

# ST. THOMAS REFORMED CHURCH PROFILE

## Section A. Background Information

**Today's Date:** September 15, 2025

**Position to be filled:** Pastor

**1. Name of church:** St. Thomas Reformed Church a/k/a Dutch Reformed Church f/k/a Protestant Dutch Reformed Church of St. Thomas

**2. Web address:** [www.strchurch.org](http://www.strchurch.org)

**3. Address:** Post Office Box 365, St. Thomas, VI 00804; **Telephone:** (340) 776-8255; **E-Mail address:** [join@strchurch.org](mailto:join@strchurch.org)

**4. Classis:** New York

**5. Classis Supervisor:** Rev. Michael DeRuyter **Address:** St. Croix Reformed Church, 6125 Estate La Reine, Kingshill, VI 00850-9881; **Telephone:** (989) 600-0492; **E-Mail address:** [revderuyter@gmail.com](mailto:revderuyter@gmail.com)

**6. Chair of Pastoral Search Committee:** Maureen Lally **Address:** Pastoral Search Committee, St. Thomas Reformed Church, Post Office Box 365, St. Thomas, VI 00804; **Telephone:** (443) 801-4156; **E-Mail address:** [Maureen.lally1@gmail.com](mailto:Maureen.lally1@gmail.com)

**7. Membership: Time of worship:** 10:00 AM (AST); **Active Confessing Members Today:** 150; **Inactive Confessing Members:** 40; **Adherents:** 140; and **Online Attendees:** 25. **Comment on significant changes:** Member and adherent attendance varies widely based upon the season. **Age of all active members (baptized and confessing):** 0-20 years old - 20%; 20-34 years old - 15%; 35-49 years old - 15%; 50-64 years old - 25%; and 65 years and older - 25%.

**8. Racial/Ethnic composition of congregation (rough estimates):**

- African American/Afro Caribbean 35%
- Asian 2%
- Caucasian 45%
- Hispanic 2%
- Mixed Race/Other 16%

**9. Worship schedule: Time of worship:** 10:00AM (AST) **Average Attendance (includes adults and children) Today:** 150; **Average attendance five (5) years ago:** 175; **Comment on significant changes:** Coronavirus (Covid-19) hit the U.S. Virgin Islands hard, but STRC congregation is resilient and recovering.

**10. Describe a typical worship service (order of worship, music, etc.) What is STRC congregation's preferred style or styles of worship?** Sunday services typically follow the church year with Reformed Church liturgy, lectionary reading and communion on the first Sunday

of every month. STRC is blessed with a very gifted Minister of Music & Arts who coordinates musical selections with the pastor, ranging from traditional to contemporary, that complement the Scripture and theme for the service. There is an active adult choir and regular offerings from the children's choir and dance ministry. Fellowship time usually follows services in Calvin Hall a/k/a Kelbert Pavillion.

#### **11. Financial Information:**

STRC Finance Committee annually proposes a church budget which is reviewed and approved by the Consistory and submitted for approval by the Congregation at its Annual Meeting. Please see the current STRC Annual Budget attached hereto as Exhibit A.

#### **12.STRC Giving:**

Less than \$500	50
\$501– \$1500	38
\$1501 – \$2500	13
\$2501 – \$3500	5
More than \$3500	37

Total 2025:	\$850,000
Total 2020:	\$1,000,000

#### **13. Financial assistance beyond the congregation:**

St. Thomas Reformed Church Endowment                      \$40,000  
(Current STRC Endowment Balance: \$1.1M)

Parking lot rental                                                      \$60,000

**14. Sunday School: Average Attendance:** Children & Worship: 5; 1st - 3rd Graders: 7; 4th - 6th Graders: 6; 7th - 8th Graders: 6; and High School/"XYG": 10.

Comment on significant changes: Before Hurricanes Irma and Maria in September 2017, Sunday School attendance was fairly robust. Two (2) Children's Worship Centers were destroyed in the floods related to the hurricanes, requiring worship materials to be remade and shelving rebuilt. By September 2018, Young Children and Worship was re-offered and 1st-2nd graders joined with 3rd graders. The pandemic caused a further stoppage for a year and a half. STRC never fully recovered from the effects of the hurricane floodings and the pandemic, but is now positioned for growth.

#### **15. Describe briefly all educational programs (including children, young adult, adult).**

- **Children:** Young Children and Worship (Pre-K through Kindergarten); 1st – 3rd graders; 4th – 6th graders; and 7th – 8th graders (all utilize Memoria Press Bible study curriculum, mostly Old Testament for two (2) years, then New Testament for one year).
- **Youth:** XYG eXamine Your God (high school and annual youth mission trip), confirmation class and mentors (four (4) Confirmands this year).

- **Adult:** Inquirers class (for those interested in joining the church), a strong ongoing women's Bible study group (centered on "She Is Called" RCA Bible Study), a men's Bible study group offered last year, and the Experiencing God study (Blackaby) offered twice this year to mixed groups. Immediate past pastor Jeffrey A. Neevel presented a twelve (12) week sermon series based upon Experiencing God, November 2024 – January 2025.

**16. Church groups/organizations:** (Briefly describe ministry purpose of each group.)

- **Building and Grounds:** Oversees the maintenance, repair, and improvement of STRC facilities and properties to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all;
- **Christian Formation/Education:** Develops and supports STRC educational programs that nurture spiritual growth and biblical understanding for all ages;
- **Congregational Care:** Provides care, support, and encouragement to members in times of joy, need or crisis, fostering a compassionate STRC community;
- **Endowment Board of Trustees:** Responsible for managing, investing and safeguarding STRC endowment funds to ensure long-term growth and sustainability and the prudent use of income generated to support the mission and ministries of STRC in accordance with donor intentions and STRC policies;
- **Fellowship/Hospitality:** Plans and hosts events and activities that build relationships, welcome visitors, and strengthen STRC congregational bonds;
- **Mission and Outreach:** Leads STRC in serving the community and world through acts of compassion, justice, and evangelism;
- **Stewardship/Finance:** Manages STRC's financial resources, encourages faithful giving, and promotes responsible stewardship of gifts and assets;
- **Worship, Music & Arts:** Coordinates worship services and integrates music, liturgy, and the arts to enhance STRC's worship experience; and
- **Youth/XYG:** Guides and supports the faith formation, fellowship and service opportunities of young people, encouraging their active role in the life of STRC.

**17. Comment on events or experiences over the last year that have significantly contributed to the spiritual life of the STRC:** The Annual Christmas Pageant brings together inter-generational actors, singers and musicians, as well as behind-the-scenes costumers, set designers and acting coaches. Over fifty (50) people from the Church participate, and it is a meaningful celebration of the birth of Christ. STRC Summer Camp and beach service is truly a "glimpse of heaven" and a vital program for the spiritual growth of over sixty (60) children every summer.

**18. Buildings: Please describe church-owned or rented buildings and purpose.** The STRC-owned buildings include:

- **Sanctuary:** Parcel Nos. 4B&C Crystal Gade, Queens Quarter, Charlotte Amalie, VI - This church property has a land area of 6,454 sq. ft. or 0.148 acre. The improvements include a main sanctuary of 3,300 sq. ft., an adjoining pavilion of 1,200 sq. ft., and a lower level (hall/kitchen/office) of 840 sq. ft., totaling 5,340 sq. ft.;
- **Church Manse:** Parcel No. 42 Dronningens Gade, Kings Quarter, St. Thomas, VI (Parsonage and Apartment) - This property is a two (2) story residential dwelling of concrete construction, circa 1847 and located on historic Government Hill/Blackbeard's Hill. It has a total building area of 3,396 sq. ft. and includes customized wood shutters for hurricane protection, solar array with Tesla power wall batteries and a generator. Minor repairs were completed following recent hurricanes, including the repair of porch tiles (bricks) and upgrade of master bathroom;
- **Church Parish Hall:** Parcel No. 5 Crystal Gade, Queens Quarter, Charlotte Amalie, VI - This property houses the church offices and main pastor's study;
- **Worship Director's Office and Music Suite:** Parcel No. 6 Crystal Gade, Queens Quarter, Charlotte Amalie, VI – This property adjacent to the Church Parish Hall houses the offices for the Worship Director and the Music Suite for choir practice and the office for the Minister of Music & the Arts;
- **Retreat Center:** Parcel No. 18 & 19 Crystal Gade, Queens Quarter, Charlotte Amalie, VI. Bunk rooms, dining room, living room, kitchen, showers, bathrooms and laundry; and
- **Parking Lot:** Parcel No. 5, Trompeter Gade, Queens Quarter, Charlotte Amalie, VI – parking lot for approximately twenty (20) vehicles providing parking for STRC and generating funds during the week from downtown businesses.

**19. Do you plan any capital expenditure during the next five (5) years?** There is a continuing need for additional Sunday School rooms for which the Consistory is considering various options. STRC is also exploring the feasibility of installing a clean water distribution system to supplement the municipal water supply which could be utilized by our neighbors and guests and could prove potentially life-saving in the event of a major disaster and enhance the utility of the STRC campus.

**20. Is there a mortgage indebtedness?** No.

**21. Pastor's Studies:** Two (2): (a) Church Parish Hall (main) and (b) Church Manse (supplemental).

**22. List all paid staff in addition to the pastor:**

- Chanelle Schaffer, Minister of Music & Arts (Full-time);
- Vicki Whitter, Church Office Administrator (Part-time);
- Vicky Gomez-Christian, Operations Administrator (Full-time);
- Shirley Honore, Church Custodian (Part-time); and
- Aracelis Formin, Church Sexton (Part-time).

**23. Consistory Membership:**

**What method is used in selecting members?** After soliciting interest in serving on the STRC Board of Elders or Board of Deacons, the STRC Nominating Committee vets and confers on potential candidates. They then develop a single slate of candidates which is presented to the congregation at its Annual Meeting and voted upon by the members of the STRC congregation.

**Current Consistory members:**

**Rev. Nathan DeWard - President (Transitional Pastor)**  
**Dave Whitter - Vice President (Elder)**  
**Billie Hodges - Treasurer (Deacon)**  
**David Haddow - Clerk/Secretary (Deacon)**  
**Rebecca Broom (Elder)**  
**Leroy Dennis (Elder)**  
**Chantal Figueroa (Elder)**  
**Amber Knight (Elder)**  
**Donna Groat (Deacon)**  
**Ty Troutman (Deacon)**  
**Randy Shaw (Deacon)**

**24. What leadership roles do women currently fill at STRC?** Women participate at all levels of STRC leadership.

**25. Special training/experience desired.** The new pastor should possess gifts in Biblical teaching and ministry, church administration, as well as vision setting and cultural awareness and sensitivity. Sermons should be engaging, relevant, inspirational and challenging. The ability to teach the Bible and bring scripture to modern-day life is important. Counselling and pastoring skills are highly valued. Community outreach and building, as well as active involvement with children and youth are desired. The pastor needs to be empathetic, have an open mind and be a strong leader. It is crucial to be flexible, respectful of history and culture and appreciative of STRC and St. Thomas history and culture. The ability to embrace and love the challenges of living and working on the island is key. The new pastor must appreciate diversity and be able to relate to people across political, economic, cultural and theological spectrums. Other desired qualities include being a good listener, having compassion, a sense of humor, strong communication gifts and the skills to lead a small staff.

**26. Languages: Should your pastor be fluent in any language other than English?** No, but Spanish and French (Creole) are spoken widely on St. Thomas and would be helpful to know (especially as two (2) STRC staff only speak Spanish and rudimentary English).

**27. Is a parsonage provided? Yes. If so, is it on site with the church? No. If the parsonage is not on site with the church, how far from STRC is it located?** It is a 7-minute walk by way of the 99 Steps, Government Hill Steps or the Bunker Hill Steps.

**28. Is a pastor's housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage a negotiable option?** No.

**29. The benefits/business expenses we will provide our pastor are:** In accordance with RCA Guidelines and includes access to Church owned vehicle(s). **Parsonage provided?** Yes. **Annual Vacation:** four (4) to five (5) weeks, depending upon years of service.

**30. Community served:** The island of St. Thomas is shaped by a history rich in conquest, colonialism, slavery and liberation. The former Danish West Indies were purchased by the United States from the Kingdom of Denmark in 1917. It is a diverse community with families tracing their

histories to prior to emancipation in 1848, and distinct groups from various origins including the French diaspora, Afro-Caribbean groups, and immigrant diaspora from different Caribbean islands, Mexico, South America, Puerto Rico and the mainland USA and Canada. Virgin Islanders do not vote in U.S. presidential elections, but do vote for a territorial delegate to the U.S. Congress, Governor, members of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands and other territorial government positions. St. Thomas survived two (2) category 5 hurricanes, Irma and Maria, in September 2017, which delivered a devastating blow to the community, causing physical damage to many buildings and leaving many without electricity for several months. Coupled with the Covid-19 Pandemic, this led to a fiscal downturn. However, this also brought the community together in many ways, with people helping each other across the islands. According to U.S. Census Data, the USVI population shrank 18% between 2010 and 2020, likely due to the stressors related to the storms, but those who remain pride themselves on being "VI Strong". Although living in the Territory can be challenging, it is also incredibly rewarding and socially fulfilling.

**31. Cooperative ministry: In what ways have you cooperated with other churches in your community during the past year?** STRC collaborates with other local congregations and organizations to meet community needs. We provide financial and volunteer support to many non-profit organizations including: Catholic Charities Bethlehem House (homeless shelter); Family Resource Center's women's shelter; The Salvation Army's homeless feeding program, food pantry, after-school and Christmas Angel Tree program; and Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon programs which meet at STRC. We will be resuming our interfaith prison ministry program through the VI Bureau of Corrections on St. Thomas and invite other communities of faith to participate. STRC founded and has an active involvement with My Brother's Workshop ([www.mybrothersworkshop.org](http://www.mybrothersworkshop.org)), a diversion program for young adults who became involved with the criminal justice system. The pastor of STRC sits on the board of MBW. We have an annual joint Thanksgiving Service with the Hebrew Congregation of St Thomas - a service that has been celebrated for over fifty (50) years; both the STRC Christmas Eve Service and Easter Sunrise Service are considered community services.

**32. What denominations or religions are present within three miles (in rural areas, consider the county) where your church is located?** Our closest neighbors are the Beracha Veshalom Vegemiluth Hasidim Synagogue (Jewish) on Crystal Gade; Frederick Evangelical Lutheran Church on Norre Gade; The Salvation Army – St. Thomas Corps. On Dronningens Gade; Memorial Moravian Church on Norre Gade, Christ Church Methodist on Market Square, All Saints Anglican Church on Commandant Gade and Sts. Peter & Paul Cathedral (Catholic) on Dronningens Gade.

**33. Outreach: What is your strategy to reach un-churched people in your community?** Our church hosts a community-oriented STRC Summer Camp each year during the month of July. At the conclusion of the Summer Camp, we host a public worship service at Magens Bay Beach and invite the families of our student-campers. We advertise our ministry with local tourist agencies to help publicize our worship and we get lots of visitors to our worship because of how centrally located we are in the town of Charlotte Amalie and the history of the Church.

**34. The income level of the people in the STRC congregation tends to be:** \$40,000 - 70,000

**35. Describe school system:** St. Thomas offers a range of public, private and parochial schools:

- **Elementary Schools (Grades K-5) (Public, St. Thomas):** Jane E. Tuitt Elementary School, Joseph Gomez Elementary School, Joseph Sibilly Elementary School, Ulla F. Muller Elementary School, Yvonne E. Milliner-Bowsky Elementary School.
- **K-8 Schools:** Lockhart K-8 School (Public, St. Thomas).
- **Private Schools:** Antilles School (St. Thomas – [www.antilles.vi](http://www.antilles.vi)), Virgin Islands Montessori School & Peter Gruber International Academy (St. Thomas – [www.vimsia.org](http://www.vimsia.org)).
- **Parochial Schools (Church-Affiliated):** All Saints Cathedral School (Episcopal, St. Thomas - [allsaintsvi.org](http://allsaintsvi.org)), Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic School (Catholic, St. Thomas - [saintpps.com](http://saintpps.com)), Memorial Moravian School (Moravian, St. Thomas - [moravianschoolvi.org](http://moravianschoolvi.org)), Seventh-day Adventist School (Seventh-day Adventist, St. Thomas - [sttstjdschool.org](http://sttstjdschool.org)), Faith Alive Christian Academy (Christian, St. Thomas), New Testament Academy (Christian, St. Thomas - [thevinta.org](http://thevinta.org)), Wesleyan Academy (Wesleyan, St. Thomas - [wesleyan@viaccess.net](mailto:wesleyan@viaccess.net)), Calvary Christian Academy (Christian, St. Thomas), Tutu Church of God Academy (Christian, St. Thomas - [tutucoga.com](http://tutucoga.com)), Bethel Baptist Day School (Christian, St. Thomas - [vimbethel@islands.vi](mailto:vimbethel@islands.vi)).
- **Middle Schools (Grades 6-8) (Public, St. Thomas):** Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School.
- **High Schools (Grades 9-12) (Public, St. Thomas):** Charlotte Amalie High School, Ivanna Eudora Kean High School ([iekhsrays.com](http://iekhsrays.com)), Edith L. Williams Alternative Academy.

**Record of last three (3) pastors:** Rev. Jeffrey A. Neevel (2010-2025), Rev. Jeffrey H. Gargano (1995-2009), Rev. Martin L. Weitz (1986-1994).

**For general inquiries to STRC Pastoral Search Committee:** Nathan DeWard, Transitional Pastor, Pastoral Search Committee, St. Thomas Reformed Church, Post Office Box 365, St. Thomas, VI 00804; **Telephone:** (340) 776-8255; **E-Mail address:** [nate@strchurch.org](mailto:nate@strchurch.org).

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## Section B. Reflections

**1) What is the stated mission, vision or purpose of your congregation?**

- **STRC Vision Statement:** A welcoming family of believers who prayerfully seek to do God's will as we grow in Christ through faith, hope, love and grace.
- **STRC Mission Statement:** Our mission is to Love God, Love People and Follow Jesus by **S**erving God's Purpose, **T**eaching God's Word, **R**eflecting God's Love and **C**arrying out God's Will.

**2) What goals have been developed from your mission and vision over the next 5 years?**

The church hopes to see ministry responsibilities spread out over a larger percentage of its congregation, adherents and volunteers, with ministry teams anticipated to help with this. There

is also an interest in an overall evaluation of buildings on the STRC campus and their maximum usage to accomplish our mission and vision.

**3) Describe the strengths of STRC, the best of what you are as a community, and what you can offer a new pastor.** St. Thomas Reformed Church is characterized by its welcoming, open and affirming environment where all are welcome, and we are able to minister to people from very different walks of life. We believe and practice a gospel of grace that is hope-filled and connected to the larger community. We reflect the historic nature of our congregation, our context and our denomination, while also being open to new ministry opportunities. STRC fosters strong connections through in-person worship that last a lifetime, which is seen in our committed online congregation. We desire to maintain a significant presence in the downtown Charlotte Amalie area. STRC is a unique and diverse church, offering a challenging, fun and dynamic ministry where no two (2) days are the same. The STRC Music & Arts Ministry is incredibly important to the congregation and is a strength.

**4) Explain the strategies or ideas that most excite STRC in becoming or remaining missional.** The STRC congregation is excited to be open to challenges and opportunities that God is putting before us and to always be generous with our time, talents and treasures, seeking greater involvement of our members and supporters in mission programs within our community and throughout the world. We pledge never to adopt a scarcity mentality, even if regular giving declines, and to always give with glad and joyful hearts. There are significant needs throughout our island community and no shortage of opportunities to serve others. STRC seeks a pastor who can help us focus and structure our internal operations so that we can be more effective in missional expressions of God's love.

**5) Name three (3) of STRC's most passionate hopes and why they are significant.** While not explicitly stated as three (3) distinct hopes, several key areas of focus emerge:

- **Strengthening volunteerism and member involvement:** There is a strong desire to see ministry responsibilities spread amongst more members and volunteers. We believe STRC could thrive more with a stronger, more active and engaged member and volunteer base, noting that volunteerism has decreased dramatically and should be a major focus for STRC leadership. This is significant for sustaining and growing our ministries.
- **Effective utilization and financial management of church buildings:** STRC is evaluating the usage of its properties and spaces, considering options and repurposing them into a cohesive and harmonious campus. Financially, it makes sense to either enhance revenue to increase our mission and its impact in our island community or reduce costs with a 'leaner' organization based upon our core mission.
- **Improved integration and welcome for newcomers:** A recognized challenge is that St. Thomas is a transient community. A weakness STRC faces is integrating new members and welcoming newcomers, especially those new to the island. This hope is significant for membership growth and ensuring that STRC continues to be welcoming to all and provide attendees with a church home, a place to build relationships and grow in their faith journey.



**6) How do you hope someone who visits STRC would describe what they consider to be most important?** Visitors would likely describe STRC and its members as welcoming, friendly and emphasize the relatable spiritual teaching, fellowship and music. They would see a loving community connected to the gospel of grace, open to new ideas and committed to serving others and our larger community.

**7) Name at least one challenge facing STRC's new pastor.** The new pastor of the St. Thomas Reformed Church will face challenges in integrating new members and effectively welcoming newcomers, especially those new to our island. We are a very transient population, and it is difficult to stay energized in the face of attrition and loss. Other challenges include organizational structures, effectively using resources and equipping lay leadership. Too often, former pastors simply added responsibilities onto their job description as opposed to engaging members and activating church entities to assume these roles. STRC has historic but restricted spaces, aging buildings, and limited parking. The new pastor will need to be resilient and flexible while providing the leadership STRC requires. They must be respectful of history and culture, and appreciative of all both STRC and St. Thomas have to offer. They need to embrace and love the challenges of living and working on a Caribbean island and appreciate the diversity and be able to relate to everyone across political, economic, cultural and theological spectrums. As few members have a Reformed background, the STRC pastor needs to be able to dialogue from a Christian perspective with and value people from different faith communities.

**8) Describe your vision and hopes for STRC and its pastor over the next 5 years.** The hope is for STRC to continue its mission to Love God, Love People and Follow Jesus, with ministry responsibilities becoming more spread amongst a larger percentage of its members and volunteers.

**9) Explain whatever else you would like the potential pastor to know about STRC.** The St. Thomas Reformed Church is a truly unique and diverse church because of its context on the island of St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands and its rich and diverse history.