

St. James Presbyterian Church USA

Jenks, Oklahoma



**St James Presbyterian Church
Many Stories – One Family
Many Gifts – One Faith**

Mission Study

March 2022

Who We Are

At the core of St. James Presbyterian Church is the love of God. The church strives to extend that love to all, to be a welcoming church, and to show hospitality to everyone.

Our essential values and core beliefs can be summarized in our mission statement:

“At St. James we believe God calls us together to bear witness to Jesus Christ in our community. We gather to nurture one another in faith, support one another in life, engage our community through mission, and welcome all people to our family. Out of gratitude for God's blessing we seek to live joyful lives as we share the Good News with all people, trusting in God who guides, supports, forgives, and loves us.”

We value the importance of music in worship, connectedness through fellowship, and caring for one another. To this end, the church participates in monthly fellowship activities which facilitate the opportunity to connect, share, and care more deeply for our own church family as well as others who may need our support.

The church also values spirituality and recognizes the need for order, ideas, logic, and consistency utilizing both written and spoken words. Included in this spirituality are Bible studies; discussion groups around particular interests; as well as books, videotapes, and special speakers with various areas of knowledge. Different perspectives are sought out to gain an appreciation of other views.

The church is open to spirituality through experiential and emotive means. Prayer is important as well as times of quiet reflection to feel God's presence. For example, the church owns a labyrinth that is used mostly during Lent and Holy Week as a tool for prayer, meditation, etc. Teachings have occurred during the use of the labyrinth including its origins. Certainly, individuals within the church would describe their spirituality as more fluid, moving among a variety of spiritual types including God as mystery and the need for quiet reflection to experience all that God is in our lives and in the lives of others.

St. James Presbyterian Church values a Teaching Elder who would want to join us with similar values of loving God and caring for and loving one another as we continue our faith journey as God's disciples.

Our Larger Community

St. James is located in Jenks, Oklahoma and is a suburban community of Tulsa, Oklahoma. The metro area has a population of slightly more than a million people with Jenks having a population of approximately 22,500. St. James is very close to a number of communities, including Glenpool, Bixby, Sapulpa, and Kiefer. Being in close proximity to Tulsa, residents of these communities have access to all that Tulsa has to offer. Below are a few of the entertainment options:

The Gathering Place is a 66-acre park along the Arkansas River that has recently received numerous awards for being the BEST PARK in the nation.

The BOK Center, Tulsa's largest entertainment venue, has seating for over 18,000 people and has twice been named "Entertainment Venue of the Year" worldwide.

Gilcrease Museum and Philbrook Museum of Art are two world-class art museums located in Tulsa.

Three minor league sports teams are located within the city, including Tulsa Drillers Baseball, FC Tulsa Soccer, and Tulsa Oilers Hockey.

Ten miles of jogging, biking, and walking trails wind along the Arkansas River, and Turkey Mountain Urban Wilderness Area also provides biking and hiking trails.

Fine dining, including 1,098 restaurants, are located within in the metro area.

A few of the festivals in Tulsa include: Oktoberfest, Mayfest, Freedom Fest, Greek Festival, Scottish Festival, Hot-air Balloon Festival, Tulsa State Fair, Christmas Parade, Craft Beer Festival, and the Taco and Tequila Festival.

The Tulsa metro area is also home to 13 hospitals with capacity for over 2,600 persons.

There are 7 homeless shelters in Tulsa, one of which St. James supports with meals on fifth Sundays. Twenty food pantries are located throughout the metro area as well. St. James has supported the Jenks Food Pantry with food and volunteers throughout the years.

Our Town

Jenks is located in the heart of what we call Green Country in the northeast portion of the state. As mentioned earlier, it has a population of a 22,500 friendly folks. The town itself has a number of impressive facilities, including:

The Oklahoma Aquarium where you can walk among the bull sharks.

Jenks Public Schools, which is a first-class, highly-rated school system with the third-largest enrollment in the state and incredible facilities including Olympic-sized swimming pools, tennis courts, large gymnasium, gymnastics/wrestling facilities, football/soccer, and baseball and soccer stadiums. It also has a planetarium on campus.

Main Street in Jenks boasts that it is the antiques capital of Oklahoma, consisting of many antique stores lining both sides of the street. Main Street also contains everything else you'd expect on a classic main street including a barbershop with a barber pole, a couple of pubs, restaurants, and local goodies like ice cream and candy shops.

The Riverwalk at Jenks, located just blocks from Main Street, is a destination in itself with businesses overlooking the scenic Arkansas River just yards away. Riverwalk

contains restaurants, clubs, boutiques, and local wares. A multi-story driving range golf structure with its own restaurant and bar are located at the North end of Riverwalk. In addition, South Lakes Golf Course is situated West of Jenks and offers a clubhouse, driving range, and restaurant.

Pertinent Demographics for Jenks include:

The population within a 2 ½ mile radius of St. James is comprised of 76.4% white, 3.8% Asian, 2.3% black, 5.1% Hispanic/Latino, and 12.4% other (Pacific Islander, American Indian, Native Hawaiian).

There are a variety of backgrounds with 63% having at least some college education and 45% having at least a bachelor degree.

The average age is 37.21 and is expected to rise in the next 5 years.

It is estimated that 50% of families make more than \$100,000 per year. Twelve percent of families make less than \$30,000.

Of households with children under the age of 18, 78% live with married couples and 22% live with a single parent.

Jenks is a very safe community with a total crime rate that is 50% below the national average.

Although Jenks proper has no homeless shelters, there are seven shelters located within a ten-mile radius of Jenks. It does, however, have a very nice food bank that St. James supports with food donations and volunteers.

The community is second to none when it comes to festivals and events. Listed below are just a few of the many events held:

Art on Main finds Main Street filled with art of every kind to look at or buy.

The annual Herb and Plant Festival again finds Main Street filled with every type of plant imaginable for your home or garden.

Halloween on Main is where hundreds of trick or treaters gather for fun and candy.

Jenks supports a city-wide garage sale and food truck festival.

The July 4th Freedom Fest supports a huge firework show to end the day.

Within the town of Jenks can be found a variety of medical doctors, dentists, eye care, specialists, and urgent care centers. There are no hospitals in the town of Jenks, but there are seven hospitals within 12 miles.

Our Congregation

The membership of St. James Presbyterian Church consists of 182 people on the active roll as of March 22, 2022. Approximately 54% of the members are female and 46% are male. This ratio has been fairly consistent over the last three years. The total number of members has dropped by 15 since the end of 2018.

On March 11, 2022, a letter was sent to people who are still on our roll but have not attended in a significant amount of time, asking if they want to continue to be on St. James' roll or if they want to be removed. At the date of this report, not everyone has responded. The list consisted of approximately 50 people; however, many were couples, so less than 30 letters were sent. We have received three responses asking to transfer their membership to another church.

Our congregation closely mirrors our community. We have a primarily white, upper-middle-class income, highly-educated, and degreed membership. Seventy-five percent of the members are over 45 years of age. Forty-five percent of our congregation is over 56 and either nearing retirement or have already retired.

Most of our membership live within a 10-mile radius of the church; however, there are some who travel farther than that to attend. The majority of our visitors are people who are new to the community and live within close proximity to our facility.

Our Sunday Morning Worship

The Sunday morning service at St. James is held at 10:30. Because of COVID we have expanded our services electronically. We are adapting and evolving forward.

Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month and other special times as determined by Session. In a continuation of the worship service, Deacons take Communion to the homebound at their request. That practice was halted during strict Covid restrictions but is expected to be reimplemented when it is deemed safe.

Worship attendance has begun to recover since the Covid shutdown (March – October 2020) with worship provided in person and online. St. James' average in-person attendance is 55. The online service is broadcast through the St. James Facebook page. Those who join online are encouraged to make a comment so their presence may be known. We believe average online attendance is eight. Typically, another 25 to 30 watch it later.

Worship follows the standard Presbyterian USA Book of Order prescribed order of worship. We Gather Around the Word, we Hear the Word, we Respond to the Word, and we Go out to Serve.

The typical service involves a Prelude, Call to Worship, hymns, Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon, Prayer for Illumination, and Scriptural readings. The Sermon is followed

by the response in hymn or reading of an Affirmation of Faith. We follow with Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer with a closing hymn and Charge and Benediction.

Our choir provides leadership during singing of hymns as well as anthems sung usually during the Offering of Gifts.

Worship at St. James is a time of gathering of the faithful to respond to God's call for praise and hearing the Word so that message may be taken out into the world.

Our Church Programming

In addition to weekly worship services and an outstanding choir, we offer a variety of programs for both the children and adults of St. James.

For the children, the Christian Education Committee has restarted Sunday morning Sunday School. There is also a monthly fellowship for fifth graders to high schoolers. Children are invited to attend the first half of worship and participate in the "Time with Children". They are then invited to Children's Church and are led in age-appropriate lessons. Historically, Vacation Bible School has been a one-week summer program. Recently, Christian Ed has begun offering one-day Vacation Bible School programs several times during the year.

A Men's Prayer Breakfast is held at 6:30 a.m. each Thursday. The women meet on Tuesday mornings for Bible Study. An adult class is held each Wednesday evening.

Fellowship is very important to the congregation of St. James. The Fellowship Committee plans and hosts a fellowship event at least once each month, and these functions are very well attended. Three or four times a year a "coffee shop" type of event is held that usually includes food and live music. These are particularly great events for inviting friends and neighbors.

Our Mission and Community Involvement

The Deacons' shoe drive is an annual event held in either July or August, coinciding with the start of school. It is in conjunction with the Creek County Foster Children program. Our church is not located in Creek County, but rather neighbors it to the east. We have partnered with Payless and Rack Room Shoe stores in the past, to offer a BOGO campaign. Foster children from Creek County are encouraged to come and pick out two pairs of shoes each, for the upcoming school year.

We provide meals to the Day Center for the Homeless whenever there is a fifth Sunday in a month (4 times a year). Prior to the Pandemic, a group of members would individually donate ingredients, another would prepare the food, and yet another group would deliver and serve it; however, since the Pandemic, we have not been able to go to the Day Center, and therefore, have been purchasing pizza that gets delivered. We fund this through a \$20 donation to compete for bragging rights in the March Madness Men's Tournament Challenge hosted by ESPN.

The Backpack Mission currently provides a bag of food every week to 105 children in the Glenpool School District to take home for the weekend. This program is available every week that school is in session. Once again, our church doesn't reside in this school district, but it is a neighboring suburb to the south of Jenks. Each year, we host a Fat Tuesday pancake fundraiser for this mission. The Akdar Masonic Lodge provides the food, preparation, and service of the dinner. Members contribute, and the Masons match funds up to \$2500.

The Benevolence fund is collected through our "change for change" offering that we collect once a month during our Sunday church service. We pass a jar down each row, and people are encouraged to drop their loose change into the jar.

There are additional missions that St. James supports that don't require funding. Some of these include the following:

Jenks Community Foodbank is a mission supported by St. James that staffs the center during food distribution times, gathers food from local stores, and even grows fresh produce in the summer.

Grace Retirement Center in Jenks is an outreach of the Deacons who previously provided a church service to the residents once a month; however, these services have been temporarily discontinued since the Pandemic.

The Tulsa Coat Drive is coordinated through the Deacons who collect new and gently used coats, gloves, scarves, and socks for delivery to the Tulsa Day Center—the same place we provide the 5th Sunday meals.

Glenpool Angel Tree is an outreach through Glenpool Public Schools. Church members pick up their angels and purchase the gifts requested.

Our Church Officers

We have 21 active officers serving at the same time. Nine elders sit on Session and oversee all aspects of the church including finance, committees, personnel, and all events held at the church.

Nine deacons sit on the Diaconate and provide loving care and outreach to the entire congregation. This care includes following up on prayer concerns, meeting needs during illnesses or deaths, and serving communion to shut-ins. In addition to the care of the congregation, they oversee several missions on behalf of the church which are mentioned under the section titled Our Mission and Community Involvement.

Three Trustees sit on the Corporation Board of Trustees. They are responsible for overseeing all legal aspects of owning buildings and overseeing property. They sign all legal documents.

Our Buildings and Facilities

St. James Presbyterian Church is located near the intersection of 121st and Elm Streets in Jenks, Oklahoma. The facility sits on 2.5 acres in an area that has developed extensively in the past 25 to 30 years with large numbers of new home developments in close proximity. Future growth in the area is projected to continue, and the church is perfectly situated to provide outreach for the community. There are three buildings onsite as well as a columbarium area in the courtyard leading to the church offices. Additionally, there is a large, fenced playground, tetherball, and an outdoor basketball half court in the church parking lot. The church is very open and inviting, and oftentimes, there will be several local neighborhood residents biking with their small children through the circular parking lot or simply playing and enjoying the grounds.

The three main buildings that encompass St. James Presbyterian Church are the Sanctuary Building, Dancer Fellowship Hall, and the Christian Education Building also known as the Old Sanctuary.

Sanctuary Building:

The Sanctuary is approximately 3,300 square feet and includes space for the choir director's office and a choir room which are located on each side of the chancel and choir loft. Two sections of large pews provide seating for the congregation and visitors. The sanctuary was updated in 2013 with items to include new paint and new pew cushions.

The most stunning feature of the sanctuary is the large stained glass window featuring Christ as the Good Shepherd. The window is perfectly positioned in the East to catch the sunlight during Sunday morning worship and illuminate the Sanctuary.

Musical instruments include an incredible digital organ, a piano, and an electronic keyboard. A three octave set of handbells is stored in the choir room.

Dancer Fellowship Hall:

This newest building for the church is approximately 9,500 square feet. The focal point of the building is the large stage which is approximately 50' wide. The stage area also has two large alcoves for prop and wardrobe storage and is a raised platform that allows easy viewing from the Fellowship Hall area which is a space that is approximately 70 feet by 50 feet. Currently, seating is provided by chairs and large round tables which allows easy reconfiguration from a completely open floor plan for games, to stage facing seating for performances, to a dining room style set-up for meals. There is a large commercial kitchen with a serving line that opens to the fellowship space complete with washer and dryer. The Fellowship Hall is also utilized by Cub Scout Pack 385 for their Pinewood Derby race as well as by bands for concerts and events that are open to the

public, in which case seating is sometimes set up to allow a dance floor as well. The Fellowship Hall is also utilized for several district Precinct Polling places for voting.

Immediately adjoining Fellowship Hall is a large storage closet which houses items for our Backpack Ministry. This way, we can quickly set up rectangular tables so the congregation can assist with stuffing food items into packs for monthly distribution.

Dancer Fellowship Hall has two large restrooms, complete with shower areas, as well as two large, 750 square foot classrooms.

Christian Education Building:

The Christian Education Building was built in 1984 and served originally as the sanctuary and fellowship areas as well as housing classrooms and the pastor's office. With the growth of the church and the addition of the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall buildings, the Christian Education Building has remained the focal point for classroom teaching and Christian education. It also serves as a backup facility if multiple events are occurring at the same time.

There are approximately 6,100 square feet available on the lower level which includes the old sanctuary area, six classrooms, and two offices. Two of the classrooms on the lower level were combined into one large open room to facilitate a more spacious and inviting nursery area. One of the larger classrooms off the old sanctuary has been utilized as a library and a meeting room for the Session. The space also contains our congregation's mailboxes.

The upstairs area houses six classrooms and it is approximately 1,700 square feet. Two of the classrooms had been configured for special use. One is for the Quilting Ministry, and another is for youth music and singing.

Although not a separate building, an addition was created when Dancer Fellowship Hall was built that both structurally and spiritually ties the three buildings together into one and provides space for the church offices. There is an office for the church manager and next to it is a work room with copier. A large office with east facing windows with a view outside and private restroom are provided for the Pastor. Additionally, there is a slightly smaller office which in the past housed the Associate Pastor.

Our Technology Capabilities

St. James' Sanctuary has extensive technology available, and all equipment was updated in 2021.

A mounted camera is available in the back of the sanctuary and can be used for live streaming, recording, meetings, etc. This camera can only send a signal to the computer and not the mounted TVs throughout the church.

A sound board can be used to control sound both in the sanctuary and digitally for recordings or live streams. It can also interact with wireless mics, stand mics, and music played from a phone or iPad. The sound board can be controlled through the computer and has the capability to have preset scenes, so lots of devices/mics can be muted or unmuted all at once.

St. James' Desktop Computer can be set up to run the live stream, sound board, meetings, Facebook, etc. in real time. It also brings all the audio and visual digital signals into one place for use.

In Dancer Hall, the equipment was installed in 2019 and includes a mounted projector and drop-down screen that connects to a computer or device through an HDMI cord through the sound board.

The soundboard/sound system is a full sound system with speakers in the wall, onstage, and mounted on rafters. The system is capable of playing sound from a computer or mobile device with correct adaptors, has the equipment to hook up eight mics and two stage monitors (feedback for those on stage), and hookups to connect the digital piano.

Miscellaneous equipment includes a mobile projector that can be connected via HDMI cord; TV in the nursery; TV in the education hall/old fellowship hall; a TV in the sanctuary entrance; and two TVs on carts with DVD players.

Our History

Led by founding pastor, Rev. Hugh O'Neal Dancer, St. James Presbyterian Church began as a new church development of Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery in September 1981. The church later chartered in October 1983.

Rev. Neal Dancer brought his strong business experience to this new church development which laid the cornerstone for its future growth. Neal was foundational in teaching this congregation to serve the local church with responsibility and to work together as a unified system. He taught a solid reformed theology to a group coming from other denominations or an unchurched background. Rev. Dancer retired in August 1990.

St. James' first Interim Pastor was Rev. Marney Wasserman. As Marney was the first woman pastor for several of the congregants, she brought a grace-filled perspective to this church. She challenged the church to view the ministry and mission of St. James in new and different ways that built upon its current perspectives. She led the church through its interim period well and continued its growth both spiritually and in numbers.

During the search for a fulltime called pastor, the church went through some turmoil, to include a disagreement between a member of the PNC and the rest of the PNC as well as EOP. At this point, this PNC member left St. James Presbyterian Church which is notable as this individual contributed approximately 30-35% of the church's budget. This left the PNC to reassess its call

parameters mostly regarding the amount of salary that could be offered. The PNC continued, and the congregation called Rev. Roger Mattson in April 1992.

Rev. Mattson, St. James Presbyterian Church, and Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery dissolved the pastoral relationship in January 1994. There were challenges and discourse throughout this eighteen-month relationship. Rev. Mattson was well educated and provided theologically sound sermons, but he never integrated with the congregation in relational ministry. During this period, there were a number of serious concerns being voiced to Session. The session contacted the Presbytery for assistance with the continued rumors as well as Pastor Mattson's overall performance deficits. After listening sessions failed to rectify the conflict, it was decided by all three parties to dissolve the pastoral relationship among St. James, EOP, and Rev. Mattson.

Rev. Rodgers Spencer became the Interim pastor at this time. It may be noted that the process of the above-mentioned attempts to involve the Presbytery brought about a sense that we as a congregation were not being heard or supported in our difficulties. Rodgers brought a calming presence to the church as well as needed healing and much needed stabilization. He came to the position with an open mind and found a much different situation than had been explained to him by the Presbytery representatives. With Rodgers' leadership, the congregation experienced membership growth and a new sense of faithfulness to where God would be moving us.

In July 1995, Rev. Jane Huffstetler became the designated Pastor for a three-year term. She completed that term and was called and installed as pastor in July of 1998. Jane retired in September 2011. It was during her time that St. James experienced significant growth in membership, programs, staff, and overall commitment and understanding of discipleship.

It was during her tenure that the music program blossomed. This was aided by the Music Director, Jane's husband David, who was a skilled organist and music director. Included in the music ministry was music programming for all ages including children, youth and adults. A Bell Choir was also added. In 2000, the church sponsored a Youth Choir trip to Europe where the choir sang in a number of churches in Scotland and England. The trip included staying with families from those churches and learning wonderful lessons of the Presbyterian heritage.

There were many happenings in these years. Two Easter worship services were held for the first time. Later, two worship services were added on a weekly basis. During this time, staff was added. Rev. Jill Clupper was ordained and installed as Parish Associate for Caring Ministries. A Christian Education Director, Ms. Cathy Hamrick, was hired and later went on to become an ordained Presbyterian minister. Others served as Christian Education coordinators. Under the leadership of Rev. Jill Clupper, a Board of Deacons was formed with the call to further the care of St. James' members and the community. Jill provided extensive training to this new group of Deacons including serving communion to homebound persons and the particulars of visiting the sick and homebound.

Jane was a person with seemingly unlimited energy and passion for ministry. She was the type of person who people gravitated to, and she made all feel not only welcome but necessary in a corporate ministry. Jane and David opened their home for many dinners and game nights to new members and for team building of Session and Deacons. Jane was very successful in getting congregational involvement in committee work, and she was able to encourage people to seek their talents and find the places those talents could be used to serve God.

Jane was Biblically knowledgeable and was a good teacher of not only the facts of the Bible such as persons and places but more importantly what the message of the writings was, especially in context of our lives of faith today.

The church grew to its largest membership as well as largest youth group and Sunday School attendance. This was certainly a time of prosperity within the church.

Because of this growth and the increasing demands placed on Jane, St. James found itself in need of an Associate Pastor. Rev. Cheryl Finch was installed in January 2009 as Associate Pastor of Youth and Adult Education/Nurture, Mission, and Evangelism. Cheryl was active most noticeably with the Youth Program and starting a liturgical arts group that added to worship with visual enhancements during worship. This growth brought challenges, however. For example, a number of young people from the neighborhood began to attend worship and youth group. There were challenges in integrating this group with the existing group of youth, and for a variety of reasons, the group dwindled.

But Jane, as anyone would, became tired and needed to take time for herself and her family and thus retired. She has been greatly missed and “right or wrong” many members refer back to Jane and her tenure as an example of how we would like St. James to be again. Not necessarily just the numbers, but the mission and purpose of the church.

In December 2011 Rev. Ann Wasson began as the Interim Head of Staff. Ann guided a grieving church through this transition. She was warm and friendly and thus gained the trust of the church. She helped shift the responsibilities to the committees to move the church to a Session-led church. It was during this time that it was determined the church could no longer financially support an Associate Pastor which resulted in Rev. Cheryl Finch leaving. Ann left the church in a good place to move to our next pastor.

Rev. Jon Watt was extended a call in March 2013 and installed in May 2013. He was young and initially brought in a number of new members, especially young families. Jon was a good preacher with sound theology. He was at times active with the youth but never quite on the level expected from what he expressed his interest and experience to be.

The church functioned well for a few years but a slow decline in numbers was noted; however, it seems these persons and families were not communicating their reasons for leaving, and it was later discovered that a number of people had stopped involvement with the church or had

left altogether due to conflicts with or a dislike of Jon's sermons. It was noted his political views were expressed from the pulpit and that many did not want to hear "politics from the pulpit".

Then of course, Covid. As with all congregations, Covid and its interruption of in-person worship, committee meetings, Christian Education, and all fellowship resulted in isolation. Communication in ways other than in person were not pursued to the extent that needed to occur. Emails, phone calls, texts, etc. were not being utilized to continue open communication. Jon resigned in April of 2021 to take a call at another church. The combination of Covid restrictions and Jon's relatively fast exit from the church made for little to no processing of all that was occurring at St. James and made it difficult to process how to correct the deficits and "move on".

The Rev. Elaine Hedgecock immediately became an "interim" Interim Teaching Elder. She had been identified as the pastor who would fill in for Jon for a Sabbatical he was planning, but rather than taking the sabbatical, he chose to resign. The church was fortunate to have Elaine during this short interim period as it allowed time for the formation of a search committee to locate an Interim pastor as well as time for St. James to regroup. Elaine brought a listening ear, a kind and caring heart, and an enthusiastic presence to allow the church to begin to open back up both figuratively and literally. But Elaine had plans for travel and much-needed rest, and thus, another interim was to be found.

Rev. Chuck Taber is the current Interim Teaching Elder. He has brought sound theological preaching, has stabilized the committees in good working order again, and has been active in singing with the choir. Although he is a self-proclaimed introvert, he is approachable and willing to talk with anyone when they initiate.

Our Future

Outreach programs the congregation has suggested for the future are to provide a garden area for those who would like to grow their own vegetables, participate in providing Thanksgiving baskets, offer Tai Chi classes, plan picnics, and hold fall carnivals. Another idea is to host community events such as "brown bag suppers" or musical gatherings which would include a program and a meal. We would also like to recertify as a disaster relief center and become involved in a ministerial alliance with other churches in Jenks. All agree that we should not spread ourselves too thin, and ensure that what we do, we do well.

Church programs we would like to consider for the future include restarting the Bell Choir, offering local outdoor outings, having a parents' night out, having quarterly one day VBS programs, and planning/participating in retreats.

We provide a welcoming faith community for all. We can provide for spiritual needs. We can meet the needs either of those who have never attended church or for those who are looking for a faith community beyond their previous experience.

In a pastor, we seek someone who values education and embraces both the Presbyterian Book of Order and Confessions of Faith and is comfortable with themselves and their love for God. We would like someone who is inclusive and accepting of others, and is willing to help care for the needs of the congregation through both visitations and phone calls, emails, or texts. We would like our pastor to appear neutral politically, accepting that as a congregation we have many political views but are united as Christians. We would do best with an intellectual, organized, educated individual who also desires relationships, likes to serve others, and is in touch with their own emotions and feels the presence of God.

Respectfully Submitted by the Mission Study Committee:

Renee Chancellor (co-chair)

Scott Davenport

Michelle Easley

Beverley Ferrell (co-chair)

Tracy Whitfield

In addition to capturing known facts within the church, several other processes facilitated this Mission Study. Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery provided much needed help with area demographics. The congregation participated extensively in our vision for the future, our values, and our hopes in a new minister by attending four meetings of the congregation. They also participated in weekly questions posed each Sunday over a two-month period. We greatly appreciate their help, support, and patience.