



Whiting Community Baptist Church

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“We are disciples who treasure Christ, and seek to make disciples for Christ”

### **Where We've Been**

Whiting is located in Neenah, Wisconsin, a small city of about 25,000 people, part of a larger community of about 125,000. Neenah is in Northeast Wisconsin, about 100 miles north of Milwaukee, and just south of Green Bay. Yes, it is common to see Packer attire on Sundays during football season.

Formed in 1861, Whiting Community Baptist Church has been serving the spiritual needs of the Fox Valley area of Wisconsin for more than 150 years. In that time, we have experienced a wide variety of changes including leadership structure, membership, and even the church building itself. In May of 1969, members of the church formed a procession to begin the task of moving items from the building that had housed the church at the corner of Commercial and High Streets to our current home on Tullar Road.

Whiting has a long history of serving a variety of mission and ministry projects. Some of our notable successes in local ministry include:

- serving in the past as a distribution center for SHARE (a food sharing program)
- partnered with community pre-school program
- participation in the Fox Valley Community Table, serving lunch monthly
- sponsoring the immigration of a Karen family from Thailand
- a strong VBS ministry
- partnering with Habitat for Humanity

A unique part of the Whiting ministry is an eighty-acre tree farm located on property about 45 miles west of Neenah, near Wautoma, Wisconsin. This property was donated by Charles Velte in 1958 and developed by members of the church. The tree farm has served as a place of recreation and worship, as well as a source of financial resources as wood products are harvested.

### **Where We Are**

Whiting is currently a congregation of about 100 people, with attendance of about 45 each Sunday. We are an older congregation with a significant number of retirees. We come from a diverse set of backgrounds and serve in a wide variety of professions and industries. While most members are residents of Neenah, we have members who come from as far away as Wautoma for weekly worship. That faithful core of the congregation provides stability during times of change.

We are also a congregation with a strong sense of our history. Whiting strives to balance the old with the new. Worship services involve a combination of traditional hymns and contemporary praise songs. While the organ is used for some songs, the piano is more common, and other instruments find their way into services on occasion. In recent years, we have benefited from the changes instituted by pastors leading the church, both from the changes themselves and from the actual process of going through that change.

Efforts in recent years led to the revitalization of our Sunday School program, now called Christian Education and Fellowship (CEF). By shifting the focus away from “teach kids” and toward “train disciples,” we better serve the mission of the church.

While we work to support mission projects each month, the church has also been challenged to find new ways to reconnect with the community. One frequent guest of the church noted that while we have strong outreach to members, there is a need to promote greater familiarity with the surrounding neighborhoods and wider community.

In recent years, we have sought to expand the reach of our ministry using both Facebook and web-based video. Videos posted immediately after worship allow those unable to attend to view that day’s message. This also allows us to reach those outside of the local community.

Whiting continues to be active in a range of local mission and ministry opportunities, including the Fox Valley Community Table, Habitat for Humanity, and the renewing of our VBS program. Knots of Love is a ministry dedicated to knitting, crocheting, and devotional time. Church youth and adults are active with Camp Tamarack, the summer camp program of the American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin. Regularly scheduled game nights provide the opportunity for fellowship combined with friendly competition. Each Thanksgiving we join with two other Tullar Road churches for a joint service.

Most importantly, we have a governing body that stands ready to support other ministry opportunities that serve to build disciples for Christ’s church. In addition to spiritual and moral support, the church has some financial resources available to support new ministries as they are started up. Once established, those ministries can then be supported by the giving of the church.

### **Where We Are Headed**

Whiting has gone through a period of reflection during this interim between Senior Pastors. We have sought God's wisdom in understanding both our strengths and our weaknesses.

Members touch the lives of people in many community organizations. The church also has a strong commitment of support for denominational giving and events. Moving forward, we want to find ways to expand these opportunities through greater participation and evangelization.

It is vital to improve the community's awareness about Whiting and the mission we serve. Key to this is increased involvement by the congregation. As a church, we must be personally involved with our mission.

Growth in our personal commitment to discipleship will drive the need to expand and improve the opportunities for learning and sharing. As we develop in our own Christian faith, expand our outreach, and develop church leaders, we can better serve the second half of our mission, making disciples for Christ.

### **Prospective Candidates**

As Whiting seeks to navigate the challenges of sharing God's message, the ability to better identify and meet needs within our community is increasingly important. The development of leaders equipped with the spirit and understanding to share that message through actions and words will enable us to act on those opportunities.

Experience in counseling and visitation will enable candidates to serve needs within the church as well as those of the surrounding community. Those skills will also aid in the expansion and continued development of lay leaders providing the same services.

### **Church Budget**

The church budget for 2017 is \$76,050. This is reflective of being in an interim period with pastoral costs included to cover a portion of the year. The budget for 2016 was \$81,554. The church also ended 2016 with \$199,462 in savings, memorials and designated funds. Long-time member Charles Velte also left a portion of his estate to the church and indicated how the interest from those funds can be used. That trust had \$134,153 at the end of 2016.

### **Pastoral Salary**

We are taught in the Bible to provide for those who lead the church. Whiting will provide fair compensation based on experience and agreed upon services. Salary and housing, health care premiums, Social Security, and retirement contributions are included as negotiated. In addition, financial resources for continuing education, conferences, and denominational events can be requested as available.