



Centenary United Methodist Church
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

This position prospectus is provided to guide the work of the Church's search team and to inform potential candidates about the nature of the Church and the position.

Church Overview

Centenary United Methodist Church has a grand history and a bold vision for ministry in its urban setting of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Centenary's inspirational worship offerings, storied music and arts programs and outreach ministries, both local and international, invites friends and strangers to a commitment to the Wesleyan distinctives of Christian discipleship.

Centenary is the successor to a local Methodist society that began in 1832. The modern congregation was founded in 1927 at the merger of two historic Winston-Salem congregations, "Old" Centenary Methodist Church and West End Methodist Church. Centenary United Methodist Church moved to its current location on Fifth Street during the Great Depression, beginning a tradition of defying the odds, and establishing a home for fine preaching, superb music and engaging ministry for residents of the North Carolina piedmont.

Christian Education at Centenary

We are blessed with an exciting foundation of wonderful and innovative educational programs, from Disciple to a weekday Bible study for young women, from Godly Play to the diverse curricula of our adult Sunday school classes. The church's ministerial staff and laity seek and develop such programs to engage our members and the community. These programs are valuable not only because they allow members to increase their knowledge of the faith, but also because they combine education with Christian fellowship. Ministry staff ensure that these groups are supported and given theological direction to keep them in concert with the tradition of the United Methodist Church.

The core mission statement of our Christian Education ministry is to provide opportunities and experiences for Christian learning, growth, spiritual development and discipleship to all persons of the Centenary community. We hold certain values to be paramount in fulfilling this mission. These values include the following:

- ❑ **We value people as unique creations of God.** We believe that people count, first and foremost, in God's plan. People were always the focus of Jesus' ministry. People of all ages come with

unique abilities and challenges yet all can and should participate in education and spiritual development.

- ❑ **We value Scripture as a primary basis for Christian formation.** Holy Scripture has been the foundational component of God's revealed Word for centuries. In the United Methodist tradition, the Bible holds a special prominence. We encourage and challenge all teaching/learning opportunities to utilize honest and forthright examination of the Bible.
- ❑ **We value prayer and other spiritual disciplines to be vital components in Christian Education and Spiritual Formation.** Spiritual disciplines connect us to God and to each other. Through prayer and other disciplines (meditation, Bible study, the sacraments, conferencing, etc.), we believe individuals of all age levels in age appropriate practices can be drawn into a spiritual connection unlike any other.
- ❑ **We value outreach to all persons for involvement in Christian Education and Spiritual Formation.** We want to remove barriers and be inclusive of all persons in our discipleship. We will work at inviting all persons of all age-levels, from inside the congregation as well as out in the community, to participate in educational and spiritual formation opportunities.
- ❑ **We value the equipping of disciples through diverse opportunities.** We believe people learn and develop differently and therefore we will offer a variety of age-appropriate equipping formats to take place. The equipping of disciples includes leading all persons to worship, learn, teach, witness, and serve.
- ❑ **We value small groups as a way to involve and connect members.** Small groups are a means for fellowship, in-depth learning and support among Christians. Sunday School is a major catalyst for this to occur but other structures such as Bible studies, Sunday Evening Youth Fellowship, Disciple Bible Study and Companions in Christ will also be available. We want to provide enough a sufficient number of small groups in order that every desiring person can find a place of belonging and involvement.
- ❑ **We value the sharing of ideas, experiences, and resources within all age groups.** It shall be our special concern to foster relationships among the various classes, groups, and organizations involved in Christian Education and Spiritual Formation. In this light, we will promote age-appropriate information exchange of positive and beneficial ideas and experiences for the betterment of all. We will work to coordinate classrooms, schedules, curriculum materials and equipment for the best possible stewardship of our resources.
- ❑ **We value honest inquiry and learning as expressions of faith growth and development.** Principally, Christian Education and Spiritual Formation at Centenary is about learning and growing. We encourage the use of sound methods, open dialog, and exciting encounters that allow individuals and groups of all age levels to be transformed by the Gospel.

Education ministry at Centenary is primarily organized into age-level programs. Programs for young Christians are directed by an Associate Minister for Children and Their Families and a Director of Ministries with Youth and Their Families. Senior clergy are currently providing resources for adult ministry that would be covered by the Associate Minister of Christian Education in the future.

Children's Ministry at Centenary strives to teach children about the love of God as seen in the person and life of Jesus Christ. We want children to learn that they are an important part of sharing the Word of God and the love of Jesus Christ with all people. Some of the opportunities we offer include Sunday school, children's worship, Bible study, Vacation Bible School, music programs, mission and community enrichment opportunities as well as special seasonal ministries.

As with all activities, parental involvement is key in helping children understand biblical principles and their relevance in today's world. Centenary's Children's Ministry does not rely on its outstanding staff alone. In addition to a full-time Children's Minister, our program works hand-in-hand with lay leaders and parents to create a strong network of parental and church involvement. Together, we help children to grow in the knowledge that our God is a God of love, mercy and grace.

Foundations at 4 ½ Street Child Care Center is our comprehensive child care and learning center for children from birth through five years old. Established in 1961, *Foundations at 4 1/2 Street-Centenary*

Child Care Center is the premiere care and growth facility for Triad children and their families. For nearly 50 years, Centenary's Child Care Center has stood for excellence in foundational education-based care. Our mission is simple: "to serve Winston-Salem by offering an excellent Child Development Ministry to families with preschool age children that seek the ideal in physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual growth."

It is our goal that children experience a Christ-centered and nurturing environment full of love, care, learning and daily inspiration. We are committed to growth—both educational and spiritual. It's our philosophy that all children are uniquely created individuals whose right it is to learn within a safe, nurturing environment.

Youth Ministry is a dynamic and engaging adventure for adolescents ages eleven to eighteen. In their own words, our youth express their mission "To love youth on behalf of Jesus in hope of loving them to Jesus." We endeavor to offer a contemplative approach to youth ministry that is based on our commitment to cultivate in young people attentiveness to God's presence. The character and focus of this approach is captured in the following terms: Sabbath; prayer; covenant community; accompaniment; discernment; hospitality; and authentic action. Youth at Centenary have also led community ministry efforts in an innovative, grassroots program called "Love thy Neighbor."

Adult Ministry programs are undergirded by our belief that Christian education and spiritual formation are key building blocks of Christian growth and maturity. After all, if one doesn't understand faith, how can it accurately and effectively be expressed to others? At Centenary, adults are the life blood of our ministries to the community and each other—actively engaged in the life of this church and this community. As a church, we offer opportunities in spiritual growth and understanding through a variety of channels including: Disciple Bible Study, Companions in Christ, Sunday school, Christian Believer, spiritual formation and other small groups, and engaging seminars with contemporary and scholarly Christian thinkers.

The Position

The Associate Minister of Christian Education will be a senior member of the Church's professional staff and will serve as a "teacher of teachers." The Associate Minister of Christian Education and Spiritual Formation has responsibility for managing a comprehensive program of Christian education and spiritual formation for the church. This includes leading church staff and laity in planning, and conducting and evaluating a complete educational and spiritual formational ministry for all age-levels, with personal attention to Adult Education and supervision of staff for Youth and Children's Education (including the Child Care Center), in support of the mission and objectives of the church.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Integration of a comprehensive system of Christian Education for all age levels.
- Strategy to energize the Sunday school ministry for adults.
- Keen understanding of learning processes that incorporate challenging and intellectually stimulating learning in a variety of contexts.
- Engagement of strong personalities and gifted intellectuals with conviction and pastoral sensitivity.

- Development of a tactical approach to incorporate and inspire a volunteer culture that currently tends to focus on short-term involvement.
- Development of processes for training and deploying lay leaders and teachers.
- Strategy for small group formation and implementation.

Desired Experience and Attributes

- A vision of what the church could be and how Christian education and spiritual formation enables such vision.
- Experience in the theory and practice of Christian education.
- Experience in developing and leading a small group ministry
- Understanding and utilization of organizational dynamics within a church culture.
- Ability to design a system of excellence for Christian education and spiritual formation, enabling process to challenge and support content.
- Irrefutable relational skills with a wide variety of people.
- Faith grounded in the theology, tradition and experience of the Christian church (principally United Methodism).
- Strong gifts in creativity and the ability to see potential in multiple personalities and a wide variety of settings.
- Capacity to set a 5-10 year plan for Christian Education/Spiritual Formation and see it through to its execution. This also requires the facility to evaluation and adapt as necessary.
- Aptitude and Skill in being a team player who can work with, learn from, and support the growth of our other professionals and support staff.
- Academic training in Christian theology. A master of divinity, master of religious education or an equivalent degree from an ATS-accredited school of theology is required. Ordination at a level equivalent to the Orders of Deacons and Elders in the United Methodist Church is preferred. Commitment to Christian education as demonstrated by further graduate education will be advantageous.

Search Information

For further information on Centenary United Methodist Church, please visit the website at:

www.centenary-ws.org

For information on the search, please contact the chair of the Search Team:

Matthew T. Phillips

cumc.education@mtpchurch.com

336-462-8687

OR

Dr. Mark King, Executive Minister

mking@centenary-ws.org

336-397-1346