

Covenant



**JOURNEYING WITH GOD'S FAMILY IN CUTLERVILLE, WEST
MICHIGAN, AND THE WORLD AS WE ARE MADE TO LIVE
AND LOVE MORE LIKE JESUS.**

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VISIT WWW.COVENANT-CRC.ORG FOR MORE DETAILS.



WELCOME

We are delighted that you are interested in learning more about Covenant Church and our search for a new Lead Pastor. It is our hope and prayer that God would guide our efforts in identifying a man who seeks after Him and is excited and passionate about walking alongside and shepherding our congregation into this next phase of church life.

In the following packet of information, we hope that you will come to better understand Covenant's history, mission, core values, ministries, and passion for outreach. We are a congregation captivated by God's grace and compelled to love each other and our neighbors. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing how the Lord leads.

OUR STAFF



Dr. Doug Kamstra
Specialized Transition Minister



Rev. Henry Schenkel
Pastor of Youth Discipleship and Outreach



Sarah Cupery
Director of Worship and Music



Tanya Quist
Church Administrator



Laura Geldersma
Adult Ministries Coordinator



Amy Rottman
Children's Ministries Coordinator



Bob Storteboom
Furniture Ministries Coordinator



Marcia Westra
Hand2Hand Coordinator



Jeff & Lisa Bulthuis
Custodians



Dale VanderMolen
Elder of Visitation



OUR CORE VALUES

- **WE VALUE GRACE...**

- WE LOVE JESUS WITH ALL OUR HEART, SOUL, MIND, AND STRENGTH KNOWING WE HAVE BEEN SAVED BY GRACE BECAUSE OF JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION; THIS IS A FREE GIFT, NOT THE RESULT OF ANYTHING WE HAVE DONE.
- WE SHARE OUR TESTIMONY OF WHAT GOD HAS DONE AND CONTINUES TO DO IN OUR LIVES BY HIS GRACE REGULARLY AND BOLDLY WITH OTHERS AS WE ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT.

- **WE VALUE GROWTH...**

- WE DEEPEN OUR FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST THROUGH REGULAR SCRIPTURE READING AND PRAYER.
- WE HAVE AND PURSUE A PERSONAL RULE OF LIFE (I.E., A PLAN FOR INTENTIONALLY GROWING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST) AND LIVING IT OUT IN OUR COMMUNITY, OUR CHURCH, AND HIS KINGDOM.

- **WE VALUE GROUP...**

- WE ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN COVENANT'S FAITH COMMUNITY THROUGH CELEBRATIVE CORPORATE WORSHIP AND MINISTRY INVOLVEMENT.
- WE ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN SMALL GROUPS, PRAYER GROUPS, AND/OR MINISTRY GROUPS TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS IN THEIR SPIRITUAL LIFE AND TO BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE IN OURS.

- **WE VALUE GIFTS...**

- WE DISCOVER, DEVELOP, AND DEPLOY THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS GOD HAS ENTRUSTED TO US FOR THE BUILDING OF THE BODY OF CHRIST.
- WE DISCOVER, DEVELOP, AND DEPLOY OUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO BE A WITNESS IN THIS WORLD, PROMOTE JUSTICE, AND TO SERVE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

- **WE VALUE GIVING...**

- WE GIVE GENEROUSLY OF OUR TIME, OUR TALENTS, AND OUR TREASURE (FINANCIAL RESOURCES) FOR THE BUILDING OF CHRIST'S CHURCH AND KINGDOM.
- WE GIVE GENEROUSLY OF OUR TESTIMONY FOR THE BUILDING OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM AND CHURCH.

OUR HISTORY

Covenant Church was founded when Classis Grand Rapids South purchased land for a prospective new congregation in the Cutlerville area. At the time Covenant Church was founded, it was the first time that "Covenant" was used to name a church in our denomination. It is a rich word that describes an aspect of God's character that we all appreciate.

Our God is a God who makes and keeps covenants, or agreements, with His people. When He makes a promise, He always keeps it. Even though we may not uphold our end of the bargain, God is always faithful. 1 Chronicles 16:15 reminds us of God's faithfulness saying, "He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations".

Over the years, Covenant has experienced God's covenant faithfulness as He has provided pastors and leaders who have faithfully led and guided our church. God has also blessed us with an intergenerational family of faith that has remained faithful to God's Word and kept our ministries focused on His biblical teachings.

Highlights of God's covenant faithfulness to Covenant Church include various events from the early 1960's through the present. Below are just a few of those moments in our church history that reveal God's goodness to us as a family of believers:

- October 28, 1962, Covenant Church held its first service in the Pine Rest Chapel.
- 1965 - Our congregation outgrew having our services at Pine Rest. On Easter Sunday, April 18, 1965 we held our first worship service in our current church location at 7171 Willard Avenue, SE.
- 1968 and 1976 - Covenant supervised the organization of two daughter churches. The daughter churches included Cutlerville Hills CRC (now Hillside Community) and Providence CRC, respectively.
- 1978 - An addition to the church was completed for use in September 1978.
- 1979 - The Coffee Break Ministry began and was run at our church until 2020.
- 1982 - The Classis Grand Rapids South ministry to handicapped people (the Friendship Program) was begun at Covenant. Covenant took on full responsibility of the program in 1988.
- 1989 - Covenant hired their first youth director.
- 1990's - The congregation approved a master plan called The Vision for the 90s: Celebrating through joyful worship, cultivating person's gifts for service, communicating the gospel, and caring for one another. Out of this vision the formation of households, care groups, Bible study groups, a worship planning committee, a coordinator of music, and the Discover Your Gifts program was born.
- 2000 - Praise teams began.
- 2002 - The furniture ministry began, and in the first 10 years, over 13,000 pieces of furniture were distributed to families in need throughout West Michigan.
- 2004 - Starting with the Dusabe family, Covenant began their sponsorship and support of various families from war-torn areas of Africa.
- 2009 - Covenant went on their first mission trip to Nicaragua. In 2011, Covenant partnered with Food for the Hungry in San Miguelito, Nicaragua.
- 2010/2011 - A study was completed and recommendations were given and approved to revise Covenant's youth programs. A youth elder position was also established to serve youth and their families.
- 2017 - Children at the table was implemented.
- 2018 - The offices of elder and deacon were opened to all women to serve.



OUR MINISTRIES

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



Here at Covenant, we are all about kids and students! The leaders of our children and youth ministries are committed to coming alongside the children and youth in our community to help them discover who God is and what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

- In Little Lambs, children (2- & 3-year-olds) experience God's love, begin to understand God's Word, and play interactively during the Sunday morning worship service.
- In Children in Worship children (4- & 5-year-olds) experience God's presence through their own special worship service that is designed just for them.
- Discipleship Journey is our church education for students in first through twelfth grade. This is where students grow in their knowledge of our Lord, His Word, and the church.

KID'S HOPE USA

- At Covenant we participate with Kids Hope USA. Our partner school, Southwood Elementary, is part of the Kentwood Public Schools.
- Kids Hope's model is one child, one hour, one church, one school. We have been partners with Southwood since the fall of 2014.
- We have had many mentors and prayer partners over the years.



GEMS & CADETS

Covenant has a flourishing GEMS group of 20 girls grades 2-8 that meets twice a month during the school year. They continued to meet throughout COVID whether by zoom or socially distanced in a member's barn. They not only learn about God, but they also learn crafts and skills which they often apply to service projects. This year they cultivated relationships with older members through snail mail pals.

The Cadet program at Covenant has been combined with another local CRC church and serves boys grades 4-8.

STUDENT MINISTRIES - Middle School and High School

- Student Ministry at Covenant Church involves 6th – 12th grade students, both our middle school and high school students.
- Discipleship Journey is our student spiritual formation groups. Each of our middle school and high school students are invited to be part of a Discipleship Journey group. These groups are organized by grade level and are facilitated by multiple adult leaders who journey with them for an extended period of time (2-5 years).
- During their time together, the Discipleship Journey groups do 3 main things. First, they check in with each other about what occurred during the past week. Second, they read and reflect on the passage of Scripture for the week using the weekly formation guide. Third, they spend time in prayer for one another.
- Covenant also has a Middle School and a High School Youth Group. During our Youth Group gatherings, we focus on social, relational, and community development. We seek to learn about each other and our community during our youth group gatherings.



OUR MINISTRIES



ADULT MINISTRIES

Through an intentional process called Re-Imagining Church, Covenant is revising it's approach to adult ministries through the formation of :

Life Groups- small groups that study the Word, pray, fellowship and simply do life together. Many groups are already formed and meeting together.

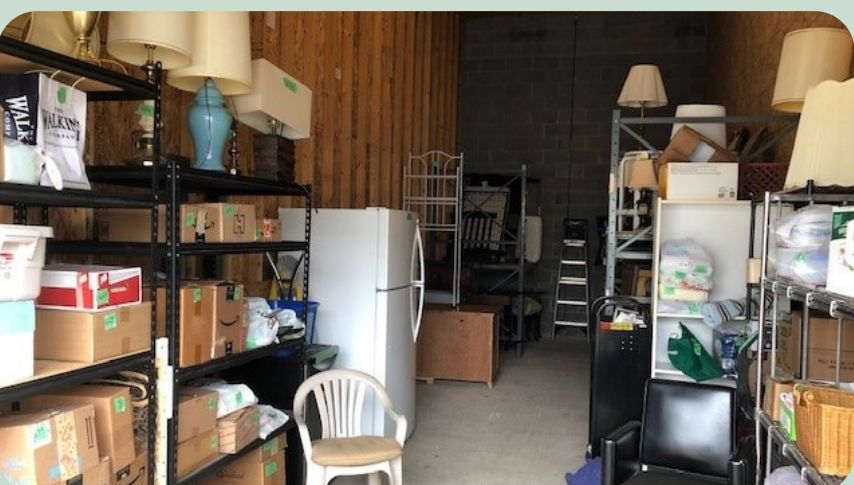
Small groups- groups meant to meet for a shorter period of time to study together/ provide faith formation or provide information about a topic such as, grief support or monthly topical studies. Covenant was one of the first in the CRC to start a Coffee Break Ministry that reached many neighborhood women and children. While the morning group with Story Hour has since disbanded, the evening group has continued to flourish and met through the pandemic via zoom. It was a welcome time of fellowship around God's Word and each other.

Sunday night gatherings- this fall we are starting a new Sunday night rythm for our church. Our plan is to meet in small groups twice a month (see above) with worship as well as service projects on the other Sundays.

We are excited about the new learning opportunities, fellowship and caring for our members as well as the opportunity to reach out to our neighbors with these ministries.

HAND2HAND MINISTRY

- Hand2Hand is one of the neighborhood outreach ministries Covenant has. It is a church wide project. As a congregation we serve Southwood Elementary School by bringing a bag of food to help end weekend hunger. Currently, this is our third year participating.
- This year we served approximately 90 children each week. A list of needed foods are posted so that the congregation may be involved in this mission by donating.
- Our team is comprised of 20 regular volunteers that rotate on a monthly basis by packing and delivering the bags to school.



COVENANT FURNITURE MINISTRY

- Started in 2002, the furniture ministry started when another pastor contacted our church and said he had a mom and child who attended their church that had no beds. Providentially, a Covenant member had contacted the church earlier to see if there was any need for a bedroom-suite they were getting rid of. After our Diaconal Ministries Coordinator shared this story, people started contacting the church with lists of what they would like to give.
- In 2002, we took in 152 items and passed them out. A growing trend happened each year through 2019, when 4,600 items were passed out that year. By that time, we had also passed out 1600+ Bibles, and introduced 270 clients to a church in their neighborhood.

OUR MINISTRIES



WORSHIP

Covenant LOVES to sing! We have choirs for children, adults, and a special Praise Singers group. Our blended worship makes use of organ, piano, keyboard, guitars, drums and even bells at times. Shofar Brass is a local group that also supports us in worship on a regular basis. We have a Director of Worship and Music that coordinates the music ministries.

STREAMS OF HOPE FOOD PANTRY

Streams of Hope Food pantry was initially started as a small food closet in our basement to service emergency weekend needs in the area. Shortly thereafter we were approached by a local hospital system and requested to provide healthy food pantry options. Over the years the “closet” grew to take over two classrooms and eventually partnered with nine other churches to build a pantry connected with Streams of Hope, a local after-school tutoring program. The pantry has been able to continue to serve the community throughout the pandemic by switching to drive through shopping, and currently serves 400+ families/month. Many of the original Covenant volunteers continue to serve at the new location.



MISSION SUPPORT

Covenant currently supports 10 missionaries both in the US and around the world. They have led us to become more than financially involved at times. For example, After Jairo and Kelly Solano led a team to Nicaragua in 2009 to help out in an orphanage the team’s eyes were opened in a new way and Covenant wanted to do more than just provide financial support. Jairo was working for Food for the Hungry and suggested that a vision team come down to Nicaragua and explore the idea of partnering with a community town to work with Food for the Hungry on tangible projects as well as sponsor the children in the village. The team went and picked the town of San Miguelito and for eight years various work teams went to volunteer a week helping with projects the town had decided were important- classrooms, latrines, a fence for safety and a feeding center. After eight years the town had surpassed all the original goals and our teams were phased out. Currently, Jairo has started his own outreach to a group of coffee growers in the mountains and is able to host groups to do Bible schools and deepen relationships with the villagers.



IMPACT BURUNDI

- Covenant has been involved with Impact Burundi since 2013.
- Libere Dusabe, a member of Covenant who is originally from Burundi, had a heart to help people in Burundi and partnered with Covenant to create a ministry that revolves around equipping people by investing in communities and creating jobs.
- As Libere puts it, “I wanted to fulfill the promise I made to God when I told him that I would work for him for the rest of my life if he would save me from the civil war, we were enduring in which nearly 1 million people died.”
- Some of the results of this ministry include:
 - 932 households now have access to clean drinking water.
 - 3000 families have learned how to live in healthy and vital relationships with God, their neighbors, themselves, and the environment.
 - The steward leadership program helps people view agriculture, livestock, clean water, and other programs as they were created by God.
 - God has blessed Impact Burundi, so we currently serve more than 18,000 people in three different provinces in Burundi.



OUR OUTREACH

Covenant 's desire is to be an outreach oriented church, where we move out into the neighborhood to meet people where they are at, to build friendships and to share the love of Jesus. Some examples of Covenant's outreach include:

- **Wednesday Nights on the Lawn** - During the summer months, from 6:30-8:30 PM on Wednesday nights Covenant invites its members and neighbors to come together to get to know each other better. Each Wednesday different activities are planned which are family friendly, fun, and sometimes a little competitive. Below are a few examples from the 2021 summer season.
 - Corn Hole Tournament
 - Sidewalk Chalk Art Extravaganza
 - Food Trucks, Bounce House & Lawn Games
 - Jigsaw Puzzle Competition
 - Outdoor Movie Night
- **Mobile Food Pantry** - Every third Wednesday of the month, we assist a local church in distributing food to hungry people in our community.



Sidewalk Chalk Art Extravaganza



Food Truck, Bounce House & Lawn Game Event



Covenant's water station for Brian Diemer 5k

LEAD PASTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

A. Status

Employment Status: Letter of Call

Reports to: Administrative Elders

Benefit Status: Vacation eligible; health insurance eligible; pension eligible; sabbatical eligible; expense account eligible

Compensation: Salary

B. Purpose

The Lead Pastor is the staff person ultimately responsible for leading, managing/administrating and coordinating the staff and ministry of Covenant Church. Specifically, the Lead Pastor is responsible for championing the mission and vision of Covenant Church, promoting the spiritual nurture of the leadership, staff, and congregation, supervising the staff, leading worship, and preaching God's Word.

C. Responsibilities: The Lead Pastor will...

1. ...provide worship leadership.

- a. The Lead Pastor will work with the Worship Director in planning engaging and relevant weekly and special worship services.
- b. The Lead Pastor will preach at least 75% of the worship service messages. (In addition to the Lead Pastor's vacation, the Lead Pastor, at their discretion, will be allotted six relief services annually).

2. ...provide spiritual leadership.

- a. The Lead Pastor, in collaboration and discernment with the staff, will establish and communicate a clear spiritual formation direction for the congregation - including setting an annual theme or focus to serve as the foundation for messages, small group discussion, and personal spiritual growth.
- b. The Lead Pastor will assist the leadership in walking through their discernments.
- c. The Lead Pastor will promote the Biblical mandate to make more and better disciples throughout the congregation and illustrate the mandate by their own personal witness.
- d. The Lead Pastor will assist the Pastor of Youth Discipleship and Outreach in assimilating new members and in preparing people for making profession of faith.
- e. The Lead Pastor will assist the Director of Adult Ministries in promoting the development of small groups focused on prayer, Scripture study, fellowship, care and service.

LEAD PASTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

f. The Lead Pastor will provide pre-baptism conversations with parents, pre- and post-wedding counseling (for weddings they perform), and will be available for, as time permits, general counseling.

3. ...provide supervision, administration, and training.

a. The Lead Pastor will serve as the supervisor for the ministry staff and will be a member of the Administrative Elders and the Council. The Lead Pastor may be invited to consult with the Deacons and Pastoral Elders.

b. The Lead Pastor will provide regular training and encouragement for Council members.

c. The Lead Pastor will typically represent the church at Classis – including as a delegate and participant in Council leadership.

4. ...provide pastoral care.

a. The Lead Pastor will be the primary provider of crisis care (i.e., hospitalizations, deaths, etc.) in the congregation.

b. The Lead Pastor will supervise, assist, and coordinate with the Pastor (Elder) of Visitation in long term care (shut-ins, elderly, chronic illnesses, etc.).

c. The Lead Pastor will be available for funerals and weddings of congregants.

5. ...be a team player.

a. Lead the monthly staff meeting and the regular ministry team meetings (Adult, Student, Children, and Worship) meetings.

b. Coordinate activities with other ministry staff, participate in staff initiated events, and assist, as needed/requested, other staff members.

c. Model discipleship by being personally involved in (at least) two mentoring/coaching relationships - one receiving mentoring, one offering mentoring.

d. Regularly continue to grow professionally in the areas of leadership, discipleship, spiritual formation, and preaching.

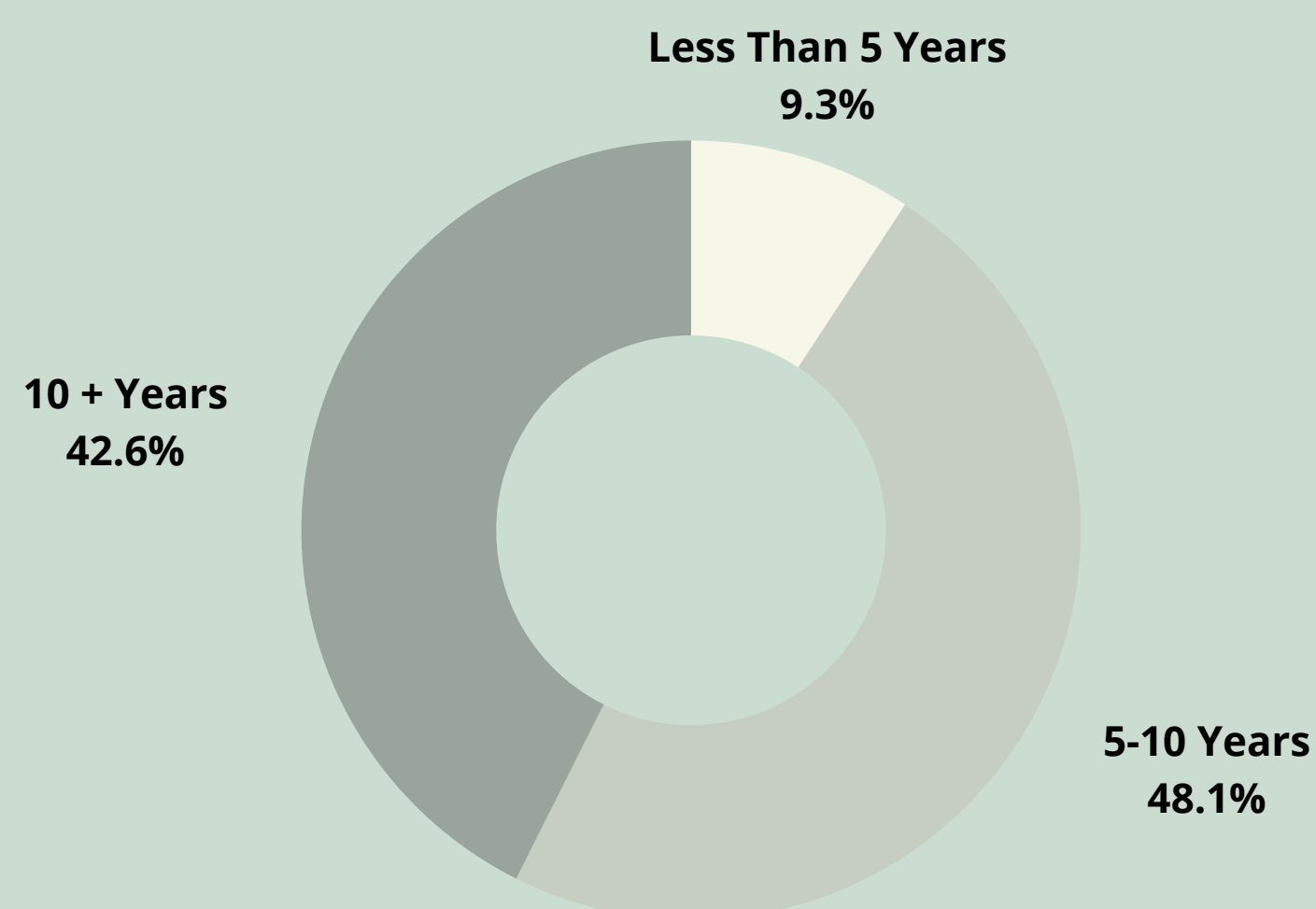
OUR DEMOGRAPHICS

Average Sunday attendance: 250-300 people (In-person and streaming)

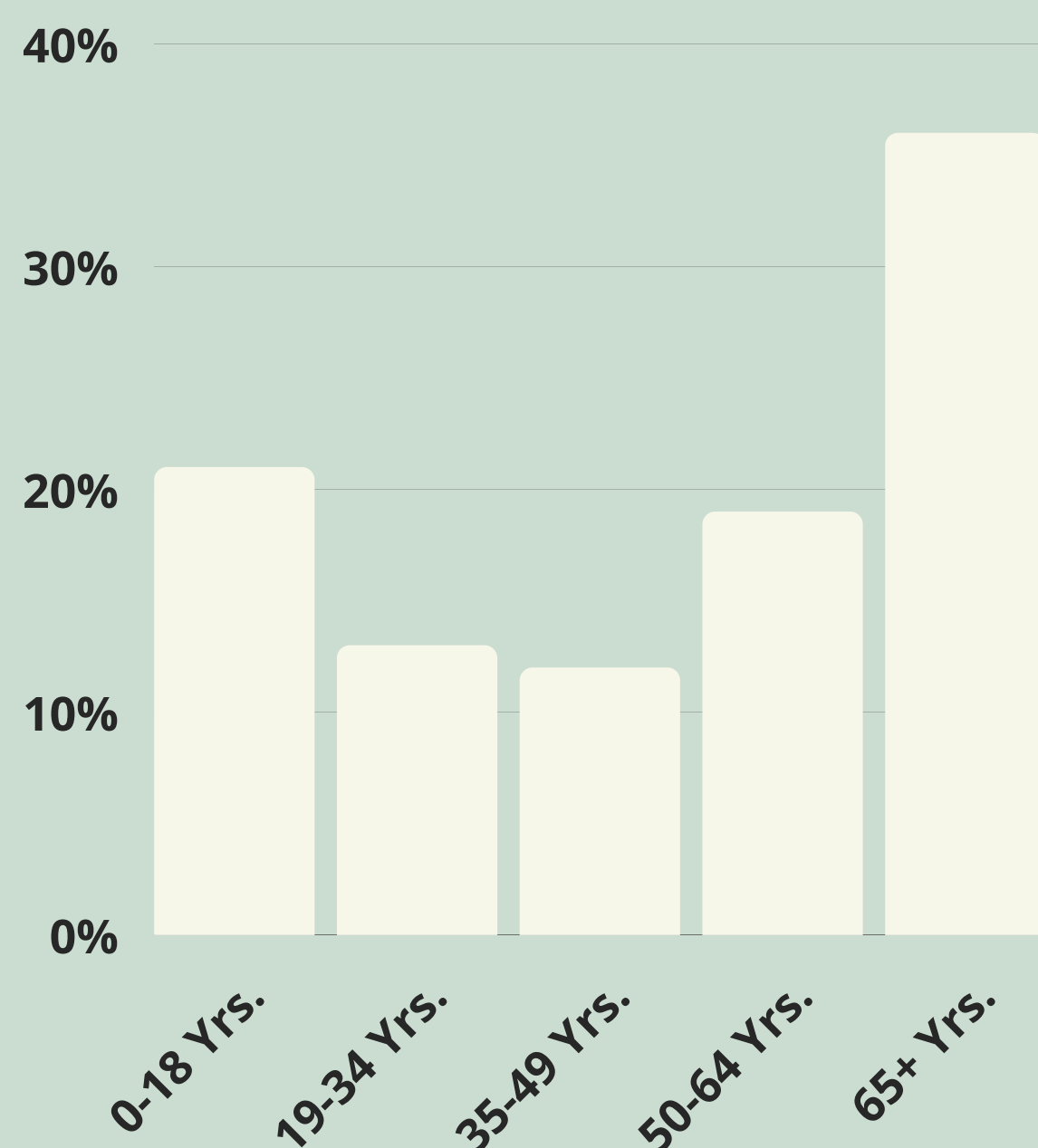
Active adult professing members: 212

The racial/ethnic composition of the congregation is primarily White/Caucasian with a small percentage of African immigrants and other ethnicities.

Length of time members have belonged to the Church :



Profile of Church members by age:



Profile of Church members by occupation :

