

Church Profile

Fountain Street Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Prepared by the Senior Minister Search Committee for use by applicants.

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Basic Information Regarding Senior Minister Position:

Anticipated Start Date: August 2020

Term: Ongoing position

Percent Time: 100% Time

Senior Minister Salary:

Salary and benefits are competitive with other churches of similar size in similar geographic areas. A salary range for this position will be established by the Governing Board and exact terms will be established as part of the finalist interview and hiring process, depending on the candidate's level of experience.

Benefits:

Among the benefits provided to the Senior Minister are: health and life insurance; professional expenses; retirement benefits; long-term disability coverage; vacation and personal time. The exact terms of the benefit package will be established as part of the finalist interview and hiring process.

Sabbatical time for the Senior Minister is established by church policy as follows: sabbatical time shall begin to accrue following the first year of service at the rate of one month for each full year of completed service, but may not be taken prior to the completion of five years of service nor may accrue more than five months.

General Description of Senior Minister's role:

The Senior Minister is responsible for implementing goals and policies determined by the Governing Board that primarily relate to the spiritual and religious life of the Church, including worship, music, pastoral care, education and social justice, except for areas or functions for which responsibility has been delegated to an Associate Minister. [From Policy Group No. 1].

Description of minister's role in relation to other paid staff:

The Senior Minister supervises and aids the development of staff members who are primarily engaged in the spiritual and religious life of the church. Currently, these include a full-time minister for spiritual life and learning, a part-time associate minister for visitation, and a 3/4-time music director. The Senior Minister has responsibility for hiring and termination decisions regarding non-ministerial staff members who are primarily engaged in the spiritual and religious life of the church (e.g. Music Director), and advises the Governing Board regarding hiring/termination decisions regarding Associate Ministers and Executive Director (if any). [Policy Group No. 1]. The minister should be proficient in interviewing, supporting, developing and evaluating staff involved in the spiritual and religious life of the church.

Primary areas of focus for the minister in this role:

The primary areas of focus for the senior minister are worship, education, counseling, visitation, and other pastoral duties, such as officiating at weddings and funerals.

How the congregation defines good preaching and worship:

During the Senior Minister search process, congregants indicated that, in addition to community building, good preaching was a priority for them. The highlight of the weekly 11 a.m. sanctuary service is the 20-minute (or so) sermon. Among the adjectives that arose most frequently to describe good preaching were “dynamic, enthusiastic, challenging, honest, sincere, and authentic.” Congregants also indicated that intellectual perspectives, familiarity with historic spiritual traditions and scholarship were important, but those should be combined with “heart.” The spiritual dimension of life is very important to congregants and they come to church expecting this aspect to be addressed. A minister who has an engaging speaking style and walks the walk or preaches with “prophetic witness” is the ideal.

Congregants appreciate worship services that have a sense of the sacred without being “stuffy” and are open to various styles of music. Most music performed at the 11 a.m. sanctuary service is drawn from traditional church and classical repertoire, with some contemporary music. Hymns are accompanied by the recently restored 8,000 pipe organ known as “Catherine the Great.” Congregational hymns are drawn mostly from the Unitarian Universalist Association hymnal,

Singing the Living Tradition. The music at the 9:30 chapel service is drawn from contemporary rock and folk-rock styles, not necessarily explicitly religious in content.

[Note: For a more detailed description of the senior minister's role and the personal characteristics we desire, see the accompanying "Position Description" document.]

Worship service schedule:

There are generally two Sunday services from late August through early June. The 9:30 a.m. Chapel Community service emphasizes group participation, artistic expression and contemporary music. Currently this service is group-facilitated with a part-time minister providing direction. 50-75 weekly attendance. See: <https://www.fountainstreet.org/chapel-worship>

The 11 a.m. main sanctuary service is more traditional, with a mix of music which includes classical sacred repertoire from many traditions and uses the UUA hymnal and supplements. The music features our organ, one of the largest in west Michigan, and classical Steinway piano, with guest soloists and the church's 25 voice adult choir. The focus of this service is on the sermon, usually given by the Senior Minister, with occasional guest speakers in our tradition of a "free and open pulpit." 250 average weekly attendance. See: <https://www.fountainstreet.org/this-sunday>

The church observes the four Sundays of Advent (celebrating Faith, Hope, Love and Joy) and has a children's and evening service on Christmas Eve. There is usually a small Good Friday observance. Other holidays (Memorial Day, Mothers'/Fathers' Day, etc.) may occasion themed services. There is an annual Reverence for Life (blessing of the animals) service in April near Earth Day, and a Coming-of-Age celebration for adolescents in springtime.

Child dedication services are periodically incorporated into the 11 a.m. Sunday worship service.

During the summer months, the Religious Services Committee arranges for congregants to deliver the sermons at a single 10 a.m. service in the chapel.

Vision, Mission, and End Goals:

Vision Statement:

We strive to be a vibrant church community that challenges individuals to craft their own spiritual journeys, and to engage in creative and responsible action in the world.

Mission Statement:

We support the creative tension between intellect and spirit, science and faith, individual and community, tradition and change, challenging us to honor our legacy by embracing the future.

Core Values: [from the 2017 Strategic Plan].

We value the spirit of inquiry which respects the religious, humanist, and spiritual teachings from many wisdom traditions; we value the direct experience of the mystery that moves us to engage in the never-ending search for universal truths that free the mind.

We value the active practice of love and justice in human relationships which validate the worth and dignity of each human being, inspiring us to deepen our commitment to deeds over creeds, calling us to grow the soul.

We value community founded on the purposeful inclusion of all, in the service of others within our church and beyond, connecting and empowering us to change the world.

Ends Statements (Goals) from Strategic Action Plan: [Source: the 2017 (current) Strategic Plan prepared in association with Richardson-Green consultants.]

To build a growth and sustainability strategy that meets the needs of the religiously unaffiliated and those who self-identify as spiritual but not religious, in alignment with the FSC vision, mission and values.

Objective #1: Refine operating model for most effective growth and sustainability.

Objective #2: Attract/retain religiously unaffiliated members.

Objective #3: Establish a “Key Indicators Dashboard Accountability System” to better manage resources.

Inclusion Statement:

We, the congregation of Fountain Street Church, create a community that is intentionally welcoming to all. We do this without requiring adherence to any religious belief or creed. We foster a climate of purposeful inclusion, an environment where all can feel safe, valued, cared for, and given an opportunity to form meaningful connections with each other. We cherish the diversity of humanity, a diversity which includes differences in age, race, ethnicity, and national origin, range of abilities, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, financial means, education, and political perspective. These beliefs and practices apply to all of the activities of our congregation; they inform all of our decisions, including our employment decisions. (<https://www.fountainstreet.org/vision-and-mission>)

Church Policies on Sexual Harassment and Child Abuse:

The goals of Fountain Street Church are to foster trust, understanding and respect for all people. According to the vision and mission statements, we strive to be a vibrant church community that challenges individuals to craft their own spiritual journeys and to engage in creative and responsible action in the world. With that in mind, we acknowledge that certain behaviors violate the fundamental rights, dignity, and integrity of the individual; among those are sexual

harassment and child abuse. Therefore the church institutes this policy: *Fountain Street Church does not permit any form of abusive behavior within the community life.* [from Policy Group no. 5, Human Resources.] A link to all church policies may be found on the church's web site at <https://www.fountainstreet.org/governing-board>

Accessibility

Fountain Street Church's sanctuary and meeting places are wheelchair accessible. The street level entrances are handicap accessible, and internal levels are accessible through elevators and a recently installed wheelchair lift. (One remaining access difficulty is wheelchair access to the chancel/pulpit level in the sanctuary.)

The sanctuary is equipped with assisted listening via a T-loop system.

The Governance and Ministry Model at Fountain Street Church:

Fountain Street Church adopted a modified form of policy governance in 2004. In this model, the Governing Board sets policies, goals and objectives and the Senior Minister and staff work to implement and achieve these.

Over the past 15 years, various iterations of team ministry and management have been applied, the most common model being to divide ministry from management. In this model, the Senior Minister is responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church and manages staff in those areas, such as education, music, and pastoral activities.

Management of the "business" affairs of the church, such as front office, physical plant, and staff management has been accomplished in a variety of ways in the past twenty years. Various iterations of an executive team have worked together to integrate the ministry and management of the church, with annual fundraising being a function of the Senior Minister, an Executive Director and Governing Board, or of a Stewardship Committee established for that purpose. In the past, the Executive Team membership has varied from two to five persons, with associate ministers sometimes being included and other times not. From 2016 until September 1, 2019, the Executive Team consisted of the Senior Minister and the Executive Director. The configuration of responsibilities since September 1, 2019 maintains the Senior Minister as director of the spiritual welfare of the church. Administrative staff currently report to the Officers Committee of the Governing board via regular meetings.

The exact configuration of the management functions of the church is determined by the Governing Board, not the church by-laws and so may be changed by the board periodically to enhance church management. It is anticipated that the current arrangement will be in place until the hiring of the new Senior Minister at which time the ministry and management functions will be reconsidered based on the new minister's interests and skill set.

Current Church Personnel

Name	Position	Paid Hours per Week	Year Started
W. Frederick Wooden	Senior Minister	40	2005
Christopher Roe	Minister of Spiritual Life and Learning	40	2018
Melissa Hoezee	Accounting/Human Resources	40	2006
Linda Jones	Interim Choir Director	10	2019
Kim Ras	Office coordinator	30	2009
Conor Bardallis	Events Coordinator	40	2013
Virginia Anzengruber	Content and communications manager	40	2018
Danny Heck	AV Coordinator	Part-time	2018
Andy DeBraber	Interim Sunday Chapel Coord.	Part-time	2019
James Hughes	Chapel Band Leader	Part-time	2018
David Lee Smith	Associate Minister of Visitation	10	

Congregational Life

As is true of most churches, Fountain Street Church includes a wide variety of committees, affinity groups, activities, and opportunities for engagement. Sunday worship is only one of these, though traditionally this is the common thread that united congregants and provided focus. The church also has an ever-evolving education program.

Religious education programs:

The Learning Commons is Fountain Street Church's answer to a 21st century learning program. Initiated in fall 2019, it is a spiritual life and learning center in which everyone, regardless of religious orientation or life background is invited to *Free the Mind, Grow the Soul, and Change the World*. It is directed by the Rev. Christopher Roe, minister for spiritual and life learning.

In an effort to accommodate the broadest cross-section of the community, The Learning Commons is structured around both Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. Programs are offered on a weekly, monthly, and quarterly basis and are co-led and implemented with a variety of local organizations and non-profits.

We offer programs, learning experiences, and spiritual connections that we feel are severely under-represented in our larger community, including science-based sexuality education, social

justice service learning, climate change education, and inter-religious and spiritual literacy encounters.

Character School (pre-school to middle school), Tower Club (middle school), and Fountain Club (high school) are the church's traditional names for our Sunday morning programs for children and youth. After 2020, they will be subsumed under the general name "Programs for Children, Programs for Youth, Programs for Adults, and Programs for Families."

Starting in fall 2019, The Learning Commons will have a breakout page accessible through the church's main website and also its own URL. The Learning Commons now has its own social media platform that consolidates many of the other learning program platforms previously maintained by the church.

Committees and Groups:

In addition to worship and education, the church has regular **church life committees** which are largely self-governing. Some of these traditionally had their own budgets, but in recent years almost all of them have been brought into the church's fiscal structures. Official church committees and boards do a lot of the volunteer work of the church. They include: the Archives Committee, the Art Committee, the Choice Fund Board, the Duncan Littlefair Great Speakers Series Board, Governing Board and its standing and ad hoc committees, the Foundation Board which oversees the endowment, the Properties Committee which monitors the state of the church building, the Religious Services Committee, the Music Committee, the Stewardship Committee, and the Social Action Committee.

Activity Groups tend to be more social, though some of them do carry out church functions. The Hospitality Group includes coffee volunteers, greeters, ushers, and tour guides. The Care group includes BeFrienders and Wellspring Wellness which provide support to congregants in need.

Fellowship groups are primarily social in function and are organized around activities. Current groups include Spiritual Expressions (poetry writing), a kayak club, church gardeners, a poker and philosopher group, a softball team, various book groups, and a women's association. Attendance and involvement in these groups varies from year to year.

The Social Action Ministry. Fountain Street Church's commitment to social justice has a long history. Members of the church were instrumental in founding local chapters of, among others, Planned Parenthood, the American Civil Liberties Union, and ANSWER, a non-profit educational foundation serving children in Nepal.

Our shared Sunday offering is an important part of our social service and outreach. From 2009-2019, all cash received in the collection plate that was not specifically dedicated to church expenses has been distributed to the west Michigan community (primarily) via the church's Social Action Committee Grants Program. This program is very popular with congregants.

In 2017, the church granted nearly \$75,000 to more than 30 projects at the local, regional, national and international level. In total, over \$400,000 has been returned to the community through Social Action Grants since the practice began.

[Note: In June 2019, the Governing Board temporarily altered this plate distribution program because of financial exigency. Proceeds are now divided 50/50 between social outreach and church operations.]

The church also administers the Choice Fund which makes reproductive health care, including legal abortions, available for women with limited means. In 2018, the church provided over \$25,000 in support of women's health care.

We partner with local social service agencies such as Heartside Ministry, an inner-city ministry, which directs our Neighborhood Assistance funds to needy area residents. Members of the congregation help staff God's Kitchen, Family Promise (aid to families with children), and tutor at a local elementary school. We are the founding chapter of ANSWER in Nepal, a foundation supporting education for poor children in Nepal. We participate in Build Guild (similar to Habitat for Humanity), and join in other social service activities in the area including Schools of Hope (literacy tutoring for grades 1-3 in Grand Rapids Public Schools).

Each year, the church also provides a scholarship to Grand Rapids Community College, to allow a DACA student to attend college. Since 2016, the church has helped to settle three refugee families in Grand Rapids.

Because we are located in a downtown area, we offer access to the church as a warming station in winter months. On Sunday, we have many housing-challenged neighbors using our Social Hall for coffee and a place to get out of the elements.

The church also provides in-kind donations of space and volunteers as well as financial support to over 25 non-profit organizations.

Non-church groups using the facilities. A number of community groups also use the church building regularly, either on a free or rental basis. These include a regular noon meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous that has been using the church for more than 30 years, two Buddhist groups, a neo-pagan worship group, and a yoga group. The facility also rents meeting rooms, typically to non-profit groups. Nearby Grand Rapids Community College also makes regular use of the building for public events like notable speakers in exchange for the church's use of the college's parking structure on Sundays.

Congregation History

Fountain Street Church was founded as Fountain Street *Baptist* Church in 1869. The original members were from two rival Baptist congregations that had grown out of earlier Baptist missions to Michigan dating back as early as 1829. In 1869, the two congregations merged, forming a single Baptist Church. In 1871, they built a wooden Gothic revival church on Fountain Street in which they sang and worshipped until the building was destroyed by fire in 1917. Under

the leadership of Pastor Alfred Wishart, the congregation held together and raised money to build the current Italian Romanesque church in 1924. The outward-looking focus of the congregation was evident in the plans for the building which was intended to be not only a home for the church members but also a public hall. At the time it was built, the 1600-seat sanctuary was the largest public meeting hall in Grand Rapids, and is still used today for large public gatherings, lectures, performances, and events. It is an architectural landmark and place of inspiring beauty.

More importantly, however, the history of the church as an organization shows consistent growth towards more openness and inclusion, as well as social action. In the late 19th and early 20th century, the church's orthodox Christian tradition became infused with the social gospel. Rev. John L. Jackson, a graduate of the University of Chicago, said, ". . . the Gospel has to do with getting us in a better position to live. Its first aim is to touch humanity and better the people. If death ended all, the Gospel would still have its place, teaching [us] to live better." The first of six ministers hired from the University of Chicago, Jackson argued for freedom of inquiry, critiqued the idea of a vengeful God, questioned literal interpretation of scripture, and believed science could produce new truths. Issues of poverty and injustice became prime concerns of the church.

That tradition continued through the rest of the church's history. Herman J. Randall, the next minister, brought the higher criticism, empirical methods and the social gospel and, according to church historians, transformed Fountain Street Church. He seems to have begun the tradition of inviting controversial speakers to the church when, in 1899, he brought Susan B. Anthony to address the congregation. The congregation reaffirmed him and supported his radical (for the time) views. This curious blend of tradition and innovation can be seen in the very design of the new building which arose from the ashes of the 1917 fire. Rev. Alfred Wishart, a student of art history, went with a delegation of congregants to Europe to get ideas for a new church building. The resulting Italian Romanesque style building is loaded with turn of the century Arts and Crafts details, and, most surprisingly, two ranks of stained glass windows. On the east wall, the windows depict scenes from the Bible. On the west wall, the windows depict heroes of intellect and conscience, including Socrates, Martin Luther, Charles Darwin, Louis Pasteur, John Bunyan and figures from American revolutionary history, including George Washington. It is an architectural statement of belief in the interaction of spirit and mind.

In the mid-20th century, a young minister named Duncan Littlefair was called to the pulpit and his long tenure at the church set the liberal and independent stamp on it forever. Described by many as a visionary, he instituted rapid change, doing away with the last vestiges of the old Baptist tradition such as baptism, the Lord's Supper, the Lord's Prayer, and missions to China and India. He replaced them with a vigorous and expansive children's education program, discussion of myths and symbols, study of world religions, and the radical (but traditionally Protestant) admonition to think for yourself and be your own representative to God. In the end, it was too much, and the Michigan Baptist Convention of the American Baptists and Fountain Street Church mutually decided to part ways. By 1962, Fountain Street Church was free and independent of any denominational affiliation and remains so today.

Dr. Littlefair remained a towering presence in the church until his retirement in 1979. During his time, the church became renowned as a center of intellectual life and social action in West Michigan. Local chapters of Planned Parenthood and the ACLU sprang from the work of members of the church who were inspired by Littlefair, and the church building became a concert and speaking venue for jazz musicians like Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, B. B. King and Dave Brubeck, as well as rock groups like U2, the Moody Blues, and others. Great speakers came to the pulpit, continuing the tradition set early on. In recent years the church has hosted Michael Moore, Gloria Steinem, Louis Farrakhan, George McGovern and Robert Kennedy Jr.

After Dr. Littlefair retired in 1979, the church called its next Senior Ministers from the Unitarian Universalist tradition and hired associate ministers from diverse traditions, including the United Church of Christ, and the American Baptist Convention. David Rankin led the church for 15 years immediately after Littlefair, and, after Dr. Brent Smith (1999-2001) and an interim period, Dr. Fred Wooden has led the church since 2005. He will retire in spring 2020. The focus on intellectual stimulation and social justice has remained a constant in the church's 150 years history.

As we move further into the 21st century, we hope to continue redefining what religion can be in the contemporary world.

A Note on Fountain Street Church's independent, non-denominational status:

When Fountain Street Church disaffiliated from the Baptist Church in the 1960s, it decided to remain independent of any denominational affiliation. It describes itself as "a non-creedal, non-denominational, liberal church." This independence allows the church to shape its own broad theology and practice. That being said, the last five Senior Ministers have been members of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and theologically we are most in kinship with the UUA. In 2016, the congregation held several town hall discussions on the question of affiliation, and the Governing Board initiated discussion with the UUA national office about affiliation. After several months of lively discussion and discernment, the Governing Board decided in October 2016 to table further discussion of the question. Thus, the idea of denominational affiliation was not rejected or accepted but remains a potential item of ongoing congregational discussion and discernment.

That being said, the church's recent associate ministers have been drawn from the ranks of many denominations, including the United Church of Christ, Church of the Brethren, the Reformed Church in American and United Methodist Church.

The following paragraph from the church's web site, written by former senior minister Rev. David O. Rankin, describes the unique blend that marks Fountain Street Church's openness:

With the Baptists, we share a commitment to absolute liberty of spiritual conscience and the rigorous separation of church and state. With the Unitarian Universalists, we share a commitment to examining all claims of religious truth and testing each against the evidence of science and other disciplines of knowledge. With the Congregationalists, we share a commitment to spiritual democracy, meaning that the local church should govern

itself, choose its clergy, and raise its own funds. With the Dutch Reformed Church, we believe that church must be ever reforming. With the Church of the Brethren, we believe ministry is for all members, not just the clergy. (<https://www.fountainstreet.org/history-of-fsc>)

Demographics of Congregation:

Age:

- 17-28: 2%
- 29-38: 5%
- 39-48: 8%
- 49-58: 16%
- 59-68: 23%
- 69-78: 26%
- 78+: 20%

Percentage of members who identify as people of color:

- The church does not track this information. Estimate less than 10%. There are a number of interracial families.

Percentage of members who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ)?

- The church does not track this information, but the church has been active in LGBTQ+ rights initiatives. The youth group (Fountain Club) sponsored the city’s first city-wide alternative prom for LGBTQ youth and has been welcoming to the LGBTQ community. Same-sex marriages have become a regular part of the church’s liturgical life. In June, 2019, members of the congregation designed and celebrated a Sunday service honoring Pride Month which was attended by several hundred people from the region.

The gender makeup of the congregation:

- Recent surveys indicate 60% female, 40% male, but church documents and questionnaires now include possible responses such as “neither” or “prefer not to say,” in addition to these binary distinctions.

Ministerial History

Minister Name	Service Years	Notes
Samuel Graves	1870-1885	
Kerr Tupper	1885-1890	
John Jackson	1890-1896	
J. Herman Randall	1897-1906	

Alfred Wishart	1906-1933	
Milton McGorrill	1933-1943	
Duncan Littlefair	1944-1979	
William Edelin	1980	Elected by congregation but did not serve.
Bruce Bode	1979-1982	Acting, assisted by guest preachers, including Duncan Littlefair
David Rankin	1982-1997	
Bruce Bode and Don Hoekstra	1997-1999	Acting co-ministers, with guest preachers
Brent Smith	1999-2001	
	2001-2002	Guest preachers
Judith Walker-Riggs	2002-2004	Interim
Thomas Owen-Towle	2004-2005	Interim
W. Frederick Wooden	2005-present	

Describe any important Lay Leaders:

The church is committed to the democratic process. The congregation elects its Governing Board, and many members are active in leadership positions in church life committees and groups, its Foundation Board and Senior Minister Search Committees. In addition, many members volunteer or are appointed into leadership positions in church life committees and interest groups.

Membership & Finances:

Fountain Street Church has five basic sources of revenue: pledge income, contributions of record, facilities rental, “other” fundraising, and an annual distribution from the FSC Foundation (endowment).

The church’s fiscal year begins on January 1.

A pledge campaign is conducted in the fall seeking pledges for the coming year. A pledge is an amount promised in advance for the coming year. “Pledge unit” is the term we use for a contributing individual or group. For example, a single person would be one “pledge unit” and a family of five that pledges would also be counted as one pledge unit. Thus the number of pledge units (mentioned below) is not the same as the number of members.

“Contribution of record” is the term used for contributions that are given by individuals for the operations of the church but which were not pledged in advance. Many congregants and non-congregants choose to contribute via this method.

Combined, pledged income and contributions of record amount to 72.5% of all income

Our staff has made a concerted effort to rent space in our buildings for meetings, weddings, public gatherings, and other events. In recent years, facility rentals have made up approximately 11.5% of annual income.

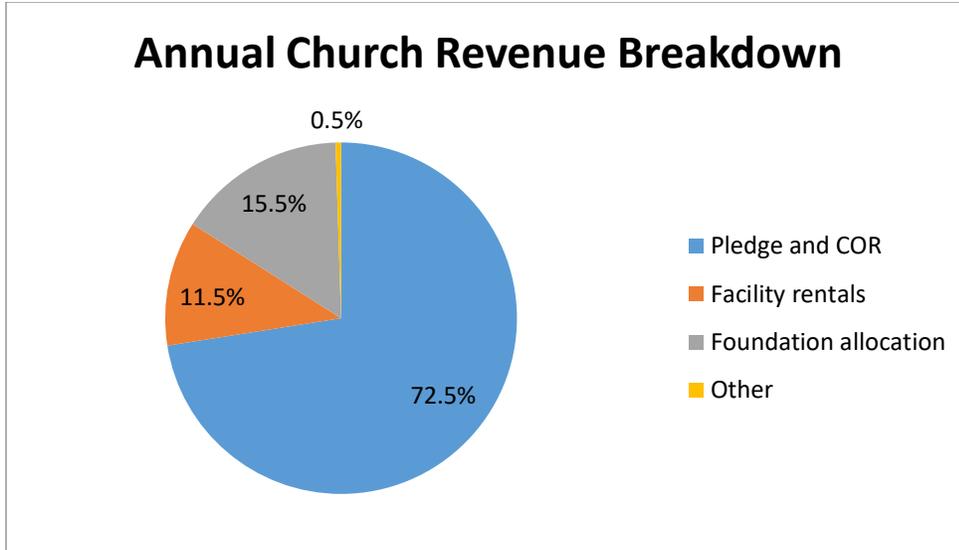
Throughout the year, various church groups and committees stage fundraisers. These efforts contribute less than 1% of annual income.

The FSC Foundation is an endowment governed by a board elected by the congregation which oversees the endowment management separate from church administration. Funds in the endowment are invested, and the income from the investments is dedicated to maintaining our historic building. An annual distribution from the Foundation is made to the church, which then uses it for building upkeep, repair and maintenance.

Until 2018, the Foundation contribution was not included in the church’s revenue reporting but was reported separately to the Governing Board. In addition to the annual distribution from the Foundation, in 2018 the Foundation loaned the church \$100,000 to support church operations. The Foundation’s annual allocation amounts to 15.5% of the church’s annual operating budget.

The annual percentage breakdown of sources of church income is as follows:

Pledge income and contributions of record:	72.5%
Facility rentals/weddings:	11.5
Foundation allocation:	15.5
Other (e.g. fundraisers):	<u>0.5</u>
Total:	100%



The figures below, taken from the congregation’s annual reports, provide a summary snapshot of the church’s financial activity over the past several years, organized from the most recent complete year for which we have information:

2018:

Income:

Pledge income:	\$741,235.00
Contributions of record:	52,000.00
Facilities Rental total:	80,000.00
Foundation Allocation:	175,875.00
Other:	1,200.00
Miscellaneous:	5,000.00
Foundation Utilities Loan:	<u>100,000.00</u>
Total:	\$1,155,310.00

Expenses:

Total:	\$1,168,321.00
Net:	(\$13,011.00)

2017:

Income:

Pledge income:	\$821,696.00
Contributions of record:	51,072.00
Facilities Rental:	65,613.00
Other:	<u>507.00</u>
Total:	\$938,887.00

Expenses:
 Total: \$1,006,348.00
 Net: (\$67,461.00)

2016:

Income:
 Pledge income: \$775,112.00
 Contributions of record: 57,001.00
 Facilities Rental: 54,643.00
 Other: 2,365.00
 Total: \$889,121.00

Expenses:
 Total: \$860,042.00
 Net: \$29,079.00

2015:

Income:
 Pledge income: \$751,699.00
 Contributions of record: 82,483.00
 Facilities Rental: 41,118.00
 Other: 1,890.00
 Total: \$877,190.00

Expenses:
 Total: \$902,374.00
 Net: (\$25,184.00)

FOUNDATION PRINCIPAL: (number fluctuates with stock market value)

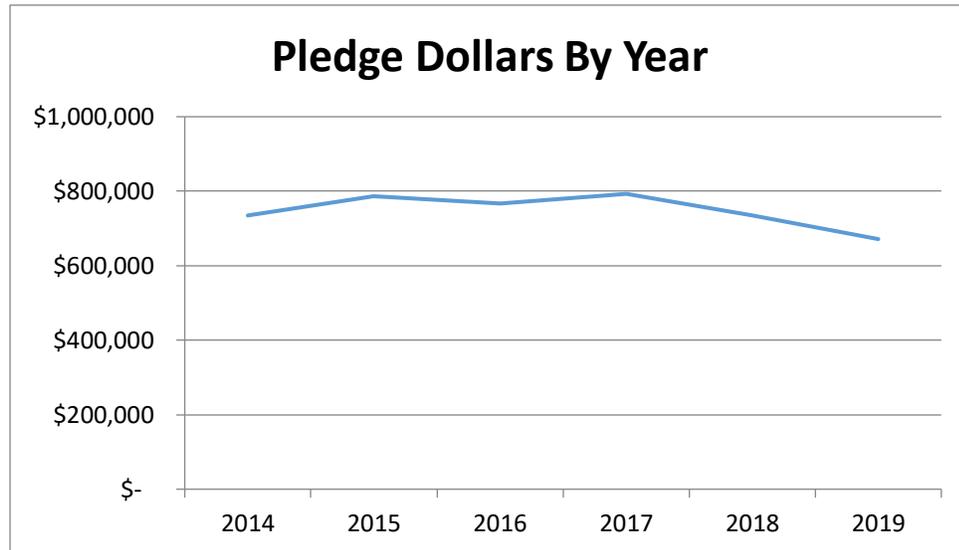
2018: \$3,680,536

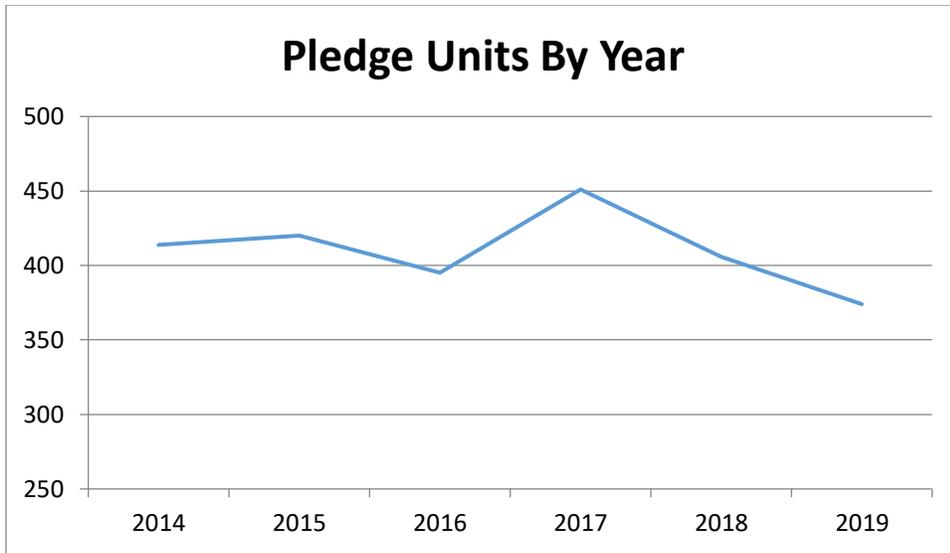
2017: \$3,831,916

2016: \$3,499,144

Recent History of Annual Pledges and Contributions of Record (COR):

Year	Pledge Units	Pledge Total	Average	COR
2019	374	\$671,431	\$1795	\$13,403 (YTD April 31, 2019)
2018	406	\$734,663	\$1810	\$57,543
2017	451	\$792,891	\$1758	\$51,072
2016	395	\$766,425	\$1940	\$57,000
2015	420	\$787,414	\$1875	\$82,483
2014	414	\$735,011	\$1775	\$67,398
2013	443	\$760,000	\$1716	\$50,115
2012	478	\$774,425	\$1620	\$54,606
2011	467	\$737,707	\$1580	\$54,028
2010	444	\$789,532	\$1778	\$52,326
2009	517	\$879,417	\$1701	\$34,656
2008	539	\$818,527	\$1519	\$40,327
2007	542	\$847,611	\$1564	\$58,888
2006	594	\$771,114	\$1298	\$57,776





About Grand Rapids and West Michigan

Basic Facts and Figures:

Size: 1,056,000 (Grand Rapids metro area).

Population/Demography: According to the 2010 U.S. census, the racial composition of Grand Rapids was 65% White (59% non-Hispanic White), 21% African American, 2% Asian, 0.7% Native American, 7.7% from other races, and 4% from two or more races. Hispanics and Latinos of any race make up almost 16% of the population.

Fountain Street Church's Location in the Community:

Fountain Street Church is located in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids, a city of about 200,000 in a metropolitan area of just over 1 million people. Unlike many Midwestern cities, Grand Rapids has maintained a healthy and diversified economic and manufacturing base, and the city has benefitted from an extraordinary level of private philanthropy led by several influential families.

Recent developments that have influenced downtown development have been a multi-purpose arena, a convention center, and the so-called "Medical Mile" complex of hospitals, the Michigan State University medical school, The Van Andel Institute (a major cancer research center), a downtown campus of Grand Valley State University, and Kendall College of Art and Design, all of which have led to a resurgence in downtown housing. With that has come a bustling restaurant and arts scene. Grand Rapids has recently received the nickname "Beer City" for the number of trendy micro-breweries that have sprung up, including Brewery Vivant which partnered with the church to produce "Fountain Streeter," a limited-edition brew in honor of the church's 150th anniversary.

The downtown arts scene includes the Grand Rapids Art Museum, the Grand Rapids Public Museum, the annual Festival of the Arts in June and a major art competition ArtPrize, as well as the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts. The Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park, an internationally recognized sculpture garden, is located within minutes of downtown. The city also has a fine symphony orchestra, a resident ballet company, and opera, as well as regular Broadway road shows, and a downtown arena for sporting events and pop music concerts. The West Michigan Whitecaps, a minor league affiliate of the Detroit Tigers, plays at Fifth Third Ballpark.

Of course, this urban revival has also displaced less affluent residents and has given rise to a homeless community in the downtown area. Fountain Street Church has worked to assist this community—welcoming them on Sunday morning with hot coffee and a place to rest. A large cadre of volunteers and two, part-time social workers assist them to find access to medical care, mental health resources, food and housing.

The current mix of residential, business, and cultural uses makes the downtown area ripe for development of a vibrant liberal church that can serve the unique needs of all the local populations.

The city is located only one-hour by car from Lake Michigan's sandy beaches and picturesque lakeshore communities, and two hours by car from the Manistee National Forest with hiking and trout streams. Chicago is about a three-hour drive, as is Detroit, and daily Amtrak service is available between Grand Rapids and the Windy City. Gerald R. Ford International Airport is a regional hub and offers daily direct flights to many major American cities.

The following web sites give more information on Grand Rapids and West Michigan:

<https://www.rightplace.org/> The Right Place, a business-oriented organization, offers a great deal of data on Grand Rapids as a place to live and work, including information on culture and the arts, neighborhoods, schools and universities, and the Michigan climate. Important information about relative cost of living in Grand Rapids is included on this site.

<http://www.churches-in.com/michigan/Grand+Rapids/> This web site gives a quick overview of the number and types of churches in Grand Rapids. It is fair to describe west Michigan as a place where religion is taken seriously by many people. The large Dutch population supports the Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Church in America, but historically the area has been home to large Catholic populations as well as three Jewish congregations. A new Hindu temple and several mosques add to the diversity. Interfaith dialogue is supported by the Kaufman Interfaith Institute at Grand Valley State University and it hosts an annual conference and interfaith events in which Fountain Street Church has been a regular participant. This general "religiosity" contributed to Fountain Street Church's growth historically and has created an environment in which people feel the need to belong to a church.

<https://www.experiencegr.com/about-grand-rapids/> This web site is mainly devoted to lifestyle, events and activities. It gives a good overview of what the city has to offer in terms of amenities.

Grand Rapids is big enough to have many large city attractions (professional sports teams, art museums, a symphony offering pop and classical concerts, a lively jazz scene, several theater companies, etc.) and yet Grand Rapids is still small enough to be accessible and affordable. Explore Experience Grand Rapids as a way to get a feel for the community.

Fountain Street Church’s reputation in the larger community:

Fountain Street Church is well known in the West Michigan area. In the past, it was somewhat demonized by conservative Christian sects because of its liberal theology, but it always remained a high-profile church, described by a former Grand Rapids mayor as one of the area’s “power pulpits.” The high-profile speakers who speak at the church and the concerts that are hosted there mean that many non-members in the area come to the church regularly. The semi-annual Art Prize competition in Grand Rapids, with over 1000 artists represented, brings about 23,000 visitors through our doors to view an “Art to Change the World” exhibit curated by our Art Committee. Because of our progressive stands on social issues, we frequently appear in the news either as the hosts of controversial speakers or the site of various protests, marches, etc., and therefore have a distinct identity in the community.

Congregation's religious, political, and social context from a historical and current perspective:

Religiously, Fountain Street Church has traditionally defined itself as “other,” the alternative to West Michigan’s more traditional (and generally more conservative) churches. In the past, members have tended to define this church in contrast to what they were coming “from” and what they were reacting “against.” This means that there is a somewhat contrarian feel among older members who often describe their love for Fountain Street Church as an experience of freedom to believe, explore and dialogue that was denied them in their previous churches. Younger members typically did not have the rigorous religious upbringing that would cause them to rebel, but instead are looking for spiritual expression that reflects the contemporary global world. This intergenerational divide is a fruitful area for dialogue and growth.

Politically, it is fair to say that Fountain Street Church has been a liberal beacon in conservative West Michigan. The local congressional district has been represented almost exclusively by Republicans in Congress, but the area has also gone Democratic in presidential elections, and both of Michigan’s senators, its governor, attorney general and secretary of state are now Democratic. Many of the older political establishment would still describe themselves as “Jerry Ford Republicans”—Ford was a Grand Rapids “native son”—who feel uncomfortable in the current Republican Party. Not all Fountain Streeters are politically liberal, but the general tenor of the church swings left, especially on social issues (race, economic justice, gender and LGBTQ+ issues).

In terms of the social context of the church, there are many affinity groups and working committees. Many lifelong friendships have been formed by people who met as members of the church. Externally, the church is committed to social justice through its Social Action Committee, Build Guild (similar to Habitat for Humanity) and service trips for both its youth groups and adults. We regularly open our doors to outside groups and the general community

for events like Laugh Fest, and civic events like Memorial Day observance (the church houses the city's first World War I memorial) and Art Prize (the church's gallery curates a social justice theme exhibition for this semi-annual event).



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