

2020 PROFILE OF: **THE BEACON FALLS** **CONGREGATIONAL** **CHURCH**



Our Mission

To glorify God through the faithful preaching of His Word, the making of disciples, and reaching the world for Jesus Christ.

Our Vision

Our Vision is to be a family of faith, hope and love, focused on joyfully giving and living to the glory of God [2 Cor 8:1-5; 1 Cor 10:31].

We see a people marked by a sincere repentance from our sins [Matt 4:17; Luke 5:31-32; Acts 17:30].

We see a people who live with a whole-hearted trust of Jesus Christ as Lord, Savior and our only hope in life and death [John 3:1-8; 2 Cor 5:21; Rom 14:7-8].

We see a people with a peace which surpasses all understanding, brought about by intense and never-ending prayer, both individually and church-wide [1 Th 5:16-18; James 5:13; Phil 4:6-7; Ps 62:8].

We see a people engaged in the study of and obedience to the Holy Scriptures, the very Word of God, fully inspired and without error. Therefore, we openly declare sound Biblical doctrines. [Titus 1:9-11; Ps 18:30; 2 Tim 2:15; 4:2].

We see a people in full commitment to the Great Commission, seeking the salvation of unbelievers through the loving service of others and the clear proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, humbly knowing that while it is our responsibility to share the good news of salvation, it is God only that does the saving [Matt 28:18-20; Eph 2:4-10].

We see a people committed to the systematic discipling and mentoring of fellow believers towards spiritual growth and maturity [Matt 28:18-20; Titus 1:9-11; 2 Peter 1:3-11; Rom 15:14].

We see a people who pursue personal holiness, who acknowledge the authority of our qualified spiritual leaders, and the practice of church discipline, to develop a godly and loving congregation. [1 Peter 1:16; 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:10-11; Matt 18:15-17; 1 Cor 5:1-13; 1 Th 4:3-8].

We see a people faithfully worshipping God, both privately and publicly, and using our spiritual gifts to support the ministries of this church and to fulfill one-another in loving fellowship [Heb 10:24-25; John 13:14, 34-35].

Introduction

The best way to describe Beacon Falls Congregational is with our “tag line” **A Family of Faith to Call Your Own**. Beacon Falls Congregational Church is a Christ centered, mission oriented, spiritually alive, warm, family-friendly congregation located in the town of Beacon Falls, CT. We are a congregation of approximately 178 members representing 109 families. Of these members there are 125 that attend regularly and 50 “very active” core members. We have many older members as well as a few families with young children. We have approximately 15 children (of the 44 that are eligible to participate) enrolled in our Christian Education program. Our present pastor of 30 years has retired effective April 29th, 2018. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are now seeking a full-time minister who feels God’s call to help lead this congregation and help us to grow, both in numbers and in Christ.

What We Believe

This Church holds that living to the glory of God in obedience to the teachings of the Holy Scriptures is the essence of Christian discipleship. Each member shall have the right and obligation to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of one’s own conscience under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We have a mutual respect for diverse convictions of sincere Christian belief. This Church commends to its own members the following doctrinal beliefs and statement of faith as an expression of how this Church interprets the Word and Will of God

Doctrinal Beliefs

The Bible

The Scriptures, made up of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired, inerrant, eternal, and authoritative Word of God. They serve as the supreme and sufficient authority in all matters of faith, conduct and Christian living. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Mark 13:31; Matt. 4:4)

Trinity

There is only one true God. He is supremely good, glorious, loving, and holy. God is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit. These three are the same in substance, equal in power and glory. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John 14:10; John 14:16-17)

- **God the Father** is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything. He is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, eternal, and unchangeable. Nothing happens except through Him and by His will. (Gen. 1:1; Lev. 11:45; Rom. 1:20)
- **God the Son** is Jesus Christ, Who is truly God and truly man. In the incarnation, Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, lived a perfect life among us, was crucified, died, and buried. He defeated death by rising on the third day, and ascended to heaven. He is the only mediator between God and Man. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. (Col.1:15-20; John 14:6; Heb. 2:17; 1 Cor. 15:2-4; 2 Tim. 4:1-2)
- **God the Holy Spirit** was sent from the Father and the Son to convict the world of sin and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. He indwells every genuine believer in Christ as an abiding Comforter, Helper and Guide. (Rom. 8:26-27; Gal. 5:22-23; John 14:26; Eph. 1:13-14; Matt. 7:21-23)

Holiness of God

God's holiness refers to His absolute purity and to His uniqueness in being separate from all He has created. We are called to holiness because He is holy. (1 Peter 1:15-16; Isa. 57:15; 1 Sam. 2:2; Lev. 11:45)

Creation

God created the heavens and the earth, and everything in it, and His original creation was perfect with no death or suffering. His crowning creation was mankind whom He made in His image, and gave the gift of free will. (Gen. 1:1; Gen. 1:26-31; John 1:3; Joshua 24:15; Deut. 30:19-20)

Sin/Depravity of Mankind

The world is now full of suffering, pain, and evil due to humans' rebellion against God, thereby incurring not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. As a result, all humans are born with a sinful nature, and disobey God in thought, word, and deed. Tragically, we love people and things more than we love the God Who made us; and are therefore under His just condemnation, without defense or excuse. (Gen. 2:16-17; Rom. 5:18-19; Rom. 3:23)

Salvation

Salvation is deliverance from condemnation, the forgiveness of our sins, and the guarantee of eternal life. Salvation is obtained through faith in the life, sacrificial death, and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. (John 3:16-18; Matt. 19:25-26; Acts 16:31; Acts 2:21)

- **Repentance** is a sincere turning away, in both mind and heart, from sin against God and a sincere commitment to walk in obedience to Him going forward. (Matt. 4:17; Acts 3:19; Luke 5:31-32)
- **Saving Faith** is trusting the person and work of Jesus Christ alone for our salvation. Those with saving faith have been 'born again' into eternal life. (John 3:3; John 3:6-7; Mark 16:16; 1 John 5:13)
 - **The Resurrection of Jesus Christ** is the core doctrine of our faith. Most simply put, a Christian is someone who believes in the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ, and lives in light of the implications of it. (Rom. 10:9)

- The resurrection demonstrated to the whole universe the deity of Jesus and God's love for him. (Rom. 1:4; Acts 5:30-31) It gives us the joy of knowing that Christ is with us today. (Matt. 16:18). It gives us hope beyond the grave. (1 Thess. 4:13) The resurrection purchased our justification and reconciliation. (Rom. 4:25, 2 Cor 5:18-20). It assures us that Christ will personally return to judge and rule the world. (Acts 17:30-31)
- **Justification** is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners who believe in Jesus Christ, not on account of any good works we have done, but solely through receiving Him and relying on Him through faith. (Rom. 3:26; Gen. 15:6; Gal. 3:24; Rom. 10:9-10; Gal. 2:16)
- **Reconciliation** - As our sins are forgiven and erased God draws us to Himself, completely changing us to new beings in a right and harmonious relationship with Him. (Rom 5:10-11, Col 1:20-22)
- **Assurance/Eternal State** - Those who have been born again are kept by God's power, sealed by the Holy Spirit, and are thus secure in Jesus Christ forever. They may rest and rejoice in the assurance of their salvation, and eagerly await everlasting bliss and delight in heaven. (Rom. 8:16; Heb. 10:22) Those who are unsaved will suffer eternal separation from God, everlasting punishment and torment in hell. (Rev. 21:8; Mark 9:43)

We thus affirm that salvation is by faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone, by God's grace alone, according to the Scriptures alone, for the glory of God alone. (Eph. 1:7; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 3:28; Rom. 8:1; 1 Cor. 10:31; Acts 4:12; 2 Cor. 5:21; Jude 1:25; Titus 1:9; Matt. 4:4)

Church

The Church is the Body of Jesus Christ, composed of His genuine believers. As head of the Church, the Lord Jesus calls us to the faithful preaching of His Word, making of His disciples, and reaching the world for His sake. We are a fellowship of the flawed but forgiven, carrying out His purposes and will in the world. (Matt. 28:16-20; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; Rom. 12:4-5; Col. 1:18; Matt. 7:21-23)

- **Women and Men in Ministry** - God created both men and women in His own image; therefore, both are called to serve equally in the ministries of this Church. (Gal. 3:28; Rom. 16:1-4)
- **Sanctity of Life** - We embrace the inherent dignity and immeasurable worth of all human beings' lives from conception to natural death. (Psalm 139:13-15; Exod. 20:13; Gal. 1:15; Jer. 1:5; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Eccl. 8:8; Job 1:21)

Prayer

Prayer is the essential and direct communication between people and God, and is the way we develop a personal relationship with Him. Although God is sovereign over everything, He uses prayer as the means to accomplish His divine will; changing our hearts into conformity with His will. We pray to the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 7:7-8; 1 John 5:14; Matt. 6:9-13; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:16-18)

Sacraments

We celebrate two Sacraments as the outward, physical signs of inward, spiritual realities.

- **Baptism** is the symbolic washing with water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is the sign and seal of God's covenant of grace with us and our children. Our congregation commits itself to the spiritual nurture and fellowship of the infant, child, or adult being baptized. (1 Pet. 3:21; Gal. 3:27; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-41; John 1:29-33)
- **The Lord's Supper** (also called Holy Communion) is a perpetual remembrance of Jesus' saving work where we proclaim His death, resurrection, and His future return. Our Lord instituted this feast on the night He was betrayed, using the visible elements of bread and wine to teach His disciples to spiritually receive and feed on Him. In these simple actions, believers experience communion with Christ Himself. The Lord's Supper is open to all who have repented of their sins and who hold Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. You need not be a member of this Church to join in this feast with us. (1 Cor. 11:24-29; Matt. 26:26-28; John 6:48-54)

Rites

We observe three rites as solemn ceremonies marking significant rites of passage in our faith lives.

- **Confirmation** is the sacred ordinance where students who have been baptized and properly educated, renew and ratify the promises made at their Baptism. The Church, in turn, receives them into full membership and prays for their filling with the Holy Spirit. (2 Pet. 1:10; John 20:22; Acts 8:14-17; Acts 19:5-6; 2 Tim. 1:6)
- **Holy Matrimony** - We believe that marriage is the exclusive, covenantal union of one man and one woman, as designed by God. We will faithfully follow the scriptural definition of marriage (Gen 1:27; Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-9; Mark 10:1-12; Eph. 5:30-33) in the teachings and practices of this Church, and therefore this Church will not officiate, solemnize, perform or host a marriage or marriage-like ceremony involving anything other than the union of one man and one woman as instituted by God.
 - We further refer to God's Commandments and Scriptural Teachings listed herein concerning sexual activity: Exd. 20:14; 1 Cor. 6:18-20
 - We fully believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be condemned as sinful and are not in accordance with the Scriptures, nor the doctrines of this Church. (Eph. 4:31-32; Matt. 7:3-5; Col. 3:13)
- **Christian Burial** (either bodily or cremation) is both the celebration of, and thanksgiving to God for a life lived among us. We commit the soul of our dearly departed into the hands of Almighty God, taking comfort in His promises. (Rev. 21:4; Phil. 1:21-23; Psalm 116:15; 2 Cor. 5:6)

Church History

The Beacon Falls Congregational Church originally gathered as a Methodist Episcopal Church in 1846, erecting our first church building adjacent to what is now Pinesbridge Cemetery. After this building was destroyed by fire, a new building was constructed on Main Street (this building later became the American Legion Hall and is now the home of Beacon Falls Pizza). In 1868, the Home Woolen Mill gave a site for a new church in the pine grove west of Wolfe Avenue where the current church building was completed in 1871 and dedicated on January 11, 1872.

In 1900 we voted to become a new independent ecclesiastical society, and in 1919 we voted to become Congregational. From 1957 to 2005 we were a member of The United Church of Christ, a merger of certain Congregational Christian Churches with certain Evangelical & Reformed churches. Today we are an independent Congregational Church, true to our rich heritage and history.

About Congregationalism

Jesus Christ alone is the head of the church! The members of the local church manage our own affairs including worship practices, education and mission work. Each congregation is free to act in accordance with the collective decision of its members, ***guided by the working of The Holy Spirit and in the light of The Scriptures***. Congregationalists have no hierarchy, no bishops, no presbyteries, etc. The pastor is called by, and is a member of, the congregation. Congregationalism was carried to America in 1620 by the Pilgrims, who were fleeing religious persecution in Europe. Congregational religious heritage stems from the great traditions of the Protestant Reformation – Lutheran, Calvinist, Methodist, Puritan and Reformed.

Worship

We currently hold one service on Sundays at 10AM. The adult choir sings throughout the service, accompanied by an organ for traditional hymns and a piano for more contemporary praise songs. Lay people participate as greeters, acolytes, readers, and ushers. Our communion service is held the first Sunday of the month as part of our regular service. On the second and fourth Sundays of the month, a children's time is included in the service. After the children's time, the Sunday School age children are dismissed to their classes. Following worship, we have fellowship time where the congregation and children gather for coffee/juice and snacks.

We use the "New International Version" Bible and "Celebration Hymnal" published by Word/Integrity Music Co during worship service.

We've recently launched a Youth-Led Contemporary Worship Service held once per quarter. These services are held on "5th Friday of the month" evenings and include prayer, short scripture readings, modern Christian music played on video and short "sermonettes" instead of a traditional sermon. Afterwards attendees go downstairs for an hour or so of pizza, snacks, board games and fellowship. We are looking to support, expand & grow this service.

Choir

Our choir at Beacon Falls Congregational Church, with approximately ten members, is always eager to sing praises to our Lord. We are a diversified bunch with willing voices led by our Director of Music, who handles all aspects of our choir and music ministry. However, we are always in need of more members. The choir of any Church has the responsibility of leading and energizing the congregation, inspiring them to sing songs of praise and worship. It is our hope to continue growing the choir to lead the congregation to new heights of the love of Christ through music.

Christian Education

Our Sunday school program meets during the 10:00 a.m. service. We use a program by Cokesbury for Pre-K to K, and the David C. Cook Bible in Life Program for 1st - 3rd grade. We adopted a new curriculum in 2017 for grades 4-7; a four-year bible study program called "G2R" (Genesis to Revelation) produced by the Great Commission Publication. The Confirmation class uses the "Confirm" program produced by Cokesbury. We currently have four Sunday school classrooms for grades pre-school through ninth grade. Our 5th grade students make their first communion on Maundy Thursday and our 9th grade students are confirmed on Pentecost Sunday following a two-year confirmation class. Classes meet from September until June. Our Sunday School students participate in the annual Christmas Pageant when the story of Christmas is retold and acted out during the Sunday service in December as well as a Palm Sunday processional. We are working on increasing Sunday school attendance and participation as we have experienced a decline over the last few years, particularly in the lower grades.

Bible Study Ministry Team:

Our Ministry Team meets regularly as needed, to plan and coordinate our Bible Study programs and to arrange coverage for our Prayer Ministries. We have an active, well-attended, lay-run adult bible study program at Beacon Falls Congregational Church. The program involves year-round programs of Bible studies and activities for adults, with the goal of increasing the level of Bible literacy in our congregation. We have run "The Alpha Course" by Nicky Gumbel five times; most recently in the fall of 2016. We endeavor to provide study programs covering both Old and New Testaments, along with Lenten and Advent offerings as well as relevant topical studies. In the summer, we have also had 'book-club' style studies based on Christian novels.

The following is a sampling of recent study programs offered at our church.

- *The Promised One: Seeing Jesus in Genesis* and *Behold the Lamb: Seeing Jesus in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy* -both by **Nancy Guthrie**
- *Journey Through Lent* -by **Tim Keller**
- *When Believers Pray* -by **Evelyn Christensen**
- *The Gospel of John; He Chose the Nails; and Because of Bethlehem* -by **Max Lucado**.
- *The Secrets of the Vine* -by **Bruce Wilkinson**

We also offer **Online Studies** which allow us to include people who are not available for the studies at the church. This has also proven to be a good option for the winter months. *Online offerings* have included:

- *What to Do When I Don't Desire God* -by **John Piper** (LigonierConnect.org)
- *Bible Survey: A Big Screen Perspective* -by **Dr. Bert Downs** (biblicaltraining.org)
- *The Holiness of God* -by **R.C. Sproul** (LigonierConnect.org).

Additionally, we provide a Parenting / Family Resource called “Focus on The Family Bulletin” which is a monthly insert into our worship bulletins, and a Daily Devotional Resource called “The Upper Room Daily Devotional Magazine” which is available for free in our church Narthex.

Outreach Ministry Team

Local Missions:

- **Home Touch Ministry** – Each week, we send our homebound members a personal package from our church. It contains two pages printed in LARGE type for easy reading, reminding them of how much they are remembered and loved. The devotional page includes a thought for the week, a prayer and a short, inspirational message. The activity page, important because shut-ins have so much time on their hands, is chock-full of things for them to do during those long hours of the day. Each activity is based on the Bible or church life. The Home Touch mailings help to fill those long, quiet times of the day in a meaningful way.
- **Beacon Falls Care Closet** – The Beacon Falls Care Closet assists local people in need. The Beacon Falls Food Bank is based in St. Michaels Roman Catholic Church and our church helps support that mission as well as other needs such as clothing, toiletries, etc.
 - Annual school supply school supply drive – we coordinate a school supply drive in town and supply backpacks full of pens, paper, notebooks, etc. to students in Beacon Falls that are in need.
 - Annual Thanksgiving Food Drive – we work with other civic organizations to supply the items for a Thanksgiving meal for Beacon Falls families in need.
 - Holiday Families in need – each year we coordinate with the schools and food bank to supply clothing, toys, and needed items to Beacon Falls families in need of assistance.
- **Halloween Trick or Treats** – Our church is located in a densely populated area of mostly single-family homes and is a huge attraction to treat-or-treaters due to the closeness of the houses and the flat landscape. We participate in the wonderful neighborhood tradition by handing out bags of treats, set up games, and welcome visitors to the neighborhood. We enjoy this event as much as the trick-or-treaters.
- **Easter Egg Hunt** – Our church holds an annual Easter Egg Hunt following service on Palm Sunday. We invite the children from the congregational, guests, and United Day School to join us. In addition, we also have a visit from the Easter Bunny to meet the children.
- **Welcome Bags** – When a new home buyer moves to Beacon Falls, we visit them with a welcome full of coupons and gifts from local businesses and of course our church. We deliver on average about 15 bags per month. It has been a great way to get to know our new residents and introduce them to our church and our members.

Regional Missions:

- **My Sister’s Place** – Our congregation runs an annual “gently used” clothing drive to benefit My Sister’s Place – a unique family thrift shop located in the heart of downtown Ansonia, CT. All

proceeds from My Sister's Place support Birmingham Group Health Services' Umbrella Program serving women and children who are affected by domestic violence by providing emergency shelter, counseling, therapy, advocacy, and other critical services that offer hope and help save lives. Learn more about [My Sister's Place](#).

World Missions:

- **World Vision Child Sponsorship** – Our most personal world-wide mission. In January of 2006 our church committed to financially and prayerfully sponsor a World Vision Child until their 18th birthday. We joyfully sponsored Abigail (from World Vision's Casitas Mission in Nicaragua) for 9 years until she moved away from the mission location and out of the program. We now sponsor beautiful Yaneris who, thanks to this wonderful program, now receives clean water, health care, improved nutrition and attends school regularly. Her entire village also benefits from World Vision's work in healthcare, education/economic opportunity, emergency response and child rights. All thanks and praise to God for richly blessing us with these sponsoring opportunities.
- **Heifer International** – One of our most popular missions. "Why give a cup of milk when you can give a cow?" Heifer International's mission is to work with communities to end hunger through gifts of livestock and training families to improve their nutrition and generate income. In exchange for their livestock and training, families agree to give one of its animal's offspring to another family in need. To see how you can learn more, please go to [Heifer International](#).
- **Operation Christmas Child** – An awesome prelude to our Christmas celebration! One of our favorite missions. Our church family support Samaritan's Purse's efforts to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. We put together shoe boxes chock full of toys, gifts, books and goodies to be distributed to needy boys and girls world-wide. To discover more about this effort, please visit [Operation Christmas Child](#).

Prayer Ministry Team

- **Prayer Care** – weekly ministry called "Prayer Care". It's an opportunity for us to pray for members individually, privately and personally. Volunteer prayer counsellors are available and happy to offer intercessory prayer with anyone in need each Sunday, just after we conclude worship. "Prayer Care" volunteers will be located in the rear balcony area of the sanctuary to pray for anyone who would like one-on-one prayer time.
- **People @ Prayer** – We hold monthly all-church prayer meetings called "People @ Prayer", which focus on the needs of our church and its members. We take one hour, usually on the first Wednesday of each month, to lift up our church/ministry needs, all those intentions already on our prayer list and any other requests brought by those present.

Membership Social Activities

- Tropical Paradise Pot Luck Supper
- Trip to Yale University sing-along performance of Handel's Messiah
- Journey to Bethlehem
- Church Campfire Sing-along
- Ice Cream Sundae Sundays

Church Committees

- **Church Council** – The Pastor presides as chairperson and does his best to keep us focused and on track (not always an easy task trying to get work accomplished when a bunch of people who like each other end up in the same room.) The committee consists of: all the officers of the church, the chairperson of each church committee / organization, and the advisors of the youth group. The council meets monthly to make sure our collective activities are coordinated so we are truly acting as one church.
- **Board of Deacons a.k.a. Diaconate** – The Diaconate works hand in hand in assisting the Pastor in all matters relating to worship services, communion and music. They recruit and coordinate congregation volunteers to serve as ushers, greeters, lay readers, flowers and fellowship hour hosts. The Board of Deacons also oversees the missions and outreach programs, congregation care, membership evangelism and growth.
- **Prudential Committee** – Prudential's prudence is what helps us to be good stewards fiscally and physically. They are responsible for the fiscal care of the church which includes: annual stewardship campaign (raising the funds to meet the budget!), financial budgeting, monitoring the inflow of cash and the paying of bills. We are grateful for their diligence in the upkeep and physical maintenance of our church and church property.
- **Christian Education Committee** – Blessed are the teachers. C.E. is responsible for the successful operation of our children's Sunday school and nursery. They also coordinate adult Christian Education (Bible studies and programs).
- **Endowment Committee** – They are charged with the responsibility of encouraging donations, investing and managing the endowment fund (which is not part of our regular operating budget).
- **Nominating Committee** – They help match our members' time and talents to the committees that truly need them. It is the Nominating Committee's annual responsibility to make sure there are qualified, caring people willing to serve on the various committees to ensure our church not just functions but rather thrives!
- **Pastoral Relations Committee** – This is a group that facilitates constructive communication between the congregation and the pastor. They also make annual recommendations to our prudential committee regarding the Pastor's compensation. The pastor appoints two members to this committee.

Facilities

Beacon Falls Congregational Church

69 Wolf Avenue, Beacon Falls, CT 06403

- The Beacon Falls Congregational Church is situated on 1.6 acres of land currently overlooking Main Street, Beacon Falls, CT. The current church building, built in 1871 and renovated in 1977, has an approximately 180 seat sanctuary, a narthex, rear balcony, pastor's study, 3 church school classrooms that can be divided for double usage, one dedicated meeting room which can be used as a classroom, rest rooms, a fully equipped kitchen, a downstairs fellowship hall, and a nursery. The Church School wing was completed in 1964. Installation of a handicapped access elevator and bathroom was recently completed. A memorial garden was included in this addition. Cell tower equipment in the steeple and a private day school are both revenue generating sources.
- An on-site, ranch style, parsonage, located adjacent to the church building, was built in 1977 with 1952 sq. ft. of living space, a full basement, and a 2-car garage. It is comprised of 3 bedrooms, kitchen with all appliances, hardwood floors, living room, dining room, family room with fireplace, 2 baths, and a sun porch. It has hot water, baseboard oil fired heat, and aluminum siding. Church parking is provided on the property adjacent to the parsonage and church building. Additional parking is available on Wolf Avenue in both directions.

Groups renting or using the Facilities

- United Day School
- AA
- Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts
- GRASP (Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing)
- Metro PCS (cell tower located in our steeple)

Attendance

Our attendance has been fairly consistent for the past few years with the exception of 2015 when it increased, but then dropped back down in 2016. The following chart shows our attendance trends over the last few years. We presently have approximately 55 members that attend regularly and 15 children that attend Sunday school regularly. We also have approximately 5 homebound members that are unable to attend on a regular basis.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Children</u>
2019	55	15
2018	66	16
2017	55	17
2016	56	14
2015	64	17
2014	53	(unknown)

Staff

- We are currently seeking a full-time Pastor.
- Director of Music – a part time employee who handles all aspects of our choir and music ministry.
- Secretary – a part time employee who works approximately 10 hours per week and handles production of the weekly worship bulletins and a bi-monthly newsletter, maintains our website, Facebook/Instagram accounts and handles other administrative tasks.
- Clerk – a volunteer who maintains the Church records and formal Congregational business.
- Treasurer – a volunteer (although position has been paid in the past) who handles all expenses of the Church and maintaining the Church’s financial accounts.
- Assistant Treasurers – two volunteers who handle all of the Church’s income, ensuring that pledges and donations are kept confidential.
- Auditor – a volunteer who performs regular examinations of the Treasurer’s records.
- Sexton – a part time employee who cares after the church property with regular cleaning and minor maintenance.
- Church School Superintendent – a volunteer who has general oversight of the Church School.

Finances

We operate on an annual budget that is approved by church members at our annual meeting in January. Pledges made by the members are known only to the member, assistant treasurer, and God. Our 2020 operating budget is \$164,498 based on projections from 2019 actuals. We have investment accounts that we control, and the earned interest is reinvested. See table below for additional financial information. More detailed information is available in our annual report.

Operating Revenues \$156,393 (2019 Actuals)

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| ○ Offerings | \$114,538 |
| ○ Rental Income | \$26,812 |
| ○ Fundraisers | \$13,893 |
| ○ Other | \$1,150 |
- Cell Tower rental income \$2,146/mo
 - Operating Expenditures \$152,820 (2019 Actuals)
 - Access for All mortgage \$2,600/mo (385,699 balance)
 - Current Funds \$188,121 (as of 12/31/2019)
 - General Fund \$23,265
 - Auxiliary \$1,069
 - Endowment Fund market value \$85,133
 - Endowment Savings \$6,416
 - Memorial Fund market value \$3,037
 - Emergency Fund \$10,218
 - Reserve Certificate of Deposit \$15,053
 - Capital Improvements Fund \$41,852
 - Scrip Fundraiser \$2,078
 - Our church fundraises to help cover some of our expenses. Our fundraising efforts include:
 - Chicken Dinner and Raffle
 - Cookie Walk
 - Scrip gift card program

Church Profile (According to 2018 Congregational Survey)

- Demographics of the congregation
 - Half of the members are associated with BFCC (Beacon Falls Congregational Church) more than 20 years and 28% of the members are associated less than 10 years.
 - Half of the members are between the ages of 50 and 70 years old and 16% under 40 years old.
 - More than half are female (66%).
 - Over 70% are married.
 - 40% have a 4 year college degree or higher.
 - 80% have lived at their current address 10+ years.
- Average weekly worship attendance is 55 adults and 15 children attending Sunday school.
- Most important reasons people continue to attend BFCC
 - Minister/Pastor
 - Meets spiritual needs for prayer and worship
 - Enjoy fellowship
 - Community/Location
- 20% of the congregation fills 100% of committee duties and activities.
- Sunday School
 - Of Sunday School age children – 75% attend (26 children)
 - Attendance of Sunday school children has decreased 42%.
 - Of those children attending, 75% attend 2 or more times per month.
- The most prominent challenges for existing member to attend:
 - Time/Schedule constraints
 - Health issues
- The congregation in general is moderate (not liberal or conservative) in their beliefs and 95% pray occasionally or often

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis

During the search process the Pastoral Search Committee utilized a common strategic planning technique to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the organization. The key results of this analysis highlighted the following characteristics of the church.

- Strengths
 - Welcoming and warm atmosphere
 - A core group of committed servants
 - Active Bible study group and commitment to Biblical literacy
 - Supportive to people in need
- Weaknesses
 - Aging congregation and absence of youth
 - Minimal Community involvement

- Too few volunteers
- Dwindling attendance
- Lack of training/procedures
- Opportunities
 - Increasing community outreach
 - Developing contemporary service
 - Engaging congregation in total stewardship
 - Establishing area-wide programs illustrating who/what we are
 - Opportunity to start with a clean slate and embracing change
- Threats
 - Resistance to change
 - Loss of outside income sources
 - Time conflicts (extra-curricular/sports vs. church attendance)
 - Insufficient security/emergency plan
 - Doctrinal differences

Natural Church Development

In addition to the SWOT analysis performed by the Pastoral Search Committee, a Natural Church Development survey was taken by a key population of the congregation. The results of this survey were evaluated in a principle-oriented manner to compare BFCC to healthy churches around the world and identify a minimum factor to focus on for improved overall church health. The philosophy of the NCD analysis is that the church can only be as healthy as the minimum factor permits, therefore by focusing on improving the minimum factor the overall health of the church will improve. Based on extensive data collected from this survey, the eight quality characteristics used by God in healthy churches include: Empowering Leadership, Gift-based Ministry, Passionate Spirituality, Effective Structures, Inspiring Worship Services, Holistic Small Groups, Need-oriented Evangelism, and Loving Relationships. In the case of BFCC, Need-oriented Evangelism was identified as the minimum factor. Need-oriented Evangelism is defined as the intentional cultivation of relationships with pre-Christian people by addressing the needs of these individuals in the surrounding community in an effort to develop fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. To address this opportunity for improvement, BFCC has initiated a focused effort on expanding our presence in the local community and developing new outreach opportunities that are centered on the needs/interests of the community.

Priorities for the church moving forward

The pastoral search process thus far has culminated in the development of a strategic plan forward, centered around the following priorities. Many of these priorities are already in work and a few are complete.

- Develop an atmosphere of change throughout the entire ministry
- Approve updated Mission, Vision, and Values statements (COMPLETE)
- Develop an overall and comprehensive prayer ministry
- Finalize an updated constitution that includes the core beliefs and major doctrines (COMPLETE)
- Restructure and update the worship service as needed
- Develop a systematic discipleship ministry to make disciples of the entire membership
- Develop a leadership program to mature leaders for all ministries and programs
- Set as a priority programs and emphases to reach younger families
- Serve the changing needs of our existing members, drawing on their experience and strengths
- Establish a community outreach ministry to reach out into the unchurched of the community
- Develop a whole stewardship training program to instruct the congregation on its responsibilities