

Church Profile Form



Introduction

The Reformed Church in America's Office of Ministry Services provides information and services to ordained ministers who are seeking a call and churches who are seeking ordained ministers. It does not recommend any particular candidate or church but instead serves as a resource to both.

Though not all fields are required, please provide as much information as possible in order to give candidates an accurate understanding of the life of your church.

For further information, or if you have questions or problems while completing this form, please contact Ministry Services at ministryservices@rca.org.

Helpful Hints for this Form:

- ❖ To move to the next field, hit TAB.
- ❖ To move the cursor to a desired field, left click on it with the mouse.
- ❖ To mark (x) in a box, left click with mouse.
- ❖ Hitting ENTER will move the cursor to the next line but keep you in the same field (essay questions).
- ❖ Spell check is not available in this format.
- ❖ The form will "paginate" itself as you complete it.
- ❖ If at any time you cannot include information important to you because of the "form field," please continue to complete the question in the comment box on the last page. Make sure to reference the question number.
- ❖ Please sign and return the **Release Statement** at the end of this form. You may scan it and email it as an attachment to ministryservices@rca.org.

Section A. Background Information

Today's Date: // Position to be filled:

1. **Name of church:** The Reformed Church of Bushkill
2. **Web address:** <http://bushkillchurch.org>
3. **Address:**
Street: 5969 Milford Rd
City / State / Zip Code: East Stroudsburg, PA 18302
Telephone: (570) 219- 6773
E-Mail address: bshklch@ptd.net
4. **Classis:** Classis of the Hudson Valley
5. **Classis Supervisor:** Rev. Thomas Bartha
Address:
Street: 204 Sunrise Dr
City / State / Zip Code: East Stroudsburg PA 18301
Telephone: (973) 214- 8117
E-Mail address: tmbartha@aol.com
6. **Co-Chairs of search committee:** Aharon Delacruz & Mary Scarnecchia
Address:
Street: 6411 Decker Rd / PO Box 418
City / State / Zip Code: Bushkill PA 18324
Telephone: (570) 352-6168 / 570-856-0620
E-Mail address: aharondelacruz@mac.com / marys8@live.com

7. **Membership:**

Time of worship	Five years ago	Today
Active Confessing Members	69	36
Inactive Confessing Members	84	10

Comment on significant changes:

Following the departure of our lead pastor in 2015, the church was led by a student minister through 2024. This leadership transition naturally shifted our congregational dynamics. Additionally, active membership declined following COVID-19, driven by member relocations, an aging congregation, and decreased involvement. We are now focused on actively re-engaging our community.

Age of all active members (baptized and confessing)

11%	0-20 years old
11%	20-34 years old
.05%	35-49 years old
33%	50-64 years old
39%	65 years and older

8. Racial/Ethnic composition of congregation:

3%	African American
.05%	Asian
67%	Caucasian
19%	Hispanic
0	Other: (please specify)I

9. Worship schedule:

Average Attendance (includes adults and children)

Time of worship	Average attendance Five years ago	Average attendance Today
10:30 am	49	37
10:30 am ONLINE	50	15 to 20

Comment on significant changes:

Our online attendance grew due to covid and people could view recorded replays of any Sunday service.

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.

It is mostly contemporary worship with a praise team. We use the liturgy of the Reformed Church of America with Approach to God, Word of God and Response to God. We celebrate Communion the first Sunday of the month. The praise team presently consists of two vocalists, and we are actively working on expanding our praise band.

A typical worship service is as follows:

- We Approach God
- Prelude
- Announcements
- Call To Worship
- Two Songs Of Praise:
- Prayer Of Confession
- Assurance Of Pardon
- Summary Of The Law (Matthew 22:37-40)
- Doxology
- Hearing God's Word
- Children's Moment
- Prayer To Prepare Ourselves To Hear God's Word
- Scripture Lessons
- Sermon
- Prayer For The Holy Spirit To Apply The Word To Our Lives
- Song Of Praise:
- Reminding Ourselves Of What We Believe

- Apostles' Creed
- Our Response To God
- Offertory
- Offertory Music
- Offertory Prayer
- Prayers Of The People
- The Lord's Prayer
- Song Of Praise
- Benediction
- Postlude

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

	Five Years Ago	Today
Total RCA related contributions	\$ 165,600	71,237.55
Total other contributions	\$ 116,334.25	139,098.81

Percentage of total budget contributed by living donors:

100-90 %	
75-89 %	
60-74 %	
45-59 %	59%
44 % or less	

(Please include a copy of your annual budget)

12. Congregational Giving:

Number of those whose annual contribution is:

Less than \$500	10
\$501- \$1,500	10
\$1,501- \$2,500	5
\$2,501-\$3,500	5
Greater than \$3,500	13

Financial assistance: Do you receive financial assistance beyond the congregation? (rents, etc.)

Yes, facility rentals

If yes, amount received last year: \$ 1400

List other fundraising programs that support the church: Semi- Annual Yard Sale and Local Grocery Store Receipt Program

Endowment: Lewis Fund approximately \$132,138.50//yr

The Lewis Fund is an endowment fund from Andrew (Cy) and Janet Lewis who were part of the Bushkill community. They were people of means but lived in a very unassuming manner. When they entered eternal rest, they had arranged for their estate to be transformed into a charitable foundation which distributed its income to the Bushkill Emergency Squad, the Bushkill Volunteer Fire Department, a private high school in New Jersey, and our church. Each year we receive income from the foundation. As it is our custom with all the income our church receives, we tithe ten percent to the Deacons' Fund.

13. Church/Sunday School:

Average Attendance

	Average attendance Five years ago	Average attendance Today
Adult	6 (2021)	5
Children	3 (2021)	2
Young Adults	5 (2025)	N/A

Comment on significant changes:

- a. The Young adults group formed organically in 2025. The Young Adult group has transitioned into the generation spark group and have begun forming an additional group "Bushkill After Hours".

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

Our educational programs consist of Sunday school, young adult, and small group bible study. We also have a cycle of book and bible studies. Women's bible study, and saturday bible study.

15. 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
The Caring Community of Needleworkers	2x a month	6
Angel's Closet	As needed	2
Men's Fellowship	2x a week	5
Community Dinners	Monthly	20
First Sunday Communion Breakfast	Monthly	20

Ladies Bible Study	1x a week	12
Saturday Bible Study	1x a week	4
Music Ministry	2x a week	2-3
Generation Spark	Monthly	4
Wednesday Night Zoom Bible Study	Weekly	4-6

- a. Caring Community of Needleworkers
 - i. The Caring Community of Needleworkers brings people together to knit and crochet for both personal joy and community outreach. It's a wonderful space to share skills, learn from one another, and enjoy heartfelt fellowship.
- b. Angel's Closet
 - i. Angel's Closet is located at our church and is run by two of our members. It is a dedicated space where we live out our mission to "clothe babies" and support local families. The goal is to provide baby bundles for local mothers in need.
- c. Men's Fellowship
 - i. From target practice and specialized service projects to men's Bible studies, these men ground every activity in prayer, seamlessly blending physical work with spiritual fellowship.
- d. Community Dinners
 - i. Welcoming neighbors to join us for spiritual growth, nourishing meals, and warm fellowship.
- e. First Communion Breakfast
 - i. This beloved ministry brings our emerging adults and older generations together in the kitchen to cook a full breakfast for members and guests. There is nothing quite like seeing all generations connect and share fellowship before the morning service.
- f. Ladies Bible Study
 - i. A welcoming opportunity for women in the community of different faiths to come together for spiritual growth, meaningful discussion, prayer, and fellowship.
- g. Music Ministry
 - i. Assist the pastor in planning and leading worship services.
 - ii. Duties include music, communion, seasonal decorations, etc. Involved with all things worship, from greeting to the end of the Sunday service. Help with seasonal services as required.
 - iii. Both the Pastor and the Music Director are active in, and crucial to, this team.
- h. Saturday Bible Study
 - i. A time to gather together in God's Word, grow in faith, and enjoy meaningful discussion and fellowship. This study provides an opportunity to learn from one another, deepen our understanding of Scripture, and encourage one another in our faith.
- i. Generation Spark

- i. Generation Spark is an initiative from the RCA that partners with Christian church leaders to design and implement intentional, safe, intergenerational mentoring relationships between emerging adults (Gen Z) and older church members. We see the gifts and potential of our emerging adults, and we want to embrace all that they are and all that they give to the church.
- j. Wednesday Night Zoom Bible Study
 - i. Wednesday Night Zoom Bible Study is a virtual opportunity for those who wish to engage in biblical discussion, spiritual growth, prayer, and fellowship.
- k. Bushkill Outreach Center
 - i. The Center is a food pantry ministry that services Pike and Monroe Counties. They offer basic support and food sustenance to neighbors in need. The Reformed Church of Bushkill walks alongside the Center through food donations, use of space during yard sales, and sharing of food sources during church events. This partnership is a blessing to the community.

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

- a. The annual church retreat.
 - i. It is a different theme each year, (ie “Renewal in Christ” and “Work of the Spirit”). There is a guest speaker, workshop, crafts, food, games, and workshops. This is a community wide event hosted by the Deacons. The timeline is typically as follows:
 1. Continental breakfast, Welcome and agenda
 2. Ice Breaker game
 3. Worship
 4. Guest Speaker
 5. Lunch
 6. Rotation of Crafts
 7. Game, Q&A, survey, closing remarks, sending prayer
 8. Distribution of crafts and gift bags

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

- a. The main church sanctuary and education building consists of the Sanctuary, a full working kitchen, fellowship hall, nursery, conference room, and separate men’s and women’s restrooms. The Sanctuary has a capacity of approximately 350 people. The ground-level floor can be accessed by either the elevator or stairway and includes four classrooms, an additional set of men’s and women’s restrooms, an Area of Refuge (a fire-safe room designated for emergency situations), and the “Angel’s Closet” workroom.
- b. The church office sits next to the church and contains an area for meetings, the Pastor’s office, the Administrative Assistant’s area, several office areas, kitchenette, and restrooms.
- c. A barn sits behind the church office and houses the riding mower and other tools for lawn care which is done by volunteers in the church.

Do you plan any capital expenditure during the next five years?

- d. No, we just repaired the fire suppression system, and we have no planned major capital expenditures for the next five years.

18. Is there a mortgage indebtedness?

- a. No, there is no indebtedness.

19. Pastor’s study:

The Pastor's study is located in the church office.

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

Position	
Administrative Assistant	Part time (28 hours per week)
Minister of Word and Sacrament	Full time (40 hours per week)
Worship Leader (currently unfilled position)	Part time (10 hours per week)
Cleaning Services	Contracted 1x per week
Winter Maintenance	Contracted as needed

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

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

Elder	Deacon	Male	Female	Occupation
X		X		Retail
X			X	Special Education Teacher
X			X	Small Business Owner
X		X		Drywall Finisher
	X		X	Medical Care Management Associate
	X		X	Retired
	X		X	Retired

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

- They serve on our consistory as Elders, Deacons, team leaders, worship leaders, Administrative Assistant, Music Ministry, Transitional Minister, liturgists, and they volunteer in all ministries within the church.

23. 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	
A college degree	X		
A graduate degree	X		

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

	Few are...	Many are...	Most are...
Scientists & Engineers	x		
Farmers	x		
Business People	x		
Students & Teachers	x		
Industrial Workers	x		
Office Workers	x		
Other:	x		

Note: Our congregation is largely a mixture of many occupations.

25. Special training/experience desired: (describe briefly)

- a. Ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament
- b. Youth Education Experience
- c. Musical experience is preferred

26. Languages:

- a. **Should your pastor be fluent in any language other than English?**
 - i. Not required, but Spanish is a growing language in our area.

27. The salary we are prepared to offer our new pastor is:

- a. In accordance with the Classis of The Hudson Valley compensation guidelines, which are based on church size and years of experience.

The average annual increase to our pastor over the past three years was:

- b. In accordance with the Classis annual cost of living adjustments.

28. Is a parsonage provided?

- a. No, there is no parsonage provided.

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

- a. Yes, in addition, relocation expenses can be negotiated. Housing allowance is consistent with the cost of living in Pennsylvania. Any negotiations will be done through the consistory.

30. The benefits/business expenses we will provide our pastor are: (Please check those provided or give amount as requested.)

Base Salary	Per Classis Guidelines
Housing Allowance	Negotiable
Parsonage provided?	No

Travel Reimbursement	Yes
Social Security	Included in base salary
Book Allowance	Yes
Continuing Education Allowance	Yes
Provision for Sabbatical	Negotiable after 7 years
Other (Specify Below)	Negotiable Items
TOTAL	—

Yes Retirement
Yes Major Medical Insurance
Yes Health/Hospital Insurance
Yes Life and Long Term Disability Insurance
No Dental Insurance
No Unemployment Insurance

Annual Vacation (Number of Weeks) : Annual vacation consists of 4 Weeks, including 4 Sundays.

31. Community served: (please check one)

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

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

- a. Angel's Closet collects donations from various churches and members of the community to provide needed items to families in the area. Baby bundles are available for local families in need and can be picked up at our church office or at another participating church located approximately 8–10 miles from our church.

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

- a. We have several donation bins located in the Narthex where congregants can donate nonperishable food items to support the Bushkill Outreach food pantry. Each November, we also collect food donations specifically to help provide Thanksgiving meals to families in need. In addition, our Deacons make an annual monetary donation to the food pantry to further support its efforts to serve the community.
- b. We hold a semiannual yard sale that is open to the community, providing an opportunity for community members to participate, shop, and connect with one another.
- c. Each month, we open our doors to the community for a free community dinner. This gathering provides an opportunity for individuals and families to enjoy a meal together in a welcoming environment while building fellowship and connections within our community.

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

- a. Because this section of the Poconos is relatively rural, the density of houses of worship is low, but the following specific congregations fall within or right on the border of a three-mile radius:
 - i. Evangelical / Nondenominational: Bushkill Community Church
 - ii. Roman Catholic: The Church of St. John
 - iii. Middle Smithfield Presbyterian Church
 - iv. Mahayana Buddhism: While not a Christian denomination, the Jinyin Temple is a notable house of worship.
 - v. Assemblies of God: Christian Life Assembly (satellite campus under renovation).

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

- a. Build genuine friendships by participating or being present in local community spaces like volunteer groups, and neighborhood events rather than just programs inside the church building.
- b. Meet practical local needs through community service projects, such as supporting food pantries, neighborhood cleanups, or assisting with local school needs. As well as host free health workshops/seminars with local experts to teach stress management, nutrition, and senior wellness.
- c. Create opportunities for low-pressure bridge events such as casual, family-friendly social gatherings (ex. craft classes, movie nights, or seasonal festivals) where church members and neighbors can interact naturally.
- d. Cultivate an open, welcoming culture with clear communication, hospitality, and active listening to people's personal stories and concerns.

36. 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

37. Describe the community and school system: (Provide website links were appropriate.)

- a. Our community is comprised of areas that are a mix of rural open space, planned private communities and growing commercial business. The East Stroudsburg Area School District is a large, public K-12 school system covering Monroe and Pike counties. The school district operates 10 physical schools split into North and South divisions with 6 elementary schools, 2 intermediate schools and 2 high schools.

b. Website: www.esasd.net

38. Record of last three pastors:

Name	Dates (Month/Year)
Rev. Marisol Ferrer Malloy- Transitional Minister	5/24 to Present
James Virtue - Student Under Care	08/16 to 11/24
Rev. Steven Sayer	08/97 to 1/15

39. Please complete your profile with the following contacts:

Name	
Theresa Taylor	Vice President, Consistory
Rev. Thomas Barthä	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?

Our mission is rooted in Jesus' command to love God wholeheartedly and to love our neighbors as ourselves. As Matthew 22:37–39 reminds us, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” We seek to live out this calling by growing together in faith, serving others with compassion, and reflecting Christ's love throughout our church and community.

We describe ourselves as a family of believers in Christ who have come together from all different backgrounds, as culturally diverse as the community around us, with members having come from equally diverse experiences and church denominations, a diversity that has created an environment where everyone feels at home as we grow in our walk with the Lord together.

Our Stated Mission: "Striving to do what Christ tells us through Scripture."

We describe our mission and commitment as threefold: we want to help people grow in their understanding and application of the Bible through preaching, Sunday School classes, and 2weekly small group studies; we want to provide opportunities for people and their families to live out their faith, impacting the community and the world as we share the Gospel through our worship services, ministries, and church events; and we want people to be encouraged, challenged, and supported in every aspect of their lives as they grow in faith as part of our church family.

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.

As we look toward the next five years, we are reminded that *“In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps”* (Proverbs 16:9). We prayerfully seek to plan faithfully while remaining open to where God is leading our congregation.

As part of our long-range planning and in keeping with our mission and vision, we have established six teams under the governance of Consistory to address the various aspects of church life and ministry. The six teams are Congregational Care, Christian Education, Fellowship, Finance, Buildings & Grounds, and Worship & Music. Over the next five years, our goal is to strengthen these areas of ministry.

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

As 1 Peter 4:10 (NIV) reminds us, “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others.” We seek to live out this calling by using our gifts to care for one another, serve our community, and support local and global missions.

We are a culturally diverse family of believers where people from many backgrounds and denominations feel at home. Our strengths lie in an active and varied ministry life, including multiple Bible study formats, a multigenerational Communion Breakfast, Angel’s Closet, the Caring Community of Needleworkers, Ladies’ Bible Study, Community Dinners, Men’s Fellowship, a dedicated audio-visual/livestream team, and intentional intergenerational mentoring through Generation Spark. We also have a long-standing partnership with the Bushkill Outreach Center food pantry and a Deacons’ Fund that supports local and global missions. istry, encourage greater congregational participation, expand educational and fellowship opportunities, provide continued care and support to our members and community, maintain and improve our church facilities, practice responsible financial stewardship, and continue to strengthen our worship and music ministries. The teams will work collaboratively with the Pastor, Praise Team, Consistory, and congregation to evaluate needs and develop programs and outreach opportunities that support the church's mission and vision.

One of our goals is to strengthen intergenerational ministry through the continued development of Generation Spark from the RCA. This initiative partners with Christian church leaders to create intentional and safe mentoring relationships between emerging adults (Gen Z) and older members of the congregation. Over the next five years, we hope to build stronger connections between generations, encourage greater involvement from emerging adults, and recognize and embrace the gifts and contributions they bring to the life of the church.

Another goal is to expand our use of technology and media as a tool for ministry and community outreach. Our dedicated Audio-Visual Team will continue to support Sunday livestreams, our YouTube presence, and worship media while exploring additional ways to use technology to bring people together. This includes expanding community movie nights and fellowship events, creating additional opportunities for connection and engagement both within our congregation and within the broader community.

To a new pastor, we offer a spacious, modern, and well-maintained facility that is completely debt-free, providing a strong foundation for ministry and future growth. Built in 2003 to meet the standards and needs of a modern church facility, our campus has been well cared for and includes a welcoming sanctuary, fellowship hall with a full kitchen, nursery, dedicated spaces for children and young adults, ample parking, and a separate office house with a private pastor's study. Along with a stable operating budget, these resources provide a solid foundation for the continued growth of our ministries and outreach.

Most importantly, we are a congregation eager to grow our outward-focused community impact together. We look forward to welcoming a pastor who will build upon our existing strengths, encourage new opportunities for ministry, and help us continue to serve both our congregation and the wider community.

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

Our church is excited to become increasingly outward-focused by meeting the needs of our community, building meaningful relationships, and finding new ways to connect with people beyond our church walls. We want to be a church that listens to our neighbors, understands the challenges they face, and responds with compassion and practical support.

One area we see as a natural opportunity for ministry is health and compassionate care. Caring for aging parents and navigating serious health challenges are significant concerns within our community. We see opportunities to provide support, connection, and encouragement to individuals and families facing these challenges, while developing relationships that can lead to deeper connections within our community.

We also place a strong emphasis on ministry across generations and life stages. With growth among retirement-age adults and young adults in our area, we want to be a "light to the community" across the entire span of life. Our involvement with Generation Spark, which creates intentional intergenerational mentoring relationships between emerging adults and older members, is one example of this vision in action. We hope to continue creating opportunities for people of all ages to share their gifts, learn from one another, and become more connected to the life of the church.

We recognize that transportation can be a barrier to participation in church and community programs. With limited public transportation and long commute times in our area, resources such as Pocono Pony's on-demand routes may provide opportunities to make our ministries more accessible and help connect more people with our church and community programs.

Technology and digital outreach also provide important opportunities for us to connect with people where they already are. Our audio-visual ministry supports Sunday livestreams, YouTube, and worship media, and we are looking to build upon that foundation through platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. We also see opportunities to use our technology for community movie nights, fellowship events, and other activities that bring people together both inside and outside our church walls.

Finally, we want to be more intentional about using our resources and partnerships to serve the wider community. While much of our current budget supports staffing and maintaining our facilities, we hope to increasingly direct our time, talents, and resources toward community needs. We want to build upon the work already being done through the Deacons' Fund, mission giving, and our long-standing partnership with the Bushkill Outreach Center food pantry, while remaining open to new opportunities to serve our neighbors.

Together, these efforts reflect our desire to remain a church that is not only a place of worship, but also a welcoming, visible, and active presence in the community.

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

As we look toward the future, three hopes rise to the forefront of our hearts as a church family. First, we are prayerfully seeking pastoral leadership that reflects the qualities we value most. Through feedback and conversation with our congregation, we identified the characteristics we most desire in our next pastor: someone who is a dynamic worship leader, spiritually grounded and authentic, an effective decision-maker, a compassionate shepherd, an inspiring visionary, and a teacher at heart. We long for a pastor who will walk alongside us with spiritual depth and genuine care while also providing thoughtful leadership and helping guide our church into its next chapter.

Second, we hope to become increasingly outward-focused in our ministry and mission. We recognize that much of our current monetary resources are dedicated to staffing and maintaining our facilities, yet our hearts are increasingly drawn toward discipleship, outreach, and meaningful engagement with our surrounding community. We want to build upon the mission support and outreach partnerships we already have while finding new and creative ways to share God's love beyond the walls of our church. We see our future as one in which we are not simply maintaining what we have, but intentionally seeking opportunities to serve, connect, and make a lasting difference in the lives of those around us.

Finally, we hope to offer an authentic and welcoming alternative to the negative perceptions that can sometimes keep people from engaging with the church. From our local data report, we've concluded that some people view churches as judgmental, exclusive, or primarily concerned with money. We want our words, actions, relationships, and worship to tell a different story. We want people who walk through our doors or encounter us in the community to experience a church that is genuine, compassionate, welcoming, and centered on faith and service. Ultimately, our hope is not simply to grow in numbers, but to grow in our ability to reflect Christ, build meaningful relationships, and positively influence the lives of the people and community around us.

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

We hope that anyone who enters our doors experiences a diverse and welcoming family, where everyone feels at home regardless of their background, culture, or denominational history. Our congregation reflects the diversity of the community around us, and we value the different experiences, perspectives, and gifts that each person brings.

We also hope visitors experience an authentic community rather than a stereotype of what they may expect from a church. While churches can sometimes be perceived as judgmental or primarily focused on money, we want a visitor's experience with us to be the opposite. We hope they encounter people who are genuine, welcoming, compassionate, and focused on living out their faith through their relationships with others.

Compassionate and practical care is another important part of who we are. Through ministries such as our Communion Breakfast, Angel's Closet, our partnership with the Bushkill Outreach Center, and the work of our Deacons through mercy and outreach, we strive to respond to real needs within our congregation and community. We hope visitors recognize that caring for people is not simply something we talk about, but something we put into action, particularly when individuals and families are facing health challenges, family strain, or the responsibilities of caring for aging loved ones.

Above all, we hope visitors notice our multigenerational sense of community. There is something meaningful about seeing children, young adults, families, and older members worship, fellowship, and serve alongside one another. Through opportunities such as Generation Spark and its mentoring relationships between emerging adults and older members, we are creating connections across generations and recognizing the value each age group brings to the life of our church. Our hope is that anyone who visits leaves with a genuine sense that there is a place for them here. As Romans 15:7 reminds us, "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." Our hope is that anyone who visits leaves with a genuine sense that there is a place for them here.

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

Three areas that present challenges and opportunities for growth within our church are music ministry, children's education, and pastoral housing.

Music ministry is an important part of worship at the Reformed Church of Bushkill. Our congregation values a blend of traditional and contemporary worship music, supported by our praise band and a variety of musical instruments. The Worship & Music Team, Pastor, and Praise Team work together to support Sunday worship and special services throughout the year. As we look toward the future, we recognize the importance of strengthening and sustaining this ministry. We hope to continue developing our music ministry, encouraging participation from members with musical gifts, supporting our praise band, and finding ways to involve additional generations in worship. A pastor who is comfortable leading worship and working collaboratively with our Music Director and praise team will be an important part of continuing to build this ministry.

Children's education and ministry is another area where we recognize a need for intentional growth. Our discernment process identified the changing presence of children in our community and congregation as an important concern. While our church offers Sunday School, Bible studies, Vacation Bible School, camps, and spaces specifically designated for children and young adults, we want to strengthen these ministries and create greater opportunities for children and families to become connected to the church. We recognize that our surrounding communities are changing, including shifts in where families live and where children attend school. As a result, we want to be intentional about reaching families, creating meaningful Christian education opportunities, and developing relationships with children and parents that encourage them to become an active part of our church family.

Pastoral housing is also an area that requires consideration as we welcome a new full-time pastor. Our church does not currently have a parsonage, so housing arrangements will need to be addressed as part of the pastoral transition. We recognize the importance of providing a pastor with a comfortable and appropriate living situation and will need to work together to determine the best approach for supporting pastoral housing needs. This is an opportunity for the church to consider both the practical needs of our future pastor and the long-term financial and logistical implications for the congregation.

Each of these areas represents an opportunity to build upon existing strengths rather than starting from scratch. We have the facilities, ministries, leadership structure, and committed members to support continued growth. As in 1 Peter 4:10, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others." We are seeking a pastor who can help us identify new possibilities, encourage participation, and work alongside our congregation to strengthen our music ministry, children's education, and overall support for pastoral leadership as we look toward the future.

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

Over the next five years, our vision is to build upon our mission of “Striving to do what Christ tells us through Scripture” by becoming an increasingly outward-focused church that responds to the needs of our community. As we look toward this next chapter, we are reminded of God’s words in Isaiah 43:19: “Behold, I will do a new thing”. Our discernment process helped us better understand the changing demographics and concerns of Bushkill and East Stroudsburg, including the growing retirement-age population, health concerns, caregiving needs, financial uncertainty, and transportation barriers. We hope to develop meaningful opportunities for fellowship, health and wellness, caregiver support, education, and practical and spiritual care while continuing to strengthen our worship, Bible studies, intergenerational programs, and community events.

We also want to build authentic relationships with those who may feel disconnected from the church by being a welcoming, compassionate, and genuine presence in our community. Through outreach, community dinners, fellowship, practical ministries, and continued digital engagement, we hope to meet people where they are and share Christ’s love. We also see opportunities to strengthen children’s education and music ministry, reach more families, and encourage participation across generations. Our hope is that our pastor will “shepherd us spiritually while helping us look outward with vision and purpose”, working alongside our Consistory, teams, staff, and congregation to turn these needs and opportunities into meaningful ministry.

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

We steadfastly trust that God will call the right pastor to our church, and us to him or her. As Proverbs 3:5–6 reminds us, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” We are open to the new ideas, opportunities, and challenges that a new pastor will bring. While no church is without its own unique challenges, we are a congregation committed to prayer, a commitment to proclaiming God’s grace , and a genuine desire to grow together. We are prepared to face both the challenges and opportunities ahead as partners in ministry with our new pastor.

Release Statement

We, the Reformed Church of Bushkill Pastoral Search Committee, 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.

Signatures of Search Team Co-Chairs

 19 Oct 2026

M Scarnechia 10/19/26
