

Bakerview Church Profile

Bakerview Church in Abbotsford, British Columbia, is located in the Fraser Valley 60 km east of Vancouver on the Trans Canada Highway. Unique among Canadian Mennonite Brethren Churches, Bakerview has for the last fifteen years offered three different styles of services under the same roof, identified as the Traditional, Liturgical and Contemporary services. Although each of the services has its own worship style, they all embrace a common mission, are overseen by a common governance structure and contribute to a common budget.

Succinctly put, Bakerview's mission is to be, make and grow disciples of Jesus Christ, in our community and beyond. Its core values, therefore, are those of being a worshipping, learning, loving and witnessing community, while its confessional stance is that of the Mennonite Brethren Confession of Faith. Fundamentally the church understands the Good News to mean that God is reconciling all of creation to himself through Christ.

As of the beginning of 2018 the church is staffed by a Transitional Pastor, four Associate Pastors, an Administrator, and three Support Staff. Its governance structure is outlined in the Bakerview Church Bylaws supplemented by its Guiding Principles, both adopted on June 21, 2017. The physical structure of the church consists of a main sanctuary capable of seating 350 people, and an all-purpose meeting space capable of seating 400 people, supplemented by educational rooms and church offices.

History

Bakerview Church was started in 1965 by a group of largely professional and business-minded people who aspired to be a congregation that reflected a more contemporary expression of worship than that to which it had been used, as well as a desire for connecting more broadly with its English-speaking environment. Having started with an initial membership of just over one hundred, the church grew quickly within ten years to four hundred and at its peak counted on some six to seven hundred members and adherents. Currently combined Sunday service attendance averages around four hundred people.

Some numerical attrition is the result of an aging congregation, especially noticeable in the Traditional and Liturgical services. Only the Contemporary Service can boast a broad mix of all ages. Attendance numbers were also affected by the departure in 2015 of a number of members and adherents from the Liturgical Service over an internal leadership issue.

Geographic/cultural context

Situated on a main thoroughfare (Clearbrook Road), not far from the city centre, Bakerview Church finds itself in the middle of a dynamic, rapidly growing community. Abbotsford is the fifth largest city in British Columbia, with a projected population of circa two hundred thousand by 2035 (presently 141,000). There are some 46,000 households within its city limits, 86% of which are two-parent families.

Abbotsford is known for its ethnic and religious diversity. South East Asians represent approximately 25% of the population, with four Sikh places of worship, one new Hindu temple and one mosque. Within this diverse milieu there are well over one hundred churches, including some twenty Mennonite congregations but also a number of non-denominationally aligned churches. Interesting, too, is the fact that Abbotsford consistently ranks as the number one region in the country for charitable giving.

From a cultural/business point of view, the city has a number of positive features. It is host to the major campus of the University of the Fraser Valley, has a lively music culture, a city museum, home to numerous trade shows and an international airport. Its surrounding area is marked by large fruit, dairy and poultry enterprises, giving rise to its "city in the country" moniker.

Nonetheless, the city also has a range of urban-related problems, including a large homeless population (271 in the 2017 count) and drug related gang wars. In fact, the neighbourhoods surrounding Bakerview Church are home to many of the lower income members of the population. The area is now frequently referred to as the Clearbrook Corridor.

The future

Although the church has enjoyed half a century of consistently good ministry, there is now a felt need for renewal both of vision and leadership. In this rebuilding process the church can count on a large core of members deeply committed to the church and its ongoing ministry, but who also long for a new phase of growth in numbers, vitality in worship and community orientated service. The leadership and membership recognize that it is a new day and new culture for Canadians as well as for local residents. The challenge in this context is to continue to nurture the congregation with a strong worship, preaching and educational ministry but also to mobilize the church for more effective ministry within the community of Abbotsford and beyond.

To help us implement this vision, we are searching for a pastor-leader marked by high standards of spirituality both in personal life and leadership competence. By "high standards of spirituality" we mean someone marked by both godliness and a balanced, healthy lifestyle. By "leadership competence" we mean someone

characterized by ministry gifts such as preaching, teaching, pastoral care, evangelism, and organizational oversight. We recognize that by virtue of human limitations no candidate will fully exhibit all of the desired traits, but possession of a combination of some the above attributes will be considered essential. For a more detailed pastoral profile please see the adjoining Lead Pastor Profile document.

Bakerview Church
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