

## Valley Presbyterian Church seeks Interim Pastor

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Congregation Lori Peck, Lynn Ecsedy, Mike Garcia

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Our congregation is searching for an interim pastor following a six year pastorate. At this time, we are looking for a ¾ pastor with the following minimum compensation. This person would report directly to the Session of the Valley Presbyterian Church and through us to the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Southern New England.

Our congregation is currently being accompanied by the Presbytery through an Administrative Commission that has original jurisdiction for property matters related to an oil spill in May of 2018. Our Session is being accompanied in its work by the Rev. Dr. Jim Fenimore of Samaritan Counseling who is helping us with our leadership during this time and would also be available to work with the interim pastor.

We are open to inviting someone to serve us who lives regionally and commutes in to serve our congregation during this time. We are looking for someone with interim/transitional ministry experience and training and also someone who has had experience/training in situations of conflict.

### Specific Roles and Responsibilities:

- Plan, lead and deliver a sermon/meditation during Sunday worship service each week. Additional services are required during Lent and Advent seasons.
- Administer sacraments. Including Monthly Communion and other times during seasonal worship. Baptism including counseling with parents
- Officiate at weddings and funerals. Including pre-wedding counseling and meeting with family members making funeral arrangements.
- Be a resource and support to church programs. Including confirmation class and Sunday school classes, Bible study.
- Visit hospitalized members and administer the Sacrament of Communion as requested.
- Provide limited pastoral care to the congregation for those who seek comfort and guidance through the church.
- Serve as moderator of Session
- Meet with deacons
- Serve as Head of staff. (A part time administrative assistant and a part time music director)
- Be a resource for and support boards and committees of the church in their ministry.
- Attend Presbytery meetings and keep Committee on Ministry (COM) informed on the health of the congregation.

- Work with the Administrative Commission (AC) on assuring our building is receiving the necessary attention needed.
- Be available at church/office or by phone or email during the week.
- Work to promote reconciliation within the congregation.
- Work with Dr. Jim Fenimore of Samaritan Counseling who is helping our leadership navigate through the transition process.
- Assist congregation with interim tasks including guiding activities associated with transition and assisting in preparation of a church mission study.

Membership: 129

Average Worship Attendance: 75-100

Sunday School Curriculum: Informal; have used Growing in Grace and Gratitude and Faith Questions

Proposed Terms of Call: see attached

To better give potential candidates an idea about our ministry and where we think we might be headed, below are the answers to the standard questions in the Ministry Information Form (PCUSA):

1. What is the congregation's or organizations vision for ministry? Additionally, describe how this vision is lived out.

Valley has been seeking to engage in a deeper way in the surrounding communities. We have supported the soup kitchen by making sandwiches monthly and some members bake casseroles monthly and some members volunteer weekly. In addition, some members volunteer at the overflow shelter. We have had a practice of "Doing Sundays". Whenever there is a fifth Sunday in a month we take part of the service to support a local organization; making soup packets for the food pantry, dog toys for a local rescue or foot care packages to be distributed to the homeless. We also have members participating in a prison ministry. We would like to find a ministry that all of our members can be involved in on an on-going basis.

2. How do you feel called to reach out to address the emerging needs of your community or constituency?

Our congregation comes from many local communities with a wide range of needs. The majority are small town suburban "bedroom" communities clustered around a small city. What has captured the heart of our church in the past have been needs surrounding food insecurity and meeting the needs of children. We have also supported

a refugee family in partnership with a local congregational church. Session has been seeking a way to connect with a local ministry where we could be more physically connected to those served by that ministry. Making sandwiches and casseroles is a start but there is no actual contact with the people experiencing food insecurity. We are seeking ways to reach outside our walls and make concrete contributions to our communities.

3. How will this position help you to reach your vision and mission goals?

As a Session, we were in the middle of a lot of visioning work. We were working to write a succinct “Why Statement” to define clearly who we believe God is calling us to be and that would help us evaluate future ministries and look for opportunities to leverage the spacious lower level of our building. We would like to complete that work and connect with our community to serve. We have had some challenges in the past creating a vision that resonates with the congregation while addressing our need to grow. Our hope is that our interim pastor can help us facilitate change. It will take some work to shift to a more sustainable, outward looking and engaging vision.

4. Provide a description of the characteristics needed by the person who is open to being called to this congregation and/or organization.

We are looking for a person who will faithfully lead us by preaching God’s word, encouraging us to engage in ministry in our community and assisting us in addressing the challenges we face as a congregation. We have talked for years about being stuck. We need an engaging and effective leader to help us get unstuck. It would be helpful for our interim pastor to have experience with situational leadership including the ability to effectively manage conflict.

5. For what specific tasks, assignments, and program areas will this person have responsibility?

Our interim pastor will be responsible for planning and leading worship with the aid of the worship committee. We had recently moved to seasonal worship planning but with the loss of our pastor and the use of supply preachers that has been put on hold. We are open to continuing with the seasonal structure or returning to a more traditional worship committee as desired by the interim. We would like to continue with our visioning work and work through the process of preparing to call a new pastor. There are some administrative challenges related to the building that will continue. We had an oil spill and building damage in May of 2018 which resulted in our congregation needing to evacuate the building from early May of 2018 until our return on the first Sunday of Advent. The building damage has been mostly remediated, however, the oil spill will be

a multi-year remediation process. There is an Administrative Commission involved and there will be related work with the AC, the Session and the congregation.