

**Woodfords Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
Portland, Maine**

***Prospectus of Woodfords and Portland, Maine***

***Seeking a Designated Pastor for a three-year term***

Woodfords Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is situated on the corner of Beacon and Woodfords Streets in a residential neighborhood of Portland, ME, about a block from Forest Avenue, a main business thoroughfare of the city. Our immediate neighborhood is largely made up of two and three-family unit apartments, although we draw our members from throughout the greater Portland metropolitan area (about 65,000 in Portland, over 510,000 in metro area). Portland is well known as a highly livable and beautiful city, combining an historic working waterfront with easily accessible beaches, islands, and water-related activities. A few minutes' drive inland gives nature lovers access to lovely hikes, lakes, and other venues for physical activities. Portland appears on many "Best of..." lists these days, noted for its livability, being a great place to retire, as a foodie town, and an "adventure destination."



Woodfords Church has designated ourselves a Just Peace Church and are equally proud to of being "Open and Affirming," since 1999. A view from the back of our sanctuary on any given Sunday reveals that a majority of those gathered are middle-aged or retired couples and individuals, with younger families mixed in. We are predominantly Caucasian, but Portland's increasing role as a refugee resettlement city is helping us to become somewhat more diverse—a development we celebrate. Although our state's is not culturally diverse, Portland, as a refugee resettlement city, is. We do have people from many walks of life, and hope that our on-going work on Social Justice issues will augment our diversity. It is notable that we have six or seven retired clergy members, some from other denominations, who are drawn to our community. Our large building includes a classic "six window New England sanctuary," graced with a 2155-pipe Wicks Organ Company three manual console pipe organ and a Steinway grand piano.

There is an attached four-story parish house, with a quaint chapel in between. There are also numerous meeting spaces and generous adjacent parking. While our building supports our worship, education, and mission work, building management claims significant staff time. On

the plus side, our building is structurally sound, elevator accessible, and is heavily used by our mission partners, many of which pay rent, while other groups benefit from free or low-cost use.

A defining characteristic of our congregation is our commitment and loyalty to one another, our church and to the world around us. We are willing to work hard and “pitch in” to tend to God’s own. Even so, Woodfords has an aging congregation that is looking for new ways to focus our energy and dedication. We deeply value our capacity to put into practice what we believe about God’s call and Jesus’ love. Our worship is spirit-filled, opportunities to socialize abound, and we love to laugh together. One of our greatest challenges is that many among us are accustomed to being a much bigger church than we are today. In adjusting our structures and expectations, we know that there are fewer of us to do everything that we seek to do. Having just worked with the Center for Progressive Renewal, we stand resolute, and yet somewhat uncertain, as we prepare to launch ourselves into a future that most likely includes right-sizing our building.

We search for a pastor who can join us in shaping that future, providing both leadership and partnership on the journey. The central characteristics of the pastor for whom we seek include adaptability, a capacity to strengthen our foundation of faith, as well as an administrator who is organized and reliable to their word. We believe that our ongoing vibrancy lies in taking the energy of our community, and helping us to focus it, both within and outside our walls. We are a church with many long-standing members, and a great history of being a “beacon” in Portland. We want to grow that history into our next chapter, and we need someone who can help us shape our vision and path to do so.



Please visit our [website](#) for a look at how we portray ourselves to the community. We love our location in Portland and Maine, and are proud to share some connections to the opportunities that our wonderful small city affords. Websites of interest include the [City of Portland](#), this [article](#) about the US’s most livable cities (Portland is #23), this [Boston Globe](#) article about the local restaurant scene, and this [article](#) about local Microbreweries. Some of the fun things to do in our area include the minor league [Portland Sea Dogs](#) baseball team, as well as the [Maine Red Claws](#) (basketball) and [Maine Mariners](#) (hockey) teams, the [Portland Symphony Orchestra](#), [Portland Stage Company](#), and [Portland Public Library](#). Other cultural

options in town include the [Portland Museum of Art](#), [Children's Museum of Maine](#) and, of course, the [International Cryptozoology Museum](#), and myriad neighborhood groups and organizations.

Portland is within a 75-minute drive of three colleges listed in the national top 75 by Forbes, [Bates College](#) (in Lewiston), [Bowdoin College](#) (in Brunswick), and [Colby College](#) (in Waterville). More local alternatives for advanced education include the [University of Southern Maine](#), [University of New England](#), and [Southern Maine Community College](#). The local economy is driven by major businesses such as L.L. Bean, WEX, UNUM Insurance, Idexx Labs and Hannaford Supermarkets, as well as a strong tourism industry.



Mitch Rosengarten is the Chair of the Woodfords Search Committee. Our contact person at the Maine Conference of the UCC is Rev. Deborah Blood. She can be contacted at [djblood@maineucc.org](mailto:djblood@maineucc.org). We look forward to talking with you.