

# from the search committee

## **Dear Iron Works Church,**

We are so excited to write this letter to you! Thank you so much for praying for our committee over the last year as we have sought the Lord to identify the man He has chosen to lead Iron Works into the future. We believe that God has provided an outstanding candidate for Iron Works. We are excited to nominate Rev. Kent Woodrow as our next senior pastor.

Kent, his wife Anna, and their two daughters come to us from Holy Cross Presbyterian Church, in Staunton Virginia. During his time as their associate pastor, he has led the church of about 200 through its own time of pastoral transition (and a building project, too!). We have come to believe over hours of conversation, meals, and the beginning of building relationships, that Kent is the man God is calling to serve as our next pastor.

**Kent is a man whose life is firmly grounded in prayer.** Prayer is a thread that runs throughout his home and work life. In fact, he has prayed for our church and our committee from his initial contact.

**He has a shepherd's heart.** Kent has a deep desire to identify with those he serves and an empathetic and compassionate heart.

**He is a man of great humility and vulnerability** with a keen awareness of his own shortcomings and limitations. He puts his confidence not in his own gifts but in Christ.

**He is a clear, direct, and organized leader** with good ideas and plans to achieve them. But he listens well, collaborates, and embraces others' ideas.

**His preaching is rich, gospel-centered, and hospitably engages the culture,** making the scriptures understandable to all.

We invite you to meet the Woodrow family during the candidate weekend, **April 4 to 7**, where you can share a meal with them, hear Kent preach, and get to know them. The following week (April 14), we will vote on a call for Kent at a congregational meeting after the Sunday worship service.

We give thanks to God for his faithfulness to Iron Works these past 18 months! (You can [read more here about the search process.](#)) Please keep praying for Iron Works, for the Woodrows, and that God would establish the work of our hands in Phoenixville!

**–The Pastoral Search Committee**

# who is Kent Woodrow?

Kent Woodrow currently serves as the associate pastor of Holy Cross Presbyterian Church in Staunton, Virginia. He loves Jesus, loves people, and has a deep desire for everyone to hear the Gospel. "He is gentle and full of conviction. He is willing to ask the heart-level questions that others won't, but he does it in a nonintrusive way. He has a good sense for when it's okay to ask the hard questions, and he asks them because he truly wants to know the answers," said a pastor who has known him for a decade.

## Education & Background

Kent's childhood growing up as a missionary kid in Mozambique was not only the incubator for his relationship with the Lord, it also substantially shaped how he sees life and ministry. He moved to the states for his undergrad studies at Covenant College, where he met Anna. They married in 2014, and straightaway went to St. Louis to study at Covenant Seminary.

## Ministry Experience

Kent has 8 years of ministry leadership experience, and is passionate about preaching Christ from all of Scripture. ([Kent's full resume](#))

- Associate Pastor | Holy Cross Presbyterian Church of Staunton, VA (2022-present)
- NextGeneration Pastor | Holy Cross Presbyterian Church of Staunton, VA (2019-2022)
- Children, Student, Young Families Director | Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church of Lexington, NC (2018-2019)
- Intern | Trinity Church (PCA) of Kirkwood, MO (2016-2017)



Kent values both structure and relationships. He is effective at building systems for ministry, leading teams, and equipping others. More than one of his references described him as very organized. And yet he loves people deeply and delights in forging strong friendships.

He started at Holy Cross in Staunton in 2019, when he served as their NextGeneration pastor serving youth and kids. When Holy Cross's founding pastor was called to another church in 2022, Kent stepped up to take on all of his duties—while continuing to lead children and family ministries. He is roundly loved at his current church: the vote calling him to the role of associate pastor in 2022 was unanimous.

# meet the Woodrows



**Kent** loves being a husband and dad. He loves creative board games, engrossing stories, a well-turned phrase, a good meal, a job well done, a loud laugh. Just get him around a beautiful sunset or a moving piece of music and you'll hear him whisper praises to

God. Kent loves preaching and organizing and leading teams of people on mission. But most of all, Kent loves his Lord and wants you to as well.

**Anna** loves kids and has taught nearly every grade level from preschool through 6th grade. Anna also loves people and embraces being "aggressively friendly." Coffee dates and honest friendships give her deep joy, as do sunshine, the outdoors, a good book, and a long run. Growing up in a pastor's family and years of ministry with Kent have honed Anna's delight in hospitality. She thrives on welcoming ministry teams and friends into her home with a good meal and a warm space to feel seen and heard. Anna sees her role as a pastor's wife as a way of serving the God she loves with the man she loves.

The Lord has blessed the Woodrows with two young daughters, **Melody** (5 years) and **Summer** (2 years), who share a deep love for music, books, ice cream, and all things pink.

# ministry

## **KENT'S PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY**

At the end of my life, I hope all who know me can say I gave my all for the Lord, for His people, and for His world and encouraged others to do the same.

### **The Lord** *(Celebrating His Grace)*

I owe my life to the Lord who loved me and rescued me, not because of anything in me but because He is just that kind of God (Eph. 2:1-10). And that kind of God deserves to be known and honored by all. That's why everything about my life and ministry centers on the Lord and His worthiness to be celebrated for who He is, for what He has done, and for offering all of this to us freely. Everything must center on Him (Rom. 11:36)!

### **His People** *(Growing in His Grace)*

The Lord who graciously rescues us also graciously gives us a home among His people. Since none of us earned our way into the Lord's family, we've got nothing to prove and are free to be honest about our failures and continual need for our Lord's grace (Phil. 3:1-14). As a pastor, I seek to see the Lord's people become more like Him by cultivating communities that embrace our utter dependence upon Him. I also believe I'm called to "equip the saints" for the ministry to which the Lord calls His people (Eph. 4:11-16).

### **His World** *(Sharing His Grace)*

The Lord's people are outward-facing, driven to see our God honored and more added to His people (Acts 2:42-47). Together we push into His world, knowing how desperately others need to hear of the grace our Lord offers in language they can understand and offering them a glimpse into the world as our Lord made it to run (Mat. 5:13-16). I see my task as a pastor to keep the Lord's mission before His people for the good of His world and the honor of our God (Ps. 96:1-6).



# sermons

A few sermons we found particularly helpful in getting to know Kent. ([more Kent sermons](#))

## **Trustworthy**

*Colossians 1:1-8 | January 7, 2024*

As Kent was preparing his congregation for the arrival of their new lead pastor, we were encouraged and felt like he was speaking directly to us.

## **The King's Way**

*Colossians 3:1-17 | February 18, 2024*

The sermon our team heard in person.

## **The Need for a King**

*Judges 17 | December 3, 2023*

An advent sermon from Judges—not what you'd expect on the first Sunday of Advent

## **The King in the Waves**

*Matthew 14:22-33 | November 19, 2023*

We love how Kent's preaching directly asks us to consider how to apply aspects of the message in our own lives

## **Simeon's Song**

*Luke 2:25-35 | December 20, 2020*

The most recent sermon for which video is available



## **PASTORS HE'S WORKED WITH**

"He's warm, naturally wired for welcoming and hospitality. Kent is a good shepherd, very relational. For those on the margins and the mainstream, he helps them peel off the veneer."

"Kent is the kind of pastor I want to become."

## **STAFF MEMBERS**

"He's a great communicator, he's down to earth and humbly connects with others. Kent was always checking in as a friend, not just as a coworker on staff. When he walks into the room, he doesn't say 'Here I am' but rather 'There you are!' He's a very real person."

"He responds to stress and conflict with prayer and patience."

## **CHURCH MEMBERS WHO SERVE ON HIS TEAM**

"Kent really cares for people."

"He is willing to put aside his own ideas and plans when better ones are presented."

## **FRIEND OF 10 YEARS, ALSO A PASTOR**

"He does very well seeing the big picture of where a church is and forming a vision not out of personal ambition but rather love for God and the community, and he has the ability to see how to get there."

## **ELDER, CURRENT CHURCH**

"He is very capable and has great organizational skills. ... He revitalized the floundering children's program and recruited people, developed procedures, met with leaders, and has done an exceptional job."

# from Kent

**Dear Iron Works Church,**

Have you ever met someone and just clicked? You haven't known them long at all but you find you resonate with them the way you might with a longtime friend? That's been my experience as I've been getting to know your church.

When I first read your church and pastor profile back in November, I found my heart drawn toward you all, both who you are now and who you say you want to be. Over the past few months as I've engaged with your search committee, your elders and deacons, and your staff, the Lord has only grown my admiration for your church and my longing to serve alongside you. I think we'll click, and I think we'll do life well together. Here's why.

Your mission to preach Christ, love one another, serve the city, and plant churches is my mission too. You and I hunger to share God's rich truths in a clear, winsome, and accessible way. I highly value humility and honest vulnerability, because I believe it creates a warm, grace-filled community--the kind of community everyone says you embody. We both yearn to see more of these kinds of gospel-centered, Jesus-exalting communities spread around the globe. You're looking for a pastor who empowers others in the ministry the Lord calls them to; that's the kind of pastor I strive to be. Finally, we both recognize this mission is impossible if our God doesn't act powerfully. So we're committed to prayer, humbly dependent upon the only One who moves His mission forward.

Friends, I've been praying for Iron Works Church since I heard of you. The past few months have been a joy as I've come to know your church more. I also recognize most of you are only just now hearing about me. So I look forward to sharing more of my life with you: my formative 21 years on the mission field in Mozambique, how I met and married my best friend, how the Lord has walked faithfully with my family through hardship, how much I love a good burrito, most of all my passion for my Savior.

My family and I eagerly look forward to our time together in April.

Warmly,

**Kent**

# meet the Woodrows

## April 4-7!

### Thursday April 4th

5p-7p dinner: **Newcomb home group**

7p-9p dessert: **Aquaro & Vitz home groups**, meeting at the Vitzes'

### Friday April 5th

5p-7p dinner: **Olson home group**

7p-9p dessert: **Lindberg & Koch home groups**, meeting at the Kochs'

### Saturday April 6th

8a-10a breakfast: **Williams home group**

10a-noon: **anyone**, meeting in the pastoral office

4pm: **Q&A & Potluck dinner**

childcare provided

[sign up for a dish & submit questions here](#)

### Sunday April 7th

Kent will preach in the worship service

## April 14

Congregational meeting after the service to vote  
on the call of Rev. Kent Woodrow as lead pastor