



**PROSPECTIVE PASTOR**  
**INFORMATION PACKET**  
**2025**

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# History of Carney Evangelical Free Church

Carney Evangelical Free Church, originally known as the Swedish Methodist Episcopal Church, was founded in 1885 by a small group of Swedish immigrants led by Suzanna Moseson and met initially in her home. Rev. L. Brynildson was appointed the first pastor on October 6, 1885. The first permanent church building was built on Lickman Rd about 1/2 mile east of US-41. The congregation worshipped in that building for six years, but the roads were impassable in the winter and spring. Property along County Rd. 374 was purchased and a new church building was completed in 1892 during Pastor P. Sivertson's ministry.

On February 15, 1948, a fire of unknown origin destroyed the church building. Pastor E.C. Sandin and his family were eating their lunch, shortly after the morning worship service, in the parsonage next door. A bucket brigade of volunteers from the community saved the parsonage. A month later, on March 25, 1948, the congregation reorganized as an independent church without denominational affiliation and chose the name Carney Bible Church. Church services were held for a time in the basement of the Carney-Nadeau school. A new church building was erected in 1948 at the current location with groundbreaking on May 9.

On July 23, 1959, while Rev. Lawrence Wagstrom was pastor, the congregation of 75 members voted to affiliate with the Evangelical Free Church of America and to change their name to the Carney Evangelical Free Church. The congregation has been served by 47 pastors over the past 140 years.

## **Carney Evangelical Free Church Today**

Carney Evangelical Free Church currently has 113 members. Like many churches around the world, the Covid-19 pandemic created turmoil and differences of opinions regarding restrictions and had some negative impacts on our ministry. A handful of members never returned after the start of the pandemic. Unrestricted donations have also been impacted.

The church's constitution and by-laws were also updated during the past few years which initiated changes in the way that we go about fulfilling our mission statement – making fervent and obedient disciples for Jesus Christ. Some changes were not received well and impacted the ministry.

After Pastor Kit Bogan's resignation in 2024, our elders knew we needed assistance in finding our next Senior Pastor. They reached out to Interim Pastoral Ministries (IPM) and through that process, we welcomed Pastor Bob Norris as our Intentional Interim Pastor in November 2024. Pastor Norris has been working alongside our Transition Team to complete assessments of our church so we may work with our strengths and work on our weaknesses as a church family.

## Current Focus

Seventy-one individuals in the congregation of CEFC participated in a Ministry Insight Tool survey in December 2024. Survey responses clearly showed that CEFC is in the declining phase as are the vast majority of churches today. This matter has been discussed at several Transition Team meetings and we understand the necessity of starting a fresh upward curve toward a new season of sustained growth. Survey results showed that 76.5% of the respondents said they are passionate about the future of our church and willing to help make changes. The following priorities are our current focus:

1. The need to have a better understanding of what it means to be a fervent and obedient disciple of Jesus Christ.
  - a. A significant part of that definition points to the importance of all Jesus' followers personally encouraging non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior. Only 53.6% of the MIT participants strongly agreed with that statement.
  - b. Carney Free Church will need to focus on launching one or more new evangelistic efforts, such as the Church Answers Hope Initiative to generate the potential for a steady growth of new believers.
2. The need to be more focused in raising up new leadership from the next generation(s).
  - a. A fresh look at the leadership qualifications and how individuals are nominated and selected is needed. Many are reluctant to serve because of the process that has been utilized in the past.
3. Fostering growth in the church's reputation as a grace-filled church, quickly forgiving those who repent.
  - a. This can be better be implemented with a greater emphasis on small group settings where real community can take place
  - b. The large number of widows and single adults living alone in our target area should necessitate an approach that focuses on their unique needs.

## **CEFC Ministries**

Please note, this is not an exhaustive list of our church ministries.

- Sonshine Club (ages K- 6)
- Youth Group (ages 7-12)
  - Districts Youth Conference
- Partnership with Lake Lundgren Bible Camp
- Shelter: A grief support group
- Annual Venison Supper
- Discipleship Classes - toddlers to adults (Sundays @ 9 am)
- Bible Studies
- Small Groups
- Summer Fireside Fellowship
- Common Thread
- We support many missionaries around the world and in the United States; recently, church members have also personally served in short-term missions opportunities in the Czech Republic, Kentucky, North Carolina and Brazil (where two members are serving for the next two years).

## Information About Our Local Communities

Carney Free Church is not solely made up of the one community it is located in. The church is located in a rural setting of the Upper Peninsula and many members travel 15-30 minutes or so to attend.

Carney is a small village with a population of 179 as of the 2020 census. It is located within the township of Nadeau. The Nadeau Township Website (of which Carney lies within) can be found here:

<https://nadeautownship.org/>

Some additional surrounding communities and links to their websites can be found below (Note the map on the next page showing several smaller communities in between):

Pembine, WI

<https://www.townofpembine.com/>

Menominee, MI (located just north of Marinette):

<https://www.menominee.us/>

Stephenson, MI

<https://stephenson-mi.org/>

Powers/Spalding, MI

<https://www.powers-spalding.org/>

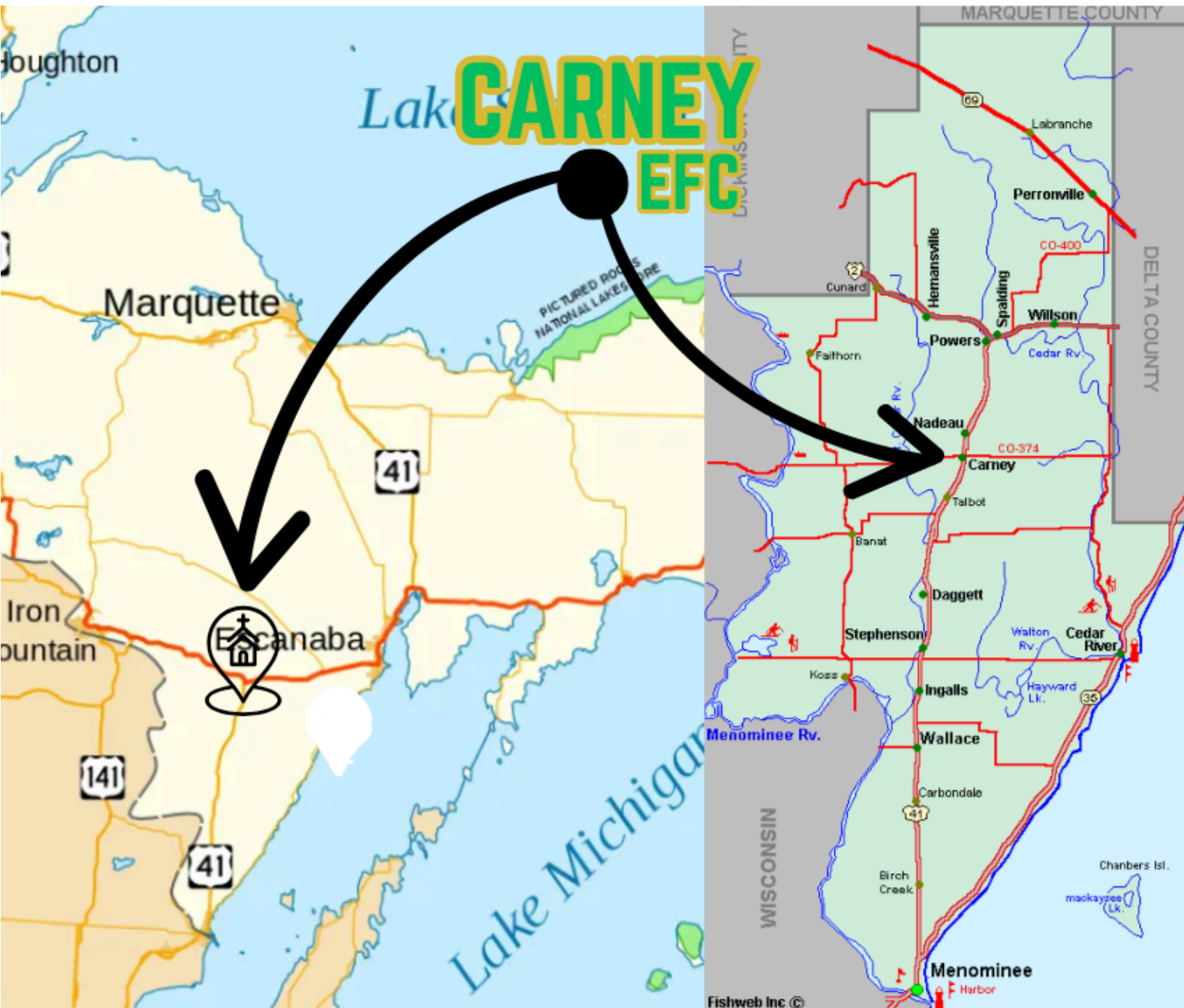
Hermansville, MI

<https://hermansville.com/>

Bark River, MI

<https://deltacountymi.gov/township-information/bark-river-township/>

# LOCATION OF CARNEY EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES



## **For More Information About CEFC**

Visit our website: <https://www.carneyfreechurch.org/>

Find us on:

YouTube (Live Streams): <https://www.youtube.com/@CarneyEFC>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/carneyfreechurch>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/carney\\_cefc/](https://www.instagram.com/carney_cefc/)