Black Mountain, North Carolina

Church Planter

An Opportunity with City Church of Asheville (ARP)



City Church

Applications & Inquiries may be sent to ***search@citychurchavl.org***

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

Early submissions are strongly encouraged.

Dear Candidate,

The search committee of City Church of Asheville (ARP) is seeking a called and gifted church planter to lead the formation of a new gospel-centered, grace-oriented, Reformed congregation in Black Mountain, North Carolina, to serve eastern Buncombe County. This new church will be a daughter church plant of City Church, whose vision is to see the gospel renew Asheville and beyond by raising up people who have been transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ and bring his renewing power into every sphere of life.

What you will find in the following pages is a window into Black Mountain, the surrounding communities, and some of the Kingdom opportunities they offer. Additionally, you'll see a brief description of City Church and the support we will provide the planter in the first four years, including the existing partnership with our Black Mountain community group, which is eager to support a church plant for God's glory and the good of their neighbors. Finally, you will find a job description and the qualifications of the kind of candidate we believe is best suited to join us in this effort.

If you're interested in applying for the position, please submit:

- A cover letter describing your sense of call to church planting, your interest in Black Mountain specifically, your sense of fit with this role, and your alignment with City Church's vision and values.
- A résumé including education, ordination, and experience.
- Three sermon samples (audio or video).

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Please know that as we embark on this journey to find the man God has uniquely called to lead the engaged core team in planting a church for Black Mountain, our committee will be praying for you, this future church, and for God's wisdom to guide all of us through the process. We also pray for God to grant you clarity, insight, counsel, and blessings for your next steps.

Sincerely,

The Church Planter Search Committee of City Church of Asheville

Anna George | Committee Prayer Coordinator
Tim Harrison | Committee Secretary
Mary Lindsey Jackson
Duff James | Lead Pastor
Aislinn Meyer | Committee Chair; Director of Women's Care & Discipleship
Ross Meyer | Associate Pastor
Cole Sims
Walter Somerville
Mary Yoder | Committee Vice-Chair

Welcome to Black Mountain!



Sometimes called “The Front Porch to the Blue Ridge,” Black Mountain is a charming, small mountain town located 15 miles east of Asheville in Western North Carolina. With a population of around 8,500, the town has a relaxed and community-oriented feel. It is known for its rich arts heritage, modern creative community, walkable downtown, and abundant natural beauty from the surrounding mountains, forests, and rivers. The downtown area is filled with local shops, galleries, and restaurants, and hosts regular community events such as a weekly farmers’ market and the Sourwood Festival. Outdoor recreation is also an important part of the culture, with many hiking and biking trails and rivers around Black Mountain and in the Pisgah National Forest.

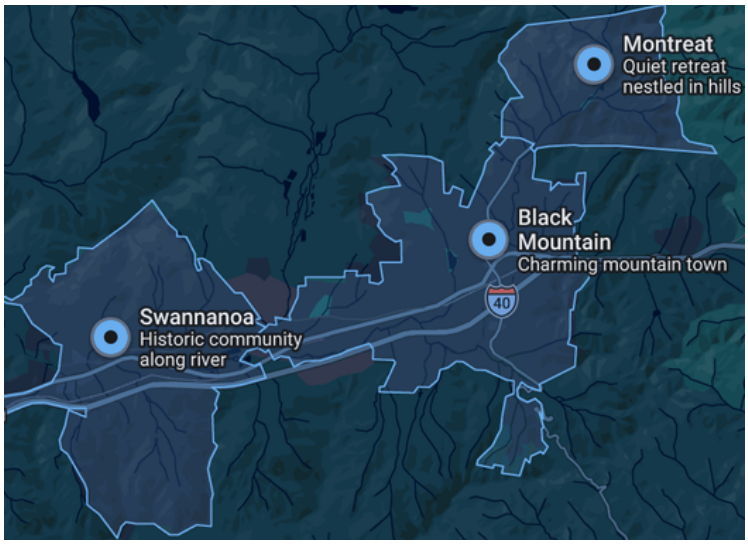
While Black Mountain has many longtime residents, it has also seen significant growth in recent years from newcomers, alongside Asheville. It remains a popular destination for visitors in the summer and during the lovely fall “leaf season.” The surrounding landscape also serves as a longstanding site of Christian renewal and retreat ministry through summer camps and conference centers such as Ridgecrest, Cragmont Assembly, and Montreat.

The communities of Swannanoa and Montreat, also based in eastern Buncombe County, are closely connected to Black Mountain but maintain distinct identities:

Montreat is a peaceful, distinctive community adjacent to Black Mountain on the northeast side of town. The people who live here have a strong sense of place, as many families have lived in or regularly visited Montreat for generations. It has no commercial development or traffic lights and is marked instead by walking/hiking trails, stone architecture, and creeks that run along the main road up into the cove. Embedded within the community are two significant institutions: Montreat College, which lends a more academic cultural feel, and the Montreat Conference Center, which has infused the area with a strong Presbyterian (PCUSA) heritage and a tradition of Christian retreat.

Swannanoa, the area between Asheville and Black Mountain, has a more rural and working-class character with less emphasis on tourism. It is home to Warren Wilson College, a liberal-arts school with a working educational farm. Swannanoa was among the communities most devastated by Hurricane Helene in September 2024, when catastrophic flooding destroyed homes, businesses, and infrastructure along the Swannanoa River. Recovery has been ongoing and uneven, and the effects of the disaster remain part of daily life and communal identity.

Demographics



Buncombe County's primary city is Asheville, and the population of the county is 277,417. We are seeking to plant a church to serve the eastern part of the county. Below is a demographic breakdown, based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, of the primary areas in eastern Buncombe County: Black Mountain, Swannanoa, and Montreat.

	Black Mountain	Swannanoa	Montreat
Population	8,491	5,021	901
Median Household Income	$77,042	$69,760	$115,568
White (not Hispanic or Latino)	89.2%	69.9%	82.1%
Black	4.2%	1.3%	8.4%
Hispanic	1.5%	23.9%	7.4%
Two or More Races	3.9%	19.9%	1.9%
Age under 18	11.9%	23.5%	7.9%
Age 65 and over	36.9%	16.4%	2.4%

Kingdom Opportunities



Black Mountain, Montreat, and Swannanoa present rich Kingdom opportunities to share the love of Christ and establish a gospel-centered, Reformed church in this community. The area's distinctive small-town character welcomes an eclectic mix of long-term residents, new families, retirees, students, and artists—each offering natural opportunities for meaningful relationships and gospel ministry:

- The recent, rapid influx of remote workers and retirees seeking quaint, slow-paced mountain living has drawn new wealth into the area. We long for our new neighbors to find true, lasting security and peace in Jesus.

- The natural beauty of the area and the vibrant art and music culture attract an eclectic mix of individuals looking for meaning beyond themselves. We long for them to know the One who created all this beauty and experience the profound truth and freedom of the gospel.

- Two small liberal arts colleges sit on either side of the Swannanoa Valley and are home to young adults searching for their purpose and place in life. We long for them to find community in the Body of Christ and anchor their identity in Jesus.

- Just like many Appalachian regions, Black Mountain and the Swannanoa Valley are what they are today as a result of the hard work of generational mountain families. These families have found themselves left behind by the economic growth and changes that have occurred in Black Mountain. We long for them to know that they are loved, valued, and a vital piece of God's Kingdom.

- A large demographic of unchurched neighbors is balanced by robust Christian camps and parachurch ministries, including the Billy Graham Association, staffed by strong believers committed to growing in the Lord. We long for them to have a gospel-rich church home in their local community that nurtures their faith and equips them for the Kingdom work to which they are called.

- The experience of Hurricane Helene further deepened our awareness of the physical and spiritual needs in our community. We long to serve and care for our neighbors in word and deed for the long haul.

We believe God is already at work here, and we want to be attentive to where he is moving and join him in that work. This vision has grown organically through a City Church community group, which began with just two couples four years ago and has grown to 21 adults and 21 children. The intergenerational group includes four men who served as ruling elders in their previous congregations, one woman who served as a deacon, individuals with church-planting experience, and people gifted in outreach, music, hospitality, and discipleship. More than simply sharing a desire for a new church closer to home, we share a growing love for our neighbors and a conviction that this community needs a church where people can find gospel hope, deep community, and a place of rest. The hyperlocal nature of life in a small town means many of our friends and neighbors won't consider attending





City Church because it's too far away or not a part of their community. We believe a church plant in Black Mountain would be a natural expression of City Church's DNA and vision, and an opportunity to see that ministry extended into the community we call home.







Mother Church: City Church of Asheville

At the request of First Presbytery of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Duff and Kristi James moved to Asheville in the summer of 2011 to plant a church, which became City Church of Asheville. From the outset, the goal has been to grow into a vibrant, multigenerational congregation that seeks to reach out with the historic truths of the Christian gospel and meet the needs of the city in the name of Jesus. Over the ensuing years, God has grown City Church into a multigenerational, healthy, welcoming, and hospitable church with a membership of 252 (communicant and non-communicant) and a typical weekly attendance of 240. The church has also seen corresponding growth in the session (4 elders, 2 pastors), diaconate (10), and staff (6 full-time, 2 part-time). The church's finances are sound, with a current capital reserve fund of over $500,000.

Our Mission: City Church seeks to impact Asheville and the world by raising up a people who have been transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ and bring his renewing power into every sphere of life.

Our Vision: We desire to foster a community of disciples who are sinners, sufferers, and saints that makes known the love and grace of God and Jesus Christ by proclaiming, celebrating, and demonstrating his truth, beauty, and goodness.

Our Aim: To be a church where people can:

- Explore the claims of Jesus Christ.
- Engage the life-giving authority of Scripture.
- Expand their faith and trust in him through thoughtful and expectant worship.
- Experience transformation within the safety of meaningful relationships in a gospel-filled, grace-oriented community.
- Employ their resources for the glory of God and the welfare of the city.
- Extend the hope of Jesus Christ to Asheville and beyond.

Support & Funding

As part of the early phase of the church plant, the church planter will initially spend a number of months working out of City Church. City Church will provide the church planter:

- Spiritual and relational covering through the Lead Pastor and Session.
- Appropriate ongoing support from experienced leaders.
- Administrative, logistical, and financial partnership during the launch phase.

City Church commits to giving at least $25,000 per year for at least the first four years of the church plant. Additionally, the ARP, through Outreach North America and First Presbytery combined, commits to funding each of the four years as follows:

- First Year (Exploratory Year): $60,000
- Second Year: $60,000
- Third Year: $30,000
- Fourth Year: $20,000

From the sources above, the church plant will receive at least $270,000 over four years. All additional funding must be raised by the church planter through his connections with local churches in the presbytery, individual family connections, church plant core group, grants, etc.

Job Description

Core Responsibilities

1. Vision & Leadership

- Develop, communicate, and implement a compelling, gospel-centered vision for the new church that aligns with the mission and theology of City Church of Asheville and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.
- Cultivate a culture of prayer, dependence, and spiritual vitality that reflects the heart of the gospel.
- Equip and lead the existing core team, and identify, recruit, and equip more team members from within City Church and the Black Mountain area, further developing a team with diverse gifts and backgrounds.
- Provide spiritual, strategic, and organizational leadership during the pre-launch and post-launch phases.

2. Preaching & Teaching

- Faithfully preach the word of God with theological depth, pastoral warmth, and cultural awareness, through the lens of the gospel of grace.
- Teach, disciple, and equip leaders to apply the gospel to all of life.
- Communicate the grace and truth of Jesus in a way that connects both to believers and the spiritually curious.

3. Shepherding & Discipleship

- Interact with people with kindness, warmth, and insight as a gentle, humble, caring, attentive, approachable, courageous, and relational shepherd.
- Develop systems for pastoral care, small groups, and discipleship pathways that foster spiritual formation and community.
- Shepherd individuals and families toward deeper love for God, for neighbor, and for the town of Black Mountain.
- Model healthy rhythms of life and ministry that reflect gospel rest and emotional health.

4. Mission & Community Engagement

- Cultivate a missional imagination that expresses the gospel through word and deed in the local community.
- Build partnerships with local organizations, leaders, and churches for the common good.
- Encourage and empower members to live as witnesses of the kingdom in their everyday vocations and relationships.

5. Organizational Development

- Work with City Church's leadership to establish sustainable, reproducible governance, financial systems, and ministry structures.
- Partner with the City Church Session for accountability, oversight, and strategic support.
- Steward resources with integrity, transparency, and generosity.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate will possess:

Spiritual & Personal

- Deep love for Jesus that overflows into all aspects of personal and public life.
- A lifestyle marked by humility, integrity, prayer, repentance, and faith.
- A life of continual personal renewal and a hopeful, joyful walk with a limp—fueled by the grace of Jesus Christ and dependent on him for growth.
- Tested and proven resiliency, capable of enduring the unique ups and downs of church planting with honest faith.

Relational

- High emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and capacity for healthy relationships.
- A priority to live faithfully in and lead well out of his marriage or his singleness.
- A warm, friendly, highly relational nature.
- The ability to engage in hard conversations and navigate conflict with grace, courage, and sensitivity.
- Deep love for individuals and the proven ability to gather people and build relationships across generational, cultural, and socioeconomic boundaries.

Theological & Ministerial

- Ordination, or qualifications to be ordained, in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.
- A shepherd's disposition with a reputation for servant leadership.
- A commitment to a high view of women and their God-given value and roles in the church.
- Demonstrated effectiveness in and calling to preaching, discipleship, pastoral counseling, and evangelism.
- Three or more years of formal ministry experience as a pastor, church planter, or missionary preferred.

Leadership & Mission

- A collaborative leadership style that equips and empowers core team members to use their gifts for the church and community.
- The ability to cast and implement a clear, inspiring vision.
- Entrepreneurial skills, a pioneering spirit of adventure, and the motivation of a self-starter to organize and build new projects.
- A genuine heart for the unchurched, dechurched, and wounded, with a proven ability to share the gospel across diverse backgrounds.
- A commitment to actively participate in local community life and to practice regular hospitality with those inside and outside the church.
- A strong interest in growing deep roots in small-town eastern Buncombe County.
- Creativity and adaptability in navigating the challenges and opportunities of church planting in a post-Christian, ideologically diverse context.

To Apply

Please submit:

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