



woodside church of flint

request for proposals

Woodside Church of Flint is seeking a marketing professional — individual or agency — to submit proposals for a campaign to include rebranding and renaming. You are invited!

Who We Are

Woodside is a progressive Christian congregation, multi-racial and welcoming of the LGBTQ community, in mission in Flint since the 1830s. We have relocated multiple times, and changed our name once. We believe the times are calling us to adapt again.

Legally, we are the First Baptist Church of Flint; Woodside Church has been our dba since about 1960. We are member of three denominations: the American Baptist Churches (*through the Metro Chicago region*); the United Church of Christ (*through the Michigan Conference*); and the Alliance of Baptists.

In 2018, we moved from our home of 70 years in the College Cultural neighborhood to relocate to Carriage Town, the neighborhood where we had our first church building in the 1870s. We are now located in an Art Deco tire store built in the 1920s, a building with an industrial edge that suits well our understanding of mission that rolls up its sleeves.

While we were already streaming worship since mid-2019, with the onset of COVID-19 we have redesigned our worship and adapted all of our mission outreach to electronic or hybrid format. We now have participants from beyond Southeast Michigan, including multiple states.

What We Believe and Care About

We at Woodside are way less about dogma and more about faith lived in community.

Our Statement of Belief describes a congregation open to questions, people on a road together, trying to figure out life's challenges in a community of grace, and trying to make the world better. *Honesty* and *diversity* are core values of the faith we claim.

Our mission is simple: *to follow Jesus' way of social justice*. We lean toward the powerful and political work of Jesus to counter empire, and to bring hope and reprieve to oppressed people. Rather than "salvation," we tend to speak of "transformation" — being transformed ourselves, but also mending the world so that it works for us all.

We describe this more fully in our "Garland Declaration," in which we state our commitment to be on the side of creation struggling to breathe under the weight of greed, power and self-indulgence; in it, we reiterate our care for the most vulnerable, those with and without home, with and without documentation, with and without a place in the mainstream or a voice in the conversation, even beyond humans to the earth itself and all the creatures with whom we share it.

Among the things we work for: civil rights & voting rights; ending exploitation of people and animals; advocating for the well-being of immigrants and refugees, those incarcerated, those living in an oppressive and rapacious economy, those who are vulnerable for any reason.

As a collection of individuals and as a community, we intend these faith objectives to define our lives — how we spend our time and money, how we vote, how we affiliate, what programs and activities we endorse, how we set personal and congregational priorities.

We take seriously our obligation to learn and grow, and to be part of ending the world's pain. (*The Garland Declaration and other "defining documents" are available on our website: <https://www.woodsidechurch.net/beliefs>*).

How We Function

Our communications and outreach strategies and platforms include:

- a physical location at 503 Garland Street in Flint's Carriage Town neighborhood.
- a website, www.woodsidechurch.net.
- presence on social media: Facebook, a YouTube channel (for worship), and an underutilized Instagram account.
- an app by which folks can watch worship, access our website, read the pastor's blog, receive news and announcements and give offerings.
- email and text alert service, for sharing information.
- pre-worship announcement slides that run for several minutes each week.
- Zoom, by which we gather.
- print: including a bi-monthly newsletter and occasional print ads in local media.

What We Need

We believe it is time to update our name and image, while preserving our community reputation for bold action. If you believe this is a congregation you could embrace and help move into the next era of life, we invite your proposal. Please include these sections — *and please number them for our ease of review*:

1. an introduction of yourself—including how you believe your (or your agency's) approach is consistent with Woodside's mission commitments. Please include an overview of your community engagement.
2. any experience you have had leading organizations in the “internal transformation” that is necessarily part of the process, and what steps you might imagine implementing here.
3. a summary of your strategy.
4. a timeline you believe would be optimum for creating this shift (especially a name change).
5. a description of the scope of your work (1,500 words max).
6. an estimate of what we should expect to budget for this effort. Please list your assumptions in making this estimate.
7. a description of two projects you've led that you feel best reflect an approach similar to what you are envisioning for Woodside.

Proposals probably won't be more than 10 pages; you may attach up to 4 additional pages with samples of your work.

About Our Process

- Interested professionals should email materials to Rev. Deborah Conrad, Senior Minister, debc@woodsidechurch.net, with the subject line “rebranding Woodside.”
- From the submitted proposals, we will invite up to 3 professionals to make presentations to our Executive Committee (via Zoom).
- Woodside values the diversity of the human community; Women and Minorities are especially encouraged to submit proposals.
- Flint-based professionals will be given priority.
- You may send questions via email. Additionally, our leadership will be available for one 20- to 30-minute call with any applicant. We will be available Tuesdays and Fridays, noon-2pm. Send an email to Pastor Deb Conrad with two options; we will schedule on a first-come, first-served basis.
- **Deadline for submission is 5 pm March 11.**