

Church Profile Form

Reformed Church in America



Section A. Background Information

Today's Date: 1/1/2017

Position to be filled: Pastor

1. Name of church:
Bethel Reformed Church

2. Web address:
bethelreformedleota.org

3. Mailing address: PO Box 308, Leota, MN 56153
Telephone: (507) 443-5991
E-Mail address: bethelreformedleota@gmail.com

4. Classis: Minnesota

5. Classis Supervisor: Pastor Mark Groen
Address: PO Box 278, Edgerton MN, 56128
Telephone: (507) 442-3072 Cell: (605) 214-1765
E-Mail address: mark.groen@outlook.com

6. Chair of search committee: Bill Sandbulte
Address: 503 3rd Ave N, Edgerton MN 56128
Telephone: (507) 227-0029
E-Mail address: bdntj@hotmail.com

7. Membership:

Time of Worship	Five years ago	Today
Active Confessing Members	110	101
Inactive Confessing Members	18	11

Comment on significant changes:

We have made an effort of following up with our inactive members to find out who has become members of other churches, which explains the decline in inactive membership.



Age of All Active Members (baptized and confessing)	
14.9%	0 – 20 years old
11.4%	20 – 34 years old
9.6%	35 – 49 years old
26.4%	50 – 64 years old
37.7%	65 years and older

8.

Racial/Ethnic composition of congregation	
0%	African American
0%	Asian
99%	Caucasian
0%	Hispanic
1%	Other: Brazilian



9. Worship schedule:

Average Attendance (includes adults and children)		
Time of Worship	Average attendance Five years ago	Average attendance Today
9:30 a.m.	88	60

Comment on significant changes:

Many of our teen members attend church at college or where they are currently living, but haven't transferred their memberships.

10. Describe a typical worship service (order of worship, music, etc.) What is your congregation's preferred style or styles of worship? Attach a bulletin, if available.

A typical worship service begins with organ or piano music for prelude, a greeting from the pastor, then a hymn or a couple praise songs. Our service includes a children's message, confession, assurance, scripture reading, a message, congregational prayer, reading or responsive reading of the law, organ or piano playing during the offering, and special music if arranged by the ministry group. Our service usually contains 2-3 hymns, and ends with a hymn and benediction, followed by a postlude as we exit the sanctuary.

Our worship style is traditional with contemporary undertones. We are open to new ideas in worship, yet appreciate the traditions in the church. We are eager to hear God's Word preached.

11. Financial Information: Attach a copy of most recent Consistorial Report and Annual Budget if available.

	Five years ago	Today
Total RCA related contributions	\$17,000	\$24,650
Total other contributions	\$10,901	\$6,060

Percentage of total budget contributed by living donors	
100 – 90%	X
75 – 89%	
60 – 74%	
45 – 59%	
44% or less	

12. Congregational Giving:

Number of those whose annual contribution is:	
Less than \$500	Unknown
\$501 - \$1,500	
\$1,501 - \$2,500	
\$2,501 - \$3,500	
Greater than \$3,500	

13. Financial assistance: Do you receive financial assistance beyond the congregation? (rents, etc.) Yes _____ No X

List other fundraising programs that support the church:

Our Fall Mission Sale is a donation auction organized by the ministry groups (formerly by the Women's Guild) to raise funds for our mission shares.

The Men's Ham Supper is a ham supper organized and served mostly by the men of the church (formerly the Men's Brotherhood) for needs within our church.

14. Church/Sunday School:

Comment on significant changes:

Average Sunday School attendance five years ago	Average Sunday School attendance today
23 kids	12 kids
24 adults	12 adults

We have fewer young children within the families of our congregation than we did 5 years ago, and only one adult class meets instead of two now.

15. Describe briefly all educational programs (including children, young adult, adult).

Sunday morning, following our worship service, we have Sunday School for all ages. We have a K-6th grade class, a 7th-12th grade class, and an adult class.



Wednesday evenings the Leota Area Youth Program is very busy with kids from our congregation, the Christian Reformed church in town, and community children that aren't members of either church. Children in Worship for K-3rd grade has 25-30 kids attending, 4th-5th grade studies Heroes of the Bible with 14 kids, 6th-8th grade tackles the issues facing preteens with 6-10 kids, and 9th-12th grade did a six-week series and tackled teen issues with 8 kids.

16. Church groups/organizations: Briefly describe ministry purpose of each group. (use separate sheet if necessary)

Name of Group	Frequency of Meeting (i.e. weekly, bi-monthly, etc)	Attendance
Ministry Groups: Our whole church is divided into 3 ministry groups. Each group arranges greeting, coffee after church, special music, children's messages, and fellowship activities for three months at a time. The groups are also in charge of serving at funerals, should they arise. Our ministry groups are always looking for ways to contribute to needs in the community as well as taking care of the church's needs. Four times a year our congregation makes cookies for the local retirement home, we make homemade pies at Thanksgiving for the Union Gospel Mission, and we collect food for the local food shelf. Sometimes our congregation serves at the Banquet (serves meals to those in need). Our ministry groups have also held fundraisers to gather winter outdoor gear and school supplies for kids in need at our schools.	Once or twice per year depending on the rotation of the three groups.	1/3 of the congregation (about 30-35 people per group)
Quilters: Make quilts for missions.	Monthly in the winter months	9
Thrift Store: Volunteers work at the local World Home Bible League Thrift Store changing out inventory, etc.	Monthly	8

17. Comment on one event or experience over the last year that has significantly contributed to the spiritual life of the congregation.

Our church has joined resources with the Christian Reformed church in town to create the Leota Area Youth Program. The program has received tremendous support from both churches and the community. The Wednesday night program now brings in about 53-62 kids from Leota and neighboring communities in grades K-12 led by adults from both congregations and the community in bible study and fellowship.

18. Buildings: Please describe church-owned or rented buildings and purpose.



The church itself is made up of a beautiful newer sanctuary (1997) with pews in a semicircle around the raised pulpit area. Many have commented on the warmth and coziness this set up provides. Our sanctuary is carpeted, the pews padded, and includes a pipe organ, a digital piano, an acoustic piano, a choir area to the side of the pulpit area, and an excellent sound board (3 years old) complete with a computer and new HD projector.



The sanctuary is attached to the fellowship hall where we enjoy fellowship after the service every Sunday, host a ham dinner that's well-attended by the entire community, conduct family services before funerals, serve lunch after funerals, entertain baby and bridal showers, set up for the donation auction, and celebrate weddings. The fellowship hall is complete with a fully-supplied kitchen and restrooms.

The basement of the church and fellowship hall contains seven Sunday School rooms, a two-room nursery, an office, restrooms and a consistory meeting room. The church, entry, fellowship hall, most of the Sunday School rooms, Pastor's study, consistory room, and nursery are all carpeted. The consistory room is sometimes called the "Fireside Room" because it is outfitted with an electric fireplace.



The parsonage is a ranch style home conveniently located across the street to the north of the church property. The home was built in the 1960's, has a double attached garage with a handyman area, a wheelchair accesible entrance, and a finished basement. The main floor consists of a large family room with a formal entrance, a kitchen attached to the dining area, a bathroom, laundry room with cabinet storage and folding surface, and two bedrooms (one is the master). The basement has a storage room (not carpeted), a very large family room, a bathroom, a bedroom, an unofficial bedroom (no window access), and kitchenette area. Appliances are included.

19. Do you plan any capital expenditure during the next five years? Yes _____ No X
If yes, please explain briefly:

20. Is there a mortgage indebtedness? Yes _____ No X
Amount \$
Of how long standing?
Annual rate of repayment

21. Pastor's study:

There is a Pastor's study in the basement of the church, next to the consistory meeting room. It is carpeted, includes a full wall of cabinet and shelf storage, a desk, windows with shelf storage below, and a closet to hang and store items. The parsonage also has an unofficial bedroom (no window access) and a kitchenette area than can both be used as office space.

22. List all paid staff in addition to the pastor:

Position	Full/Part Time
Secretary	Part time
Janitor	Part time
Grounds Keeper	Part time

23. Consistory Membership: What method is used in selecting members?

Our congregation nominates consistory members from a list of those eligible for election. The top nominees are voted upon at the annual congregational meeting.

Please list present Consistory members (put a check in the box where appropriate).

Elder	Deacon	Male	Female	Occupation
X		X		Business Owner
X		X		Business Owner
X		X		Retired Business Owner
X		X		Business Owner
	X	X		Truck Driver
	X	X		School Custodian/Coach
	X	X		Butcher
	X	X		Farmer

24. What leadership roles do women currently fill in your church?

Women (and men) lead ministry groups, teach Sunday School, lead youth groups, organize praise time and PowerPoint for service, direct Vacation Bible School, give children's messages, read scripture, provide organ/piano music for service, and lead the congregation in prayer. Women have been nominated but not yet elected to consistory positions, but do serve on committees.

25. In our congregation...(please check appropriate box)

	Few have	Many have	Most have
Had up to twelve years of formal education			X
Had some education beyond high school		X	
Have a college degree	X		
Have a graduate degree	X		

26. In our congregation...(please check a box)

	Few have	Many have	Most have
Scientists and Engineers	X		
Farmers		X	
Business People		X	
Students and Teachers	X		
Industrial Workers	X		
Office Workers	X		
Other: Retired		X	

27. Special training/experience desired: (Describe briefly)

We desire a pastor who is energetic and enjoys being involved in a community. Our ideal pastor would be able to show love to people through good communication skills with the elderly, the working people, and the youth. Someone who is diligent with visits to the elderly and hospital bound and likes to interact with the kids of the community and congregation. We hope for a pastor who enjoys studying and sharing the truth of God's Word.

28. Languages:

Should your pastor be fluent in any language other than English? Yes _____ No X

29. The salary we are prepared to offer our new pastor is \$ _____

The average annual increase to our pastor over the past three years was \$ _____

30. Is a parsonage provided? Yes X No _____

If so, is it on site with the church? Yes _____ No X

If the parsonage is not on site with the church, how far from the church is it located?

The parsonage is across the street to the north of the church property, approximately 100 yards away.

31. Is a Minister's housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage a negotiable option?

Yes _____ No X

32. The benefits/business expenses we will provide our pastor are:

The financial package offered by Bethel Reformed Church will be determined by education and experience of the candidate, and all of the below will meet classis minimum guidelines.

Base Salary	\$
Housing Allowance	\$
Parsonage provided?	YES
Travel Reimbursement	\$
Social Security (Amount)	\$
Book Allowance (Amount)	\$
Continuing Education Allowance (Amount)	\$
Provision for Sabbatical	\$
Other (Specify Below)	\$
TOTAL	\$

Yes _____ No _____ Retirement
 Yes _____ No _____ Major Medical Insurance
 Yes _____ No _____ Health/Hospital Insurance
 Yes _____ No _____ Life Insurance
 Yes _____ No _____ Dental Insurance
 Yes _____ No _____ Unemployment Insurance
 Yes _____ No _____ Disability Insurance

Annual Vacation (Number of Weeks)

Necessary Comments regarding above:

33. Community served: (please check one)

Rural: Under 2,500	X
Town: 2,500 – 9,999	
Small City: 10,000 – 49,000	
Metropolitan - Suburban: 50,000+	
Metropolitan - Urban: 50,000+	
Metropolitan – Inner City: 50,000+	
Other:	

34. Cooperative ministry: In what ways have you cooperated with other churches in your community during the past year?

A few times a year we worship with our neighboring church, Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church for a community service (July 4th, GEMS Sunday, Youth Sunday, VBS Program, etc.). We join with Ebenezer and other churches from the nearby community of Edgerton for a Community Prayer Service. We also participate in the Fellowship of Churches service twice a year, which includes the other eight area RCA churches. Our VBS and GEMS programs are community-wide, as is our youth program (see #17).

35. Community involvement: In what community programs or projects have you participated during the past year? (As an organization, not as individuals.)

Our church has joined together with the local Christian Reformed church to provide a youth program for the young people of Leota and the surrounding area. Our church sent workers, funds, and supplies to Juarez, Mexico with Justice for All to continue work on an orphanage and minister to the local families. Members of our congregation have prepared and served meals to homeless and needy people at the Banquet in Sioux Falls, SD. They thoroughly enjoyed their fellowship time with the people there. Our congregation has a long standing reputation with the Union Gospel Mission in Sioux Falls, SD for providing homemade pies for their Thanksgiving meal. We make cookies for the residents of the local retirement homes to enjoy. Our members serve as workers at the World Home Bible League Thrift Store in Worthington, MN. As a congregation, we have gathered food, winter clothing, hats, mittens, boots, school supplies, toiletries and funds to provide glasses and other necessities for the school's social worker to hand out as needed through the Backpack Program at the local school.

36. What denominations or religions are present within three miles (in rural areas, consider the county) where your church is located?

Reformed, Christian Reformed, Evangelical Free, Catholic, Jehovah's Witness, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and about 35 miles away there is a very multi-ethnic community with many immigrants who also have different religions outside of Christianity.

37. Outreach: What is your strategy to reach un-churched people in your community?

Our strategy is to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those in our community, thereby showing them the love of Christ. Through the Leota Youth Program we hope to reach the children of our community as well as their parents and family members. We have stepped forward to help unchurched people in our community with needs that they have: rides to cancer treatment, funds for a relative's funeral, clothing and furniture to a family that experienced a house fire, bibles given to children who have come to visit the church, fundraising help for medical treatments, and our congregation is very quick to provide a meal to families that are in need or hurting.

38. The income level of the people in our congregation tends to be: (please check one)

X	About average for our community
	Somewhat below the rest of the community
	Somewhat higher than the rest of the community

39. Describe the community and school system: (Provide website links where appropriate.)

Leota is a very small, vibrant, and strong community of approximately 200 people. Our town has a café, branch bank, post office, grocery store, meat locker, grain elevator, cardrol gas station and many small businesses including milk haulers and trucking companies. It is a rural area, with many beef, dairy, and hog farmers.

Edgerton is the nearest community at 10 miles away and contains the schools for our children:

- Edgerton Public School, a K-12 public school (edgertonpublic.com)
- Edgerton Christian Elementary, a K-8 private school (edgertonchristianschool.org)
- Southwest Minnesota Christian High, a 9-12 private school (swmch.org)
- Edgerton Free Christian, a K-8 private school

40. Record of last three pastors:

Name	Dates
Rev. Barrett Lang	2009 to 2016
Rev. David Vander Leest	1997 to 2008
Rev. Leroy Boender	1990 to 1996

41. Please complete your profile with the following contacts:

Name	
Ivan DeJong	Vice President, Consistory
Pastor Mark Groen	Classis Supervisor

Section B. Reflections

Please answer the following questions, adding your own experiences where appropriate.

- 1) What is the stated mission, vision or purpose of your congregation?

The mission of Bethel Reformed Church is to help believers grow in their faith in Jesus Christ and to experience His redemption power, sharing that message through God's Word and by being the hands and feet of Jesus in the greater community and in the church.



- 2) What goals have been developed from your mission and vision over the next 5 years?
(Example new programs or outreach ministries.) Include long range or strategic plan.

Our newest program is the Leota Area Youth Program, helping us reach the youth of Leota and our surrounding communities. Our goal is to reach out to the children as well as parents of the youth program children, the unchurched, and inactive members of our community. We want our church to provide a warm and inviting place to fellowship with these people as we begin to develop those relationships that give a glimpse of Christ through the grace and love shown by our congregation.

- 3) Describe the strengths of your church, the best of what you are as a community, and what you can offer a new pastor.

The strengths of our church include the willingness of our members to be involved in our church through our ministry groups. We are positive, welcoming, and genuinely care for one another. We are open to newer styles of worship. Our building is inviting and warm. We seek to welcome new members to hear the solid truth of the gospel. As a community we are loving and strong. We come together in times of need to bolster one another up. We can offer a new pastor a nurturing environment for growth. Our church has had several pastors that were new to ministry as a first or second career.

- 4) Explain the strategies or ideas that most excite your church in becoming or remaining missional.

Our church has two main strategies to raise the majority of our missional funds. In the fall, after the harvest, we have a Donation Auction. Members of the congregation donate all kinds of items (even each other's personal belongings, if you're not paying attention) up for auction. People open their wallets and pocket books and give generously while bidding on homemade pies and jams, fresh cut meat, craft items, and silly white elephant gifts all in the name of mission giving. At Thanksgiving, our consistory puts forth a challenge for the Thanksgiving offering to be taken during the Thanksgiving-eve service.

Consistently, our congregation not only meets, but exceeds the goal set by the consistory for our mission shares. Our members all wait around fellowshiping after the service to find out how much money we raised, and are thrilled when we surpass the previous year's amount. Members of our congregation are excited as they plan their trip to Juarez, Mexico to continue work on the orphanage each year. It seems like more people are recruited every year, even taking children out of school for lessons about Christ's love in action.

- 5) Name three of your church's most passionate hopes and why they are significant.

Our most passionate hope is to grow our church by welcoming new members in to hear and receive the gospel truth and to fellowship with the family of believers. Our church is excited to continue to increase the number of youth we can minister to through the Youth Program because they will be the future of our church. Our church desires to continue to be a vibrant and vital part of the spiritual community with the help of an energetic and Spirit-filled pastor to lead us and teach us by example.

- 6) How do you hope someone who visits your church would describe what s/he considers to be most important?

Our hope is that someone visiting our church would feel welcomed through us as Christ welcomes everyone into the church. We hope those who enter are seeking a relationship with Christ, and that they can be fed by His word in our services and by our actions outside the services. We want visitors to realize that our church is full of life and ready for growth.

- 7) Name at least one challenge facing your new pastor.

One challenge facing our pastor will be to motivate us to extend ourselves outside of our comfort zone in our desire to be a vibrant, vital congregation working as the hands and feet of Jesus as we grow in our faith.

- 8) Describe your vision and hopes for your church and your pastor over the next 5 years.

Our vision for our church is to share the gospel truth and the love of God as we grow in numbers and faith. Our hope is that our new pastor will continue to foster the unity of our congregation, and that our pastor will feel welcomed and supported as a part of our church family.

- 9) Explain whatever else you would like your potential pastor to know about your church.

We are a fun-loving group of Christians who are excited to meet the person that God has set aside for our church. We are sincere about the ministry of the true Word of God, not the cultural interpretation of it.

Reformed Church in America
Office of Ministry Services

Release Statement

We, Bethel Reformed Church, acknowledge that the information in this Church Profile is accurate and complete. We authorize the Office of Ministry Services (OMS) to release this profile to designated recipient(s) seeking positions as ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament, including posting of this profile on the RCA website.

Bill Sandbulte

Signature of Search Team Chairperson or Designated

6/27/17

Date