

## Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

# INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH

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!

Rachel Hackenberg

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

First Congregational Church of Ripon  
Ripon, WI

Full-Time Pastor

Wisconsin Conference, Northeast Wisconsin Association

2/20/2019

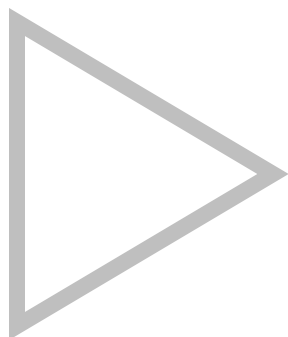
### LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- 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)*

# 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 Church of Ripon  
**Street address:** 220 Ransom Street  
Ripon, WI 54971

### Supplemental web links:

First Congregational Church of Ripon website:

[www.riponcongregationalucc.org](http://www.riponcongregationalucc.org)

*Around the Corner with John McGivern* -- A television production by Milwaukee PBS aired on Wisconsin Public Television and other national public broadcasting stations. In June 2018, John and his crew visited Ripon and this aired in January 2019.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ooWZaZPWcMI&t=913s>

*Ripon Concert Series* -- A short video featuring downtown Ripon, its many shops and restaurants plus highlights the weekly, summer-long Friday evening concerts on the Village Green.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bp64ixWjIAU>

*Pilgrim Center* -- There are two UCC retreat centers in Wisconsin and the Pilgrim Center is the closest one, just 7 miles west of Ripon.

<https://ucc.org/pilgrim-center/>

*Green Lake Wisconsin Enjoy* -- The city of Green Lake is 7 miles west of Ripon and on the lake's north shore. This spring-fed lake was carved out by the glaciers and measures 8 miles east to west and 2 miles north to south. For decades, it's been a tourist destination for people from 200 miles around.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsNZ-dVyMfE>

A *Discover Wisconsin* link will be added after March 23rd, when a program airs about Wisconsin's craft brewing industry and features a Ripon microbrewery.

### Additional ecumenical affiliations (e.g. denominations, communions, fellowships):

Ripon Area Ministerial Association is an ecumenical group of local clergy.

**Conference:** Wisconsin Conference

**Association:** Northeast Wisconsin Association

**UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person (Name, Title, Phone, Email):**

Rev. Jane Anderson, Associate Conference Minister

(920) 540-2586

janderson@wcucc.org

**Summary Ministry Description:**

We are a small, healthy church located in a rural, college town. We are just 15 minute drive from the Pilgrim Center on beautiful Green Lake, one of our outdoor ministry sites in the conference. Ripon is within a half hour drive of larger cities in northeast Wisconsin. Our church has a growing number of young families. The excitement of having young families and young children is a focal point of our discussions and future planning. We are looking for a minister with a progressive voice who preaches biblically-based messages related to current-day issues and relatable to our everyday lives.

**Photographs:**



### **What we value about living in our area:**

- **Education:** Ripon College – college town, cultural atmosphere, high-performing public school system, excellent public library with programs for all ages, birthplace of Republican party and museum.
- **Community Centric:** Bustling downtown, revitalized, Main Street Community Designation, thriving business district, civic activities and events, unique shopping, award winning newspaper (Wisconsin's Weekly Newspaper of the Year 6 out of the last 7 years).
- **Innovation; Growth, Development and Recreation:** Winery and microbrewery, recent \$32,000,000 renovation of a joint high school and middle school complex, a "Main Street" official designated community, Main Street revitalization, nearby Green Lake which is Wisconsin's deepest lake, the brand new Willmore Athletic and Fitness Center at Ripon College which is open to the community, a new Ripon Medical Center (hospital and ER) opened in 2014 which includes its own community wellness center that is open 24 hours a day, and multiple recreational trails for biking, running, hiking, and snowmobiling.

**Current size of membership: 143**

**English used in our ministry.**

**Position Title:** 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 our state association

**Compensation Level:** Full-time

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

## **1b. SCOPE OF WORK**

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\_\_\_\_\_ We are looking for a progressive minister which we hope to be a long-term ministry.

- The top Key Activities include:
  - Embrace and develop modern and innovative worship styles, utilizing technology, music and current events (build on our solid foundation, but take us outside the box).
  - Seek to incorporate new and exciting ways to engage the congregation and attract members.
  - Help us become a vital, exciting and engaging resource for youth (of all ages) in our community.
  - Help us continue to grow with more young families, which is something the wonderful young woman we had for the past 6 years did so well, but at the same time, be able to minister to even the eldest in our congregation.
- In no particular order, where are other top Key Activities:
  - Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship.
  - Faith formation and vitality.
  - Leadership development.
  - Community engagement and being available and visible to Ripon and surrounding communities.
  - Strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry.
  - Pastoral care.
  - In coordination with a seasoned and well-functioning Executive Committee and Cabinet, be responsible for the staff and for administrative matters.
- Our finances are in good shape and successful capital campaigns over the past 14 years has our church in good or even great shape.

**Core Competencies:**

The Search Committee asked congregation members to help identify the top traits we wish to see in our next minister. We supplied a list of 43 *Leadership Expectations* (sourced from the 2011 version of the UCC Church Profile) and tallied those votes. Based on the results, we know our congregation seeks a minister whose core competencies are: caring, sensitive and sociable.

Caring: We seek the warmth of a minister who is invested in making personal connections and who shows up to comfort members in hospitals and nursing homes, as well as the homebound.

Sensitive: We seek a minister who is level-headed, open-minded, and has the ability to mediate in times of conflict.

Sociable: We seek a spirited and engaging orator who can connect scripture to contemporary concerns and whose words and deeds encourage people to live their faith in their daily lives.

Please note: the full results of our survey can be found in the Congregation Wide Survey Addendum.

## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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### **Salary Basis:**

Salary is based on experience and will be between Step A and Step D of the current Wisconsin Conference suggested guidelines.

### **Annual housing allowance:**

In line with UCC Compensation Guidelines it would be \$16,600 per year (1% of the median-priced home in this area times 12 months).

### **Benefits:**

- UCC ministerial health and dental insurance for the individual and her/his family
- UCC 401(k) retirement annuity
- UCC Life insurance
- Short-term and long-term disability insurance
- Social Security offset
- Workers' Comp
- 4 weeks paid vacation
- Holidays and days off
- Malpractice
- Leaves: Sick, Disability, Parental, Maternity/Paternity, Compassionate, Civic Service, Sabbatical, wider church involvement, Continuing Education, including programs like the Next Generation Leadership Initiative
- Community of Practice
- Travel

### **What is the expected living situation for your next minister:**

- Living in town with a housing allowance.

### **Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister:**

- A local estate agent who is a member of the church recently wrote that, *"Based on our research, modest starter homes can be found in Ripon for just under \$100,000 and that for \$190,000 to \$200,000, someone can find a very nice home for a family or minister seeking to 'move up' from a starter home"*. Another church member, who is a retired real estate agent added, *"In 2018, the median price for a home in Ripon was \$138,000"*.
- As for commuting, that just isn't an issue in this town of 7,400 people. We have a grand total of 6 traffic lights, which many Wisconsinites refer to as "stop and go lights". By the way, the next closest stop and go light is 6 miles west of town!

### **State any incentives:**

- The Wisconsin Conference's school debt reduction / retention bonus

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

- Ripon Area Ministerial Association: This organization is made up of ministers of almost all faiths located in the city of Ripon. The ministerial association provides an opportunity for ministers to enjoy a time of fellowship and to be involved in the activities and events of our community.

## 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.**

- Create more fellowship and community events.
- Grow the education program (youth through high school).
- Be very relevant and essential throughout our community.

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

- An engaging leader in our church community who lives in Ripon and is active in our community.
- Speaks to contemporary issues that are political, social and important in an entertaining and social manner.
- Committed to great music and alternative approaches and styles to worship (music, technology, etc.).

**There are no specify language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next pastor.**

**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.**

In no particular order:

- Exhibiting a commitment to the core values of the UCC: continuing testament, extravagant welcome, and changing lives.
- Empowering the church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.
- Nurturing care and compassion for God's creations.
- Engaging in mission and outreach.

## 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?**

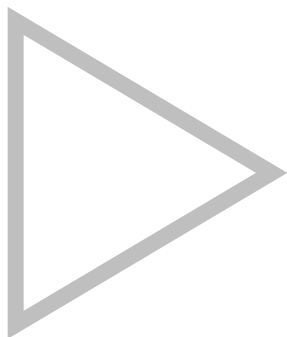
A body of people who are trying, through action and intellect, to apply Gospel lessons considered on Sunday to contemporary challenges and issues we confront the other six days of the week. Church fellowship helps us inform, sustain and grow our faith so we can be an active, vital church in our community and beyond.

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

Last December we completed a capital campaign to build an outdoor playground on church and college property to serve our own children, appeal to prospective families considering a church home, and accommodate the needs of neighborhood youngsters for whom the nearest park is not within safe walking distance.

We are the first church in Ripon to have married a gay couple and now have several gay family units in our congregation. We are invested in continuing to identify ways for us to advocate and invite the full inclusion of all persons in the life and ministry of our church. We recently celebrated declaring ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ with a 98% approval at the congregation's annual meeting on January 27, 2019.

Our multi-year vision statement calls on us to renew our faith "intellectually, emotionally and, at times, intuitively" through our worship, church outreach and lay volunteer work. We emphasize ministering to the marginalized facing challenges due to poverty, drug abuse, mental and physical health, personal tragedy and broken families. We do this through many actions, some institutionalized such as our monthly community dinners, food drives to both food pantries in town and adoption of a refugee family. In a more pragmatic and less structured way through quietly tending to personal needs, encouraging individuals and families facing challenges to know they have a home with us, and working closely with Ripon College to identify ways in which our missions overlap as they relate to the students.



### 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 value questions as much as answers, and don’t discount our neighbor’s beliefs because we feel differently. That said, we believe Jesus gave us a full testament of values and truths to guide us as we attempt to implement his teachings in our lives.

We believe our faith is a journey, not a destination, and so while we all attempt to discern God's will and personify Jesus' charge to help the poor and disadvantaged, we reject the notion that there is only one way, one doctrine, that will lead us to be active, vital Christians.

Because we know God is still speaking, we reject the notion that the church is apolitical, as Christ's teachings certainly call us to see justice, do mercy and recognize our own imperfections as we address contemporary issues. That said, we are respectful that a healthy church has a wide variety of partisan preferences, and so try to balance the need to respect political differences with the challenge to keep the church active in matters of peace and reconciliation.

We implicitly believe our faith insists that our caring and compassion for each other overrides differences of politics, background, ethnicity, sexual preferences, race, etc. Our relationships with each other and with our neighbors, in Ripon and globally, provide us daily opportunities to offer guidance, support and love.

##### **Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.**

The hallmark of First Congregational Church of Ripon is we are a welcoming and friendly church. We know each other. We care about each other. We begin every worship service with a sharing of the peace where the congregation routinely steps out of their pews and mingles about, shaking hands, and greeting one another in a genuine manner. Our church has a sense of humor and we don’t take ourselves too seriously. We are among friends and supporters. We are committed to the concept of being open and welcoming, as evidenced by being the first church in Ripon to perform same-sex weddings.

While we want to emphasize the importance of growing our youth programming, the church has seen significant growth in this area in the past few years, and it's a foundation we expect our next minister to help us to build on.

After recently renovating our sanctuary, our facilities are now greatly improved. We opened up the chancel area and added a ramp for accessibility to the altar, replaced the pews, added new heating and air-conditioning, new electrical and lighting, put on a new roof, refurbished the organ, refinished the floors and put in new carpet. Our fellowship hall, church offices and classrooms were also added in the past 14 years, including an elevator.

**Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.**

We enter and greet the folks near us, even newcomers. We are comfortable joking and laughing with each other during announcements, often go beyond the allotted time for the "passing of the peace" because of the friendships we enjoy with each other, and we feel comfortable publicly sharing personal concerns in the time preceding our pastoral prayer. We value instrumental and vocal music and often applaud to show our appreciation of the choir, organist/pianist or guest musicians. We can count on scripturally-based sermons that, through anecdote or reference to current events, challenge us to reconsider our beliefs and improve our actions so we may actualize Biblical teachings.

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

The current Christian Education Coordinator is Jeanne Williams. She is a retired professor of Educational Studies at Ripon College and long-time member of this church who was hired in the fall of 2016. Our goals have been to (1) provide an engaging lectionary-based Sunday School program, (2) upgrade the church's classrooms so they provide a safe and attractive learning environment and (3) support families of the church with programs that encourage positive interactions among the families and support for parents. The rest of the Christian Education staff consists of four Ripon College students who act as the children's Music Director, Sunday School teachers, and child care providers. The college students are paid and have also benefited from the support of our generous congregation and the experiences with the children. Our Christian Education program as a whole, is overseen by the Faith Formations Committee which plans activities throughout the year for children and their families. Some of the activities consist of Parents' Night Out, a trip to the Northeast Wisconsin Zoo in Green Bay and a family "PJs, Popcorn, and movie night". Our program currently serves approximately 37 children, ages 6 months to 17 years.

Our Sunday School program is organized into three flexible classes. The *Little Fish* classroom is children ages 2 to 4 years, *Story Masters* are ages 4K to 3rd grade and *Faith Explorers* is children in 4th, 5th and 6th grades who are preparing for the confirmation class. For all of our classes, the Faith Formations Committee selected a multiage curriculum, *The Whole People of God*. Each Sunday, the children meet as a whole group and enjoy some free play and crafts before gathering for an opening prayer and song. The classes then split depending on the ages of the children present. On a typical Sunday, we have between 15 and 20 children in our Sunday School classrooms and in the nursery during the service. Each Sunday's lesson

includes arts and crafts, music, and a Bible-based lesson and activity. Our children's choir performs several times a year. During the church service, which follows immediately after Sunday School, there is a children's moment. The children's moment typically consists of a short story or lesson often linked to the pastor's message for the day and a prayer. After the children's moment is finished, the children are invited back downstairs to the classroom for crafts, free play and a snack.

We have four middle school students in their second year of a two-year confirmation program which is lead by Interim Pastor Stephen Welch. During the 2017 - 2018 school year, Pastor Joanna used the "*Re: Form*" curriculum and during the 2018 - 2019 school year, Pastor Stephen is using the "*Affirming Faith*" curriculum. The confirmation students also help in the Sunday School classes during events and occasionally in the nursery during the service. Our high school students are engaged with the church as members of the adult choir, worship leaders, and the technical booth staff. They also help with the Christian Education program during special events such as the Christmas pageant, Easter brunch, and family activities.

As requested by the parents of our congregation, a Vacation Bible School was initiated last year. For one week in July, 12 students participated in the program which used the curriculum from Global Ministries, Embrace the Fruits of the Spirit. They focused on five Bible stories and the lives of children in the Caribbean region. The week was brought to an end with a family picnic and campfire. We will look to continue to grow this Vacation Bible School program as it was a success last summer.

We believe it takes a village to raise a child and an active fellowship to nurture and grow faith for people of all ages. In addition to our regular Sunday School offerings for children, the church also has held Bible studies, book discussion groups and even field trips to area attractions as well as to our sister church in urban Chicago.

Among the books we recently read was "The New Jim Crow," which enabled us to better understand how our criminal-justice system has created a unique set of ways to enforce and adjudicate the law in ways that disfavor black people. This caused us to examine and dismantle assumptions about our own racism and to what degree we are complicit through our ignorance or indifference in perpetuating a system that is divided and unjust.

### **Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.**

The full Cabinet meets monthly for about 90 minutes but for any committee, even the Executive Committee, it's time spent together during a month really depends on what's going on in the life of our church. For instance, as fall arrives the Finance Committee goes from being in a bit of a lull to being in full swing working on the next year's Stewardship Campaign and building that next year's budget, all of which has to be wrapped up by the first of the year and in preparation for the annual late-January meeting of the entire congregation.

Our congregation follows the organizational structure and process of our church's bylaws. New bylaws were approved at the Annual Congregation Meeting in January 2018 and a few new

changes were introduced at January 2019's annual meeting that need to be voted on. This document, as well as the church's annual report is available for candidates to review.

Under the bylaws, committees representing different ministries of our church such as Worship, Membership, Finance, Outreach, Faith Formation meet regularly to plan and carry out our church's mission. These committees report monthly to our governing body, known as the Cabinet. Jane Cotter is the current Moderator, Michele Wittler is Vice-Moderator, Andy Lyke is Treasurer, and Justus Paul the Clerk.

Committee work and decisions are communicated to the congregation through a variety of ways. Our monthly newsletter, *The Spire*, is sent out electronically or in the mail to all members; announcements are placed in the Sunday bulletin and shared from the pulpit during worship; as well as emails and letters are sent to members if a situation requires a timely or detailed communication and a possible decision.

Recently a member of our church gave birth to a premature baby. Our minister announced from the pulpit this family of 5 was in need of food, gas cards, and other support because the baby would be hospitalized in Children's Hospital in Milwaukee, 90 minutes away, for an extended period of time. Within 2 days the Outreach Committee established a meal schedule for the congregation to deliver food to the family and the Finance Committee provided support with gas cards and covered other expenses for this family.

Committees may struggle at times with identifying new ways to improve their ministry. As committees have many tasks to complete during the church calendar year, in some cases not enough time is devoted to evaluation of current practices, new ideas, and planning for the future. A church retreat in the year may be helpful to provide that opportunity.

**Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance?**

Yes, we can certainly provide candidates with a copy of our bylaws and the January 27, 2019 Annual Report upon request.

# 3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

### ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS



Church#: 862530

Assoc: 824

Schedule: 0

First Congregational Church of Ripon UCC

Ripon

WI

54971

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2007	106	70	42	9	0	0	4	5	0
2008	115	68	45	3	10	0	2	2	9
2009	114	61	40	0	5	0	5	1	-1
2010	114	61	40	0	0	0	0	0	0
2011	125	53	37	2	0	0	4	0	-2
2012	103	51	37	0	0	0	7	0	-7
2013	103	51	37	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	112	55	0	7	0	6	4	0	9
2015	122	58	40	7	13	0	1	0	19
2016	120	65	40	0	0	0	0	2	-2
2017	128	68	42	0	10	0	2	0	8

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCMW	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2007	\$187,560	\$197,925	\$7,140	\$2,329	\$9,469	\$160	\$9,629	4.26	\$375,114	\$125,249
2008	\$144,416	\$41,549	\$10,312	\$3,409	\$13,721	\$0	\$13,721	7.14	\$199,686	\$137,664
2009	\$159,921	\$0	\$4,914	\$800	\$5,714	\$3,062	\$8,776	3.07	\$168,697	\$148,662
2010	\$159,921	\$0	\$6,651	\$3,009	\$9,660	\$0	\$9,660	4.16	\$169,581	\$0
2011	\$161,968	\$20,000	\$6,395	\$1,805	\$8,200	\$6,257	\$14,457	3.95	\$196,425	\$212,187
2012	\$156,258	\$179,934	\$7,365	\$1,719	\$9,084	\$2,606	\$11,690	4.71	\$347,882	\$132,857
2013	\$156,258	\$0	\$4,913	\$2,456	\$7,369	\$0	\$7,369	3.14	\$163,627	\$0
2014	\$156,258	\$0	\$3,250	\$1,661	\$4,911	\$0	\$4,911	2.08	\$161,169	\$0
2015	\$172,655	\$0	\$18,983	\$30,890	\$49,873	\$1,823	\$51,696	10.99	\$224,351	\$160,214
2016	\$176,191	\$17,847	\$8,299	\$20,667	\$28,966	\$2,000	\$30,966	4.71	\$225,004	\$170,991
2017	\$183,303	\$252,568	\$16,081	\$3,539	\$19,620	\$604	\$20,224	8.77	\$203,527	\$192,525

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCMW	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2012-2017	24.27	33.33	13.51	0.00	-71.43	17.31	115.98	-41.50
2007-2017	20.75	-2.86	0.00	11.11	-77.78	9.40	107.20	-45.74

Please note: Zero values ("0" or "\$0") may reflect missing information in some years. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 2007.

### 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:	143	Yes
Number of active non-members:	15	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	158	Yes - This total includes approximately 20 members who participate only occasionally in the life of the church.

#### Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	45%	Yes
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	18%	Yes
Less than 5 years:	37%	Yes

#### Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
24	9	14	22	11	6	26	27	19	Yes

#### Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	4%	Yes
Households with minors:	40%	Yes
Single adults age 35-65:	5%	Yes
Joint households with no minors:	27%	Yes
Single adults over 65:	24%	Yes

#### Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	27%	Yes
College:	41%	Yes
Graduate School:	20%	Yes
Specialty Training / Doctorate:	12%	Yes
Other (please specify):		

**Percentage of adults in various employment types:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	58%	Yes
Adults who are retired:	33%	Yes
Adults who are not fully employed:	9%	Yes

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

Church members represent a wide range of occupations. We have a number of professionals who work serving our community including: doctors, veterinarians, physical therapists, social workers, nurses, and teachers. Some members are retired from Ripon College while others currently work for the college as faculty or staff. There are community leaders, such as a company presidents, newspaper publishers, farmers, bankers, lawyers, and executive directors of non-profit organizations. In addition, our church is also home to factory workers, mechanics, cooks, hair stylists, and insurance agents.

**Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial makeup.**

**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?**

Our church’s ethnic mix represents the make-up of the Ripon Community as a whole. The majority of our congregation is of northern European heritage. Approximately 4% of our membership has a different ethnic background including: East Indian, Micronesian, and Malaysian. The city of Ripon has a growing Latino and Hispanic community, which now exceeds 4% of the total population.

**Welcoming Diversity:** On January 27, 2019 our congregation declared itself Open and Affirming.

### 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	Who plans each of the listed gatherings?
Adult Groups or Classes	10	Pastor, CE Director
Baptisms ( <i>number last year</i> )	5	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	15 attend reg.	CE Director/ Committee
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	125 and 124	Pastor, Worship committee
Church-wide Meals	4 or 5 per year	Multiple committees and members
Choirs and Music Groups	12	Music Director
Church-based Bible Study		
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	1 time per month - 50	Worship committee/ Pastor
Community Meals	40	Monthly meals planned by a committee
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	0	Four confirmands are due to be confirmed on May 19,2019. Pastor
Drama or Dance Program	0	
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	6	Pastor, Event Coordinator
Intergenerational Groups	50	Choir, book studies, committees, camp
Outdoor Worship	40	Worship Committee, Pastor
Prayer or Meditation Groups	5	Church member
Public Advocacy Work	12	Outreach Committee, Pastor
Retreats	1	Pastor at UCC's nearby Pilgrim Center.
Theology or Bible Programs in the	13	Vacation Bible School

Community		
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	5	Pastor/ Event Coordinator
Worship (time slot: 10:30am)	50 to 80	Pastor, Worship committee.
Worship (time slot: 10:30)		
Young Adult Groups or Classes		
Youth Groups or Classes	4	(Confirmation). Pastor.

**Additional comments:**

**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)
Jack Kraaz			Was full-time, then retired.	Working as an interim pastor in Fond du Lac, WI

**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:**

Jack Kraaz retired in 2012 and occasionally attends worship.

**List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person 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
Church Office Manager	Pam Icenogle	Part-time	Executive Committee	4 years
Christian Ed Director	Jeanne Williams	Part-time	Performance review done by our Vice-Moderator	2 years

Music Directors	Kurt and Maria Dietrich	Part-time	Vice-Moderator	Each with more than 20 years experience in our church.
Custodians	Peggy and Rod Freeman	Part-time	Vice-Moderator	Each with more than 20 years experience in our church.

## REFLECTION

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

Our church:

- would benefit from an organized retreat to effectively plan for future goals and ministries.
- should focus on more programming for youth and young adults.
- should consider providing more service opportunities for members addressing community issues involving addiction, mental health, family stress and poverty.
- should consider providing more social opportunities for members.

## 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
2019 budget's Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving figure	\$162,200
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cof typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	\$560
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i> )	interest only on \$37,927 Equity Fund
Fundraising Events	\$22,400
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$41,979
Grants	none
Rentals of Church Building	\$23,525
Rentals of Church Parsonage	N/A
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )	none

Transfers from Special Accounts	none
Other (specify):	none
Other (specify):	none
TOTAL	\$250,664

**Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$191,500**

# Treasurer's Report

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Here's a recap of our financial statements:

## **Treasurers Report (also known as the Summary Income Statement)**

The Treasurer's report shows the money coming into the church as well as the money going out. It's helpful to look at the Treasurer's report broken down into Local Mission and Wider Mission:

- *Local Mission* – We projected a deficit for last year of \$3,658, but we ended up with a surplus of \$10,356. We spent less than we budgeted, but we didn't do as well with our pledges and gifts compared to our projections. We were saved by strong earnings from investments (more on that below) We are budgeting a deficit this year of \$6,600.
- *Wider Mission* – For the year, we gave about \$14,713, which is about what we have averaged over the past few years. I'm tempted to move our five extra collections (One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, Christmas Eve and Christmas) into the Wider Mission category going forward as those collections are certainly part of our giving to those outside of our church.
- I added an extra statement showing five years of our Treasurer's report. Having that information in one spot should make it easier to spot trends in our income and expenses.

## **Balance Sheet**

Our balance sheet – a statement of what we own (Assets) and who we owe money to (Liabilities) – remains solid. We have fewer assets than a year ago, but even fewer liabilities. Like the treasurer's report, I included five years worth of data.

Let's start with the good news. We've been listing under Investments our United Church Fund (UCF) investments at the value of those funds in 2014. Our investments have gone up in value since then from \$122,636 to \$258,383 – a gain of \$135,747. I recorded \$20,795 of the gain as income for 2018, and the rest of the gain went to the prior years. If you look at our investments as our "endowment", it's gone up from \$181,000 in 2014 to \$356,000 at the end of 2018. I'll try to get some guidelines as to how much of an endowment a church our size should have.

We had a fairly large balance in our checking account. Because the checking account pays very little in interest income and we are paying 5% on our mortgage balance, it made sense to pay down our mortgage. We paid \$140,000 in November 2017 and \$100,000 July 2018. We saved about \$10,000 in interest costs by making these payments early.

At the bottom of the balance sheet are the fund balances. The fund balances represent the difference between the assets and liabilities, broken into several categories for special purposes. The biggest funds are for Local Mission, which shows our income and deficits over time, and Sacred Space, which is for the Sacred Space contributions and expenses.

## Consolidated Fund Activity Report

The Consolidated Fund Activity Report is a detailed look at what makes up the fund balance at the bottom of the balance sheet. The biggest addition to the funds this year was for the playground project.

### Budget

As I noted above, we are projecting a \$6,200 deficit for 2019. Thanks to the stewardship committee, we have a better handle on our pledges. We are planning on \$3,000 in interest income and \$5,000 in increase in the value of our investments.

For expenses, we have \$3,000 for the search committee, which may be low depending on who we call. Also, budgeting for ministerial expenses is challenging without knowing who and when we call as our new minister. We didn't have an accountant review last year, and so hope to have a two year review within the next couple of weeks. We also have more expenses to take care of our newly refurbished organ and our new piano.

### Sacred Space Update

Below is a recap of what I project we have left for Sacred Space income and expenses. We started with \$714,000 in pledges and so far we've collected \$594,000. Of the pledges remaining, I expect we'll collect \$94,000, mostly by the end of 2021. The Organ Repair is \$98,000 less payments to Salzman Pipe Organ Services of \$25,000 in 2016 and \$35,000 in 2018. We've paid Omni Glass and Paint \$37,500 (roughly) in 2018, so we have about \$20,000 left on that bill. While the painting wasn't part of the Sacred Space campaign, I've included it in the totals. We paid Omni \$37,500 out of our BMO checking account, so I need to transfer that money from Sacred Space to the regular BMO checking account.

When you add up what we own (CD, checking account and remaining pledges), and take away what we owe (Mortgage, organ repair and painting), we should have a balance of \$1,595. That's cutting it pretty close!

#### Sacred Space Recap as of 12/31/2018

<i>Resources</i>		<i>Debts</i>	
<b>Sacred Space CD</b>	92,368	Less: Mortgage	(138,620)
<b>Checking Account</b>	51,347	Less: Organ Repair	(40,000)
<b>Pledges Receivable</b>	94,000	Less: Remainder of Omni Glass	(20,000)
<b>Less: Transfer to BMO Checking account</b>	(37,500)		
<b>Total Assets/Resources</b>		<b>Total Expenses left to pay</b>	(198,620)

### Other Notes

I know this is a lot of information, and in the future I'll try to make it easier to read. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know. I'm still learning and I'm sure I will learn even more by your questions!

Andy Lyke

## Balance Sheet - 2014 to 2018

<b>Assets</b>					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Checking</b>					
BMO Harris checking	95,309	98,703	69,408	197,403	36,370
Sacred Space/Reach checking	11,738	19,735	334,526	51,347	56,371
<b>Total Checking</b>	<b>\$107,047</b>	<b>\$118,437</b>	<b>\$403,934</b>	<b>\$248,750</b>	<b>\$92,741</b>
<b>Investments</b>					
*Russell BMO Harris Savings	2,621	2,622	2,624	2,625	2,626
*UCF Russell Equity Fund	94,336	94,336	37,928	37,928	85,422
Cornerstone Note 86-01253002	-	-	74,355	-	-
Cornerstone Note 86-03253001	-	-	90,548	92,368	94,225
Securities investments	1,716	1,716	1,716	1,716	1,716
UCF Balanced Fund (Maitland)	27,319	27,829	28,493	29,183	50,756
UCF Equity Fund	55,525	55,525	55,525	55,525	122,205
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>\$181,517</b>	<b>\$182,028</b>	<b>\$291,189</b>	<b>\$219,344</b>	<b>\$356,949</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>					
Sacred Space Interior	-	-	132,946	132,946	132,946
Sacred Space Other	-	-	1,436	1,436	1,436
Sacred Space Structural	-	-	420,030	420,030	420,030
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$554,412</b>	<b>\$554,412</b>	<b>\$554,412</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$288,564</b>	<b>\$300,465</b>	<b>\$1,249,535</b>	<b>\$1,022,506</b>	<b>\$1,004,102</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Accounts Payable/Vendors	-	-	-	-	(1,571)
Cornerstone Mortgage Note	-	-	529,323	276,754	138,620
Prepaid Pledges	-	-	-	60,000	30,000
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$529,323</b>	<b>\$336,754</b>	<b>\$167,048</b>
<b>Fund Balance</b>					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Fund Balance</b>					
Local Mission	-	5,584	138,350	166,650	266,216
Wider Mission	-	(4,467)	(286)	-	-
Sacred Space/Reach	11,738	19,042	462,840	372,658	399,137
Other Funds	276,826	280,307	119,309	146,444	171,701
<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$288,564</b>	<b>\$300,465</b>	<b>\$720,213</b>	<b>\$685,752</b>	<b>\$837,054</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$288,564</b>	<b>\$300,465</b>	<b>\$1,249,535</b>	<b>\$1,022,506</b>	<b>\$1,004,102</b>

## Pass-Through and Reserve Accounts

Account Name	Balance 1/1/2018	Receipts	Expenses	Transfers/JE's	Balance 12/31/2018
Local Mission gain/loss	166,650	173,266	187,872	114,173	266,216
Wider Mission gain/loss	(100)	13,913	13,913	100	-
Sacred Space	372,658	102,645	46,370	(29,795)	399,137
Other Fund Balance					
Christmas Eve	-	220	-	-	220
Christmas	100	1,130	1,230	-	-
Neighbors in Need	-	779	779	-	-
OGHS	-	807	807	-	-
Strengthen the Church	-	759	759	-	-
Adult Education	(226)	103	221	-	(344)
Altar flowers	2,225	803	199	-	2,829
Arnold Education	6,172	3,270	3,479	-	5,962
Children's choir	1,865	-	70	-	1,795
Conant Choir	500	-	-	-	500
Habitat	116	-	-	-	116
Heifer Project	247	182	-	-	429
High School Youth	842	-	-	-	842
Kenya Orphanage	442	221	663	-	-
Memorials	110,984	1,109	-	-	112,093
Misc pass-thru	-	1,819	1,451	1	369
Playground Equipment	-	22,411	139	-	22,272
Refugee Relief	(111)	-	(156)	-	45
Ripon Community Dinner	1,084	1,650	1,486	-	1,249
Russell Bldg Repair	17,830	1,289	-	-	19,119
Special offering	272	-	-	-	272
Stuart chime	4,000	-	-	-	4,000
Sunday School	102	-	170	-	(68)
Total Other Fund Balance	146,444	36,553	11,297	1	171,701
Totals	\$685,652	\$326,376	\$259,453	\$84,478	\$837,054

**Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 39%**

**This church has never failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church.**

**Our church is 5-for-5.**

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

x One Great Hour of Sharing

x Strengthen the Church

x Neighbors in Need

x Christmas Fund

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

OCWM is part of the pledges. Church members designate how much of their pledge should go to local mission vs. OCWM.

**What is the church's current indebtedness?**

**Total amount of loan debt:** \$138,000 (as of 1/30/2019).

**Reason for debt:** We refurbished the worship area (\$682,000). We have pledges receivable and an investment with Cornerstone to cover the full amount of the debt -- pledges will be collected between now and summer of 2020.

**Are capital and other payments current?** Yes

**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.**

We are building an outdoor playground and musical garden for our growing number of children and the children in the surrounding neighborhoods. Estimated cost of the playground equipment (Phase 1) is \$22,000; its completion date is scheduled for Spring 2019. The musical garden is phase 2 and that may be as much as \$8,000.

**If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, describe:**

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
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2016	Renovate sanctuary; Chancel and balcony construction; refinish flooring; change lighting and electrical rewiring; change heating system; add air conditioning; organ restoration; new pews; interior painting; full roof replacement; exterior painting; renovate narthex.	Between \$520,000 and \$660,000	\$698,000	Increased new members, increased requests to use the sanctuary due to improved appearance of the space, comfortable pews, controlled temperature, and larger chancel for group performances and ceremonies. Accessible to chancel with ramp and better lighting for congregation.
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**If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:**

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2019 or 2020	Family & youth-friendly bathroom and kitchenette in basement.	\$32,000		The Cabinet is in the very initial planning stage of adding a family and youth-friendly bathroom and kitchenette downstairs near our Sunday school rooms.

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

We've gained new members. We've had more requests to use the sanctuary due to the improved appearance of the space, comfortable pews, controlled temperature, and a larger chancel for group performances and ceremonies.

**Does your church have an endowment?** Yes, \$346,000. The most we have for any near-term future capital project is a possible (potential) \$32,000 kitchen/bathroom remodel in the basement.

**What is the market value of the assets?**

\$253,383 as of 1/30/19 (the market was great to us in 2018).

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

We can only withdraw the earnings, and we do so on occasion. With interest rates so low on our checking account and our balance so high, since October 2017 we paid down our mortgage an additional \$240,000.

**Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years:** N/A - see above

**At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last?** N/A - see above

## **Other Assets**

**Reserves (savings):** \$55,525

**Investments (other than endowment):** \$93,284

**Does your church have a parsonage?** No

**Describe all church-owned buildings:**

- The church was built in 1868; current sanctuary was renovated in 2016, organ reworked and updated in early 2019, Fellowship Hall, kitchen, classrooms, and restrooms addition was in 2007
- Roof resingled in 2017, parking lot resurfaced and striped in 2018, exterior repainting was almost completed before winter set in (remainder is supposedly our painter's first project, once spring 2019 comes).

**Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:** We have a license agreement to use a bit of college property for the outdoor playground and the college thought that \$1 per year would make it a good value for both sides.

**Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?**

- Everything but the balcony. The elevator accesses the first 3 floors (just not the balcony).
- There is also ramp access to Chancel/pulpit.

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

For years the Treasurer, who is a member of the 4-person Executive Committee, ran the budgeting process but beginning in 2019, the Finance Committee needs to become more involved.

Long-term, the church steps up to meet our initiatives, whether it's missions or infrastructure. Short-term, we support several local missions as needed.

### 3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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#### **Significant happenings in the history of your church that shaped our the identity:**

- History: (1) Church's role in abolition of slavery: In February 1854 a meeting was held in the church that was open to everyone but slaveholders. A few months later, a follow-up meeting was held in a nearby school with many of the same individuals present which actually resulted in formation of the Republican party. (2) Clash between a past minister who believed in evolution and the Ripon College president who did not believe in evolution during the 1860s. (3) The self-declaration of Open and Affirming on January 27, 2019.
- Refugees: Church's role in settling multiple refugee families -- Lativan's in the early 1950s and a family from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2016.
- Community gathering place/facilities/capital needs satisfied: By renovating our sacred space, adding the fellowship hall, putting on a new roof, and adding an outdoor playground, we established ourselves as welcoming of community events. (1) For years now the School District's alternative high school has been in our basement from September through June. (2) Girl Scouts. (3) Weekly Narcotics Anonymous meetings. (4) Music: there are the weekly Choral Union practices which consists of members from throughout Ripon and Green Lake and Ripon College students. Also, Green Lake's summer Festival of Music and as a result of our long-time involvement with this festival, we actually had a baby grand piano gifted to us in 2018, which is now in the front of the church and is used weekly.

#### **Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.**

Sanctuary capital campaign.

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

On January 27, 2019 we declared ourselves to be Open and Affirming.

**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.**

The initial Open and Affirming discussions began in 2011 and lent to conflict and the loss of some members. However, it helped the church engage in an important and meaningful discussion and self-analysis, which ultimately culminated in the church embracing the Open and Affirming designation by overwhelming support in January 2019.

#### **Ministerial History**

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing
Joanna D'Agostino	6	Moved to a UCC church

		in Ohio that's 20 minutes from her hometown.
Jack Kraaz	10	Retired. Serving the UCC as an interim pastor in nearby Fond du Lac.
Debora Hillgartner	2	Moved out of state. Took up a different profession.
John Bixby	3	Returned to the east coast when his wife got a new job.
Catherine Carlson	3	Decided to stay home with family. Is still a friend of our church.
Melodee Smith	6 months	Joined congregation out of seminary and moved to a new position shortly thereafter.
Allen Martling	8	Retired and remains in contact with members of the congregation.

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

We value someone who helps grow the church family and is socially connected to and invested in the members and community. We value someone who is legitimately interested in, connected to, and engaged with youth. We seek someone who brings new ideas but appreciates the history of the church and its congregation. We wish to pursue innovation done in an inclusive way.

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

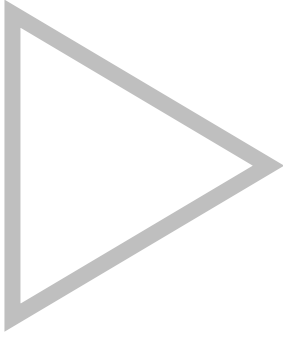
Yes, feel free to ask us.

**Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?**

Yes, feel free to ask us.

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

Yes, feel free to ask us.



## 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?**

Outreach:

- Monthly community dinners
- Prison Ministry
- Food Pantry and various charity drives
- Refugee work
- The UCC’s Pilgrim Center which is 7 miles away, on the shores of Green Lake (see video link in Supplemental Web Links).

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

The Lay Academy: We encourage interested members to attend The Lay Academy which is sponsored by the Wisconsin Conference. The Lay Academy offers lay members the opportunity to expand their faith base through the study of the Old and New Testaments; theological thinking; and ethics and training on various aspects of church leadership, including UCC policy, preaching and pastoral care.

Wisconsin UCC Church Camps: We actively support the two UCC church camps in Wisconsin -- Pilgrim Center on Green Lake and Moon Beach Camp near St. Germain.

Doctrine of Discovery: At 2018’s annual Wisconsin UCC Conference meeting, the Ho Cak UCC congregation from Black River Falls, WI proposed that the Conference vote to formally repudiate the 525-year old Doctrine of Discovery. In order for the Conference to have a vote to repudiate it at April 2019’s meeting, a minimum of 65 conference churches need to send in a form stating their congregation studied the Doctrine. Our Outreach Committee worked to be one of those congregations:

- Provided printed information about the doctrine through Sunday bulletins and in our newsletter.
- Introduced the doctrine and shared the video during church services in early 2019.

- Hosted a local teacher and community leader with knowledge of the doctrine and its implications, discussed the doctrine, its history, and implications of its existence.

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

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible to All (A2A)                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Just Peace                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creation Justice                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA)               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming                  | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> God Is Still Speaking (GISS) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other UCC designation: Prison Ministry |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Border and Immigrant Justice | <input type="checkbox"/> Designations from other denominations             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)       |  |

**Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?**

We support both food banks in town and church members provide both money and time to the Prison Ministry at the prison 20 miles south of Ripon.

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

Ripon Area Ministerial Association  
College Clergy Picnic  
Blue Christmas Service  
Good Friday Service  
Baccalaureate

**If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities?**

Our faith is 2,000 years old, but our thinking is not. We believe God is still speaking. We believe we have the opportunity to improve and grow our ministry through a renewed commitment to transformation by applying timeless values to our modern context. We believe our faith endures because it is renewed intellectually, emotionally and at times, intuitively through our church.

We do this through connecting the teachings of Jesus Christ to the lives of the marginalized: people challenged by war, political divisions, rising prices, income disparity, malnourishment, drug abuse, terror, distrust between countries and among neighbors, personal isolation, political incivility, home foreclosures, deadly weather, depression, sexual abuse, the decline of marriage and growth of single-parenthood and families.

**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 seek a pastor who is compelled to embrace the amazing elements of our city and who sees the value in forming community ties and fostering relationships beyond our congregation. To that end, we encourage our pastor to serve not only our congregation but the Ripon community. There are several terrific civic groups in the Ripon that do important work. We hope our pastor will appreciate that this is not only an opportunity to make connections and network but will find volunteerism genuinely rewarding and reinvigorating. We believe that in order to help our church family grow, it is essential that our pastor be socially connected to our community and legitimately interested in, connected to, and engaged with youth.

Our congregation respects that a pastor's workload is multi-faceted and can be uniquely time consuming; we are aware of the balance between serving our church and community and the importance of self-care. We are willing to support our pastor whenever and however we can.

#### **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?**

- 7.2% are non-caucasian and of that, 4.4% are Hispanic.
- 95% speak English at home.
- There's a fairly even split between white collar and blue collar workers in town.
- Almost 33% in the area have an associates, college or graduate work and in the case of those in places like the hospital and college, have their doctorate.
- The number of mother-only households is expected to increase while married and father-only households decrease.
- Over next 10 years, the number of children ages 0 to 4 is expected to increase while the number of older children is expected to drop, then grow again.
- People aged 35+ is expected to grow from 50% to 55%.

**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?**

- Our demographics seem to mirror the area, except that our congregation has a greater percentage with college and advanced degrees (a number of current and retired professors).
- We have an LGBTQ population visible in our church, which might mirror the surrounding area.
- Our largest growth area is definitely in young children and their parents!

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

- Because of the growth in the number of children, we are actively reshaping our education program.
- We may wish to consider how to better minister to single parent families and blended families.

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

- Our church building is regarded as a local landmark - the “church-on-the-hill” - and our history is closely tied to the history of the community as a whole.
- As evidenced by our Open and Affirming vote in January 2019, we are recognized as a welcoming congregation.
- Active in social justice issues.
- A close relationship with Ripon College.
- We are considered one of the more progressive churches in the community.
- Many members are very active in all types of organizations in the community.
- Known to have facilities available for community use.

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

They like the:

- Theology and beliefs of the church.
- Diversity of thought in the congregation.
- Diversity of people.
- Welcoming, friendly and social atmosphere.



## 5. REFERENCES

### REFERENCE 1 DR. BRIAN SMITH

*Chair of the Religion Department at Ripon College;  
Member, St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church (Ripon, WI)*

**PHONE:** (920) 748- 9229 **EMAIL:** [smithb@ripon.edu](mailto:smithb@ripon.edu)

Dr. Brian Smith is a long-time friend of this congregation. Dr. Smith has filled in for past ministers who were absent for short periods of time during his 30+ years at Ripon College.

### REFERENCE 2 KAT GRIFFITH

*Spanish Teacher - Ripon High School  
Quaker - Winnebago Friends Worship Group*

**PHONE:** (920) 748-3923 **EMAIL:** [katgriffith@hotmail.com](mailto:katgriffith@hotmail.com)

Kat Griffith is a community member and friend of this congregation. She has worked on a number of social justice projects with our church over the past 15+ years.

### REFERENCE 3 REV. BEN KONECNY

*Minister of Spiritual Formation and Community Outreach;  
UCC's Next Generation Leadership Initiative participant;  
Minister, First Congregational UCC (Greeley, Colorado)*

**PHONE:** (970) 237-1246 **EMAIL:** [revben@firstconggreeley.com](mailto:revben@firstconggreeley.com)

Rev. Ben Konecny is an ex-Riponite. Rev. Konecny was our Christian Education Director while he was a student at Ripon College.

February 2019

*One area of strength of the First Congregational Church's ministry has been the quality of pastors it has had over the past 30 years.*

*I have lived in Ripon since 1987 and have known (and worked with) all of the past pastors of First Congregational Church during that time – Kathy Carlson, Jack Bixby, Greg Turner, Jack Kraaz, Joanna D'Agostino. What has impressed me about all of them was their solid theological preaching combined with a commitment to social justice. They were not afraid to challenge the congregation to new ministries and outreach into Ripon, while always ministering to the sick, the homebound, the grieving in the congregation.*

*Whoever the new pastor will be now is standing on the shoulders of giants. This is not meant to intimidate, but to remind them of the great traditions this church has had in pastoral leadership. They should be proud to be part of such a tradition and be able to continue it into the next phase of the church's future.*

*One area for improvement (and I say this as Professor of Religion at Ripon College) is to be more imaginative and active on the college campus. The students I teach are hungry for meaning and the new pastor should be someone who can relate to the college campus more actively than past pastors. Having an interfaith chapel open 24/7 is good but this is relatively unknown to students. On campus discussions in the dorms by the pastor and pastoral team could be a way to make the church more visible in the college community, along with more activities at the church that would attract both faculty and students. This is after all the church that helped found the college in 1851 and helped save it from an embarrassing mistake about Darwinism and evolution in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The church should act more as the college's conscience and spiritual guide in the future – without proselytizing or becoming a pain in the neck. The new pastor and church leaders need to give some serious and imaginative thought on how to do this more effectively than has been done in the recent past.*

*I had the unique opportunity of serving as unofficial interim pastor at the church for almost a year in 1994-1995 when the church was in transition in search of a new pastor. It was a moving experience for me to get to know such wonderful people who belong to this church. There is an incredible range of beliefs and outlooks with much tolerance and respect for one another and this inspired me very much. These are good people who have helped sustain the church over many years and also have made very important contributions to the Ripon area. I still am asked periodically to preach when a pastor is away and am humbled and thrilled to do so. Though not of their denomination, the people graciously receive me and I them. I hope to continue this relationship with the church for as long as I live in Ripon.*

-DR. BRIAN SMITH

REFERENCE: DR. BRIAN SMITH

February 2019

*First Congregational Church has a long and storied history that dates all the way back to the early days of Ripon. While the congregation is deeply rooted in the past, it is far from stuck there. Throughout its existence, First Congo has been a warm and welcoming community, open to ongoing growth and transformation. First Congo continues to be the main progressive Christian presence in Ripon and the surrounding area. Its commitment to this identity was recently embodied in the church's vote to become Open and Affirming. This proclamation is a faithful expression of who First Congo has been for a very long time.*

*Because of the church's commitment to being a place of welcome and inclusion, it is a vibrant and thoughtful congregation that has attracted people of different ages, backgrounds, and ways of thinking. As a result, First Congo is currently a place of engagement, energy, and curiosity that and has great potential for continued expansion. An area of ongoing growth for First Congo, as with other progressive churches in more rural areas, is to continue finding ways to be a bold witness for inclusive Christian faith and to connect with those who have been turned-off or marginalized by the dominant expression of Christianity in the surrounding region.*

*I am personally grateful to First Congo for being a supportive place to begin my ministry. While attending Ripon College, I served as the Christian Education Director for the church. The support and encouragement I experienced during my time there was one of the main factors that contributed to my excitement and enthusiasm for doing ministry in the church.*

-REV. BEN KONECNY

REFERENCE: REVEREND BEN KONECNY

February 2019

*I am writing in support of the First Congregational Church's search for a new pastor. I would like to share what I have experienced of this wonderful congregation as a community member.*

*During the last few years, I have been involved in a number of initiatives for social justice. Over and over, I have found that many of those who got involved were members of First Congregational UCC, or the church as a whole showed up with an institutional commitment. The congregation has shown itself eager to learn about a variety of issues, from immigration to white privilege to becoming an LGBTQ affirming congregation to refugee resettlement. I and others have been invited to speak on these and other issues, lead coffee hour discussions, preach, write a bulletin insert, or even start ongoing initiatives.*

*One initiative I can speak to personally is RARA -- the Ripon Area Refugee Association -- which was birthed in Fellowship Hall about three years ago. This group, which included a number of members of the congregation as well as community members, helped settle a Congolese refugee family of nine. Over the course of two years, we set up two apartments, taught a member of the family to drive, helped with transportation to innumerable appointments, made many visits to the family, provided some financial assistance, and hosted a number of festive gatherings to welcome the family more fully. The heavy lifting throughout was done substantially by members of First Congregational, and the church also made a substantial donation to cover some of the beds which had to be purchased for the family.*

*Recently, I was invited to speak informally about the Doctrine of Discovery; the congregation was exploring whether to join the movement to repudiate it formally. Out of an informal coffee hour discussion, enough interest arose to take the next steps towards a possible project. I do not know what the end point will be, but more than half of those in attendance were interested in exploring further, with possibilities including additional education, a workshop, and perhaps outreach to local tribes dispossessed of their lands.*

*Another initiative of the church for which I am grateful is its physical hosting of one of our School District's charter schools. I teach in the high school, and our growing population of at-risk kids is close to my heart as a concern. Our school for at-risk kids is housed in the basement of the church in a pleasant, modern, well-equipped space. It is a wonderful location, a block from downtown, and right next to the Ripon College campus -- a steady source of volunteer tutors and mentors. It is a wonderful arrangement for the District and a true service to the community (not to mention a revenue stream for the church!)*

*The church facility has also been my go-to location for many types of meetings and events. With the beautifully remodeled kitchen and Fellowship Hall, as well as more intimate spaces, it is a venue that can accommodate a wide variety of events. Our high school GSA (Gender and Sexuality Alliance) has had most of its out-of-school meetings at the church,*

**REFERENCE: KAT GRIFFITH**

*and I have had students host several fundraisers there as well, for everything from the Make-A-Wish Foundation to an environmental justice organization in Tijuana. The church also hosts monthly Community Meals. These are well attended, and an important service in a community whose number of children receiving free or reduced-price lunches at school has doubled in the last decade.*

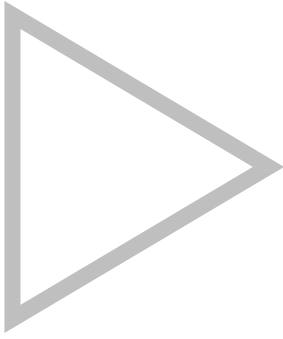
*I belong to a worship group (Quaker) that has chosen not to invest in a building -- we meet in homes. There are many benefits to this form of simplicity, but I will be the first to say that I also greatly admire the enormous commitment Ripon's First Congregational Church has made in having a space that welcomes so many so graciously. I admire all those who had the vision, commitment and courage to make such an investment. And I am very grateful for their generosity to community members who have needs and ideas and initiatives aplenty and need a place to house them!*

*I cannot say enough good things about this congregation. If I were not a committed Friend, I'd sign up at Ripon's UCC in a heartbeat. I am pleased to be a friend of and sometimes collaborator with a church so committed to being a positive and welcoming community institution.*

-KAT GRIFFITH

REFERENCE: KAT GRIFFITH

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## **6. CLOSING THOUGHTS**

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

### **6a. CLOSING PRAYER**

Children bring a light to our church, and our congregation embraces everything about their energetic souls. During every service, the children are called to the front of church for a “children’s moment”. As they head down to the Sunday School rooms after the children’s moment, the congregation sings the following song, which we believe is a particularly meaningful part of our service.

*Strong, gentle children,  
God made you beautiful;  
Gave you the wisdom and power you need;  
Speak in the stillness,  
All you are looking for;  
Live out your calling to love and to lead.*

## **6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT**

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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?**

This profile was created by the Search and Call Committee which consists of Audrey Conant, Tom Konecny (Chair), Mary Lyke, Rachel Minch, Tom Moniz, Lelani Sanchez, and Gary Scholtens, with invaluable input from:

- The Executive Committee
- Faith Formations Committee
- Finance Committee
- Interim Pastor Stephen Welch

### **2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:**

See Addendum/Survey results (below).

Also, if you missed it, we've included some links to videos that give you a sense of our community and the surrounding areas (see *Supplemental Web Links* in Section 1a).

**Signed:**

**Name / Title / Date:**

## 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:** *Rev. Jane B. Anderson*

**Name / Title:** Rev. Jane B. Anderson

**Email:** janderson@wcucc.org

**Phone:** 920-540-2586

**Date:** 2/19/19

## ADDENDUM: Congregation Wide Survey

*In creating this profile, the Search and Call Committee recognized the importance of having as much congregation input as possible. With that in mind, we created a paper survey, a digital survey and held two congregation wide meetings to ensure that every member had an opportunity to offer their insight and opinions. The following are the results of those surveys and meetings.*

**Members were asked to choose their top leadership expectations in list of 43 traits.**

TOP LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS	
1	Is an effective Preacher/speaker
2	Is accepting of people with divergent views
3	Is a person of faith
4	Maintains confidentiality
5	Makes calls on people in hospitals, nursing homes, and those confined to their homes
6 (tie)	Helps people understand and act upon issues of social justice
	Is mature and emotionally secure
7 (tie)	Deals effectively with conflict
	Is a compassionate and caring person
	Is effective in planning and leading worship
	Encourages people to live their faith in their daily lives

How we describe ourselves:	
41%	Moderate to liberal
38%	Liberal
12%	Quite diverse theologically
9%	Moderate

How we describe what has happened in the past:	
58%	In general, lay leaders have a history of strong, cooperative relationships with the pastor
30%	Had some fairly rocky moments but have worked through them
12%	Had some tough times and things did not always work out

Members rated the accuracy of the following sentences about conflict in our church.

<b>We respect and listen to one another. We work things through without generating divisiveness.</b>	
5%	Does not describe us at all
45%	Somewhat describes us
50%	Closely describes us

<b>Painful experience with conflict has been present but worked through and we've learned from it.</b>	
19%	Does not describe us at all
62%	Somewhat describes us
19%	Closely describes us

<b>We try to respect and listen to each other but it is not uncommon for differences to be a problem and for some to choose sides.</b>	
10%	Does not describe us at all
45%	Somewhat describes us
45%	Closely describes us

<b>Some painful experiences with conflict linger in the background.</b>	
18%	Does not describe us at all
64%	Somewhat describes us
18%	Closely describes us

<b>Some have left the church because of conflict.</b>	
1%	Does not describe us at all
71%	Somewhat describes us
28%	Closely describes us

<b>Open conflict is present and we need a minister who can help us deal with it.</b>	
84%	Does not describe us at all
16%	Somewhat describes us
0%	Closely describes us

<b>Conflict hurts unity but we tend to not talk about it.</b>	
2%	Does not describe us at all
97%	Somewhat describes us
1%	Closely describes us

**ADDENDUM: Congregation Wide Survey**

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



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*