



# New Hope Church

## AN INBOUND PCA CHURCH IN BANGOR, MAINE

### WHO WE ARE A CHURCH IN TRANSITION

Learn about our nearly 20-year history in the Christian Reformed Church (CRCNA) and our future transition to the PCA.

### WHY WE EXIST A CHURCH WITH A VISION

Meet our leadership, congregants, and learn about our ministries.

### WHERE WE ARE A CHURCH FOR BANGOR

Discover life in Bangor, the "Queen City", a small, yet vibrant, regional center for the arts, commerce, education, and the best Maine has to offer!

### WHAT WE SEEK A PASTOR FOR OUR CHURCH

Meet our search committee and learn about our hopes and expectations for our future pastor.



NHC is a church in the suburbs of Bangor, currently worshipping at Penobscot Christian School, where we've been for over a decade. We are nearing our 20th anniversary and consider ourselves a "newer" church, with a mix of original members and recent transplants.

We have a unique demographic, with an average of 50 congregants on Sundays, including nearly 30 children under 10, a majority of adults in their 30s, and a cohort of retirees. Theologically, NHC holds to the historic reformed creeds, with congregants coming from Reformed Baptist and Presbyterian traditions.

# NEW HOPE: A CHURCH IN TRANSITION

New Hope has gone through some challenges in recent years, yet through it all God has been faithful to provide.



## EARLY YEARS: 2005-2013

CHURCH PLANT WITH A GOAL TO BE REFORMED, CONTEMPORARY, AND EVANGELICAL

New Hope Church was launched in March 2005 as a church plant within the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) by a core group of committed believers led by Pastor Carl Bergman. Following several months of planning and once-a-month preview services, New Hope celebrated its “grand opening” in October 2005 with regular worship services in a rented space at the Bangor Motor Inn. At that time, 28 adults became members, and the congregation included 12 children. In the spring of 2006, the church moved to facilities at Penobscot Christian School in Bangor. The church established several programs and opportunities for spiritual and personal growth for members and the community including local and international outreach, Celebrate Recovery, Financial Peace University, Alpha, Men’s Breakfast, Women’s Study, other small groups, adult and children’s Sunday School, and regular fellowship meals. In the fall of 2010, the church transitioned from a church plant to an organized church commissioned by the CRC. During this period and the next few years, New Hope experienced moderate growth in membership.



### INTERMEDIATE YEARS: 2013-2020

A GROWING CHURCH WITH A FOCUS ON DISCIPLESHIP, EVANGELISM, AND WORSHIP

Jonathan Fischer, a Calvin Theological Seminary graduate, was hired as a pastoral intern in August 2013. In October of that year, Pastor Carl Bergman began a three-month sabbatical and Jonathan Fischer assumed interim pastoral duties. Upon his return, Pastor Bergman notified New Hope of his intent to retire from ministry in March 2014. The church approached Pastor Fischer about accepting a call as sole pastor of New Hope Church. Under his leadership, the church experienced a demographic shift. The arrival of a young pastor led to an increase in UMaine students and young families joining New Hope, which was accompanied by the joy of several new births within our church community. Sadly, at the same time, there were a few deaths, several members left due to job relocation, while others retired and moved from the area. The result was little change in overall church membership and attendance numbers.



## SEASON OF TRANSITION: 2020-PRESENT

A CHURCH LOOKING FOR A NEW HOME AND SHEPHERD

During the past four years, New Hope has experienced several challenges. Like most churches, we struggled to navigate COVID and the challenges of gathered worship and ongoing fellowship. We pursued options for purchasing a permanent building and made offers on two. We were briefly under contract on one and investigated several others. Yet, these all fell through, and we remain in our current rental location at Penobscot Christian School. Many of our college students graduated and moved on, along with the loss of several key volunteers, leaving a void in our ministries. However, the most challenging chapter in the life of the church was the dismissal of our pastor. Those details will be shared with any pastor pursuing a possible call to New Hope Church.

In 2022, as Jonathan Fischer left our pastorate, New Hope began a journey into our next phase of ministry. We were blessed by many local pastors who provided pulpit supply faithfully week after week. Eventually we hired a specialized transitional minister, Roger Sparks, through the CRCNA. He served New Hope for a year and encouraged us in a season of healing and reflection, paving the way to begin our pastor search process. Since Pastor Sparks' departure, another recently retired local pastor, Bill Johnson, has filled our pulpit while we continue our pastor search.

Throughout this season, the church leadership team watched the theological drift of the CRCNA, investigated available pastoral candidates and prayed about where New Hope should be aligned in the future. Many of New Hope's members and leaders have a presbyterian background, so in the spring of 2024, the elders began discussing aligning with the PCA. After more prayer, research, counsel, and discussion with local PCA leaders, the Council voted to pursue the denominational transfer.

Over the summer of '24 the Council shared this new vision with the New Hope congregation who eagerly embraced this new direction.



# NEW HOPE: A CHURCH WITH A VISION

As New Hope looks to the future, we have a strong sense of who we are today and where we want to go in the future!



## WORSHIP SERVICES

### ON A TYPICAL SUNDAY

Worship at NHC is fairly traditional in the elements of the service. The weekly liturgy contains many historical elements, worship songs, hymns, prayer of confession and assurance of pardon, congregational prayer, the Lord's Prayer, responsive reading, giving of offering, scripture readings, preaching, twice-monthly Communion, and benediction. Our musical flavor is a blended contemporary style which is typically guitar led. When possible, we add keyboard, drums, bass, and sometimes violin and multiple vocalists. Most weeks we sing four songs which range from traditional and re-instrumented hymns to contemporary praise songs. Our intention is to have content-driven worship, with the songs linked to themes in the Scripture reading or sermon, or to elements of the service (Communion, baptism, confession, etc.).

On the first and third Sunday of each month we celebrate the Lord's Supper together.

Following the service on the third Sunday of the month, we have a fellowship potluck.

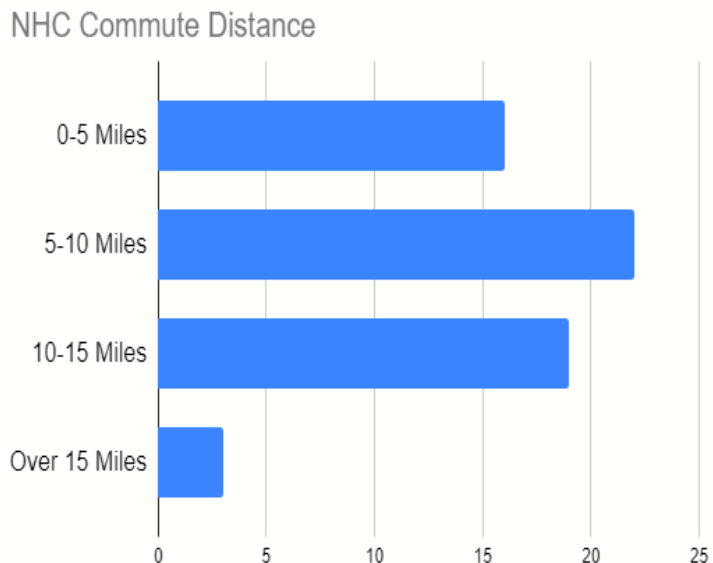
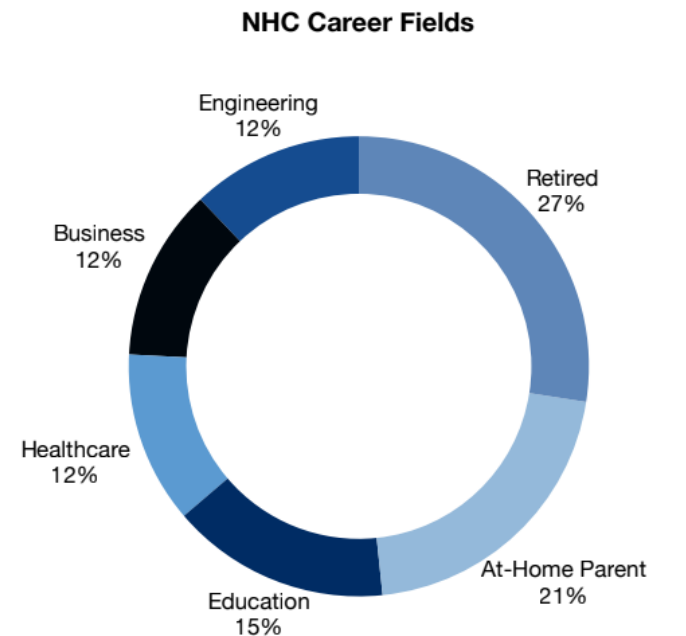
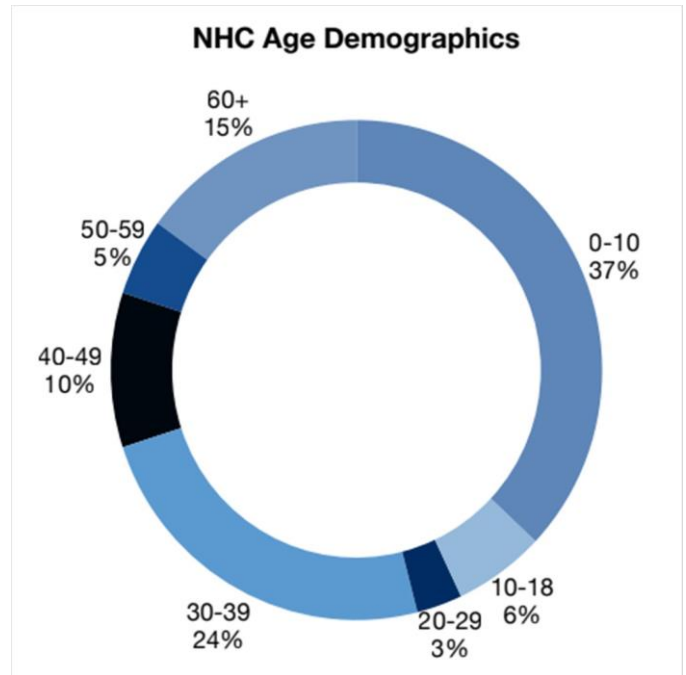




CHURCH  
LIFE

### NEW HOPE DEMOGRAPHICS

New Hope is a small, yet diverse community. Our congregants span all age ranges (although we have a growing population of young families), many different careers, and diverse educational backgrounds. With the largest demographic being young children, our gatherings are full of energy and joy! Nursery and Sunday School have become increasingly important, and a focus on youth ministry is in our future. As a well-educated congregation, there is interest in developing our theological foundation and nurturing an ever-deepening love of the gospel.



### ACTIVITIES AND MINISTRIES WITHIN NEW HOPE



#### Weekly/Semi-Weekly Gatherings

**Prayer:** Weekly in-person prayer meeting, pre-service prayer, Prayer Warriors online group.

**Children’s Discipleship:** Nursery, Sunday Schools for K-3 and 4-8.

**Men & Women Fellowship Groups:** Meeting weekly or bi-weekly for fellowship and life together.

**Women’s Ministry:** Regular Bible and book studies.

**Additional:** Monthly Potlucks, Gen Rev Activities (Local Christian outdoor group celebrating God’s creation).





## OUTREACH

IN 2024 NHC SUPPORTED THE FOLLOWING MINISTRIES WITH FINANCIAL GIFTS, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, AND DONATION DRIVES:

- [Eagle Projects International](#)  
*Church planting, medical aid, and theological training among unreached and marginalized populations in 17 countries.*
- [Joyful Hearts School](#)  
*Christian Education and discipleship in Uganda.*
- [Safe Families for Children](#)  
*Support for struggling families.*
- [First Step Pregnancy Center](#)  
*A first step in making an informed choice concerning pregnancy.*
- [STEP International](#)  
*Gospel-oriented development programs in South Asia.*
- [The Navigators](#)  
*Relational on campus discipleship. Local chapter at UMaine.*
- [Manna Ministries](#)  
*Outreach to the needy and unhoused in the Bangor Area.*
- [Anchor New England](#)  
*Equipping teens and young adults to defend their faith.*



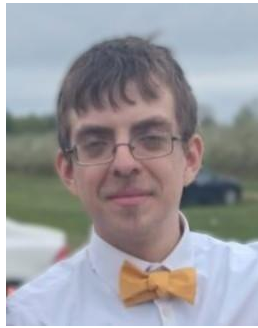
## CHURCH LEADERSHIP

MEET THE MEN OF SESSION



LUKE LEAVITT  
**ELDER**

Luke and his family have been at NHC for eight years, and he has served as an elder for the past five. Luke enjoys leading worship on guitar, teaching Sunday School, and greeting visitors.



ANDREW SCHANK  
**ELDER**

Andrew and his wife Morgan are parents to three young kids. He received his Doctorate in Civil Engineering from UMaine in 2021 and is a registered professional engineer. On Sundays, he can be found playing the bass in the worship band.



BERT SMITH  
**ELDER**

Bert and his wife Amy, along with their two kids, have been members of NHC since 2018. Bert has his BS in Chemical Engineering and an MBA from UMaine.



JOSH BURNS  
**DEACON**

Josh and his wife Holly have been at NHC for five years, and Josh has served as a deacon for over a year. He helps to organize men's fellowship and work groups at NHC. In his free time, he enjoys gardening, beekeeping, and homebrewing.

## MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM

MEET THE LEADERS OF OUR CURRENT MINISTRY AREAS



SHARON BOWMAN  
**ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR**

Sharon helps to coordinate the various elements of Sunday mornings and church life during the week. When not sending emails or texts, Sharon enjoys singing with the worship team and caring for her children.



BERT SMITH  
**TREASURER**

In addition to his duties as elder and member of the Pastor Search Committee, Bert has served New Hope as the treasurer since 2020.



PETER DROWN  
**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY**

Peter and his wife Dominique and three young children recently moved back to Maine from Washington, DC, to work at a research laboratory at UMaine. He likes to spend time with the family, golf, cook, fish, play piano, read, travel, and enjoys meaningful conversations.



BRANDON QUEZADA  
**PRAYER MINISTRY**

Brandon and his wife Rachel recently moved to Bangor from the Midwest. They have three young children and love spending time outdoors and indoors with others. Brandon and his wife enjoy hosting a weekly gathering at their house that includes a meal, study time, and prayer.

## NEW HOPE: A CHURCH IN BANGOR, MAINE

Learn more about our little city and all it has to offer.



*“The time may soon arrive when the three great cities of North America — Bangor, New York, and San Francisco — shall be representatives of the wealth, population, intelligence, and enterprise of the eastern, central and western divisions of our country.” – Oliver Frost (1869)*



It may sound fantastical to compare Bangor, Maine, (population 31,753) to New York and San Francisco, but there was a time, not too long ago, that the “Queen City” was the burgeoning capital of the American lumber industry. A lot has happened in Bangor since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, including devastating fires in 1856, 1869, 1872, and especially 1911, which gutted the downtown area. The lumber-focused economy, memorialized by a 30’ tall statue of mythical lumberjack Paul Bunyan near the Downtown area, gave way to a modern economy based on manufacturing, services, healthcare, and education.

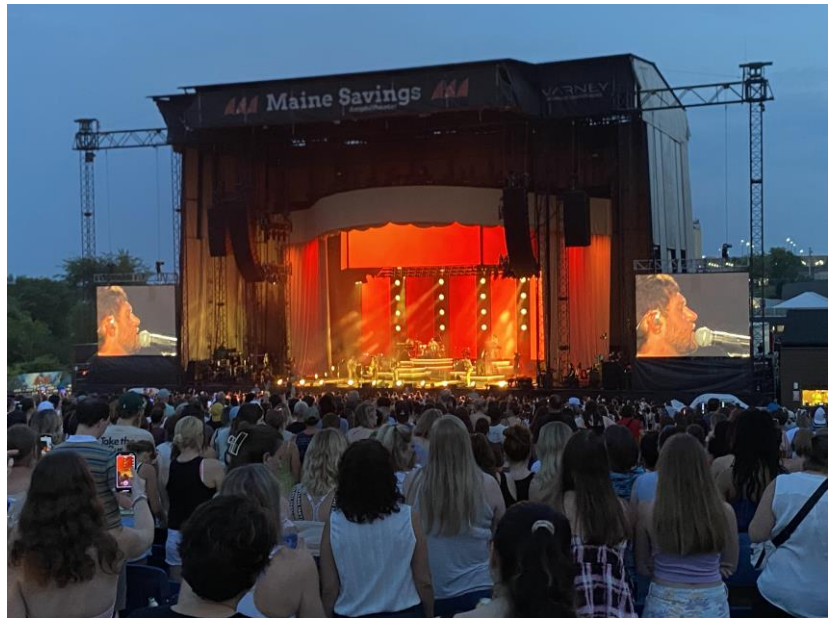
Bangor functions as the service, shopping, and entertainment center for most of Northern Maine. Thus, the greater Bangor area is home to two universities (including the state flagship University of Maine campus, nine miles from Bangor) several smaller colleges and trade schools, two hospitals, and numerous government and professional offices. Bangor is also home to the Air National Guard, 101<sup>st</sup> Air Refueling Wing, and the only military commissary in the state. Bangor’s extensive dining and retail options far exceed what its population would imply.

## Arts & Entertainment

Bangor also offers cultural and entertainment opportunities far beyond that of most cities three times its size. [The Waterfront Concerts](#) series at the [Maine Savings Amphitheater](#) hosts a diverse lineup of national and international musicians in a modern, luxurious, outdoor venue each year from late spring through early fall.

Other art and entertainment options include:

- [Cross Insurance Center](#) (Concerts, sporting events, etc.)
- [Bangor Symphony Orchestra](#)
- [Penobscot Theatre Company](#)
- [Collins Center for the Arts](#) (Concert/Arts venue located at the University of Maine)
- [Maine Discovery Museum](#) (Children's Museum)
- And more!



## Food / Dining Out



The Bangor area has a vibrant restaurant scene. [DowntownBangor.com](#) highlights the many varied options the city can provide: “From upscale dining to casual eats and food trucks along the waterfront, your taste buds can travel the world in our 40+ independent and locally owned pubs, restaurants and nightlife venues, all within walking distance of each other. If you’re looking for an authentic dining experience, whether it’s for locally-crafted beer and snacks on a patio, a quick sandwich during a lunch break, innovative fare for a special evening, a night out on the town, or just a place to linger over a coffee, downtown Bangor has it all.”

Additionally, in suburban Bangor, we have a variety of popular national chains including Chipotle and Chick-fil-A. (One of only a handful in all New England!)

## Transportation

Bangor has a metropolitan bus system with routes extending into the surrounding communities of Brewer, Old Town, and Orono. Local taxis, along with Uber and Lyft, are also popular transportation options. Bangor International Airport is a convenient gateway airport, with direct flights available to Boston, New York, Washington, D.C., several cities in Florida, and other destinations. Alternatively, Bangor is only 2 hours from the Portland, Maine airport offering even more destinations.

## Education

In addition to robust public-school systems in Bangor and the surrounding communities, Bangor is home to John Baptist Memorial High School, which was recently ranked in the top 20% of private high schools nationally by *The Washington Post*. The area is home to three Christian schools, one of which, Penobscot Christian School, is New Hope Church's current host.

## Outdoor Recreation

Our region is a paradise for those who enjoy spending time outdoors. Even within the city limits of Bangor you



will find opportunities to connect with the outdoor world, such as the 680-acre Bangor City Forest. Acadia National Park is located approximately one hour away. Baxter State Park, location of Mount Katahdin (the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail), is approximately 1 ½ hour drive from Bangor. Closer by, there are dozens of smaller parks and recreational areas that offer hiking, biking, swimming, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Countless lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams offer beautiful places to explore by canoe, kayak, sail, or power

boat. Access to the Interstate Trail System for snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles is within easy reach for those who prefer mechanized outdoor adventures. Western Maine is home to some of the best alpine skiing in New England at Sugarloaf and Sunday River ski resorts, along with a dozen smaller facilities.

## Maine Climate

*"He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding;" – Daniel 2:21*

The Lord uses the variability of the seasons throughout the year as a frequent metaphor in Scripture, often coupled with reminders of His absolute authority over them. Indeed, Creation is constantly in a state of change; not chaotic change, but purposeful movement during which there is "a time for every matter under Heaven."

The changing seasons in Maine provide us with ample fodder for contemplation of God's providence in Creation, and offer distinct times for a gloriously wide range of activities. Conditions range from warm summers to winters when temperatures are reliably below freezing and plentiful snow accumulates. Each of the four distinct seasons supplies unique opportunities and has its own special purpose.



## Summer



The flagship season for Maine's robust tourism industry, summer in Maine can be hot but is more frequently pleasantly warm (average daytime highs 75-80°F). Even cooler along the coast, this comparative mildness draws large crowds from areas to the south, eager for relief from sweltering heat and humidity. Summer is the perfect time for hiking, camping, biking, boating, fishing, or a swim in one of Maine's hundreds of lakes, ponds, and rivers. Summer, along with the peak of the tourism season, is generally considered to run from Memorial Day to Labor Day, although warm daytime temperatures generally linger into late September.

**Fun Fact:** Due to Bangor's position near the 45<sup>th</sup> parallel, we have over 15 hours per day of daylight for much of the summer!

## Fall

The arrival of Fall in September brings shortening days and cooler temperatures, though this often comes as a relief to Mainers who by now have had enough of the heat and humidity of Summer. Indeed, the lower temperatures make Fall the best time for more athletic outdoor pursuits, like hiking or mountain biking. Spectacular fall foliage sweeps from North to South across the state over the month of October, painting the forests brilliant shades of yellow, orange, and red, and drawing another influx of tourists. Late fall, beginning in November, is closely associated by



native Mainers with hunting season, as Northern Maine has strong hunting, fishing, and trapping traditions.

## Winter



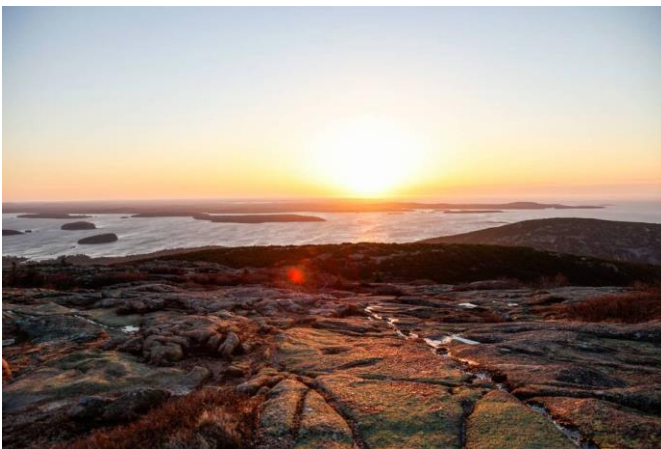
Winter, running from December through March and bringing daytime high temperatures that only occasionally rise above freezing, can be intimidating to some. But like the other seasons, it brings unique opportunities and provides a necessary and valuable part of the seasonal cycle. Many Mainers value the generous snowfall, particularly at higher elevations, for the recreational opportunities it brings: snowmobiling, cross-country and alpine skiing, and snowshoeing are popular winter-only activities. Children treasure the free construction material for snowmen and snow forts. Skating, both at indoor and outdoor venues, is popular with all ages. For many, winter provides a season of rest. Evenings spent reading in a comfortable chair by a warm fire provide a necessary counterbalance to the hectic days of summertime when, despite the length of days, it never seems like there's *quite* enough time.

## Spring

Springtime is a time of rapid change in Maine. Noticeably warmer daytime temperatures usually begin in late March, building through April until the joyous arrival of the first "T-shirt weather" day sometime between late-April and mid-May (depending on personal cold tolerance). Melting snow combines with frequent rain showers to bring on "Mud Season", a joyful time for children and a minor annoyance for adults, but the beauty of the blooming wildflowers and return of visible life to the plants and trees puts everybody in a celebratory mood.



## Spiritual Climate



As beautiful and historic as Bangor and Maine are, we, as a state, are in the midst of a faith crisis. Maine battles Vermont each year for the title of "Least Churched State in the USA". It is not a title we wish to keep! Maine trends politically liberal, independent, and extremely self-reliant. Many people in Maine would best be described as "Post-Church." There is a fairly strong Catholic community as well as a Unitarian, Congregational, and Methodist presence. There are also some non-denominational churches, with Baptist leanings. Churches with a reformed foundation are a rarity in the area. There is an

OPC church in our community and a few other churches with some reformed tendencies, and we have seen some resurgence in the past several years of an interest in reformed theology.

# NEW HOPE: SEEKS A PASTOR FOR OUR CHURCH

A shepherd to help provide stability and guidance after a challenging period. Learn more about the position and consider how you can partner with us in ministry.



## WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

We have been without a permanent pastor for over 18 months and are looking for someone to boldly proclaim the gospel in the Bangor area.

Additionally, we are looking for someone who can inspire and nurture our congregation in living as the Body of Christ. We are seeking a pastor who is passionate about preaching and teaching and has the vision and leadership to help us grow both spiritually and in our outreach to the community and local universities.

Our church faces several unique challenges such as finding a permanent building, expanding services for our young congregation, and navigating the dynamics of being in a military and college town in a predominantly secular and irreligious region.



## POSITION DESCRIPTION

- Preach and lead worship services, bring biblical, practical messages to all ages, which teach and convict those who are searching, while also challenging the more spiritually mature.
- Engage with congregants to promote discipleship and spiritual development.
- Teach adult Sunday School and lead Bible studies.
- Engage with the surrounding community to identify ministry and evangelism opportunities.
- Partner with the Session and members to ensure pastoral care for all members and regular attenders.
- Work with Session and Administrative Coordinator to ensure organized and efficient administration and communication.
- Provide direction, support, and assistance to ministry groups and leaders.
- Provide counseling and referrals as needed.
- Fulfill community, ministerial, and denominational responsibilities, and be a positive liaison with our broader mission partners.
- Other duties in keeping with pastoral ministry as determined by partnership of the pastor and the Session.



## PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

MEET OUR SEARCH TEAM



DAN MCGOVERN  
**CO-CHAIR**

Dan is a retired Naval Officer, having served in submarines and associated shore assignments for nearly 30 years. He and his wife Jane were core members of the team that planted New Hope Church in 2005. Dan has served in many capacities in the church, including 15 years as an elder.



LUKE LEAVITT  
**CO-CHAIR**

Luke, when not serving as an elder at New Hope, is a hospital administrator for a local health care organization. He enjoys playing basketball with his three sons and all season of outdoor recreation with his family. He and his wife Bess lead the worship team at NHC.



BERT SMITH  
**MEMBER**

Bert and his family reside in Brewer. He owns a small company that performs air testing services, which involves a lot of travel around the Northeastern US.



NANCY CONNOR  
**MEMBER**

Nancy and her husband have been members of New Hope since its founding in 2005. They have two daughters and three grandchildren. They cherish New Hope because of its strong biblical foundations and the caring family fellowship they have experienced here.



ERIC BOWMAN  
**MEMBER**

Eric and his wife Sharon have been at New Hope for seven years. They are parents to three young boys and are licensed foster parents. Eric enjoys Pittsburgh sports, lifting weights, and can usually be found running the A/V on Sunday mornings



MARK SOCOBY  
**MEMBER**

Mark and his wife Cassandra have been at New Hope for five years, valuing its focus on the doctrines of grace and its friendly, growing community. They have four boys and began homeschooling their oldest in 2024.



New Hope Church

**Next Steps:**

For more information, please email [info@newhopebgr.org](mailto:info@newhopebgr.org)

To apply, please send your resume, and a link for at least one online sermon to [Jason@No-FeePastorSearch.com](mailto:Jason@No-FeePastorSearch.com)

**Photo Credits:**

*New Hope Events/Services:*

Sharon Bowman, Bonnie Clark, Nancy Connor

*Bangor and State of Maine Scenery:*

[Seth Pops Photography](#)

*Greetings from Bangor Wall Art:*

[Zachary Edmundson](#)

*Waterfront Concert:*

[Bethany Eyster](#)

