Living Hope Community Church, Lancaster, PA, searchteam@explorelivinghope.com

Senior Pastor

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**Who we are**

*History:* Living Hope Community Church was planted in 1998, as a congregation of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference. LHCC withdrew from the Mennonite denomination in 2002 and has been a non-denominational church since. LHCC is a member of the HopeNet Fellowship of Churches, a small regional network providing accountability and support.

*General snapshot*: LHCC’s Sunday gatherings have emphasized worship and the teaching of the Word, while also offering children’s ministry. Outside of Sunday mornings, we emphasize small group participation and discipleship connections. We offer a weekly youth group ministry for students in 7th through 12th grade.

*Government:* LHCC is an Elder-led congregation. The elders give oversight to the functioning of the ministry. The Senior Pastor leads the Elder Team and works with the elders to move the team’s vision forward. Other ministry leaders are set in place by and accountable to the Elder Team.

*Facility/Finances:* LHCC owns its own building, a facility that was purchased in late 2004 and completely renovated for its first worship gathering in April of 2007. Much money was raised towards this extensive renovation effort, and LHCC still carries a mortgage of appx. 1.2 million dollars on the building, which is valued at appx. 4 million dollars.

*Our desires moving forward:* For years now, we have used the words “Loved, Transformed, Sent” to describe our ministry goals, with new believers discipled to maturity and released to serve both inside and outside of the congregation. But we are also discovering some methods need updating.

Our concern is that the American church has settled into putting on a polished weekly production that will attract a lot of attendees while overlooking the more difficult work of making disciples. Corporate gatherings for worship and teaching are still important to the life of the church, but we believe that these are not the primary venues where discipleship takes place. Rather, this takes place in small groups, and even through one-on-one connections, where people have the safety and freedom to talk about their lives.

Church programs are not rejected outright but are evaluated on their ability to help make true followers of Jesus. Standard church programming such as youth groups, young adult fellowships, children's ministry, etc., are all valuable, but must be viewed through the lens of making disciples.

Using general terms, we are desiring to move away from the current American church model and towards a model based more on the powerful but simple key elements of the New Testament Church. We believe that God is calling us back to the simplest of commandments from Jesus when he instructed us to go and make disciples. We believe God is asking us to focus on Scripture, prayer, fellowship, and the gospel message – all by the working of the Holy Spirit. Congregational vision adjustments like these require strong and visionary leadership.

*Type of leader sought:* Ever since we developed an elder team in 2013, our desire was that the vision for Living Hope would come through this team, not through a single strong leader. With this in mind, we are seeking a pastoral candidate with pastoral/leadership experience who has strong gifting in in communicating and developing vision and who desires to serve as the full-time senior pastor. The Lead Pastor’s role is to communicate with and boldly lead the congregation in accordance with the vision that is discerned by the elder team (which is led by the Lead Pastor). The church must be arranged well and led well by the Lead Pastor while the elder team is responsible for continuing to listen for God's voice and to make sure that the church is moving forward in keeping with what is being sensed from God. A strong leadership/mobilizing gift is important for Living Hope in this season, especially as we feel like we're being called to clarify/adjust some ministry approaches.

*Description of position*: The chosen candidate will give overall leadership to the direction and function of the church and together with the Elder Team will shepherd the congregation (1 Peter 5:1-4). A final job description will be tailored to the gifts of the leader chosen, revolving around the central elements of leading the Elder Team, teaching/preaching, communicating and advancing vision, raising up leaders, and watching the overall health of the Body.

Depending on the leader chosen, there could be a transition phase from our current lead pastor to the new leader over a period of 6 to 12 months, or the period could be shorter if the new leader has sufficient experience to step into the lead role earlier. The goal is to see a transition that is healthy for both the congregation and the incoming leader.