

Report of the Session
Of the year 2025
“Witnessing for Christ in Bloomington since 1821”

“When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.”
– Ephesians 4:8

Membership:

Communicant: 200 (+21)
Baptized: 65 (+1)
Total: 265 (+22)

Changes:

Transfers in: 26
Professions of faith: 5
Covenant baptisms: 9
Transfers out: 12
Transfers to glory: 2
Removal: 0
Excommunication: 0

Attendance:

AM: 212 (+12)
PM: 122 (+6)

The session has met in constituted court 20 times, and then two other longer meetings, one a planning retreat earlier this fall, and the other a more recent extended meeting with members of the presbytery visitation committee in early November. The main work of our regular, monthly meetings is praying for the congregation, discussing various visits with members of the congregation, working together on difficulties that individuals are facing, and giving counsel to the pastors concerning their ongoing work, including discussing preaching series. We also try to meet with representatives of the Deacon board quarterly. Four additional meetings were for the purpose of interviewing those interested in joining the congregation for communion, and two more meetings were arranged specifically for the purpose of adding new members to the congregation.

Two more meetings were to conduct the election and ordination of Colin Elliott to the session, a very important blessing for the session. Elder Wes Archer was also given a sabbatical after 17 years of service on the session. We also accepted the resignation of Deacon David Perron from the deacon board, due to his job location moving to Cincinnati.

The year has been remarkably busy but very encouraging, filled always with the empowering gifts of the Spirit’s work through the congregation; as Paul’s quotation says it, we have seen God’s work in bringing the congregation to Himself, and have in turn seen Him give the congregation so many gifts in the people He’s assembling as our congregation.

Concerning the membership and attendance changes from this last year, we note the following for calendar year 2025.

The total membership on December 31, 2025, was 265, an increase of 22 over 2024, and an increase of 47 over the last two years, since 2023.

The average in-person morning worship service attendance was 212, an increase of 12 over 2024.

The average in-person evening worship service attendance was 122, an increase of 6 from 2024.

The average SS class attendance was 121, a decrease of 9 from 2024.

Thirty-one new communicant members were added, including Eric and Anna Grace Brown, and Matthew Planalp who came to us from the Columbus RP Church, and Soloman van Vlack who came to us from the Providence (R.I.) RP church. Five were baptized members who became communicant upon their public profession.

Fourteen new baptized, non-communicant members were added: 5 joined us with their parents, and 9 were baptized.

Jesse Burton was transferred to 2nd RP of Indianapolis and 5 communicant members with 6 non-communicant members were transferred to non-RP congregations. One family was commended to their congregation in their home country.

Jean Curry and Joe Moore both went to be with our God in glory, both after many, many decades of blessing us and serving the Lord as members of our congregation.

Communicant membership at the end of 2024 was at 179 and rose to 200 at the end of 2025. The number of baptized non-communicant members at the end of 2024 was 64 and increased to 65 in 2025.

To put these last few years in a larger historical perspective, we mention, as noted last year, that the membership in the congregation held consistently around 120 through the 1950's and 1960's, but beginning in 1970, the membership declined to a low of 65 members in 1987. At that time, the congregation came together to ask the Lord to open a new chapter in the congregation's work for Him, and through their sacrificial giving to support a second pastor and their new focus on serving Him and one another, the trajectory changed by the Lord's grace. Here, nearly 40 years later, we have grown to more than quadruple that size in the late 1980s.

This overall growth trajectory forms the main background of the session's focus for this last year. The main challenges concern providing growth in leadership and in the physical provision for the growing congregation. The first area of concern has been adding official leadership for the congregation. A main point of discussion with the presbytery visitation committee was how to assess the appropriate size of a session for the congregation as it grows, with a general conclusion that we need to be continually seeking out those who might be able to serve in the capacity. To this end, we reflect with thankfulness for the provision of Colin Elliott to the session this last spring. We are so thankful for his energy, gifts and the great encouragement he brings to us. Although we do not have specific plans to call another congregational meeting for election of more elders and deacons, we do expect that planning such meetings will be part of the work for the coming year.

Building the pastorate is another part of our focus as a session. A crucial element of the session with respect to leadership for the congregation are the pastors. We are so thankful for God's provision for two pastors who so skillfully support one another and provide such a rich foundation of God's word to us from week to week. It is truly a joy to be able to work together with our pastors as a session, and we are so thankful for their strong and prayerful relationship.

As part of our focus on building the pastorate, we have been able to provide for a half-portion of a Sabbatical leave for Pastor McCollum this last year, and we are planning on providing for the second portion this coming year. It is remarkable how fruitful this program continues to be, providing not only for him and his family, but also allowing us to serve and be served by the Blair family this last summer. We believe that this dual purpose of supporting both our pastors and others' pastors is a crucial part of what the Lord would have us do with this program, and so we are working out possible arrangements for adding an intern for the congregation this coming summer.

Over the years, the Bloomington ministry and congregation have proven to be a help for the development of pastors throughout the denomination, and we are beginning the process of formalizing this role. We expect that this summer may be a formative step in regularizing this for the future years. We also note, in this regard, the training and work of the Punts; John is now already more than half of the way through his seminary training program. We are also discussing possible future plans for the pastorate with other men, including Tyler Kniess, who has preached for us. We also have people taking distance-learning classes from our seminary for various purposes related to equipping them for service in the church, and we wish to continue supporting this as people express interest.

One other area of growth that we have been pursuing is increasing the session's effectiveness at building relationships with a growing congregation. This is one other area we discussed with the presbytery visitors as a challenge. The danger is that, as the congregation grows, it would lose its coherence as it becomes more difficult for people to know one another. We are so thankful for the regular visitation pattern we have been able to use and are so encouraged in being able to get together with so many in the congregation and see what the Lord is doing in their lives.

The second set of obvious challenges for the growing congregation concern the familiar problem of finding an efficient and effective path to growing the physical plant of the church. Our current approach, learned over the last two years, is to develop an incremental model, which addresses congregational needs as we have resources to do so. The next step in this plan is to construct an addition to the current building that will fit on the current land footprint. The following steps would fall into place as further property becomes available, and so the current plan must not preclude possible future additions. At this juncture, the incremental nature of the additions would also align with an incremental funding plan, which

will likely entail a fund-raising campaign, though the timing of such a campaign will depend on the unfolding finances of the congregation. Another part of our current thinking is that there is a natural limit to the size of facility that can be created on the current site, which means that we will continue to probe possible ways to expand the ministry into additional sites beyond the First & Lincoln facility.

It would be very ungrateful of us to neglect giving thanks to God for the way in which He has provided so richly with the financial support that our ministry has needed. The collections each year have not just met the needs of the pastors and enabled us to extend support to various other ministries and have also provided funds which grow as the congregation grows.

Reviewing the past year brings additional matters which we also highlight.

A plan by the Bloomington City government to expand High Street led people in the congregation to do a thorough investigation of the history of the congregation's relationship with the cemetery association, and with advice of counsel, the session asked the congregation to make various motions. These acts are intended to ensure that the Covenanter Cemetery Association can manage the property without the legal entanglement of the congregation, beyond the basic arrangement of the congregation acting as a back stop for the Association to ensure its long-term viability. We believe that the current arrangement is much clearer and hopefully will provide for the future of the Covenanter Cemetery well. The cemetery stands as a powerful witness of the Lord's work in Bloomington for almost as many years as Bloomington has existed.

We note Lena Dixson's retirement from her role as our congregational secretary, with great thankfulness and appreciation. It is difficult to imagine the congregation running without her irrepressibly hospitable smile and her attention to everything. Many years ago, we conducted an 'exit interview' with one of our pastors, and one prominent item on the list of 'assets' was simply put: "Lena". We cannot agree more.

Our relationship with the Chinese congregation that meets in our building continues to be fruitful and very felicitous, and so we believe it is appropriate and helpful to continue to support them with of our facilities, both for worship and for other ministries during the week.

Our congregation, through the facilitation of Pastor McCollum, sent a second mission group to Wilksburg, Penn., following up on their trip from two years before. Continuing this pattern for the coming year, we anticipate a second mission trip to Ireland for the coming summer, following up in a different location on the work by a group two years ago.

We also note with thanks the growing number of students worshiping with us from the university. These students are coming through connections with our current students including those living in the Christian Student Fellowship house and

contacts encouraged through the RP student ministry on campus, which has been guided by Jacob Frost with Pastor McCollum's involvement. As the university is such a large proportion of the city, we are thankful for seeing the ministry growing there as it grows throughout the city.

Respectfully submitted by the Session of the Bloomington Congregation

Wes Archer, Eric Cosens, CJ Davis, Ken de Jong, Colin Elliott, Rich Holdeman, Philip McCollum, & Stephen Shipp

Bloomington Reformed Presbyterian Church Budget Summary - January 31, 2026 - Revised at Meeting

<u>Income</u>	<u>2025 Budget</u>	<u>2025 Actuals</u>	<u>2026 Budget</u>
External Income			
Book Table Income		2,477.61	
Contributions - Offerings	625,000.00	680,109.32	650,000.00
Designated Income	500.00	7,177.00	800.00
Diaconal Ministry-Voluntary Fund		32,900.00	
Facilities Capital Income		3,835.00	
Facilities: 619 S. Lincoln Income	7,500.00	12,000.35	12,000.00
Grants - RPCNA		25,000.00	
Interest - Capital Investments & Savings	40,000.00	44,400.21	40,000.00
Miscellaneous Income	80.00	1,510.00	90.00
Offerings & Donations	-	3,632.30	-
Total External Income	673,080.00	813,041.79	702,890.00
Designated Income from Savings Revolving Funds	12,829.02	9,580.00	21,810.92
Total Income	685,909.02	822,621.79	724,700.92
<u>Expense</u>			
External Expenses			
Book Table Expense	982.76	2,142.71	1,317.66
Facilities Capital Expense	10,000.00	11,886.25	31,250.00
Facilities: 619 S. Lincoln St.	9,800.00	7,352.73	8,800.00
Facilities - Operating	143,226.00	108,940.59	168,862.00
Finance Committee	15,870.00	14,917.59	16,988.00
Ministry: Diaconal	3,500.00	35,970.05	24,000.00
Educational	21,471.26	21,122.21	27,693.26
Fellowship	5,000.00	6,332.87	7,700.00
Library	1,000.00	994.23	1,000.00
Nursery	1,000.00	311.74	1,000.00
Outreach	10,600.00	7,988.23	10,800.00
Session	4,725.00	5,209.76	6,300.00
Student	1,600.00	2,006.88	2,400.00
Technology	12,735.00	21,535.06	4,400.00
Youth	1,200.00	533.19	1,200.00
Missions	35,500.00	36,386.88	46,550.00
Offerings - Disbursements		1,500.00	
Office Expense	37,380.00	19,388.78	37,900.00
Pastoral Compensation - Holdeman	124,120.00	124,520.00	127,778.60
Pastoral Compensation - McCollum	103,840.00	104,240.00	107,998.60
Pastoral Internship	-		17,000.00
Pastoral Expenses	7,000.00	3,482.03	7,000.00
Presbytery	7,580.00	7,890.48	12,300.00
RPCNA Works	23,303.39	23,340.59	25,289.21
Special Funds	11,575.00	13,500.00	-
Total External Expenses	593,008.41	581,492.85	695,527.33
Designated Disbursements - to Savings Revolving Funds			
Benevolence		-	
Book Table		334.90	
Camp Fundraiser		3,222.00	
Facilities Capital	50,000.00	53,835.00	50,000.00
Ministry Hedge	-		-
Mission Trip		1,000.00	-
Total Disbursements to Savings Revolving Funds	50,000.00	58,391.90	50,000.00
Total Expense	643,008.41	639,884.75	745,527.33
Net Income	42,900.61	182,737.04	(20,826.41)

Bloomington Reformed Presbyterian Church
Committed to God, to Others, to Growth

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Bloomington, IN 47401

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We have examined the 2025 financial records of the Bloomington Congregation and have found the following:

X 1. No problems or questions were noted.

 2. The following error(s) or problem(s) were found and were resolved as follows:

Finding

Resolution

Date: 2.12.26

Finance Committee Members:

Barbara Sandage
Marvin K. Wicker

Non-member reviewer:

Cheryl A. Hardin