



Lead Pastor

Rainier Avenue Church

Seattle, Washington 98118 • Rainier Valley
Pacific Northwest Conference | Free Methodist Church USA

About Rainier Avenue Church

Founded in 1904, Rainier Avenue Church (RAC) is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-generational congregation rooted in the heart of Seattle's Rainier Valley. For more than 120 years, RAC has been a place where people from vastly different backgrounds, cultures, languages, generations, and economic circumstances have gathered to worship Jesus Christ, serve their neighbors, and bear witness to a living God who breaks down dividing walls.

RAC is intentionally diverse. The congregation includes refugees, immigrants, long-tenured South Seattle families, and newcomers from across the region. Racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity are core to who RAC is and who the church believes God is calling us to be. Our commitment to justice, mercy, and whole-life discipleship flows directly from our Wesleyan heritage and our location in one of the most dynamic neighborhoods in the Pacific Northwest.

RAC is part of the Pacific Northwest Conference of the Free Methodist Church USA and is grounded in Wesleyan-Arminian theology. Our identity as a congregation is shaped by five values known as the FM Way: Life-Giving Holiness, Love-Driven Justice, Christ-Compelled Multiplication, Cross-Cultural Collaboration, and God-Given Revelation. The mission of the Free Methodist Church is "To bring wholeness to the world by loving God, loving people, and multiplying followers of Jesus." Check out more of RAC's story here:

<https://www.rainieravenuechurch.org/about>

The Rainier Valley

South Seattle's Rainier Valley is one of the most ethnically and economically diverse communities in the country. Shaped by immigration, a vibrant refugee population, and rapid gentrification, the Valley is a neighborhood of profound beauty and multifaceted need. Dozens of languages are spoken; families span every economic stratum. RAC understands its calling as inseparable from this place, seeking the peace and flourishing of its neighbors while remaining grounded in historic Christian faith.

The Lead Pastor will be someone who loves this neighborhood, commits to know it deeply, and leads the church in faithful, credible presence within it.

The Opportunity

RAC is entering a new season of leadership and ministry. We are seeking a Lead Pastor who can shepherd this congregation with spiritual depth, cultural humility, and relational wisdom, building on a rich history while guiding the church into its next chapter with clarity, courage, and hope.

This is a season of transition and renewal. The congregation is spiritually vital. The board is prepared and invested. The staff team is gifted and committed. What is needed now is a pastor who can build trust, strengthen organizational health, articulate a compelling vision rooted in the community's own voice, and lead from a posture of humble, Spirit-led presence.

What Thriving Looks Like Here

- A pastor who is present and engaged in the neighborhood and trusted by the congregation
- A healthy, empowered staff team with clear roles and a culture of honest communication
- A congregation deepening in discipleship, growing in diversity, and expanding its presence in the Rainier Valley
- A vision developed collaboratively and owned by the whole church

Who We're Looking For

Our ideal candidate is someone who:

Is Spiritually Grounded

- Leads from a deep, authentic relationship with Christ marked by consistent prayer, Scripture engagement, and personal and social holiness
- Demonstrates a lived Wesleyan-Arminian faith, including the integration of justice and spirituality
- Models spiritual formation and invites others into health and growth, rather than simply managing programs

Brings Cross-Cultural Competence and Humility

- Has meaningful experience leading in multicultural, multi-ethnic environments
- Listens deeply and honors voices at the margins, immigrant and refugee members, those who have felt overlooked, and communities navigating economic unpredictability
- Does not impose majority-culture frameworks; actively dismantles barriers to belonging

Preaches and Teaches with Faithfulness and Accessibility

- Delivers biblically grounded, theologically substantive sermons that connect with a genuinely diverse audience
- Communicates the Word of God in ways that reach the unchurched, those with limited English proficiency, and people across cognitive and educational backgrounds
- Challenges the congregation to wholeness and healthy growth and does not assume familiarity with church culture or Christian tradition

Builds Trust and Empowers Others

- Creates environments of genuine trust, psychological safety, and belonging for staff, lay leaders, and congregation members
- Delegates meaningfully, develops staff, and builds shared leadership rather than centralizing authority
- Engages conflict honestly and compassionately and does not use spiritual language to avoid difficult organizational issues
- Receives feedback with genuine humility and non-defensive openness

Leads Change with Wisdom and Patience

- Establishes trust before initiating significant change
- Communicates direction, decisions, and expectations clearly and consistently
- Understands RAC's history and honors it while helping the congregation move faithfully forward

Loves the Neighborhood and Engages the Community

- Understands the church's calling as embedded in the Rainier Valley, not separate from it
- Actively builds relationships with neighbors, community organizations, and local stakeholders
- Integrates justice and spirituality as inseparable expressions of the good news of Jesus

Qualifications

Required

- Ordained (or ordination candidate) in the Free Methodist Church USA, or eligible for transfer per Book of Discipline
- Theological alignment with Wesleyan-Arminian doctrine and affirmation of FMC Articles of Religion
- Minimum 5 years full-time pastoral experience, including at least 2 years in a lead role
- Demonstrated experience leading in diverse, multicultural ministry contexts
- Demonstrated ability to preach and lead staff teams effectively
- Commitment to Free Methodist governance and Pacific Northwest Conference accountability

Preferred

- M.Div. or equivalent training and experience
- Urban and/or neighborhood-based ministry experience
- Experience leading through organizational transition and trust-rebuilding
- Language proficiency other than English (Spanish, Somali, Amharic, Vietnamese, or other Rainier Valley languages)
- Familiarity with trauma-informed organizational leadership

Pacific Northwest Conference Expectations

The Free Methodist Church USA measures missional health through four Mission Measures—Spirit Aliveness, Evangelistic Disciple-Making Plan, Leadership Pipeline, and Multiplication Step. In the Pacific Northwest Conference, every church and its pastor are expected to pursue growth in each of these areas as expressions of the FMC's vision: "We envision a Spirit-fueled movement that catalyzes the multiplication of disciples, leaders, and churches." The Lead Pastor is the primary facilitator of this culture at RAC and will be a covenantal partner with the PNWC in this mission.

How to Apply

We invite qualified candidates to submit the following to the Pacific Northwest Conference

- Pastoral résumé or curriculum vitae
- Cover letter describing your sense of call, cross-cultural formation, and why RAC's mission resonates with you
- Three recent sermon recordings (upload video or send video link)
- Personal statement of Wesleyan theological commitments
- Five professional ministry references (ex. supervisor, board member, team member, supervisee)
- Completed [PNWC pastoral application form](#)

Submit to the PNWC Ministerial Appointments Committee (MAC)

Email: pnwcoffice@pnwc.org

PO Box 1639, Snohomish, WA 98291-1639

Rainier Avenue Church and the Pacific Northwest Conference of the Free Methodist Church USA welcome candidates whose life and ministry reflect the depth and diversity of the kingdom of God. We are praying for the person God has prepared for this moment.