



**CHEMISTRY**  
STAFFING

# **CHURCH & CANDIDATE PROFILE**

**MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN  
EDUCATION**

Bonsack Baptist Church  
Roanoke, VA

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## **POPULATION OF CITY**

100,000

## **POPULATION OF COUNTY**

Roanoke City & County: 200,000

Botetourt County: 35,000

## **COMMUNITY OVERVIEW**

Located only six miles from downtown Roanoke, VA, Bonsack Baptist is in the Roanoke Valley's northeast sector. This area, which was once rural, has grown in the last decades to become a suburban outpost. Though close to downtown Roanoke, this area has a life of its own. Income and education levels are relatively high, and there is a mix of white-collar and blue-collar professionals.

The population in this area is also relatively stable; there is not a high rate of turnover. In other words, people who move here tend to stay. The church is located at the intersection of two major arteries across this end of the valley, one moving east-west, and the other moving north-south. We are also located just a few hundred yards from the line which separates Botetourt and Roanoke counties.

## **WHY PEOPLE LIKE LIVING HERE**

Our community benefits from two very good public school systems, one in Botetourt County and one in Roanoke County, as well several strong private schools. The region also benefits from tremendous natural beauty and outdoor resources. We enjoy four distinct seasons. The Blue Ridge Parkway and the Appalachian Trail both pass within less than 6 miles from the church, and Smith Mountain Lake is less than 30 minutes to the south. There has been a boom in the medical and biotech fields in the last few years. This, combined with the presence of several engineering-related industries means there is a growing presence of highly educated professionals.

## **CHURCH HISTORY**

Bonsack was founded in 1880. The name comes from a family who donated the land upon which the original church building stood. For the first several decades, the church barely survived, as the area around the church was sparsely populated. As the region began to grow in the mid 20th century, the church began to stabilize and gain a foothold.

Through the 1960s the church grew, calling its first full-time pastor and adding to its facilities. In 1971, the church began construction on a new site located less than a mile from the original location but much better positioned with the new highways being widened and/or added. Through the 1990s, the church began adding multiple staff members, all of who had long tenures. This was accompanied by significant growth. The facilities were expanded and new worship services were added, and in 2014, the weekly average attendance peaked at 1100.

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Since 2014, the church has gone through transition as long-time staff retired or moved on, and new staff have begun to assume leadership.

## **VISION, MISSION, VALUES**

Bonsack's unchanging mission statement is to Share Christ and Build Believers. In 2015, sensing the changing environment and leadership, a new vision statement was adopted, focusing on three key words/initiatives: Know, Grow, Go. Our desire is to "Know God as he has been revealed in Jesus Christ," to "Grow together as we build an inviting community that invites others on the journey to Christ-likeness," and to "Go Share as we take the love of Jesus to our community through words and deeds." In 2022, we have added unique emphasis to bring attention to these three initiatives. We call it "Worship one, learn one, serve one." The goal is for every member of this church family to spend at least one hour a week worshipping together, one hour a week learning together, and one hour a week in intentional service, regardless of whether that service is inside or outside the official ministries of the church.

## **AVERAGE WEEKEND ATTENDANCE**

Before Covid - 850; since Covid - 600

## **OVERVIEW OF WEEKLY WORSHIP GATHERING**

We hold two worship services each week, but they happen simultaneously at 9:45 a.m. A more traditional, choir-based, organ-led service takes place in the Sanctuary, and more contemporary, band-led service happens in the Community Life Center. The music and other elements of worship leadership happen live in each venue, and the sermon is broadcast via video from the Sanctuary to the Community Life Center.

## **TELL US ABOUT YOUR FACILITY**

The original building, which is now used entirely for educational purposes, was constructed in 1971. In 1981 another building was added that now serves largely for administrative purposes as well as an auxiliary space for mid-sized gatherings. The current sanctuary, which seats 550 was added in the early 1990s, and a dedicated children's facility was built in 2002. In 2016, we completed the construction of our Community Life Center, which houses a gym that also doubles as worship space, a large event hall, a large atrium, and some additional educational space. Altogether, we have over 160K square feet of space, much of which is multi-functional.

## **OVERALL BUDGET (THIS FISCAL YEAR)**

\$2.7 million

## **OVERALL LONG-TERM DEBT OF THE CHURCH**

\$5.4 million

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## **DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION AND/OR OTHER PARTNERSHIPS**

We are affiliated with the Roanoke Valley Baptist Association, the Baptist General Association of Virginia, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **GOVERNANCE & POLITY**

Ultimately, we operate by a congregational polity, at least when it comes to major decisions (hiring, budgeting, building, etc.). Day-to-day operations and decisions are made by senior staff, in partnership with key committees, such as the Personnel and Stewardship Committee.

## **CURRENT PAID STAFFING LEVEL**

- Full time Ministers: senior pastor, executive pastor, minister of christian education, minister of music, minister of youth; minister of community life (rec center), minister of senior adults
- Full-time staff: communications director, director of children's ministries, CLC worship leader and director of and media ministries, Weekday Early Education Center director, facilities director, music associate
- Part time staff - education assistant, children's music coordinator, outreach coordinator

## **MAJOR MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH**

We are a largely Sunday School-driven church with classes for every age level and staffing dedicated to recruiting and equipping teachers and leaders and launching new classes. We also have a vibrant music ministry that includes graded choirs for children, a large adult choir, a senior adult choir, a praise band, a youth praise band, and an orchestral ensemble (much of this has been paused during Covid). Our youth ministry holds its main event on Wednesday nights, and our children's ministry hosts weekly and seasonal events. We have also tried to be more intentional in recent years about developing our partnership missions program.

## **OUTREACH PROGRAMS OVERVIEW**

Outreach to our community and beyond:

- Our partnership missions program provides support and funding for people to participate in hands-on mission experiences. When COVID forced the postponement or cancellation of many of the mission engagements we would typically sponsor, we shifted our focus to strengthening our partnership with several local ministry partners. This includes two mission houses in the inner city, the adoption of a local school, and hosting events for the administration of one of the county school systems. Events (musical and educational) are promoted to our community through our members as well as media.

Outreach to guests:

- Our Sunday School ministry is a key to outreach and assimilation for all ages in the life of the church. Sunday School is the first step toward assimilating guests.

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## **IN THE MOST GENERIC SENSE, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CHURCH THEOLOGICALLY?**

Evangelical - Moderate

## **PUBLISHED THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT**

We align with the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message of the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **WHAT THEOLOGICAL HILLS WILL YOU DIE ON?**

We believe in the authority of Scripture, the Lordship of Christ, and in faith in his atoning sacrifice as the sole means of salvation. We are Armenian in posture, but with a strong belief in the sovereignty of God.

## **HOT-BUTTON SOCIAL/CULTURAL ISSUES FOR YOUR CHURCH**

We hold to a traditional, biblical understanding of marriage as a life-long covenant between one man and one woman. While we would welcome anyone to worship with us, we would not embrace or affirm an actively gay lifestyle or a same-sex marriage.

## **BIGGEST CHURCH 'WINS' IN LAST 18 MONTHS?**

In recent years we have managed a large amount of transition as long-tenured staff began to move into retirement or into new modes and places of service. We have navigated that transition with stability as the church has adjusted to new individual and corporate personalities. That stability has served us well through the disruptions of Covid. While we have seen the same drop-off in attendance that almost all churches are reporting, we are on the high end of the average. Our current in-person attendance hovers between 65-70% of pre-Covid attendance.

We finished 2020 and 2021 in a strong financial position. In 2020, giving exceeded budget, and in 2021, we came within 3% of meeting budget. We also completed a debt-reduction campaign in 2019 by exceeding our goal, so we are in a strong financial position. We have hired a new ministry staff person by securing a new worship leader for our CLC service, and there is excitement among staff and our core leaders as we move through our first fully "normal" post-COVID year.

The staff and church continue to make major & minor adjustments due to Covid. Money and meals were provided to our local community mission centers (thousands of meals), carefully phased returns of worship, Bible study and ministry so far without outbreak-related incidents, and we feel we are positioned to do well as restrictions are lifted.

## **BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR CHURCH IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS**

Now that we've hired a new worship leader, the prospect of bringing on a new Minister of Education creates an atmosphere of excitement as we position ourselves for ministry beyond COVID. This combined with the fact that the

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neighborhoods around our church will likely be undergoing change over the next 5-10 years as longtime residents transition out and families who are new to the area begin to take up residence. New leaders and the fresh vision they help inspire put us in a place of high expectation as we discern how to connect with the world around us.

## **CHURCH'S BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE**

For years, Bonsack has been a large, program-driven, attractional church. This model served the church well, particularly when there were forces at work in our immediate context that pushed people towards us. This included such factors as population growth in our area, and the struggles of other churches who were dealing with unhealthy internal situations that drove people away. We had the ministries, staff, facilities, and services to appeal to people who were looking for a church home. We have now moved into a new season in which some of those factors are no longer as strong as they once were. For example, the population in our area is stable, but the growth has moved to a new area north of us. Thus, we are having to find a new identity that focuses on getting outside our walls. We will always be a program-heavy church, but we have to be more intentional on going to people where they are rather than waiting on them to come to us. This is reflected, for example, in our renewed focus on local ministry partnerships. We will still encourage mission trips to places outside our region, but Covid has forced us to take stock of the ministry needs that exist in our own neighborhood.

## **TITLE OF POSITION YOU ARE HIRING**

Minister of Christian Education

## **CATEGORY OF HIRE**

Education / Discipleship / Outreach

## **FULL TIME POSITION?**

Yes

## **OVERALL DESCRIPTION OF THIS POSITION**

Our Minister of Christian Education will be responsible for development of the Christian heart, mind, soul and body across all ages. The first priority will be growing and equipping an already vibrant Sunday School ministry, but will also include oversight and direction of small groups. This individual will lead the church in promoting a culture of discipleship.

## **DESCRIBE THE LAST PERSON THAT HELD THIS POSITION**

This hire will succeed our previous Minister of Education, who has now transitioned into a new role as our Executive Pastor. This transition was necessary and appropriate as the growth of the church over the years required more

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administrative oversight. The previous Minister of Education was seminary trained in christian education and had a broad understanding of discipleship and the various ministries associated with it. He was also proficient at facilitating collaboration among ministerial staff so they performed well as a team.

## **REPORTING RELATIONSHIP**

This individual will supervise all age-specific discipleship ministers of staff, including the Director of Children's Ministries, the Minister of Youth, Minister of Community Life (Rec Center) and the Minister of Senior Adults. Additional direct reports include (the Minister of Community Life (Rec Center), and) the Weekday Early Education Director and Communications Director. The Minister of Christian Education will report directly to the Executive Pastor.

## **GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS**

The Minister of Christian Education will develop and oversee a comprehensive, discipleship plan with an outreach emphasis. The ongoing growth of Sunday morning Bible study is a focus of this position. We also desire for this person to help us better map out a process of assimilation, by which people can more intentionally move from guests to active members of the community.

## **DO YOU HAVE A JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THIS ROLE?**

Job Title: Minister of Christian Education

Job Classification: Exempt (salaried), full-time position

Position Reports to: Executive Pastor

Principal Function:

To evaluate, develop, implement and maintain a comprehensive discipleship plan within an outreach that helps to fulfill the gospel mandate of "Sharing Christ and Building Believers."

Responsibilities:

Education:

- Sunday School - recruit and equip teachers and leaders for continued growth in the discipleship ministry
- Communication of the vision for discipleship ministry to the larger church
- Discipleship Training – assess relevant areas of need within the church and plan appropriate classes and events to promote spiritual growth
- Participate in and network with professional organizations to enhance personal and professional development in Christian education

Outreach:

- Develop an ongoing outreach process that connects and involves guests with staff and church members

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- Inspire staff and members with a passion for reaching our community for Christ
- Provide ongoing vision and training of the hospitality team (e.g. greeters, ushers, parking, etc.)

#### Assimilation:

- Develop and communicate the process by which new believers, new members and guests find their place of connection and ministry
- Provide ongoing opportunities for members to discover and utilize their spiritual gifts

#### Leadership:

- Provide direct oversight and leadership for volunteer, part-time and pastoral staff who are directly responsible for the discipleship and outreach ministries of the church, including the WEEC
- Develop and lead Sunday School and discipleship teams that meet regularly to evaluate, develop, implement and maintain the church's disciple-making strategy
- Provide vision and guidance to the primary adult discipleship ministries of the church (i.e. Sunday School groups, men's and women's ministries, and others as identified or assigned)

#### General:

- Proficiency in pastoral care functions (e.g. public prayer, hospital visitations, funerals, preaching, etc.)
- Develop and coordinate budgets with the discipleship team

#### Qualifications:

- Growing believer in Jesus Christ
- Healthy family relationships and strong moral character
- A proven passion for making disciples and developing teams in a growing church
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively as a leader and teacher
- Ability to think strategically and involve others in all levels of the disciple-making process
- A minimum of five years of vocational ministry experience and a master's degree in Christian
- Ability to evaluate curriculum based on sound educational and biblical principles

#### Education, Discipleship, or comparable degree

- Supervisory experience preferred

### **EDUCATIONAL PREFERENCES**

Our strong preference is that this individual will have a defined philosophy of Christian Education congruent with ours. A Master's in Christian Education is most desirable.



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## **AGE VS. EXPERIENCE**

Bonsack is a large church, so a level of experience is needed in order to be competent at managing the complexities of church life. However, we need someone who is either young enough in age or in mind to understand the mindset and needs of today's young adults so we can more effectively connect with and reach them.

## **DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION**

We have been very intentional about maintaining our identity as Baptists. While we are open to someone coming from outside our denominational tradition, this person needs to understand and be willing to honor that tradition.

## **HOW IMPORTANT IS GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION TO YOU?**

We would be open to someone from any region of the country. Our only "condition" would be that this person have a desire to settle into southwest Virginia with the goal of a long-tenured ministry. In other words, we want someone who wants Bonsack to be their home.

## **WHAT SKILLS ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SPECIFICALLY?**

While this individual won't be asked to teach or preach on a weekly basis, it would be very helpful if he or she had that ability when called on. Most importantly, this person needs to have a theological and philosophical understanding of how preschoolers through adults learn (especially adults) and grow in their faith that is educationally sound.

- should have well-developed communication skills (be a listener/learner, confident while empathetic, a good writer and speaker)
- should have the ability to recruit and equip leaders
- should be a proven problem solver who is organized and can develop and implement processes (discipleship, outreach, assimilation)
- should be able to work with others/teams, able to gain the respect of leaders to lead
- should have a proven ability to make disciples who make disciples
- should have a servant's heart and a customer service approach
- should be confident and passionate about reaching out to people for Christ (especially guests)
- should have experience supervising multiple staff members

## **WHAT TECHNICAL ABILITIES (IF ANY) ARE REQUIRED?**

Beyond a basic understanding of utilizing personal computer technology and social media, there are no specific technical abilities needed to carry out the duties of this role, including basic tasks in church management software, Office 365, etc.

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## **EQUIPPER OR DOER?**

Of course, this person needs to be able to complete assigned tasks with professional excellence. However, if Bonsack is going to transition well into this next phase of our life, it will be extremely important that we all know how to equip others to do the work of everyday ministry. This is how we move beyond the idea that ministry is a commodity people come to consume.

## **ATTRACTIONAL VS. MISSIONAL**

As previously stated, our pattern has been more attractional in the past. We will never completely abandon this mindset, but we need to develop a more missional mindset as we move into the future.

## **BUDGET AREA SUPERVISION**

- Approx. \$33,000 directly, not including professional development money
- Indirectly (youth and children) approx. \$40,000

## **PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS DESIRED**

This person must be willing to work as part of a unified team. He or she must be willing to support and encourage the success of other ministers on staff with a clear understanding that when one of us succeeds, we all succeed. To that end, he or she must always be willing to see how discipleship ministries fit into the overall mission and ministry of the church. There can be no room for a territorial attitude.

## **WHAT WOULD IMMEDIATELY DISQUALIFY SOMEONE?**

We would not hire someone if he or she did not agree without basic theological stance, supported gay marriage, or was determined to dissolve our existing denominational connections. We also would not hire someone who has shown indiscretion on social media.

## **URGENCY**

This is a position we have needed to fill for at least 10 years. Now that the conditions are favorable to hire, we are ready to bring someone on board as quickly as the right candidate can be found. This would rank as an 8 or 9.

## **OTHER "MUST HAVE" SKILLS**

This person must share in the pastoral care of our congregation. In other words, he or she must not only see themselves as a leader/director of program, but as a pastor to people. This person must, therefore, have the emotional intelligence necessary to relate to people in a meaningful way.

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This person must understand, appreciate, and strengthen our existing discipling through Sunday morning Bible study for all ages (Sunday School) while having the ability and openness to help Bonsack expand into other models.

## **OTHER "NICE TO HAVE" SKILLS**

- Ability to preach as needed.
- Experience with a hybrid discipling model of home groups and campus-based Sunday morning Bible study.

## **FINALLY...**

This person needs to have a passion to see people grow in their relationship with Christ. He or she must be a teacher of teachers, a shepherd of individuals, and an intentional member of the team committed to the overall ministry of the church.

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## **Public Job Posting**

### **Minister of Christian Education**

#### **Bonsack Baptist Church**

#### **Roanoke, VA**

Bonsack Baptist Church in Roanoke, VA is in search of a Minister of Christian Education to grow and equip their Sunday School/small groups and to develop the hearts, minds, souls, and body of the church. They are looking for someone to promote a culture of discipleship growth through personal spiritual disciplines. This will mainly be done through the growth of Sunday School and help the assimilation process for new members to become active members of the church community.

What you'll be doing:

- Evaluate, develop, implement and maintain a comprehensive discipleship and outreach strategy
- Equip and develop Sunday School teachers and leaders
- Assess areas of need for discipleship training and plan appropriate development of spiritual growth
- Develop and communicate the process by which new believers, new members, and guests find their place
- Inspire in others a passion for reaching our community for Christ
- Provide ongoing vision and training of the hospitality team
- Provide vision and guidance to the primary adult discipleship ministries of the church

What you need to have:

- A growing relationship with Jesus Christ
- Healthy family relationships
- Strong moral character
- A proven passion for making disciples and developing teams in a growing church
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively as a leader and teacher
- Ability to think strategically and involve others in all levels of the disciple-making process
- A minimum of five years of vocational ministry experience and a master's degree in Christian Education, Discipleship or comparable degree
- Supervisory experience preferred

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**Apply here: [www.chemistrystaffing.com/bonsack-discipleship](http://www.chemistrystaffing.com/bonsack-discipleship)**