our pastor to lead and teach us to strengthen our Christian faith and use our gifts for successful implementation of our strategic plan. Our pastor should inspire members to contribute their talents, treasure and energy, reminding us that those contributions are for the sake of doing God’s work in the world.

We would like the pastor to identify and invite members to participate in leadership roles and activities that they may not have previously sought out. The pastor’s teachings should nourish and inspire the congregation to share God’s love outside our walls.

Our pastor should help Session execute current plans and identify any organizational weaknesses or opportunities for improvement. We welcome new ideas and tools to enhance the vitality of our
congregation. We want to ensure we are up to date technologically and are utilizing all methods of community outreach including social media.

We want our lay leaders to be more knowledgeable in Presbyterian polity and to take increased leadership responsibilities. S/he should oversee this education and encourage lay leadership to utilize available training resources annually, particularly as new elders and deacons are installed.

By reinvigorating our congregation in spirit and participation, our new pastor will enable us to better share Christ’s teachings with our community and become more connected as a congregation.

*Provide a description of the characteristics needed by the person who is open to being called to this congregation and/or organization.*

The person called to ministry for Highland Park Presbyterian Church should:

- Be passionate about working with a small to mid-sized congregation seeking to minister to our congregation and our community as a whole
- Have sincere interest in learning about who we are as a congregation and as individuals
- Exhibit an appropriate temperament for providing pastoral care to those suffering or in need

We believe to engage with us s/he will need:

- A sense of humor, compassion and spiritual maturity
- The capacity to accept us for who we are and help us to grow in our common faith and goals
- A proficiency for navigating conflict and following through on productive resolutions
- To be self-motivated and comfortable being supported by a staff of part-time personnel and volunteers, and encouraging their development

We are looking for a person with a love of human diversity who recognizes and embraces opportunity brought through a mixing of diverse people and who understands the value of ecumenical and interfaith relationships within our community. We believe a call to this position of solo pastor requires an ability to wear many hats and incorporate the various gifts that members offer. This person should also place value on the relational aspect of the Presbyterian Church by active participation in the Chicago Presbytery and national church. S/he should be a life-long learner.

*For what specific tasks, assignments, and programs areas will this person have responsibility?*

The pastor will serve as the head of the non-clergy staff which includes: Director of Music, Director of Child and Youth Ministry, Director of Finance, Congregational Growth Coordinator, Office Administrator, and any additional staff.
The role involves the following responsibilities:

- Provide spiritual and administrative leadership for the congregation
- Preach in a manner that inspires the congregation to joyfully follow Christ’s teachings and share the gifts of the Holy Spirit throughout the week
- Lead worship services in coordination and partnership with church leaders
- Administer the sacraments and officiate at weddings and funerals
- Provide pastoral care for all who seek comfort and guidance through the church
- Serve as moderator of the Session, advisor to Deacons and head of staff
- Assist ministry groups and other committees and task forces
  - Current ministry groups include: Worship, Christian Education, Membership Development and Congregational Life, Administration and Finance, and Building and Grounds
- Train newly elected officers (Ruling Elders and Deacons) and prepare persons for membership
- Participate in the Chicago Presbytery to ensure our church is represented and connected to other local congregations, missions and ministries

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