

LEAD PASTOR PACKET



Redeemer  
Presbyterian Church



KENAI PENINSULA, ALASKA

# Redeemer Presbyterian Church KENAI PENINSULA, ALASKA

## Letter of Introduction

Thank you for investing time to learn about what the Lord is doing among the people of Redeemer Presbyterian Church (RPC) on the Kenai Peninsula. We hope you will enjoy hearing about our story, and you might feel prompted to apply for the position of Lead Pastor at RPC, if the Lord so leads.

Since 2016, RPC has been a reformed gospel-preaching voice on the Peninsula. We're a small group, and we've gone through a lot, and we're ready to have a re-planter join in what God has for us in our future. RPC is excited to live and grow in the reality of our redemption by Jesus Christ. We believe that every benefit in this life flows out of our identification with and obedience to Jesus. We welcome all, whether believer or skeptic, to come and hear the good news of the gospel—the redemption of all things through the person and work of Jesus Christ our Redeemer.



*“For the glory  
of God and the  
enjoyment of Him  
in every corner of  
the Peninsula”*

We welcome all, whether believer or skeptic, to come and hear the good news of the gospel—the redemption of all things through the person and work of Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

Our founding pastor did a great job planting the church and helping to establish it. He had to leave because of Stage 4 lung cancer. Our second pastor was with us for four-plus years but felt called to continue his former work as a military chaplain full-time. His pastorate ended at the end of 2023.





Since Redeemer started as a church of PCA's Northwest Presbytery, it has been laboring with a Temporary System of Government (TSG) making up its session of TEs and REs that are geographically separated, and they have contracted with Flourish Coaching to aid us in our re-planter search process. Flourish's Executive Director, Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) Pastor Matt Bohling, has come alongside the TSG and RPC to prepare us and our search committee as we conduct this search.

RPC seeks a pastor who will walk alongside us, help us grow, and challenge us to live more fully into a biblical life within a Reformed worldview. We're praying for a leader who will connect us as a community and partner with us in ministry to fully engage our hearts and minds as committed Christians in our current place and time. He'll do this with empathy, kindness, gentleness, grace, wisdom, and a servant's heart.



While we want to be salt and light on the Kenai Peninsula, we are currently mostly a Sunday church in terms of activities and connections due to our size, make-up, and the distance members drive. Sundays take on a particular significance, so we value Biblical preaching, participatory congregational worship, spiritual leadership, and opportunities to engage and connect. But we also want to grow and attract others to our fellowship and community, develop opportunities for discipleship, and find ways to reach out to our neighbors and the world.

This Lead Pastor Packet has three major sections: Our Story, Our Community, and Our Next Pastor. Enjoy reading and please do not hesitate to reach out to us or to Flourish Coaching for further information!

We're praying for you as you consider this opportunity.  
Grace and peace be with you, the Pastoral Search Committee:

Lizzy Bieber  
Kenny Leaf

Donna L. Brown  
Kylie Wilcox

Steve Campbell  
Pete Williamson

Leif Danielson



# PART 1: OUR STORY



## The Beginning

Years ago, God put a desire into the hearts of several families to found a Reformed congregation on Alaska's Kenai Peninsula. In 2016, the group connected to the Northwest Church Planting Network of the PCA. The network supported the mission, and God led us to Andrew and Amy Allen. With the prayers and help of many people, Redeemer Presbyterian Church was planted in Kenai/Soldotna.

## The Pastors

With Andrew Allen as RPC's first pastor/church planter, the congregation grew in God's grace under Andrew's pastoral care for about two years. Then, a persistent cough and a series of tests led to a diagnosis of Stage 4 lung cancer, although Andrew had never smoked and was otherwise in good health. Andrew and his family made the difficult decision to leave Redeemer and Alaska to be close to family and undergo treatment. Sadly, Andrew passed away in late April, 2019. The congregation, the Allen family, and all those who knew Andrew continue to grieve but cling to the hope of heaven and the ultimate redemption of such loss through Christ.

During Andrew's time at RPC, we grew to approximately 60 people, and we had great hopes for more impact.



Our second pastor, Jeff Glover, came to us in September 2019. Jeff, a military chaplain, was stationed with his wife and five children at Fort Richardson in the greater Anchorage area when he received the call to Kenai. Jeff and his wife Kristie served Redeemer faithfully for over four years, guiding our congregation through the Covid crisis, introducing Sunday School programs for adults, teens, and children, and emphasizing home groups and hospitality. Jeff maintained a part-time position with the Army National Guard as a chaplain, which served as his second vocation and a supported mission of RPC. He left ministry at RPC in December 2023.



## Our Logo

The ancient symbol in our logo combines the first two capital Greek letters of Christ (the chi rho) with a cross and an anchor in order to express our place on the Peninsula, but, more importantly, the firm expectation of eternal life for those who place their faith in Jesus Christ: “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure” (Hebrews 6:19).

Our church attendance suffered in that last year. We understand that the purposes of God are a mystery to us. However, we have a firm confidence in God’s goodness.

In consultation with our TSG and Flourish, we realize that, due to our size, our church needs to be re-planted, and our next leader must embrace this with us and lead us forward in evangelism and outreach while pastoring those of us who love this church and call it our home.



# The Future

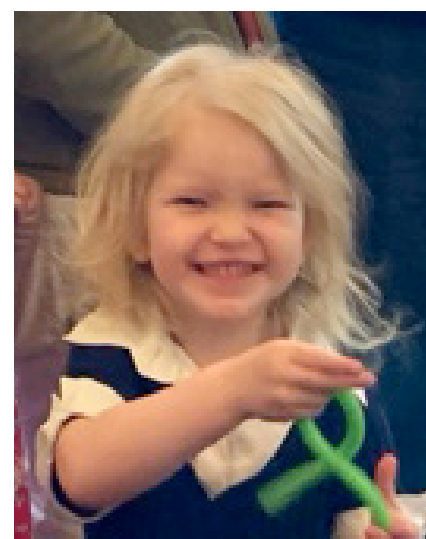
We continue to trust God's direction for RPC and our ministry in Kenai, Soldotna, and the Peninsula. Our worship and fellowship continue with a small, dedicated congregation. We hope to be led by a re-planter as soon as the Lord leads us to him.

# Our Present Reality

We are a small core group of 20 voting members (or 28 total members if you count children), with an average Sunday attendance of 25 people. This work is a church-plant of the PCA's Northwest Presbytery with a TSG that is made up of pastors and elders from Anchorage and Seattle.

RPC meets in a rented Seventh-Day Adventist Church halfway between the sister cities of Kenai and Soldotna. We share the space, so every Sunday, dedicated and talented volunteers set up and tear down the sanctuary (including audio technology) for our worship and fellowship. Some of the congregation lives in the nearby communities of Soldotna and Sterling while others drive some distance to attend church; therefore, we want to ensure that Sunday is meaningful, real, relevant, and accessible. We tend toward a traditional, liturgical style of worship, with an emphasis on congregational involvement in singing, prayer, and reading of Scripture and weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper.

RPC largely reflects the local demographics. We have families with children ranging from infants to teens/new adults, single adults, married couples, and retirees. We have people recently relocated to Alaska or the Peninsula, as well as lifetime residents. The congregation has tradesmen, educators, engineers, retail and administrative and legal professionals, as well as homemaking mothers and home educators. Our congregants are active in volunteering in Christian mission and service projects in the area. One of our members graduated from Covenant Seminary and teaches at the nearby Alaska Christian College, whose Alaska Native students will sometimes join us in worship. Many of our children are homeschooled, while others attend Christian schools or local public/charter schools.



# Finances and Giving

Financially, Redeemer has been working toward becoming self sustaining since its inception. It has enjoyed the support of other sister churches, namely Faith PC Tacoma, the Northwest Church Planting Network, and Faith PC Anchorage. At the beginning of 2024, Redeemer had approximately \$170,000 in cash reserves. We are using these funds to sustain the church over the next six months and anticipate \$26,000 in giving during that period and \$86,000 in expenses. That would leave us with \$110,000 half-way through the year. We believe that with a new replanting pastor in place, the congregation can grow and fill in these gaps. However, like a new plant, the replanter will need to raise outside support.

## Challenge(s)

One real challenge for the group that will need some attention and that is currently being addressed by the TSG: the original group that wanted to plant the church have almost all left. Some left due to the transient nature of life in Alaska, some due to a personal mismatch with their ideal church and what Redeemer has become, some due to disagreements with the TSG, and some due to interpersonal relationships with Pastor Glover. Finally, some regular attendees made the difficult decision to seek other fellowship as the congregation entered into this season of re-planting. Those who remain have varying perspectives on the issues which brought Redeemer to this season, but remain committed to the vision of planting a Reformed, presbyterian body of believers. With time, patience, and relationship building, there may be an opportunity for reconciliation with some estranged former members, while others may be eager to return to a robust, replanted RPC. A potential negative outcome would be continued tension and competition between RPC and a currently emerging new body consisting of former RPC members for the allegiance of pre-Christians seeking a fellowship with Reformed theology.







# Part Two: Our Community

## Kenai and Soldotna

Kenai and Soldotna are sister cities centrally located on the western Kenai Peninsula in south-central Alaska, about 65 air miles (160 miles and a three-hour drive by road) southwest of Anchorage. Kenai is as far west as Hawaii and about the same latitude as Stockholm. This scenic setting is along the banks of the Kenai River—an area of diverse natural resources, wildlife, habitats, and commercial and recreational fishing, activities that provide the basis of our economic foundation.



The combined population of the two cities is about 11,500. However, the central Kenai Peninsula with the surrounding towns and villages has a population of over 26,000. The area sees a large seasonal fluctuation during the summer mainly due to fishing season with many tourists with some who end up staying. Due to the nature of the area and surrounding economy, much of the population is transient, which presents its challenges.

The median household income is almost \$59,000, and the median house price is just under \$200,000. The price for a family home lies between \$300,000 to \$400,000.



# Schools/Education

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District has 44 sites in 21 communities. Our community is also home to 3 private Christian schools. Alaska is known for its strong support of homeschooling, with two major correspondence programs, IDEA and Connections, operating in the Kenai/Soldotna area with roughly 1000 students enrolled in each program. Affiliated with the University of Alaska-Anchorage, Kenai Peninsula College is located in Soldotna, providing technical programs, junior college, and community enrichment offerings.



# Health and Services

The Central Peninsula Hospital is a modern hospital providing quality care and air ambulance service. Both communities have senior centers and services. A variety of options are available for the care of pregnant mothers, from OB/GYNs serving the in-hospital Family Birth Center in CPH, to freestanding birth centers, to home birth midwives

# Employment

One-half of all workers in the community work in health, education, retail, and natural resource-related occupations, with 65 percent of the labor force in private wage jobs, 17 percent in government, 9 percent self-employed, and 9 percent unemployed. Business sales in the area were up 6 percent in the last year.

# Climate

On the Cook Inlet, the Kenai Peninsula has a moderate climate for Alaska. The average summer high in July is 65 degrees with 18 hours of daylight. The average winter low in January is 9 degrees with about 6 hours of daylight. We receive roughly 18 inches of rain a year and have 135 sunny days.



## Churches

There are approximately 40 churches in the Kenai/Soldotna area. Two significant portions of religiously-affiliated people in our area are Latter-Day Saints/Mormons and Roman Catholics, as well as smaller groups like Jehovah's Witnesses and Eastern/Russian Orthodox. RPC is the only denominationally-affiliated Reformed congregation on the Peninsula.

## Arts

The area boasts a thriving music and theater scene with local and visiting performances, artists, musicians, bands, choirs, and symphonies. There are dance studios, galleries, and museums.

## Recreation

The Kenai Peninsula offers fantastic opportunities for play and sport. Summer brings people outdoors for hiking, boating, fishing, camping, berry-picking, and bird-watching. Live outdoor festivals with music, food, and arts and crafts bring the community together. In the winter, people enjoy cross-country skiing, hockey, taking out snowmobiles, hunting, ice fishing, and snow-shoeing. The communities also have movie theaters, rodeo grounds, athletic clubs, and a golf course.

The Peninsula is known for its world-class fishing. You can fish from the river bank, launch a boat, hire a guide, or go dipnet fishing. King, Red, Silver, and Pink Salmon, Rainbow, Steelhead, Lake, and Dolly Varden Trout are in abundance in the Kenai River and nearby lakes, rivers, and tributaries. You can dig for clams on the beach. Saltwater halibut fishing is close by in locations along the Cook Inlet.



RPC members love to be outdoors and to enjoy many of the previously-listed activities together, and have a wealth of knowledge to share, both professional and amateur. They look forward to providing guidance, gear, and support to our new pastor and his family in whatever of our unique opportunities they choose to pursue.

# Additional Resources on Our Community

Soldotna tourism, events, business, attractions & community resources

[www.visitsoldotna.com](http://www.visitsoldotna.com)

Kenai Chamber of Commerce, including news, events, local businesses

[www.kenaichamber.org](http://www.kenaichamber.org)

The Peninsula Clarion news source, 'bringing you the news and views of the Kenai'

[www.peninsulaclarion.com](http://www.peninsulaclarion.com)

The official Alaska state website

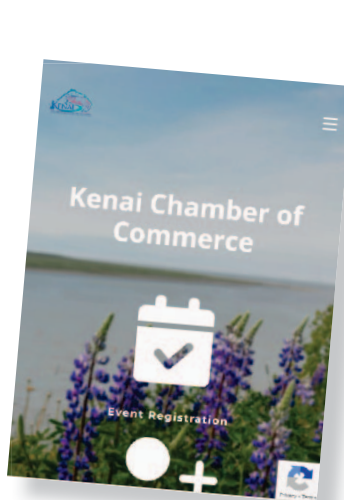
[www.alaska.gov](http://www.alaska.gov)

Kenai Peninsula Borough website, including local government, services, and employment opportunities

[www.kpb.us](http://www.kpb.us)

Kenai Peninsula Borough school district website

[www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us](http://www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us)





# Part 3: Who Is Our Next Pastor?



## A Gospel-Humbled Man

The traits in 1 Timothy, Titus, and Galatians 5:22–23 freely flow from a man who knows and applies the gospel to himself daily. He is mature and emotionally secure and this enables him to relate well to others and be approachable.

## A Contextual Communicator

He encourages the people of RPC to relate their faith to their daily lives. He exposites the Scriptures in clear and memorable ways that challenge long-time believers but are also accessible to non-believers and the unchurched or de-churched. He teaches in an intellectually and theologically robust way that engages both the lifelong Christian and is understandable and welcoming to the outsider. He offers present-day applications that reach across generations and backgrounds.



## A Collaborative and Proactive Leader

He respectfully and effectively helps the church develop a vision and accomplish goals. This includes the ability to work well on a team while encouraging others to assume and carry out leadership. The re-planter will need to train and develop elders and deacons so we can be a particularized church in the PCA.



## A Proactive Self-Starter

Since Kenai is rural and remote, the re-planter needs to be comfortable on his own without much in-person support from PCA churches and the presbytery. He would be wise to develop friendships and partnerships with other like-minded churches in the area.

## A Well-Differentiated Person

Most people in Alaska weren't born here but came for work or the military and chose to stay. Since it's not easy to live here, it takes a certain type of person to do just that. Our people show respect to people who respect them and the culture we have here. Just like anywhere else, people bristle when someone takes the opposite approach, and there can be conflict.

## A Pioneer Ready for Adventure

Replanting a church in Alaska is an exciting opportunity, but it's good to think of it as an adventure to embrace. We need someone who is up for it, and a re-planter willing to lead us in worship and discipleship, but one who will spend half of his time meeting unchurched or de-churched people in the community. We are looking for someone with a passion for building relationships outside of the church, especially with those who don't know Jesus while not neglecting the saints already gathered. There is a real sense that this is more of a missionary, re-plant position than a traditional pastor.

## A Fundraiser

Outside sources of income will be needed until the church grows. This should include traditional means of fundraising, but the re-planter might also consider part-time work, which has the additional benefit of embedding himself in the community.

# What Our Next Pastor Will Do:

- **Preach** most Sundays, perhaps 46–48 weeks, with approximately ten hours of sermon prep
- **Prepare and lead** our worship services, ensuring all of the components are there, even if he doesn't have to do them all (operational skills)
- **Meet** with and pastor current members and attenders
- **Spend time** with people and projects in the community
- **Be active** in the Pacific Northwest Presbytery



## He Should:

- Be ordained or ordain-able in the Presbyterian Church in America
- Have prior ministry experience including pulpit supply

## Compensation

Redeemer will offer:

- **Cash Package:** \$100,000 split between Salary & Housing Allowance, as replanter desires
- **403b Retirement:** \$7,000 Employer Contribution
- **Health Insurance:** Estimated value of \$28,000

This represents a total estimated package of \$135,000. Redeemer is able to cover \$70,000 of the package, between reserves and internal giving. The replanter will be asked to create the other \$65,000 annually in a manner of their choosing. The TSG is open to the replanter being bi/co-vocational, the replanter fund-raising, and/or the replanter's wife working. In addition, a relocation reimbursement up to a maximum of \$25,000 will be provided upon substantiation of expenses.



# Our Team



## Lizzy Bieber

Originally from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Lizzy now works in college ministry as a Resident Supervisor at Alaska Christian College, where she has served for almost three years—that’s also how long she has been at Redeemer. Prior to this, she taught 5/6 year old Sunday school for ten years. Lizzy also sat on the board of Simba Educational Ministries for two years back in 2016-17. As a single person without kids, she has an Aussiedoodle named Ziggy that she loves dearly!

## Donna L. Brown

A happily married homemaker, Donna has lived in various and diverse regions of the contiguous USA prior to relocating to Alaska. She’s been at Redeemer for about five years now and enjoys her involvement in Sunday School. Donna believes that it is vital to live out Scripture’s admonition to “Love the Lord your God. And love your neighbor as yourself.”



## Steve Campbell

Steve and his wife have been married for 47 years and are blessed to have seven children and 12 grandchildren. They have long been involved in homeschooling and also in leadership of the prolife movement. As a couple, they’ve been in PCA churches for the past two decades and he’s served in music ministry, teaching Sunday School, and outreach. They came to Redeemer two years ago now, after many years down on the Gulf Coast in Mobile, Alabama and also a stint in Houston. Life in Alaska is quite a change and Steve’s wife absolutely loves the cold and the snow! He works as a Project Management professional on various industrial, oil & gas, chemical, and refinery positions on contract after having retired from a career at DuPont.



## Leif Danielson

A member of Redeemer since 2017, Leif is also a Pastoral Intern and the Ministry Coordinator at the church. He also leads singing most Sundays. Leif is single and works as a Resident Supervisor at Alaska Christian College where he is also an adjunct professor of Theology. He is a lifelong resident of Kenai!



## Kenny Leaf

Kenny served as a deacon and led worship at a local Baptist church prior to coming to Redeemer just last year. He has also been a part of an interdenominational prison ministry called Kairos for the past 15 years. In addition, he's taught science for 20 years at a local Christian school and considers that his primary ministry. Kenny is originally from Helena, Montana and says, "I am a fishing guide on the Kenai River and spend the better part of July helping clients land fish and take home great memories! God also stirred a love for soccer in me as a kid and I continue to enjoy coaching, refereeing, and being involved with the game." Kenny has been married to Regina for four years and they have seven grown children and five grandchildren in their blended family.



## Kylie Wilcox

A longtime Presbyterian (PCA and ARP), Kylie and Milton have been at Redeemer for three years along with their five children, who range in age from 14 on down to a one year old! Having grown up in the suburbs of Minneapolis, Minnesota, this homemaker has been involved in many church ministries including Women's Bible study, preschool/early elementary Sunday School, and small groups.



## Pete Williamson

Married to Cheryl since Dec 1995, Pete is a Teaching Elder in the PCA (he represents the Temporary Session that oversees Redeemer, since it is still a mission church). The Williamsons have four kids and three cats. Cheryl teaches middle school at a classical Christian school. Pete worked with FCA at Washington State University, served as a church planter and pastor from 2005-2018, and is also a staff member/director at discipleship school in Tieton, WA (Great Commandments Ministries).

# The Process

## Questionnaire

We want to get to know you, your heart, and your life with Christ. Please provide a response in no more than a paragraph or two to each of the following:

1. Describe your spiritual journey.
2. Tell us about a failure in your pastoral ministry and what you learned from it.
3. What aspects of serving the church energize you? What drains you?
4. What are the greatest dangers to the peace and purity of the local church?
5. Describe a ministry (or ministries) that you built or started from scratch—your vision, your execution, your evaluation of their effectiveness, etc.
6. Given our current situation, what would be your proposed plan to move forward in the first three years and why? Feel free to use up to five paragraphs or about a page.
7. Where would you say you fit theologically under the “Big Tent” of the PCA (i.e., from more broadly evangelical—to the middle of the road—to classically confessional)?
8. Describe the way you handle your social media presence if you have one.





# Application Requirements

Please send your materials to [redeemerakpsc@gmail.com](mailto:redeemerakpsc@gmail.com), and you will be contacted with next steps which may include requests for additional information or scheduling conversations.

- Cover Letter, Resume, & PCA Ministerial Data Form (MDF)
- Completed, typed out responses to the questionnaire

Please use the following format to label all attachments:

- JohnSmith\_CoverLetter
- JohnSmith\_Resume
- JohnSmith\_MDF
- JohnSmith\_Questionnaire

*Thank you for your interest in RPC. We look forward to hearing your story and exploring God's plans for you and your possible relationship with our church family. May the Lord grant you wisdom as you see His face in this process of discernment.*