

Profile of Steinbach Evangelical Fellowship Church

This profile introduces Steinbach Evangelical Fellowship Church (EFC) to prospective Lead Pastor candidates by outlining our history, present ministry, congregational priorities, and vision for the future. As we prepare for a pastoral transition in 2027, we invite candidates to consider the opportunity to serve alongside a welcoming, biblically grounded, and growing church family.

History

Steinbach EFC was founded in 1979 as a church plant of the Steinbach Evangelical Mennonite Church on Main Street. When that congregation outgrew its facility, it chose to establish another EMC church in Steinbach rather than expand the existing building. About fifty people formed the new congregation, initially gathering for worship in the chapel at Steinbach Bible College (SBC); several charter members continue to attend EFC today. Construction of the present church building at Giesbrecht Avenue and Woodhaven Street began in 1980. A Christian education wing was added in 2015, and a basement renovation is planned for the fall.

Ten pastors have served EFC since its founding. Our current Lead Pastor, Ernie Koop, is a charter member who previously served as an EMC missionary and as a Missions professor at SBC. He became Lead Pastor in 2018 and plans to retire in the summer of 2027. This transition creates an important opportunity for EFC to honour a season of faithful leadership while welcoming a successor who can help guide the church into its next chapter of spiritual growth, discipleship, and community engagement.

Across its history, EFC has experienced seasons of both growth and contraction, including difficult transitions that led some families to leave. Through these challenges, a committed core has remained faithful to our mission, sustained the congregation, and helped renew unity and hope. These experiences have strengthened our desire to lead with humility, communicate openly, and continue growing together in Christ.

EFC Today

EFC is a welcoming, biblically grounded, multigenerational, and increasingly multicultural community of faith. Average Sunday attendance is approximately 175, and membership is 150. Under the leadership of our current pastoral staff, the church has experienced steady growth and a renewed sense of spiritual vitality. In addition to Sunday worship services and Sunday school classes, ministries operate throughout the week. A part-time Youth Director leads regular Thursday evening gatherings for youth, while women's, men's, Spanish-

language, and small-group ministries offer further opportunities for fellowship, discipleship, and service.

EFC is governed by an Elder Board composed of five members elected by the congregation, the Lead Pastor, Associate Pastor and Youth Director. The Elder Board provides spiritual and organizational oversight, supervises the pastoral staff, and oversees the church's committees. Each staff member is supported by an Elder Board liaison who provides accountability and communication. The Lead Pastor also guides the church staff through weekly meetings focused on prayer, ministry alignment, and coordination.

A recent congregational survey affirmed that EFC is a friendly and welcoming church where people experience belonging, mutual care, and prayerful support. Respondents also identified our solid biblical foundation as a defining strength and core value.

The survey also revealed a shared desire for continued numerical growth and deeper spiritual maturity. Congregants expressed interest in strengthening their prayer lives, expanding opportunities for service and evangelism, and developing a more substantial understanding of Scripture. Ministry to young families and outreach in the surrounding neighbourhood emerged as the leading opportunities for the future, alongside discipleship, leadership development, youth ministry, and prayer.

EFC in the Future

God has placed EFC in a strategic location within Steinbach and has gifted us with a well-designed facility with room for sustainable growth. We desire to be a growing and unified congregation of all generations and many cultures that will declare Jesus is Lord as we:

- (i) **Belong:** Develop a strong sense of belonging within our congregation identified by an awareness of love, compassion and caring for each other.
- (ii) **Thrive:** Develop a healthy and vibrant community of faith that will thrive as we follow and obey Christ.
- (iii) **Equip:** Cultivate and send mature and growing disciples who are equipped to disciple others.
- (iv) **Serve:** Become indispensable to the people in the area surrounding our location by serving their practical, emotional and spiritual needs.

The congregation recently affirmed this vision as a progression from belonging to thriving, equipping, and serving. We recognize that bringing it fully to life will require prayer, faithful leadership, intentional discipleship, and shared effort. With God's help, we are ready to take the next steps. We invite a Lead Pastor who will love this congregation, uphold biblical truth, develop leaders, and partner with us in reaching our neighbours and making mature disciples of Jesus Christ.