

## Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

# INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Who  
are  
we

Who  
is our  
neighbor

Who is  
God calling  
us to  
become

?

The new Local Church Profile is not just for congregations in search of a pastor. *All* congregations are encouraged to engage in its process of discovery every 3-5 years. The UCC Local Church Profile reflects valuable data, assesses ministry, clarifies change, and helps advance the calling of the congregation. Not just to be completed by a search committee – the more participation, the better!

MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,  
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

First Congregational U.C.C  
Tomah, WI

Three-Quarters to Full Time Settled Pastor

Northwest Association WI Conference

[February 18, 2019]

### LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- Position Posting
- Who Is God Calling Us To Become?
- Who Are We Now?
- Who Is Our Neighbor?
- References
- Consent and Validation

*“God is able to provide you with every blessing, so that  
having all sufficiency in all things at all times,  
you may abound in every good work.”  
(2 Corinthians 9:8)*

## INSTRUCTIONS

The new Local Church Profile supports the calling and discernment of United Church of Christ congregations with their current or future pastoral leadership.

For many congregations, the interim time between ministers is an intentional season that is guided in part by the preparation of a Local Church Profile. Using the Profile, the church can discover its data and express its story for the reliable discernment of a search committee and the beginning of a new pastorate. Searching ministers will want to see this document in its entirety.

The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – **WHO ARE WE NOW**, **WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR**, and **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME** – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years. Known together as the "Discovery Document," these three sections can be completed by a visioning group, a governing body, a transition team, or other group – not just the search committee – in order to draw forward the gifts and imaginative possibilities of a congregation. The church's engagement with the "Discovery Document" might not have the same sequence as the completed Local Church Profile that is read by candidates.

Some questions are easy to answer. Some are not so easy. Prompts are provided to stimulate narrative response if needed; these italicized prompts are merely examples from which to choose or to inspire your own. Efforts to answer the questions will prompt conversations and explorations and story-tellings and many prayers. As the Spirit moves throughout the process, congregations will shape a collective articulation of Christ's leading (**WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME**). This last question to be answered becomes the first section to be read by searching ministers in the Local Church Profile, and it is boldest and most actionable piece for faithful leadership into the future.

Your conference can provide materials referenced in the Local Church Profile, such as the 11-Year Report containing data as reported by your congregation annually to the UCC Data Hub, and MissionInsite reports containing demographic information on your community. More information on types of pastorate in the United Church of Christ can be found in the Call Agreement Workbook. Be sure to use the Call Agreement Workbook's Scope of Work to describe in this Local Church Profile the position being sought.

When it is time for ministerial search, the conference can counsel you on posting the Local Church Profile together with your public listing at UCC Ministry Opportunities (<http://oppsearch.ucc.org>).

The last page of the Local Church Profile contains a statement that parallels the consent statement signed by ministers in the UCC Ministerial Profile. In keeping with the covenantal relationship between a church and those it seeks to call, this statement encourages an open, honest exchange of information. On behalf of the United Church of Christ, and on the basis of the best knowledge available to them, your conference staff will validate your completed Local Church Profile when it is ready to be shared in relationship with prospective new leaders.



## 1. POSITION POSTING

- a. LISTING INFORMATION
- b. SCOPE OF WORK
- c. COMPENSATION & SUPPORT
- d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

### 1a. LISTING INFORMATION

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Church name: First Congregational U.C.C

Street address: 115 W. La Crosse Street

Supplemental web links: [firstcongregationaltomah.com](http://firstcongregationaltomah.com) / Facebook:

Additional ecumenical affiliations (e.g. denominations, communions, fellowships): None

Conference: Wisconsin

Association: Northwest

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:

Rob MacDougall

Associate Conference Minister

715-308-6120

[rmacdougall@wcucc.org](mailto:rmacdougall@wcucc.org)

Summary Ministry Description:

*The First Congregational UCC of Tomah, WI has a true and caring heart. We believe in a just world for all and in caring for others. We strive to be good neighbors and we care about our community. We generously give of our time and talents in our church, our community and our world. We are an Open and Affirming congregation. We value the whole span of the generations, striving to provide for their needs in programs & worship. As you become acquainted with us, you will find the traits of giving, caring and accepting throughout our congregational life. We are seeking a forward thinking, visionary leader who will inspire people...those who are already here and those who will shape the church with their presence on their journeys of faith, hospitality and service.*

Photographs:



Third Graders receive Bibles



Sanctuary from the balcony

What we value about living in our area:

*We appreciate the diversity of our population. Our location gives us proximity to more metropolitan areas. We treasure our natural environment, and enjoy community activities. The Veterans Hospital and military bases in the area contribute to our uniqueness. Friendliness, caring and giving qualities of this community are highly valued.*

Current size of membership: 179

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*): *None*

Position Title: *Solo Pastor*



Position Duration:

Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister moves church membership to the congregation and moves standing to related association

Compensation Level:

*Three-quarter to Full Time depending on experience and negotiated package. We would prefer a full-time pastor, but our budget does not allow us to pay a highly experienced pastor a full-time salary. We are willing to negotiate fewer hours if needed to get the right match for our congregation.*

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? *Yes.*

## 1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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*We agree with the Scope Of Work as outlined in the Call Agreement Workbook for full time and for ¾ time pastor position. Details would be worked out in the contract.*

Core Competencies:

- *Inspirational*
- *Prayerful*
- *Forward-thinking - Visionary*

## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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Salary Basis: \$45,000 to 54,000

Benefits:

*Salary plus Benefits*

*Benefits include mileage, pension, professional development, Social Security supplement, sabbatical, life, disability and health insurance and others as negotiated.*

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

*We expect the pastor to live in or near Tomah, as we highly value the interaction of the pastor with the Tomah community. The salary basis includes a housing allowance.*

Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister.

*We have experienced pastors who lived up to 10 miles away and were quite comfortable with that. We want the pastor to be a part of the community, so prefer a limited commuting distance.*

State any incentives: *No specific incentives.*

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference:

*We hope that the pastor will be part of a Community of Practice. Currently one is meeting in LaCrosse monthly. We will compensate the pastor for the annual fee.*

If applicable, describe how your church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment:

*We are flexible about the pastor's work hours, expecting that we will be able to accommodate a 1/4 time additional employment if that is needed.*

## 1d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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Describe the ministry goals you envision your next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve.

*Green Church - Environmental Awareness in all our practices and developing community leadership on the complex of issues around Climate Change and its effects*

*Further engagement with our Open and Affirming status*

*Support and expansion of the local service opportunities in which members participate (see later list)*

Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

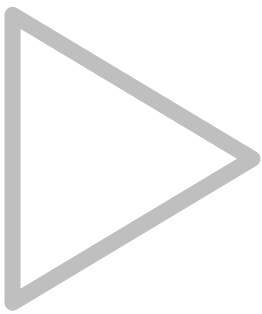
*By actively nurturing spiritual practices that inspire engagement with the larger community such as a rich prayer life and bible study that encourages a missional way of life.*

Specify language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling.

*We are a rural community, but we keep up with the world and its concerns. Many of our members hunt and fish, and appreciate a person with a love of nature. No non-English language needs at this time.*

Based on what you have learned about who your church is, who your church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, describe four areas of excellence from *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry* that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

- 1. Leading faith formation effectively across generations*
- 2. Demonstrating an appreciation for and participation in the ecumenical interfaith partnerships of the UCC*
- 3. Engaging in mission and outreach*
- 4. Building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence*



## 2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

*We want to build upon our strengths of welcome and service as we have described, and become bolder in expressing our commitment to justice and witness.*

*God calling us to con extend a hand to the community (which we already do in many ways) and let people know that the church on the corner exists.*

*We have found inspiration in this UCC piece and print it weekly in our worship bulletin:*

*Be the church*

*Protect the environment*

*Care for the poor*

*Forgive often*

*Reject racism*

*Fight for the powerless*

*Share earthly and spiritual resources*

*Embrace diversity*

*Love God. Enjoy this life*

*Be a welcoming and spiritual church that expresses our faith through our actions.*

*Work to create stronger relationships with new & existing members.*

Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.

*Our challenge is to reach out to people in our community who are spiritual seekers who are disaffected by organized religion but who share our values of community service, welcome and equality for all (Open and Affirming), and, as a newer initiative, environmental advocacy and action, and meet them where they are.*

*To research areas of need that we may not be aware of, and ask what we can do and how we can help.*

*Create opportunities for all members to participate & learn & share their faith.*





### 3. WHO ARE WE NOW?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

- a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS
- b. 11-YEAR REPORT
- c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS
- d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING
- e. CHURCH FINANCES
- f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

#### 3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

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Describe your congregation’s life of faith.

*We feel our congregation has a true & caring heart. We believe in a just world for all, in caring for others and in being righteous. Our lives personify those values as we strive to be good neighbors, care about our community and accept others. We strive to follow the commandment of “love our neighbor as ourselves”.*

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

*Our congregation is learning to accept God’s will and pull together to maintain our faithfulness and fulfill God’s mission for us. We are committed to a better world and generously give of our time and talents in our church, our community and our world to strive toward that commitment. We are Open and Affirming and this reflects our congregational experience. As you become acquainted with us, you will find the traits of giving, caring and accepting laced through our congregational life.*

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

*Our worship begins as we enter the church building. We share greetings and recent news with each other as we make our way through the narthex and find our seats (like most congregations, we seem to have our “assigned seats”). Formal worship begins at 10:00 on Sundays and at 6:30 on Wednesdays. We follow a traditional pattern of worship, sing from a variety of hymnals, enjoy our growing choir, listen carefully to the children’s and the adult’s sermons and reverently participate in communion twice a month. It is always appreciated when we hear sermons that suggest how we can follow Jesus and use his teachings in our everyday life during the week. We have followed the hymnal liturgy for special portions of our services (baptism, communion, etc.), but we have also used*

*alternative formats. It has been our tradition to ask members to provide “special” music each week during the summer – members sign up and then share their individual talents with us. This ranges from Norm’s annual “How Great Thou Art” to teens on their band instruments to father/daughter duets to American Sign Language presentations (with sign-along to the best of our abilities) of Sunday School songs. It is always fun to come to church and see what our “special music” is going to be that week.*

Describe the educational program/faith formation vision of your church.

*Church school is offered on Sunday mornings for children K-4th Grade. We strive to maintain participation in a newly-formed ecumenical (four local churches) youth group which focuses on study, worship, food, service and fun for our teens. In addition, our young people are looking forward to a pastor-led confirmation class in the near future. Our young people and adults participate in outdoor ministry events through the Wisconsin Conference. Our congregation generously provides scholarships for all participants. An adult book club meets after church once a month and reads inspirational material. We have also enjoyed a pastor-led study group.*

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

*We are led by a moderator and an assistant moderator. We have committees of church members of Christian Education, Trustees, Deacons and Memorial Committee. These committees are comprised of 6-9 members each who serve rotating terms of two years. The pastor, moderator, assistant moderator, treasurer, a member-at-large and one member of each committee comprise the Cabinet, which makes large church decisions.*

*We also have two active women’s circles and a men’s group which activates itself as necessary.*

*We recently experienced a mid-winter furnace emergency. The trustees worked to determine the needs as quickly as possible and phone calls and letters went out to call an emergency congregational meeting. The congregation voted to suspend the constitutional requirements for a three week notice for all large financial decisions, discussed the options available to us and voted to do the extensive repair work recommended by the trustees. There was also extensive discussion on how to pay for this major, unexpected expense. Various members and groups within the church pledged significant amounts and we all went home knowing that the crisis had been resolved. Very importantly, the entire congregation had input into the solution.*

### **3b. 11-YEAR REPORT**

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# Financials

Year	Current Local Expenses	Capital Pay-ments **	Basic OCWM Support	Special Support	Total OCWM	Other Gifts	Wider Mission	Basic Supp %Curr Local	Total Expend	Pledges Offerings*	
2006	\$118,965	\$0	\$10,729	\$1,555	\$12,284	\$18,772	\$31,056	9.02	\$181,077	\$176,615	total income
2007	\$87,503	\$0	\$13,314	\$6,111	\$19,425	\$8,919	\$28,344	15.22	\$144,191	\$133,334	Wider mission ~12447
2008	\$132,606	\$0	\$12,170	\$0	\$12,170	\$0	\$12,170	9.18	\$156,946	\$173,334	total income
2009	\$117,884	\$0	\$13,300	\$135	\$13,435	\$8,000	\$21,435	11.28	\$160,754	\$205,538	total income
2010	\$111,544	\$0	\$11,337	\$892	\$12,229	\$0	\$12,229	10.16	\$136,002	\$152,836	total income
2011	\$141,509	\$0	\$12,600	\$0	\$12,600	\$0	\$12,600	8.90	\$166,709	\$143,473	offerings
2012	\$155,513	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	3.22	\$165,513	\$144,658	offerings
2013	\$155,282	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	6.44	\$175,282	\$123,357	offerings
2014	\$143,530	\$0	\$4,331	\$0	\$4,331	\$0	\$4,331	3.02	\$152,192	\$130,483	offerings
2015	\$140,363	\$0	\$5,000	\$1,215	\$6,215	\$0	\$6,215	3.56	\$152,793	\$122,182	offerings
2016	\$163,898	\$0	\$5,000	\$3,216	\$8,216	\$0	\$8,216	3.05	\$180,330	\$124,241	offerings
2017	\$129,709	\$0	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000	\$2,500	\$8,500	4.63	\$146,709	\$119,260	offerings
* Total Income reported in years where offerings were not broken out in annual financial reports.											
** No new building or remodeling. Large expenditure for new boiler 2016, but funds raised quickly from membership.											

										adjusted to reach ending # + note	
2011	205	85	30	6	0	11	-8	-8	1		213
2012	206	85	30	0	0	13	-12	0	1		223
2013	207	85	30	4	0	8	-8	-6	-2		224
2014	205	85	30	6	0	13	-5	-3	11		222
2015	216	60	24	0	0	8	-4	-16	-12		240
2016	204	57	15	3	0	8	-8	-17	-14		204
2017	190	55	15	0	0	6	-3	-1	2		190
2018	192	45	15	0	0	1	-6	-8	-13	tentative	192
2019	179										179
% change	Members										
2011-16	-0.4902										
2006-16	-45.0980										
Note: 2010 was the year that the Lutherans who had joined us left to form a new ELCA congregation.											

Page 1

(add here the 11-Year Report developed with the help of your conference staff, UCC Data Hub, and MissionInsite)

*We found several significant errors in the official 11-Year Report that did not reflect the actual experience of the congregation. The attached report is our revision. Copies of this have been sent to appropriate offices for correction.*

### 3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

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Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	179	
Number of active non-members:	24	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	193	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	103	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	26	
Less than 5 years:	32	

Number of total participants by age:

0-5	6-18	19-34	35-49	50-64	65-74	75+			<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
4	12	6	16	61	55	25			Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	7	Y
Households with minors:	14	Y
Single adults age 35-65:	15	Y
Joint households with no minors:	46	Y
Single adults over 65:	18	Y

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	30	Yes
College:	25	Yes
Graduate School:	10	Yes
Specialty Training:	30	Yes
Other (please specify):	5	Yes, Military

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	45	Yes
Adults who are retired:	45	Yes
Adults who are not fully employed:	10	Yes

Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

*Broad mix of agriculture, professional, service, military, industrial, business and education.*

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. Most UCC congregations tend to describe themselves as “diverse.” Yet, the vast majority of UCC congregations are mono-cultural. What does diversity mean in your context?

*Caucasian 89%*

*African American 3%*

*Native American 3%*

*Hispanic 5%*

*Diversity includes religious backgrounds and rootedness in the area. Military bases bring a changing variety of ethnic and racial differences that we readily welcome.*

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one on the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)? Please note the date. Comment after the exercise:

*Our Open and Affirming Statement welcomes everyone. We have not had a more recent discussion except to reflect on the importance of this statement to this congregation.*

### **3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING**

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Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i>
Adult Groups or Classes	18	Faith in Fiction , Adult Study
Deborah Circle	15	The group itself plans meetings, program, special events. They host the election day soup lunch, donate to various causes,

Priscilla Circle	8	Self organized. Lay leadership
Prayer Quilters	8	Self organized. Lay leadership
Baptisms ( <i>number last year</i> )	3	Pastor and family (during worship)
Children's Groups or Classes	8	Sunday School
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	80-100	Pastor, Deacons, Choir Director
Church-wide Meals	50	Deacons, Deborah Circle, Trustees (6)
Choirs and Music Groups	12-14	Mary Jo Lanska. Choir Director
Church-based Bible Study	8	Pastor
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	40	Twice a month from September to May and once a month June through August
Community Meals	40-60	4 times per year
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	4	Every other week, Jan-May*
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	4	Pastor
Youth Ecumenical Group	15	Lay led
Retreats	1	1 per year
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	2	
Worship (time slot: _10:00 am_)	25 - 40	
Worship (time slot: _6:30 pm_)	3-12	

Other		
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Additional comments:

*\*The program leading to confirmation is shorter this year than usual and is 9th and 10th graders.*

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a ministry beyond a congregation).

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
None				

If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation:

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staffperson serves as head of staff.

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Interim Pastor	Yes	Full time		Since March 1, 2018
Clerk / Secretary		Part time	Pastor	4 years
Choir Director		Part time		10 years



## REFLECTION

Reflection: After reviewing the congregational demographics and activities above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's overall ministry?

*Broad diversity for our area and we eagerly welcome the expansion of that diversity. We are recognized for our openness to all people.*

## 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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Current annual income (dollars used during most recent fiscal year)

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$ 119,260
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	\$ 3,623
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i> )	\$ 0
Fundraising Events	\$ 1,632
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$ 820
Grants	\$ 0
Rentals of Church Building. The School of Childhood Most groups use the church for free.	\$ 11,726
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )	\$ 1,240
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$ 0
Other (specify): Memorials	\$ 1,960
Other (specify): Temporarily restricted	\$ 6,669
TOTAL	\$ 146,930

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$

*Attach most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer's report as shared publicly with the congregation, or – if your church does not pass an annual budget – list current budgeted expenses here.*

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage?

*58 % of 2018 Budget*

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church?

*No*

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? (*indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year*) *Not currently*

☒ Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)

☒ One Great Hour of Sharing

☐ Strengthen the Church

☒ Neighbors in Need

☒ Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? *It is budgeted.* If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? (*recommended 10%*) *4 %*

What is the church's current indebtedness? *None*

Total amount of loan debt:

Reason for debt:

Are capital and other payments current?

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget. *None*

If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, describe: *None*

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
		\$	\$	
		\$	\$	

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe: *None. We donated \$2500 for the last three years to the Wisconsin Capital Campaign for updating the UCCI church camps.*

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
		\$	\$	
		\$	\$	

Describe the prominent mission component(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign.

Does your church have an endowment?

*Not officially designated. We do have a fund from the sale of a parsonage several years ago.*

What is the market value of the assets? *\$200,000*

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances?

*Interest is used for regular income. Principle is protected.*

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? *None*

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years:

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last?

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$ 0

Investments (other than endowment): \$

Does your church have a parsonage? *No*

Fair market rental value of the parsonage:

How is the parsonage used?

Street / City / State / Zip:

Finished square footage:

Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms:

Assessed real estate value:

Available for minister residence: Y/N

Expected minister residence: Y/N

Condition of structure, systems and appliances

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

*We have a church building with an attached education /school wing.*

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church: *None*

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

*Worship, fellowship, Boardroom, Offices, Lounge & Classrooms.*

*The chancel (pulpit, lectern & platform) and balcony are not accessible to wheelchairs.*

Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's mission and ministry?

*(For example, when was a time the church made a major budget change? How is the budgeting process done? What new ministry initiative has your church financed?)*

*We are financially responsible. All of our bills are paid on time. Our members are generous in supporting community needs and world disasters.*

*Budgets are prepared by major committees and groups and submitted to the Cabinet for review. Final budget is approved at the Annual Meeting in January.*

*Although income has diminished somewhat, no major budget changes have been made. No new initiatives recently.*

### 3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.

1. *Deciding to be an Open & Affirming congregation.*
2. *Welcoming a break away group from a local Lutheran church, who later formed a new church. We shared our building for worship and combined music programs, church school & special services, such as mid-week Lenten services.*
3. *The retirement & untimely subsequent death of our pastor brought us closer together.*

Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. “Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....” Describe your congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict.

*(For example, what is an example of a recent conflict and something your congregation learned from it? Describe an occasion when your church experienced conflict without being able to resolve it well. Does your church have policies, protocols or structures for dealing with conflict?)*

*We attempt to build common understanding through use of conversation, or through the Pastor – Parish relations committee.*

Ministerial History (include all previous ministerial staff for the past 30 years)

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
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Ed Stigen	26	yes - deceased
Calvin Helming	9	yes - deceased

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?

Y/N/Ask us

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Y/No/Ask us

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

Y/No/Ask us

*Our relationship with our most recent pastor was comfortable and close. There was balance in leadership and responsibility.*



## 4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

a. COMMUNITY VISION

b. MISSION InSite

### 4a. COMMUNITY VISION

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How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?

*For example, which service activities has your church participated in this past year?*

*Where has the church participated in global connections of care and justice? What is currently transformational in your church's engagement with neighbors near or far?*

*Weekly Community dinner, Tomah School of Childhood (located in our building), Tomah Area Cancer Society, annual Longest Night Service, Our Church's Wider Mission, Habitat for Humanity, St. Clare's Mission, High School Clothing Drive, Funerals, Feed My Starving Children, Food Pantry, High School Scholarship, Layettes for Community & Church World Service, Prayer quilts in church, Salvation Army Bell Ringing, Hospice Volunteers, Guardians of the Children.*

*Are willing to perform weddings & funerals for non-church members of the community.*

Describe your congregation's participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ (association / conference / national setting).

*This year only pastor attended Association & Conference Meetings, but usually a lay person also attends. Previous pastor served on Association committees/board.*

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).)

Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

- ☐ Accessible to All (A2A)
- ☐ Creation Justice
- ☐ Economic Justice
- ☐ Faithful and Welcoming
- ☐ God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
- ☐ Border and Immigrant Justice
- ☐ Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)

- ☐ Just Peace
- ☐ Global Mission Church
- ☒ Open and Affirming (ONA)
- ☐ WISE Congregation for Mental Health
- ☐ Other UCC designations:
- ☐ Designations from other denominations
- ☐ None

Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?

*We believe we are unique in our ONA position and witness.*

*We may be interested in the Creation Justice designation, but have not explored that at this time.*

Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional).

*Active with local Tomah Area Ministerial Association and through that in several agencies including: Local Neighbor for Neighbor Food Pantry and Second Harvest monthly food distribution; Faith in Action group of volunteers helping others with daily tasks, rides, etc; Families First aid to local and itinerant folks; Salvation Army Red Kettle drive which funds a variety of local needs; Community Table weekly free meal, preparing the meal 3 or 4 times per year, Ecumenical Lenten Study, Ecumenical Choir, Ecumenical Youth Group, Ecumenical Mission Fund Raisers.*

If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.

*Most activity is by committed individuals. Community meal is prepared very efficiently, with little "overhead" time. Work with Habitat for Humanity has been mostly cash donations in recent years, so is also relatively efficient. Collecting for Food Pantry is mostly passive, with one or two people delivering on a regular basis.*

Reflect on the scope of work assigned to your pastor(s). How is their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time?

*We place a high value on the visible activities of the pastor and are glad to have that as part of the regular round of pastoral activity. Out of town activities are also supported both*



*with time and reimbursements for necessary expenses. Previous pastors have served on Association committees with the support of the congregation*

#### **4b. MISSION InSite**

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Comment on your congregation's MissionInsite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown?

*Our church reflects the diversity of the community, including races, ethnicities and sexual orientations. There is opportunity in the area of non-churched younger adults who are concerned about environmental and community issues.*

How do your congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects?

*We are downtown, near both modest single family houses and apartment buildings. Several of our members come to us from those locations. We also attract members from farther away who come for the special welcome and theological openness of the congregation. We reflect a fairly broad slice of the community.*

How are the demographics of the community currently shaping ministry, or not?

*Like many communities, Tomah has a substantial number of churches. We understand that we do not need to compete for the members of these congregations, but have a particular mission to the smaller number of "progressive," and not religiously affiliated people who might share many of our values. Recognizing that demographic reality in the community helps shape how we do outreach and will shape program/services in the near future.*

What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

*Helpful, generous and welcoming. A church that pays attention to the needs of the community.*

What do new people in the church say when asked what got them involved?

*They were warmly welcomed and included from their first visit*



## 5. REFERENCES

Name up to three people who have agreed to serve as phone and written references. Advise the three references: “The contact information you provide may be shared publicly. Please use contact information that you feel comfortable giving to candidates so they can reach you with their questions.”

Make sure they are not members of your church but are persons who know your church well enough to be helpful to candidates seeking more information. Request a letter from each reference in answer to the four prompts below. Attach the letters (up to three) as desired.

### REFERENCE 1

Name / Position / Setting

Laura Bishop / 608-343-7039 / [rbishop7038@charter.net](mailto:rbishop7038@charter.net) / Coordinator Community Meal Program

### REFERENCE 2

Name / Position / Setting

Sarah Moseley / [swampqueen64@centurytel.net](mailto:swampqueen64@centurytel.net) / local activist

### REFERENCE 3

Name / Position / Setting

Philip J. Stuart, CEO

Tomah Memorial Hospital - 321 Butts Ave - Tomah, WI 54660

V – 608-374-0301 / C – 608-315-0041 / [pstuart@tomahhospital.org](mailto:pstuart@tomahhospital.org)

### PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES

Describe some areas of strength in this church’s ministry.

Describe some areas for improvement in this church’s ministry.

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church’s ministry.

Anything else you wish to share.

## 6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

- 
- a. CLOSING PRAYER
  - b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT
  - c. CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

## 6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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We want to extend this invitation  
for you to come along  
and become part of our church family.  
Where you feel that you belong  
For you are valued by the Lord  
And he has a purpose for you,  
He's placed within you special gifts,  
He longs for you to use  
And we, as a church, would love to see  
You grow within your gifts,  
For then we all can receive a blessing  
With what God's blessed you with.  
- M. S. Lowndes

## 6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile? *(for example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.)*

*We formed a transition team that met bi-weekly for about 6 months. We held two congregational gatherings. The first was to explore our history and what it said about our values and what we want to bring forward as a foundation for the future. The second was to dream of the future and to think about the pastoral qualities we wanted.*

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Name / Title / Date:

*Cindy G. Zahrt*  
*Cindy G. Zahrt*  
*Chair - Search Committee*  
*2/3/19*

## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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The congregation is currently in good standing with the association / conference named.

Staff Comment:

To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete.

Staff Comment:

To the best of my knowledge, available church financial information is presented thoroughly.

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: 

Name / Title: Rev. Robert MacDougall/Associate Conference Minister

Email: rmacdougall@wcucc.org

Phone: 715-308-6120

Date: February 18, 2019

This document is created through support to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and is only possible through the covenantal relationships of all settings of the United Church of Christ.

***“Jesus answered them, ‘Have faith in God!’” – Mark 11:22***

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



## Comments from local leaders:

### Thoughts on the Tomah First Congregational Church

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to attend weddings, funerals and various non-church events (fundraisers, classes) at the Church. For the last 15+ years, I consistently attended the Longest Night Service hosted by the congregation. Altho I am not a member of the congregation, I find much solace in the comforting message of the sermon and the acknowledgment although the Christmas season is the most joyous time of the year, it can be a sorrowful time for so many.

The church has so many strengths. Physically, its located in a great part of town. It's a beautiful facility with a comfortable feel for visitors. The congregation has a strong history and a solid foundation of multi-generational families that attend. On the same token, there are enough new members to keep the congregation refreshed. Theologically, it seems to be very open in its doctrine, and attract diversity. In addition, they open their doors for other activities that drive fellowship and community within the building.

With most congregations, the attraction to the church can be a result of the pastor and leader, not necessarily the doctrine or the church itself. As a result, when there is transition to new leadership, it can be challenging for members to adapt. I believe all churches are struggling to find the niche to get younger families to participate in church events and attend formal services. With a smaller congregation, and members involved in other events, it's a challenge to get out in the community to showcase the offerings of the church.

I look forward to seeing how the church grows and changes in the years to come and wish them God's blessings in the endeavors.

Respectfully,

Sara Moseley

[swampqueen64@centurylink.net](mailto:swampqueen64@centurylink.net)

"middle-aged, active community member"

December 2, 2018

Pastor Marlea Gilbert  
First Congregational Church  
Tomah, WI 54660

Dear Pastor Gilbert,

I am writing in response to Jennifer Parson's request, as it pertains to your seeking a permanent pastor at your church.

My responses to the three prompts are below:

- **Strength of the Church's Ministry.** From what I know of the First Congregational Church, it is a very welcoming and very giving congregation. I coordinate the Tomah Community Table and volunteer there each Monday night; I can attest to the involvement of your congregation in this ministry since "Day 1." Your Election Day lunch is very welcoming and is a good way to include all of the community. Individual members of the congregation are involved in community organizations: Jesse Parker fundraisers and Haiti Mission Team come to mind immediately. These members volunteer and serve as leaders.
- **Areas for Improvement for ministry.** I don't have any direct knowledge on this topic. I have heard from friends that the congregation is dwindling in size and that it is aging (i.e., not very many young people). So, maybe some outreach is needed.
- **Significant experience in church's ministry.** I am a member of Peace Lutheran, Tomah's ELCA church. Peace was created after the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's national synod voted to allow congregations to call a gay pastor if they chose to. This occurred in 2009. The congregation at Gloria Dei split over this issue and a good number of the congregation (myself included) agreed with the policy and wanted to remain ELCA; the other portion of the congregation and most of the church's leadership wanted to leave the ELCA and join the LCMC branch of the Lutheran Church. Your church offered the "displaced" members a place to worship and serve as we organized and eventually purchased the building that is now our church home. We combined Sunday School classes; we partnered with you for Vacation Bible School for years. Words cannot fully express how significant that was and how many of the members of Peace continue to hold a dear place in our hearts for your church.

I hope this is helpful. My contact information is below.

Thank you,

Laura Bishop  
608-343-7039  
[rbishop7038@charter.net](mailto:rbishop7038@charter.net)

November 28, 2018

Dear Cabinet Members,

I am writing this letter of reference for First Congregational Church – UCC of Tomah. My name is Philip Stuart and I have lived in Tomah for over two decades. My wife and I are active members of Peace Lutheran Church, a member congregation of the ELCA. I have had the opportunity (and pleasure) to interact with First Congregational Church in a variety of ways over the years.

An area of strength for First Congregational Church is how it lives its Christian mission. They have been involved in many community activities that support those in need. They were very involved in the establishment of, and continued support, of our local food pantry. I know that they have provided support to those in need. Matthew 25: 35 – 40.

An area for improvement would be in growing their membership. I am well aware that many congregations, across the country, are faced with declining membership. We are challenged to reach out to those who have no Church home and are in need. First Congregational has a strong base within their membership. I believe that their next Pastor that can tap into that base and lead the way they should be able to not only maintain their membership but find a way to reach out to those looking for a Church they can be a part of.

A significant experience that I can attest to happened several years ago. My family were members of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church. When the ELCA voted to support an ALL inclusive ministry and would accept those in committed same sex marriages, including Pastors, Gloria Dei became divided. The Pastor of our Church led the congregation in a vote to go against the ELCA. Gloria Dei is no longer part of the ELCA.

It was truly a difficult time and those of us who supported the views of the ELCA and we were suddenly left without a church home. A small group of us banded together and set out to form a new congregation. The members of the First Congregational Church, and Pastor Stigen, opened their arms and helped us heal. Over a two year period of time First Congregational provided us with a “Home”, fellowship, prayers and never once judged us – just helped fellow Christians in their time of need.

Today that small group of Christians were able to grow in number and now have our own church home. Peace Lutheran Church may not have been formed without the First Congregational Church being there with their support and prayers. They are truly a faith based congregation and I would support their efforts and need for a Pastor to help guide them in their faith.

If I can provide any other information or support please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Philip J. Stuart, CEO  
Tomah Memorial Hospital - 321 Butts Ave - Tomah, WI 54660  
V – 608-374-0301 / C – 608-315-0041  
F – 608-374-0289  
[pstuart@tomahhospital.org](mailto:pstuart@tomahhospital.org)