Fort Plain and Sprakers Reformed Church Profile

Section A: Background Information

Date: Position to be filled: Pastor

1-3. Name of Church: FORT PLAIN REFORMED CHURCH
165 Canal St., Fort Plain, NY 13339
518 993-4302
fortplainrca@yahoo.com

SPRAKERS REFORMED CHURCH
112 Sprakers Hill Road
P. O. Box 45
Sprakers, NY 12166
518 774-5805
sprakersreformedchurch@gmail.com

Web address: fortplainandsprakersreformed.org

4. Classis: Schenectady Classis

5. Classis Supervisor: Rev. Matthew vanMaastricht
518 723-0821
516 Washington Ave.
Rensselaer, NY 12144
matthew.vanm@gmail.com

6. Chair of search committee:
Michele Whiteman (Fort Plain)
P. O. Box 194
Nelliston, NY 13410-0194
518 421-2969
whitemoy@roadrunner.com

Justin Hodge (Sprakers)
479 Blaine Rd.
Canajoharie, NY 13317
484 716-0696
jmhodge1@yahoo.com

7. Membership:

Fort Plain -	Five years ago	Today
Time of Worship	11:00 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
Active Confessing Members	56	48
Inactive Confessing Members	21	5

Sprakers -	Five years ago	Today
Time of Worship		
1st & 3rd Sundays *	9:00 a.m.	9:00 a.m.
2nd Saturday	6:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
Active Confessing Member	21	15
Inactive Confessing Members	3	0

Comment on significant changes: The Sprakers church plans to reinstate the 9:00 a.m. 4th Sunday service with the new pastor.

Age of all active members (baptized and confessing):

Fort Plain:	Sprakers:
4% 10-20 years old	22 % 0-20 years old
11% 21-34 years old	3 % 21-34 years old
3% 35-49 years old	16 % 35-49 years old
26% 50- 64 years old	22 % 50-64 years old
56% 65 years and older	37 % 65 years and older

8. Racial/Ethnic composition of congregation:

Fort Plain- 2% - African American; 8% Hispanic; 90% Caucasian

Sprakers - 100% Caucasian

9. Worship schedule:

	Time of Worship	Average attendance(adults and children)	
		5 Years ago	Today
Fort Plain -	Sunday 11:00 a.m.	40	40
Sprakers -	Sunday 9:00 a.m.	12	14
	Saturday 6:00 p.m.	22	24

10. Describe a typical worship service (order of worship, music, etc.)

Fort Plain and Sprakers follow the same traditional Reformed Church order of worship for Sunday morning worship as follows:

Announcements
Votum/Prayer
Prelude
Call to Worship
Hymn
Prayer of Confession
Declaration of Forgiveness and Gloria Patri
Scripture
Sermon
Hymn
Profession of Faith- Apostles Creed
Tithes and Gifts
Doxology/Prayer
Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession
Benediction
Hymn
Postlude
(copy of a current bulletin attached)

Sprakers 2nd Saturday :

Welcome Prayer and Concerns
Shared Meal
Scripture and Devotional Message

Time of Fellowship

11. Financial Information: Attach a copy of the most recent Consistorial Report and Annual Budget if available:

Copies of both are attached.

	Five years ago	Today
Total RCA related contributions	FP-$4992 / S-$1373	FP-$5450 / S-$1634
Total Other contributions	FP-$500 / S- $4589	FP- $650 / S-$7775

Percentage of total budget contributed by living donors:
(100-90%, 75-89%, 60-74%, 45-59%, or 44-or less%)

Fort Plain - 75-89%

Sprakers- 90-100%

12. Congregational Giving: Number of those whose annual contribution is:

	Fort Plain	Sprakers
Less than $500	11	10
$501-$1500	14	3
$1501-$2500	5	1
$2501-$3500	1	1
$3500-greater	9	2

13. Financial Assistance: Do you receive financial assistance beyond the congregation? YES

Fort Plain - $22000- Investment Income
$660- Rental of space (AA & Coop. Ext)+renting kitchen currently
$3400- Fundraisers (rummage sales and dinner)
$5000- foundation gift
$2500- Classis & Synod Grants

Sprakers - $100- Hall Rental
$2400- Fundraiser (rummage sale)

$1995- Bike Path donations
$2500-Classis & Synod Grants

14. Church/Sunday School: Average Attendance

	5 years ago	Today
Fort Plain	0 (covid)	5
Sprakers	0 (covid)	0

15. Describe briefly all educational programs (including children, young adults, adults)

-Faith Formation, a variation of traditional Sunday School for all ages open to the community

-Adult Bible Studies offered in person or via zoom

-Jr/Sr High Drop In Program is a weekly after school program offered to students in the community. It provides a safe place where they can learn some life skills, get spiritual support and participate in preparing and sharing a family style meal.

16. Church groups/organizations: Briefly describe ministry purpose of each group.

None currently – room for growth

17. Comment on one event or experience over the last year that has significantly contributed to the spiritual life of the congregation?

Sprakers - Rummage Sale, 2nd Saturday and the Bike Path Ministry

Fort Plain - Jr. / Sr. High Drop In Program, Faith Formation 4th Sunday service and Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry

18. Buildings: Please describe church-owned or rented buildings and purpose.

Both Fort Plain and Sprakers own their sanctuaries and attached church halls. Neither church has any rented buildings.

19. Do you plan any capital expenditure during the next five years. Yes or No

If yes, please explain briefly: NO

20. Is there a mortgage indebtedness? No for either Fort Plain or Sprakers

21. Pastor's study:

Fort Plain – a Pastor's office in the church. Sprakers – none

22. List all paid staff in addition to the Pastor:

	Fort Plain	Sprakers
Organist/Musicians	yes – part time	yes – part time
Custodian	yes - part time	yes – part time
Pulpit Supply	yes – part time	yes – part time
Treasurer	yes – part time	
Financial Secretary	yes – part time	

23. Consistory Membership: What method is used in selecting members?

Single ballot for both Fort Plain and Sprakers

Please list present Consistory members:

Fort Plain:
Michele Whiteman – Elder , Female , retired
Susan Demick – Elder, Female, retired
Stephanie Paradiso – Elder, Female – teacher
Garrett Cowsert – Deacon, Male, Store Manager
Bob Hoffman – Deacon, Male, retired
Tina Goldswer – Deacon, Female, Social Worker
Mary Failing – Deacon, Female, retired

Sprakers:
Diane Reynolds – Elder, Female, retired
Pat Oeser – Elder, semi-retired
Carol Slater – Elder, Female, retired
Nancy Mace – Deacon, Female, retired
Stacey Kamp – Deacon, Female, teacher
Lisa Vosburgh – Deacon, Female, teacher

24. What leadership roles do women currently fill in your church:

Pastor, Consistory Elders and Deacons, Faith Formation leaders and teachers, Worship Team, Treasurer, Financial Secretary

25. In our congregations…(for each category choose either few, many or most have)

	Fort Plain	Sprakers
Had up to twelve years of formal education	Most have	Most have
Had some education beyond high school	Many have	Many have
A college degree	Many have	Few have
A Graduate degree	Few have	Few have

26. In our congregations…. (please choose either few, many or most are)

	Fort Plain	Sprakers
Scientists & Engineers	few	few
Farmers	few	few
Business People	few	few
Students & Teachers	many	many
Industrial Workers	few	few
Office Workers	few	few
Other	few	few

27. Special training/experience desired: (describe briefly)

Familiarity with community outreach and engagement.

28. Languages: Should your pastor be fluent in any language other than English?No

29. The salary we are prepared to offer our new pastor is in accordance with the salary schedule of the Schenectady Classis guidelines dependent on experience level.

The average annual increase to our pastor over the past three years was $0.00, however other allowances were negotiated.

30. Is a parsonage provided? NO

31. Is a Minister's housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage a negotiable option? YES

32. The benefits/business expenses we will provide our pastor are:

Basic salary $57,060 - $71,328 (Commensurate with experience)
Housing Allowance (included in the above)
Travel (IRS reimbursement rate)
Social Security
Pension
Medical
Life/Disability
Professional Development

We will provide the following – yes or no

Retirement	yes
Major Medical Insurance	yes
Health/Hospital Insurance	yes
Life Insurance	yes
Dental Insurance	negotiable
Unemployment Insurance	no
Disability Insurance	yes

Annual Vacation (Number of Weeks) : Negotiable, but baseline is consistent with minimum salary schedule.

Necessary comments regarding above:

The salary and benefits will at least be consistent with the minimums of the Classis of Schenectady or the requirements of the Northeastern Middle Assembly.

33. Communities served:

Fort Plain – Town: 2500-9999
Sprakers - Rural: under 2500

34. Cooperative ministry: In what ways have you cooperated with other churches in your community during the past year:

- Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry was an emergency Food Pantry for the surrounding communities, stocked by local churches, individuals, organizations and grants.
- High School Baccalaureate – an ecumenical service hosted by local churches to honor

and bless the graduating high school class.
-Jr./Sr. Drop In Mission is a weekly after school program supported with volunteers and meals from local churches and organizations.

35. Community involvement: In what community programs or projects have you participated during the past year? (As an organization, not as individuals.)

- Erie Canalway Trail (Bike Path Ministry) is hosted by Sprakers, provides a comfort station with water, snacks, bathroom facilities and emergency shelter, 24 x 7 to those traveling the bike path.

- 2nd Saturday Community Meal is a free monthly community meal, incorporating prayer, devotional fellowship, and mission opportunities.

- Jr./Sr. Drop In Youth Program is a weekly after school opportunity for students to have a safe place to gather with fellow students for activities, support, and a shared meal. - Emergency Food Pantry – provided food for the less fortunate in our communities needing extra assistance.

36. What denominations or religions are present within three miles (in rural areas consider the county) where your church is located?

Catholic, Jehovah Witness, Lutheran, Christian Missionary Alliance, Baptist, Methodist and Evangelical

37. Outreach: What is your strategy to reach un-churched people in your community?

Our outreach strategy is to meet the un-churched people in our communities where their needs are. Sprakers worship is posted on Facebook for shut-ins and others unable to attend. Through the following programs we are a witness to the love of Christ to all those in our midst.

Drop In Youth Program, 2nd Saturday community meal, Bike Path Ministry, Emergency Food Pantry, AA meets weekly in our building in Fort Plain

38. The income level of the people in our congregation tends to be:

X - About average for our community
Somewhat below the rest of the community
Somewhat higher than the rest of the community

39. Describe the community and school system:

The website for the Fort Plain schools is fortplain.org and the Sprakers church is in the Canajoharie school district, which is canajoharieschools.org. Both websites are very informative about our local school districts.

40. Record of the last three pastors:

Fort Plain	Rev. Nancy Ryan - 1998 to 2026
	Rev. Sam Vanderschaaf – 1997-1998
	Rev. Jeffery Thibodeau - 1993-1996
Sprakers	Rev. Nancy Ryan 2024-2026
	Rev. Joyce Jenning 2003-2009
	Rev. James Foster 1984-2001

41. Please complete your profile with the following contacts:

Vice President of Fort Plain Consistory – Michele Whiteman
Vice President of Sprakers Consistory – Diane Reynolds
Classis Supervisor – Rev. Matthew vanMaastricht

Section B: Reflections

Please answer the following questions, adding your own experiences where appropriate.

1.) What is the stated mission, vision or purpose of your congregation?

The Fort Plain and Sprakers Reformed Churches practice abundant hospitality toward all people, including the most vulnerable among us. Our inclusive congregations open their doors to all, to spread the love of Jesus in word and deed.

We acknowledge that we are all beloved children of God and are reminded through worship, service, and prayer that we are created in God's image, redeemed through Christ, and sustained and renewed by the Holy Spirit.

2.) What goals have been developed from your mission and vision over the next 5 years? (Example: new programs or outreach ministries. Include long range or strategic plan.)

The goals of our churches are to support the Jr/Sr Drop-in program, Bike Path Ministry, Faith Formation 4th Sunday, 2nd Saturday, Camp Fowler and Bible studies to meet the un-churched in our communities where they are.

3.) Describe the strengths of your church, the best of what you are as a community, and what you can offer a new pastor.

We can offer a new pastor a community of believers with open minds & hearts to help others find their way to Christ. We are hard workers, gracious givers, and we offer our church as a home to all. We are a people willing to walk besides our new pastor even out of our comfort zone by experimenting with different times, days and formats for worship and unorthodox ways to engage the un-churched.

4.) Explain the strategies or ideas that most excite your church in becoming or remaining missional.

The following are programs excite us by enabling us to reach the churched, un-churched, believers, and non-believers of all ages in our communities and beyond.

a. Sprakers:

i. Second Saturday Community meal

ii. Bike Path Ministry

iii. our support for numerous charities both local, national & international

b. Fort Plain:

i. Jr./Sr. Youth Drop in

ii. Faith Formation 4th Sunday service

iii. Alcoholics Anonymous

iv. other charities and emergency aid

c. Both Sprakers & Fort Plain:

i. Office of the Aging

ii. Emergency Food Pantry (as needed)

iii. Camp Fowler support

iv. Bible Study

5.) Name three of your church's most passionate hopes and why they are significant.

These are the 3 hopes listed:

a. More Family Involvement/increased youth involvement. New and increased family and youth involvement is critical for the growth of our congregation.

b. Improved community outreach. Improving our outreach allows the church to address the pressing needs – such as food insecurity and safe, stable after school spaces of our community.

c. Aspiration for both churches to be beacons of hope in our respective communities, it's important our churches be reliable sanctuaries of peace, unconditional support and acceptance, ensuring that no matter what struggles the surrounding community faces, there is a welcoming place to find comfort and renewal.

6.) How do you hope someone that visits your church will describe what s/he considers to be the most important?

We hope to foster a welcoming environment that makes people feel comfortable, want to return and become involved in reaching out to the communities.

7.) Name at least one challenge facing your new pastor.

The two largest challenges facing the new pastor are the following:

a. An economically depressed area resulting in limited opportunities for employment.

b. A gradual aging congregation and a lack of younger members.

8.) Describe your vision and hopes for your church and your pastor over the next 5 years.

We hope for a graceful transition for both our churches and pastor and to grow our ministries and explore new ways to reach the un-churched.

9.) Explain whatever else you would like your potential pastor to know about your church.

That we need their help and vision to further God's Kingdom. More than anything, we need their friendship, support and love. We are offering a blank canvas to create a forward thinking, innovative approach to ministries.

Release Statement

We, Fort Plain Reformed Church and Sprakers Reformed Church acknowledge that the information in this Church Profile is accurate and complete. We authorize the Office of Ministry Services (OMS) to release this profile to designated recipients seeking positions as ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament, including posting of this profile on the RCA website.

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(Signature of Search Team Chairperson or Designated) (Date)