

# LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE



Plymouth Congregational Church  
Minneapolis, MN

Lead Minister

Minnesota Conference

December 11, 2019

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*"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 work of preparing a Local Church Profile. Through the Profile, the congregation 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 to give attention to questions and exploration of a congregation's vocation, however. 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 as the “Discovery Document,” these three sections can be completed by a visioning group, a governing body, a transition team, or other entity in the church – not just by a search committee – in order to draw forward the gifts and imaginative possibilities of a congregation. The more participants, the better!

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 storytellings and many prayers, and 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.

# POSITION POSTING

LISTING INFORMATION

SCOPE OF WORK

COMPENSATION & SUPPORT

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

## LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: Plymouth Congregational Church

Street address: 1900 Nicollet Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55403

Supplemental web links: [Plymouth.org](http://Plymouth.org)

Additional ecumenical affiliations:

National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC) member

Conference Association:

UCC Minnesota Conference member (Schedule II Status)

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person

Name: Rev. Richard (Rick) Wagner

Title: Associate Conference Minister

Phone: (612) 871-0359

Email: [rickw@uccmn.org](mailto:rickw@uccmn.org)

Summary Ministry Description:

Plymouth is an urban church drawing its membership from across the Twin Cities, rooted in the teachings of Jesus, providing space for people to explore their spiritual paths through rich worship, the arts, and service to the Twin Cities community. Four words form the core of Plymouth's ministry:

**Spiritual:** Creating sanctuary for the soul, seeking the sacred in all ways.

**Loving:** Living out the courageous and compassionate love of Jesus.

**Relevant:** Rooted in our heritage, engaging the ancient teachings to bring them alive today.

**Transforming:** Nourishing and expanding hearts and minds to become the change we want to see in the world.

Through our 160-year history we have fought for justice, led by eloquent and caring senior ministers. We now seek a person to lead within our new team ministry model, to collaborate with staff and congregation in an ongoing exploration of what it means to be a progressive Christian church on the edge of downtown Minneapolis in the 21st Century. Just as the individual spiritual journey is never concluded, we as a church will never fully reach our destination, but our path is marked by our Purposes of the Church, which states, “We, the people of Plymouth Congregational Church, humbly seek and serve God within, among, and beyond ourselves.” As we are able to embody each word of our Purposes, and more fully love each other as we walk together in all of God’s ways, we will know that we are on our way to God’s destination for us.

Photographs:



Plymouth Church, built in 1907



Second service during advent in the Sanctuary.



First Service Rally Sunday in the Sanctuary.





Volunteers completing a service project at 100 Hands.



Members of the Immigrant Welcoming Committee.

What we value about living in our area:

"As a grandmother living close to my two granddaughters there are many things I value about this area. The schools they have attended include a Chinese immersion program in a public school, a Waldorf school and an arts school. We attend the Minnesota Orchestra together and in the past had many excursions to the Minnesota Zoo as well as the Minneapolis Art Institute and much more. In addition we all attend Plymouth and value

and appreciate the ministry, social justice efforts and programming for all ages that we get to share." Mary Kay & Orv Sauter

"We moved from LA to Minneapolis nearly 9 years ago. We were drawn to this Midwestern city that felt metropolitan - much like LA, NY, Chicago - but easier, and more accessible for our family. We didn't anticipate how much we'd love and use the unparalleled bike trails, chain of lakes and park system that Minneapolis has to offer. We were drawn to Minneapolis by the balance of corporate and creative opportunities that suited our respective professions. And though the snow falls early and often, it's amazing to see how this active city embraces and celebrates the weather year round. We chose the SW Minneapolis neighborhood because of friends in the area, the Minneapolis Public Schools, the adjacent neighborhood communities and proximity to downtown. While there are members from the SW Minneapolis area, we've also found that Plymouth draws congregants from across the city as well as surrounding suburbs." The Hugunin Family (Eric, Kelly, Lucy and Clara)

Current size of membership: 1,564

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

Position Title: Lead Minister

Position Duration (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

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 (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

PCC participates in the core UCC national benefits programs, including the retirement, medical, disability and life insurance benefit plans. PCC also targets its benefits contribution levels and salaries in reference to the MN UCC guidelines, practices of other comparable churches, and local nonprofit organizations.



PCC contributes 11% of salary plus housing allowance into the UCC retirement plan, while also contributing 7.65% of relevant compensation for Social Security and Medicare benefits. PCC covers 100% of the cost of UCC Plan B Health Insurance. Time-off benefits include four weeks of vacation each year, 12.5 holidays per year, sick leave, long-term disability, and sabbatical leaves.

**SCOPE OF WORK** *(add here the Scope of Work developed by your church using the Call Agreement Workbook)*

See Attachment #1 for job description.

Core Competencies:

**Ministerial Excellence**

The first and foremost accountability of the Lead Minister is to create and nurture the spiritual health of the church. Excellence in preaching is key as is the ability to support the broad perspectives on spirituality in the congregation. Being able to attract new people to Plymouth and strengthen the commitments of current members will be important.

**Leadership and Management**

Having superb leadership and management skills is a critical success factor given the size and scope of Plymouth Church. The current model of participative leadership is one that we would like to continue and build upon. The ability to lead large teams and manage the physical plant and budget are requirements of the position.

**Social Justice Leadership**

Plymouth has a long history of leadership in social justice and the lead minister must be both passionate about and committed to advancing social justice, both within the church and in the larger community. Ideally our new lead minister will have experience collaborating with leaders of the other churches and organizations on social justice initiatives.

## COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis (*from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance*):

Salary negotiable based on skills and experience.

Benefits (*choose one*):

Salary plus Benefits

What is the expected living situation for your next minister (*e.g. parsonage, living nearby with a housing allowance, living elsewhere to commute as needed*)?

Living in the metropolitan area with a housing allowance.

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

Our metropolitan area provides a wide choice of residence and education resources. It is nationally recognized for its quality of life.

State any incentives (*e.g. school debt reduction or retention bonus after a certain number of years in position*):

No retention incentives are envisioned. We want our ministers to stay because they are enthused about living their faith in the context of PCC and the community.

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

The major support for the Lead minister is the Downtown Clergy monthly meeting which includes the Rabbi/Imam/Lead/Senior minister from Temple Israel, St. Mark's Cathedral, St. Mary's Basilica, Hennepin United Methodist, Westminster Presbyterian, Central Lutheran, Masjid An-Jur and more.

There are additional professional supports available through the Minnesota Conference of the UCC including a clergy cluster, annual clergy retreat, Communities of Practice, and informal peer networks.

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

## WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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

We envision our Lead Minister providing spiritual leadership to our community with a progressive Christian theology that holds the tension between the individual spiritual journey, encountered through all faiths, the arts, justice work, and community connection; and the power and wisdom of our specific faith tradition, which grounds us through Jesus' teachings in covenant as a congregation and as members of the broader Christian church.

We are a community who engages deeply and seeks earnestly. We seek a minister who will inspire us to freely and fully share our gifts, and also help us balance the intellect with joy and connection.

We are an urban church with a membership that looks very different from our immediate neighbors. We seek a minister who will help us to offer radical hospitality to - and strive for justice alongside - our urban neighbors, while continuing to move forward with our existing outreach, as well as caring for and holding space for our current members.

We are a 160-year old church blessed with a large campus - including a food shelf and a 200-seat theater - that has spun off nonprofit organizations through its outreach work, abundant resources, and entrepreneurial spirit. We seek a minister who is excited to explore with us what it means to be a 21st century church, and how best to use our material, human, and spiritual resources in new and innovative ways to serve our immediate and citywide neighbors.

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

Plymouth recognizes the larger shifts happening in Protestant Christian communities across the U.S. In our increasingly multicultural, less connected world, attendance at Sunday services across the country has been dropping for years. We understand that the Plymouth of the future must continually evolve in order to survive and serve God.

Our next minister will work with us to identify what radical hospitality looks like, and help to manage change as our culture inevitably expands and shifts. As Plymouth finds authentic ways to grow in spirit and

mission, the impact outside our walls will be the nurturing of a spiritual and cultural neighborhood hub that provides a safe place for everyone to ask the big questions. They will have a hand in a community that is built across socio-economic, generational, and racial divides.

In addition, we fully intend to continue the good work already being done in housing and homelessness, the arts, environmental justice, immigration advocacy, and LGBTQIA+ affirmation. We have a strong and diverse network with whom we partner, including Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, the Minneapolis Downtown Area Churches, and VocalEssence.

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 require no additional languages. Demonstrated intercultural experience and competence would be a plus.

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.

As followers of the life and teachings of Jesus, Plymouth members are called to follow our individual, unique path to the divine, love our neighbor, and seek justice. We are an action-oriented community with a long history of direct work on behalf of our neighbor. But our drive to make a difference in the world makes us susceptible to losing our spiritual grounding, by focusing too strongly on action and not enough on seeing the grace and spirit of God around us.

We recognize that without strong spiritual guidance, undergirded with a deep historical and theological understanding of the Christian tradition, the fight for justice can lose its sustaining energy and become a mere intellectual exercise. Thus, we seek a lead minister capable of deeply **engaging sacred stories and traditions, exhibiting a spiritual foundation and ongoing spiritual practice.** Our lead minister will model an approach of lifelong spiritual development, and inspire us through mature, prophetic preaching.

When properly grounded, we are a community capable of incredible things. Excitingly, during our current two-year interim period, the

community has engaged more deeply in the long, uncomfortable work of examining the implicit bias that has kept us from becoming better neighbors, and exploring what radical hospitality can look like within our walls and beyond. Our lead minister will join us in **working together for justice and mercy.**

Finally, Plymouth's recent governance changes and switch to a team ministry model call for **building transformational leadership skills.** Our forebearers left us with incredible richness: buildings and grounds on the edge of Downtown Minneapolis, collaborative relationships with diverse organizations in the community, and a healthy endowment. We want to use those gifts to grow our mission and show our community how relevant and positive the Christian Church can be. Our lead minister will have a strategic yet collaborative spirit, intercultural sensitivity, and a growth mindset.

## WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

Our Purposes of the Church document states that “We, the people of Plymouth Congregational Church, humbly seek and serve God within, among, and beyond ourselves.” Our community is comprised of active, engaged spiritual seekers. We have a long history of exploring a wide spectrum of avenues to the divine rooted centrally in the teachings of Jesus, in a dogma-free environment that values each individual’s spiritual path.

The current moment calls us to direct our collective intention toward strengthening two areas in particular. First, our ability to be in conversation with each other as we walk our particular paths, valuing each others’ stories, and always growing the ways in which we are an inclusive community, even in the midst of the inevitable conflicts that arise.

Second, to extend radical hospitality to our immediate neighbors, to seek racial justice, and to work shoulder-to-shoulder and non-hierarchically with marginalized communities in our city.

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

At the beginning of the 2018-2019 church year, Plymouth made a change to our Sunday morning schedule, opening an hour for education and fellowship between our established first and second services. Church staff and leadership made the change in an attempt to better extend hospitality to members who had been forced to choose between attending worship or participating in adult and youth education programming. The 10:00 hour now also serves as an integral time and space for the attendees of the two services to participate in events as one community. The results have been very encouraging: first service has blossomed and grown its more participatory jazz-based format, overall church participation (defined as combined first and second worship attendance and all education offerings) has increased from 532 (average over the 2017 – 2018 church year) to 723 people per Sunday (fall 2019 average), and the energy in the church on Sunday mornings is noticeably higher. To begin the 2019 church year, first service has moved from the chapel to the sanctuary in order to accommodate the rise in attendance,



and our Board of Spiritual Formation and other groups continue to experiment with how to engage our community in spiritually meaningful ways between services.

Plymouth has a long history of social justice work, particularly in the areas of housing insecurity and LGBTQIA+ rights. In recent years we have begun to look inward and examine how our church institution embodies racism, and how we can change our behaviors to end harm we have done. In 2018, in an effort to institutionalize the long-term nature of racial justice work as well as to recognize its importance in how we serve God in the world, Plymouth's Leadership Council changed the Racial Justice Task Force to the Racial Justice Initiative (RJI). Whereas the task force held events and sought to educate individuals about racism, the RJI embeds itself within each board to facilitate conversations about systemic racism in American society, to invite each Board to adopt a racial justice covenant to guide their work, and to explore ways that each board's work can address and dismantle systems of racism and exclusion. Seeing and addressing white privilege is long, uncomfortable work that Plymouth is committed to undertaking, because racial justice is central to where we see Christians called to act in our time.

# WHO ARE WE NOW?

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

11-YEAR REPORT

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

CHURCH FINANCES

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation's life of faith.

Plymouth Congregational Church is a progressive faith community grounded in the Christian tradition. We seek to embody the radical love and justice found in the life, teachings and spirit of Jesus. We provide each other mutual care, and respect each other's diverse understandings of God.

We accept that there are many paths to the sacred and neither expect nor encourage a homogeneous belief system. Providing a safe space for faith exploration and engagement is highly valued.

The words of poets and theologians are valued and shared as part of our worship experience.

We do not frequently reference the Holy Spirit but feel God's spirit is experienced within each person and in covenanted community.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

From its earliest days, Plymouth has embraced an independent voice and resolve to serve as an innovative force for progressive growth. Founded as a frontier congregation on the eve of the Civil War on strong principles of slavery abolition, the church has steadily evolved through its 160 year theological, social and spiritual journey. Through hills and valleys of various challenges, transitions, struggles and achievements, Plymouth has maintained a steady commitment to impacting its community beyond as well as within its walls.

While a large, highly visible, institutionally well established, downtown church, Plymouth is keenly aware of, and not immune to, trends of diminishing church attendance within so-called mainstream Protestant congregations. However, this church generally is blessed not to count significant apathy among its greatest challenges. Plymouth is and persistently has been a congregation of highly engaged, passionately caring and intellectually curious members who value – often insist upon – openness, transparency and thoughtful conversation. Theological dogma is expressly disavowed. Conversations around important congregational decisions are expected. Lay leadership decisions seen to have been inadequately considered are challenged. Members of the congregation care. They disagree. They volunteer. They participate. They celebrate each others' contributions. They extend themselves on behalf of others. In the neighborhood. In the state legislature. In the living room. They are grateful for lay and clerical leaders who challenge their way of thinking, who offer fresh insights and inspiration, who confront impulses of complacency, who listen well, who value tradition as well as discovery as means to discern a path forward.

Plymouth's is a restless congregation. Devoted to pursuit of the divine, wherever evident; however elusive. Determined to confront injustice in all its manifestations. This is what makes Plymouth at times daunting. This is what makes Plymouth strong.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Our First Service attracts an intergenerational audience who respond to a participatory, more casual, jazz-centric worship style. In First Service we pass the peace, welcome the joyful presence of children, offer prayers of the people, and are led in song and worship by families, children from the Church School, and our Chapel Singers, an intergenerational choir with a modern repertoire.

Because of the growing interest in this more contemporary approach to worship, the First Service outgrew the Chapel and now meets in the Sanctuary. The average attendance is 100.

Our Second Service provides a more traditional worship setting that includes exceptional preaching, a stellar choir, renowned organist and choirmaster, and scripture and other readings offered by clergy and lay participants. The Second Service's hymns, anthems and offertory music are a blend of ancient, classical and contemporary composers. Attendance averages between 350 and 400, with a lively mixture of ages. Children can be seen participating occasionally or enjoying the Activity Packets offered to them by the ushers as they enter the service.

Baptism and communion may be offered at both services. The week's sermon is preached at both services by a member of our clergy team or a guest preacher. We value relevant, prophetic, pastoral, inspiring, informative, spiritually enriching, humorous and biblically grounded sermons.

In addition to the First and Second Services, a loosely structured time of meditation and reflection is held between the two worship services.

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

Plymouth Congregational Church is a community with a strong education emphasis with diverse programs for people of all ages. Overseen by the Board of Spiritual Formation, our programs can be best viewed through three lenses: children/youth programs, adult spiritual exploration and the intergenerational Sundays @ 10. Necessarily, children and youth continue to be more involved in the life of the church every year. Over the last decade, and strongly over the last 3 years, young people's roles have changed from being more performative to becoming imperative to the life of the church. Young people serve on some boards and committees, are trained to be welcome ambassadors for new visitors, run many charitable drives during the year, give fellowship concerns, and are part of focus groups to drive church decisions. Both the Minister for Spiritual Formation and the Programs Manager consistently try to amplify the voices of our young people as it relates to the future of the church.

Young people are most present at Plymouth during Sunday morning Church School and our Wednesday night Children + Youth

Arts programs. Our current Church School curriculum is all created in-house by our Programs Manager and the focus is to actively encourage children and young people to: 1) develop spiritual curiosity 2) create community within their class, among their fellow church goers and out in the world and 3) engage in meaningful action towards a more just society. Curriculum for ages 3-grade 5 ties closely to the weekly message in worship and consists of 5 segments: the Message, its Meaning, a Movement activity and an opportunity to Make something to deepen the meaning and application of the Message and More, a way to take the message out into the world and share it with others. Our 6th and 7th graders are focused on the world outside the church walls and they look critically at social issues and how they can be active participants in their communities.

Our confirmation program is a program for 8th graders. The intent is to have a formalized year of practice in defining what they believe in, what motivates them and how they see their place in the world. With the understanding that humans continually reassess what they believe to be meaningful, this program walks students through many people's belief systems culminating in a What I Believe Now statement.

Senior high is a 4 year program that focuses on: Cementing positive relationships among the young people and those around them, Awareness of their privilege and how to use it to benefit others, Teen issues that do not always receive enough focus in busy academic focused school today (such as mental health, relationships and sexuality), and How to apply spirituality to their daily life.

Over the years at Plymouth, like many mainline protestant churches, there has been a marked drop in children and youth participation, but we are currently on an upswing of attendance and membership, as well as more consistency with people coming every week, all of which helps build friendships and makes church more enjoyable for the young people.

Our adult Spiritual Exploration programs are rooted in book studies, workshops and retreats that take place outside of the

Sunday morning gathering times. Recent subjects have been: Celtic spirituality, racial justice, contemplative practices, non-violent communication, living water, and other means of integrating spiritual practices into daily life.

Between our two worship services on Sunday mornings, we have a 50-minute education and fellowship time called Sundays @ 10. Here we have coffee/tea service in two fellowship areas along with Church School and several adult and intergenerational opportunities. Consistently we offer a space for meditation and contemplative prayer, a Sunday Forum with guest speakers on important contemporary issues, a Biblical text study with the day's preacher and a rotating series of discussion-based salons on topics such as racial justice, environmental justice and radical hospitality.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

#### **MINISTERIAL STAFF**

In addition to the Lead Minister, the ministerial leadership team at Plymouth includes two other ministerial positions:

##### Minister for Congregational Care and Worship

The primary roles are to provide pastoral care to members of the congregation and to coordinate and plan worship. This position is also the clergy support for many significant ministries, including the Befrienders, Board of Community Life, Mortality Project, Faith Partners in Recovery and the Board of Worship.

##### Minister of Spiritual Formation and Theater

This position is responsible for all programming for the children and youth ministry. It is the liaison to the Board of Spiritual Formation and its committees as well as the Theater Committee, and Racial Justice Initiatives.

#### **LAY LEADERSHIP**

Plymouth Church has two lay leadership bodies that oversee and govern the work of the church, the Deacons and the Leadership Council.

##### Deacons

Made up of nine elected members, the Deacons work in concert with the clergy to provide legal, fiduciary and spiritual leadership and articulate



the future visioning for the church. The Deacons engage in regular conversation with the Congregation to serve and listen. The Deacons ensure the church fulfills its mission and ministry with effective use of resources

The Deacons are led by a Moderator, who serves as the senior lay leader of the church. The group of nine also includes the Treasurer, the senior lay leader responsible for the financial oversight of Plymouth.

### Leadership Council

Chairs of the six boards, clergy, three officers (Chair, Chair-Elect, and Secretary) and the church archivist make up the Leadership Council, which is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the church.

The Leadership Council fulfills the following functions:

- Collaborate to address priorities identified by the Deacons
- Guide operational work and address operational issues of the church
- Establish specific task forces and cross-functional groups to address operational issues, concerns or new activities (e.g. Transition Planning Task Force, Growth Task Force).
- Through the various Boards, deepen connections between individuals within the church by developing groups that explore opportunities for service and fellowship.

The six Boards are: Community Life, Finance and Administration, Fine Arts, Outreach, Spiritual Formation, and Worship.

Each Board has a number of vibrant committees and working groups who advance the work of the Board. The committees and groups are the energy of the church; members engage in service and fellowship that promote the identity and unifying mission of Plymouth

### Congregation

The Congregation holds the ultimate decision-making authority for the church. The congregation has the following responsibilities:

- Live in all relationships according to the teachings of Jesus
- Share in the fellowship of the wider church
- Attend worship faithfully

- Contribute toward the financial support of the church
- Approve Officers, Deacons, Leadership Council Officers and Board Chairs, who are the members
- Calling and releasing ministers
- Approving denominational affiliation
- Approving church merger or changes in church legal structure, changes in church name, selling church property

This governance structure was instituted in December of 2014. The Boards are empowered to make and implement decisions within their areas of accountability. Significant Board recommendations are approved by the Leadership Council. In practice, the Deacons and Leadership Council work collaboratively to advance the mission and work of the church. Generally the Deacons, Leadership Council, Boards, Committees and Task Forces each meet once a month.

Decisions that require a congregational vote are addressed at the annual meeting in June or a special meeting of the congregation, pending a three-week notice of a special meeting.

Plymouth has a robust communication system. Every Friday an email is distributed to members and other subscribers with a ministerial message, description of upcoming events and activities and other significant news of the church. In addition, there is an insert in the Sunday worship program and a monthly newsletter. Information is also distributed through Plymouth's website and social media channels.

When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?

Lay leaders spend 2-5 hours in meetings per month, depending on their leadership role.

Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?

In recent history we have not faced a disaster or crisis requiring quick action. Should such a situation arise our Lead Minister has broad authority to deal with personnel or building issues. Beyond that a likely scenario would have the ministry team and moderator in conversation and quickly engage the Leadership Council Chair. Collaboratively a strategy would be articulated and our governance gives the Deacons and

Boards authority to make decisions (Decisions reserved for a congregation vote would unlikely be crisis driven).

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

# 11-YEAR REPORT

<b>FY Financials</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>Income</b>							
<b>Total Income</b>	\$ 2,316,195	\$ 2,363,464	\$ 2,341,869	\$ 2,423,594	\$2,537,087	\$2,617,697	\$2,277,512
<b>Pledges and Offerings</b>	\$ 1,717,862	\$ 1,800,577	\$ 1,829,602	\$ 1,856,711	\$2,011,460	\$1,954,108	\$1,906,721
<b>Endowments</b>							
<b>Bequests</b>	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 124,310	\$ 405,086	\$234,880	\$71,425	\$325,000
<b>Deferred Gifts</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Endowment</b>	\$ 2,991,540	\$ 3,739,940	\$ 4,578,601	\$ 4,043,269	\$4,765,141	\$4,960,774	\$5,222,066
<b>Expenditures</b>							
<b>UCC Annual Support</b>	\$ 540	\$ 5,400	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,300	\$8,300	\$10,300	\$10,300
<b>Other UCC Giving</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$10,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
<b>Other Support</b>	\$ 193,289	\$ 193,990	\$ 227,371	\$ 236,500	\$257,500	\$235,500	\$262,100
<b>Capital Payments</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200,000	\$200,000	\$177,798	\$0
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	\$ 2,324,506	\$ 2,227,845	\$ 2,165,267	\$ 2,163,093	\$2,162,907	\$2,236,634	\$2,104,571
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>			
	\$2,368,695	\$2,103,531	\$2,232,288	\$2,194,027			
	\$2,100,298	\$1,932,911	\$1,825,851	\$1,751,448			
	\$275,120	\$42,427	\$334,513	\$0			
	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
	\$5,241,061	\$5,870,870	\$6,399,604	\$6,859,774			
	\$10,300	\$10,300	\$10,300	\$10,300			
	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000			
	\$170,500	\$165,500	\$175,128	\$166,164			
	\$999,774	\$0	\$0	\$118,066			
	\$2,218,255	\$1,940,678	\$2,052,578	\$1,972,231			

\* The reported figures reflect total invested funds available to support Church operations. Of these funds, only a small proportion are subject to the strictures of literal "endowment". For example, within the \$6.8 million shown here for 2019, roughly \$1.3 million are literal "endowment."

\*\* See Attachment #2 for additional church budget information.

## CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate?</i>
Number of active members:	1200	Yes
Number of active non-members:	400	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	1600	Yes

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	69.1%	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	20.2%	
Less than 5 years:	10.7%	

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Age Unknown	<i>Are these numbers an estimate?</i>
150	100	100	150	200	250	250	400	-	Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	3.8%	
Joint household with minors:	15.5%	
Single adults age 35-65:	8.5%	
Joint household with no minors:	35.3%	
Single adults over 65:	17.2%	

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	5	Yes
College:	35	Yes
Graduate School:	60	Yes
Specialty Training:		
Other (please specify):		

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:	35%	Yes
Adults who are not fully employed:	20%	Yes

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

A range of occupations and professions are represented within our congregation.

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?

With a 5% non-white membership, Plymouth is not a racially diverse congregation, which presents a challenge and an opportunity. Over the years, our understanding of what it means to be a church with radical hospitality has broadened and deepened. Extending beyond helping others and doing good, we are being challenged to critically examine our individual and collective bias and blindness and to do something about it.



List the date your congregation has had or will have a conversation using a resource such as the Welcoming Diversity Inventory. Comment on the results.

Plymouth has a Racial Justice Initiative, which was created in January of 2015. The members of the Plymouth RJI took the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) in 2017. Also, in 2017 over 250 Plymouth members went through an intensive workshop on White Privilege facilitated by Workingbetter2gether.

Plymouth has not used the Welcoming Diversity Inventory throughout the congregation. However, recently members of the Initiative took the WDI and it became clear that there was much work that still needs to be done. It is important to point out that since its inception in 2015 the work that the RJI has been doing has focused primarily on what it means to be white, and how white dominant culture has oppressed people of color. For the past four years the Racial Justice Initiative has sponsored numerous workshops, book discussions, and other activities on racism, White Privilege and White Supremacy.

## PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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

\*Averages for the 2018 - 2019 church year.

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	475	Board of Spiritual Formation; Minister for Spiritual Formation and Theater
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	6	Ministers, Board of Worship
Children's Groups or Classes	162	Board of Spiritual Formation; Minister for Spiritual Formation and Theater, Programs Manager
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	Christmas: 1476 Easter: 950	Ministers, Organist-Choirmaster, Board of Worship
Church-wide Meals		
Choirs and Music Groups	106	Organist-Choirmaster; Board of Spiritual Formation; Minister for Spiritual Formation and Theater; Directors of Youth, Cherub, and Chorister Choirs, Director of Handbells, Director of Chapel Singers
Church-based Bible Study		
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	First Service: monthly; Second Service: 6 times a year	Ministers, Board of Worship
Community Meals	Third Sunday meal: 118 average monthly attendance	Board of Outreach

Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	6	Board of Spiritual Formation; Minister for Spiritual Formation and Theater
Drama or Dance Program	10	Board of Spiritual Formation; Minister for Spiritual Formation and Theater; Director of Alleluia and Genesis Dancers
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	15	Ministers, Board of Worship, Memorial Committee
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship		
Prayer or Meditation Groups	20 weekly	Ministers, Lay Leaders
Public Advocacy Work	699	Ministers, Outreach Coordinator, Lay Leaders
Retreats	included in first item	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	included in first item	
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	5	Ministers, Ministry Assistant for Hospitality, Wedding Coordinators
Worship (time slot: 9AM)	110 weekly	Ministers, Board of Worship, First Service Music Director
Worship (time slot: 11AM)	400 weekly	Ministers, Organist-Choirmaster, Board of Worship
Young Adult Groups or Classes	not separated from first item	
Youth Groups or Classes	not separated from third item	
Other		

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-Way or Four- Way Covenant?	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Bob Albers				Y
Tara Bauer	4	U.S. Air Force	Military Chaplain	N
Nadean Bishop				Y
Kevin Carr				Y
Steve Daniel				Y
Chuck Dudingston				Y
Catherine Duncan	4	Spiritual Director	Chaplain	N
Jennifer Eagleman	4	U of M Hospital	Chaplain	N
Julie Neraas				Y
Kathleen Galvin				Y
Richard Gerber				Y
Alan Gordon				Y
Chuck Grose				Y
Jane Henderson				Y
Karl Jones	4	HealthEast Hospital	Chaplain	N
Carol Joyce				Y
Herb Laube				Y

Art Lunow				Y
Don McKenzie				Y
Bob Parsonage				Y
John Roschen				Y
Mary Kay & Orv Sauter				Y
Pat & Tony Stoneburner				Y
Parker Trostel				Y
Gretchen Thompson				Y

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:

No formal roles beyond membership.

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
Acting Sr Minister	Yes	Full Time	Deacons	2 yrs in current role, 14 years as a minister at Plymouth
Business Administrator		Full Time	Lead Minister	2 yrs
Audio Techs		Part Time	Communications Director	10 yrs
Minister for Congregational Care		Full Time	Lead Minister	2 yrs in current role, 2 years as transitional minister
Organist and Choirmaster		Full Time	Lead Minister	50 yrs
Minister Assistant for Program		Full Time	Minister for Congregational Care	13 yrs
Accounting Manager		Full Time	Business Adm	9 yrs

Director of Communication		Full Time	Lead Minister	8 yrs
Religious Ed Program Manager		Full Time	Spiritual Formation Director	1 yr
Spiritual Formation Director*		Full Time	Lead Minister	3 yrs
Ministry Assistant of Hospitality		Full Time	Business Adm	20 yrs
Public Safety Manager		Full Time	Business Adm	9 yrs
Handbell Director		Part Time	Choirmaster	1 yr
Youth Choir Director		Part Time	Choirmaster	2 yrs
Child Care (2)		Part Time	Religious Ed	1 yr
Outreach Coordinator		Part Time	Lead Minister	1 yr
Drop-In Coordinator		Part Time	Minister for Congregational Care	11 yrs
Custodians (4)		Full Time	Business Adm	1 - 10 yrs

\*This position has been restructured as Minister for Spiritual Formation and Theater and a search to fill this position is underway.

## REFLECTION

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

We know that the strength of Plymouth's choral music program, paired with high quality, thought provoking preaching, have been the primary entry points for many over the past 50 years. Our participation numbers in outreach and social justice activities, as well as the high percentage of our membership who have attended for ten years or more, attest to the fact that, once people have found Plymouth and heard its message, they find a multitude of reasons to stay and engage.

It is also noteworthy that, after a decline in church school participation, over the past two years the program has been infused with a renewed sense of energy and mission, and participation has doubled.

## CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$1,751,449
Endowment Proceeds* ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	\$0
Endowment Draw* ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i> )	\$0
Fundraising Events	\$0
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$399,456
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$237,291
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$0
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts**	\$205,287
Other (specify):	\$0
Other (specify):	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,593,483</b>

\*Per consistent practice, earnings on the "Endowment" account (see footnote at page 20) were not spent but were instead simply transferred to the Legacy Investment account.

\*\* This reflects a slightly less than 4% draw on the Legacy Investments account, used to support budgeted spending.

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year):  
\$2,239,0337



*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.*  
See Attachment #2.

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

12% Payroll and Benefits

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)*

- ☒ 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? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? *(recommended 10%)*

Operating Budget decided by the Finance Board

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: \$.00

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.

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result
2014	Building, Growth, and Outreach	\$7,125,000	\$4,926,000

The primary purposes of the campaign were to fund building projects (including roof repairs and the installation of a fire sprinkling system), strengthen Plymouth's endowment, and support outreach initiatives. Though falling short of the ambitious, aspirational goal, it achieved its primary purposes.

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
N/A		\$	\$	
		\$	\$	

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

N/A

Does your church have an endowment?

Yes, we have Legacy invested funds, plus endowment.

What is the market value of the assets?

Strict "endowment" assets amount to \$1,270,000; total Legacy Invested funds, reported on page 24, are significantly greater.

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

As needed.

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)?

3.5% last year / 3.5% 5 years ago

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

To balance Operating Budget Expenses.

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

Indefinitely. The 4% draw on Legacy Investments is set to be at or below the average long term rate of return, and the principal amount of true "endowment" funds are never spent.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

Earnings on the endowment fund are not spent; they are simply transferred to Legacy Investments. Draws used to support annual spending are drawn from the Legacy investments, generally at or below the 4% level. All estimates are contingent on the market.

#### Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$

Investments (other than endowment): \$ 5,187,993

Does your church have a parsonage? No

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

The church was built in five projects. The main building with its granite and brick exterior and classic sanctuary dates to 1907. In 1948, a library and chapel were added, and in 1968, the central office, church school, and Howard Conn Fine Arts Theatre (art gallery and theater) were completed. In 1994, the Jones Commons, a large, central entry to the church was finished. Finally, in 2005 an expanded education and office wing was erected to better serve children and youth programming and provide expanded and more efficient office space. The total space is 100,000 square feet, and with the adjacent parking lot, occupies the entire city block.

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:

None

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? (*worship space, pulpit, fellowship space, facilities, etc.*)

All Worship, Fellowship, and Office areas are wheelchair accessible.

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

While resources are never taken for granted, the core truth is that Plymouth continues to be fiscally stable, through its annual offerings and pledges and careful management of invested assets. The consistent level of annual giving demonstrates the congregation's support of church initiatives within its walls as well as in the community. Furthermore, when special needs are identified, the congregation has responded, as demonstrated by the most recent Capital Campaign. This campaign was triggered in significant part by adversities experienced during the recession and recognition that draws on invested assets needed to be reduced to historical (no more than 4% draw) conservative norms. This successful campaign was undertaken simultaneously with uncertainties inherent in the impending departure of a long-tenured Senior Minister and the adoption of a new governance structure. In this challenging context, almost \$5 million was raised to assure needed stewardship of existing church facilities, strengthening of invested assets and support of outreach and growth initiatives. Overall, Plymouth members have demonstrated by their actions and financial giving that they are committed to the church's mission and future.

## HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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.

Plymouth's commitment to social justice is foundational. The very first minister, through whom the church was founded, was removed in 1859 by the congregation after just two years of service because the congregation was dissatisfied with his failure to speak out sufficiently in support of abolition. His replacement was recruited from the then-distant town of Stillwater squarely because of his prominence as such a spokesman, who not only preached passionately on the subject but also had acted on his deep personal commitment by providing his own home as a stop on the underground railroad.

One example of congregational initiative that has both reflected and shaped Plymouth's more recent history is the creation of a venture seeking to reduce and eventually eliminate homelessness throughout Minneapolis and the surrounding metropolitan area. In 1999, Plymouth members and clergy created the Plymouth Church Neighborhood Foundation (PCNF), a 501c(3) with offices off-site, so they could apply for and receive grants. Awarded a two year 'program grant to redevelop part of a community,' PCNF researched and eventually chose to purchase, in 2001, a former nursing home on LaSalle Avenue which they named Lydia House. PCNF converted this building to a 40-unit apartment building for adults with mental health, chemical dependency or HIV/Aids issues. Of prime importance was working with Simpson Housing Services to provide in-house social services to the residents. PCNF's consistent focus was providing permanent supportive housing: not a group home, not a treatment center, not transitional housing, not a shelter. The PCNF board included Plymouth members with extensive experience in housing management and housing development. The board worked with community agencies to develop referral sources. 2001 was a year of community protests, city council meetings, fund raising, picketing of church property and much work to demonstrate community support. Lydia House opened in November 2003 and has since been renamed Lydia Apartments. PCNF was successful in raising funds and involving more faith communities with other projects. In 2012, because of their size and reach, PCNF became what is now Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative involving over 100 congregations. Beacon has grown to be a nonprofit developer with a budget of about \$8M a year, and a staff of 35. Beacon owns and manages 19 properties, houses about 700 families and individuals and raises about \$3M annually from individual donors. All of this started with a small number of Plymouth members and clergy who lacked significant funding but were driven to surmount myriad political and financial hurdles to make change in the community.

Perhaps the most galvanizing congregational initiative of the past ten years has been the decision, in 2012, to take a stand, as a church, in opposition to a statewide ballot proposal to constitutionally forbid gay marriage. Standing on a proud tradition of respect for individual conscience, church members nonetheless broke ground by this decision to embrace, on select occasions such as this, the concept of institutional social action. By this step, the church not only expressed a public position on this issue central to its members' core values but also held

weekly services on Sunday evenings, led by church clergy and prominent outside voices, throughout the electoral campaign, to support LGBT and straight members and nonmembers alike, as they undertook to navigate the rough waters of intolerant political discourse. A dramatically successful election result capped this richly positive experience.

Through these and many other actions, past and present, Plymouth has undertaken to freshly discern and live out its sense of the teachings and example of Jesus in the modern world. These transforming milestones mark a continuing journey to see and experience God in the relationships which bless our life together and the opportunities of learning and service we seek.

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

Our shift to policy governance was approved by congregational vote almost five years ago and this change has had a significant impact on the life of the congregation. We now have governing bodies that have authority to make decisions and as a result, we are more nimble and able to take action. We have increased the number of servant leaders, increased collaboration among boards and with clergy and lay leadership, there is more accountability, and we are getting more done. We were able to change our Sunday morning worship schedule, grow our first service, and reach out in new ways to the underserved in our community with programs initiated by members. This is in contrast to the previous undefined system, with no stated policies, one identified lay leader and boards with little decision making authority. There was little transparency in the "who" or "how" of decision making.

The most significant outcome of this change is the adoption of the Purposes of the Church (see Attachment #3), which have taken a very important role in being a touchstone or measure for every new endeavor and examining the old. We have something that is concise and clear that guides us and unifies us as a church body to seek and serve God with humility.

The shift to more representative governance, where elected bodies (The Deacons and Leadership Council) have authority and power to make some decisions without a congregational vote, is an adjustment and we continue to improve ways to engage members in dialogue. The new

governance with transparency, good process and high participation can guide us to address more controversial issues, rather than ignore them.

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.

Our Purposes document is the foundation to which we return in times of conflict because it holds our core values: to love each other, to seek the sacred, to live in hope of renewal and transformation, to advance human rights and justice, to care for one another. Our covenant urges us to stay in contact with each other even in moments of discomfort, with the understanding that we are loved even in disagreement.

Of course, we are a large community with diverse beliefs, and conflict can be painful. But we go to great lengths to hear all voices, and we seek out educational resources for the congregation when a voice from outside of our prevailing experience is not being recognized or understood. We give conversations time to breathe and discern together where God is calling us to go.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/No)
Paula Northwood, Acting Senior Minister Associate Minister	2017 – Present 2003 – 2017	Y
Beth Hoffman Faeth, Minister for Congregational Care and Worship	2017 – Present	Y
Daniel Wolpert, Interim Minister	2018 – 2019	Presbyterian
Jeffrey Sartain, Associate Minister, Executive Minister	2001 – 2017	Y
Catherine Crooks, Minister for Congregational Care	2005 – 2017	United Church of Canada
Carla J. Bailey, Senior Minister Associate Minister	2015 – 2017 1983 – 1988	Y
Gary Smith, Interim Senior Minister	2015	Y
James C. Gertmenian, Senior Minister	1996 – 2015	Y

Tara Bauer, Lilly Minister*	2011 – 2013	Y
John Edgerton, Lilly Minister*	2009 – 2011	Y
Brandon Perrine, Lilly Minister*	2007 – 2009	Y
Malcolm Himschoot, Lilly Minister*	2005 – 2007	Y
Sarah Griffith, Associate Minister for Outreach	2003 – 2005	Disciples of Christ
Susan (Eli) Elliott, Associate Minister for Faith and Learning	2003 – 2005	Y
Coqui Conkey, Interim Minister of Children, Youth, and Families	2002 – 2003	Y
Virginia Rickeman, Minister for Outreach	1992 – 2003	Y
Karen O’Connell, Director of Children’s Programs Associate Minister for Children, Youth, and Families	1993 – 2002	Y
Peg Pfab, Interim Minister for Pastoral Care	2001	
Susan Thornton, Associate Minister of Pastoral Care	1995 – 2001	
Edwin J. Eilertsen, Interim Senior Minister	1995 – 1996	
Paul Johnson, Associate Minister for Children, Youth and Families	1993 – 1996	
Vivian Jones, Senior Minister	1980 – 1995	
Martha Gustafson (Hendricks), Associate Minister for Pastoral Care	1989 – 1995	
Lois Vetvick, Assistant Minister, Minister of Outreach	1988 – 1992	Y
David Carter Florence, Associate Minister for Children, Youth, and Families	1990 – 1993	
David Lord, Associate Minister	1988 – 1989	
Helen McEvoy-Freese, Interim Minister for Pastoral Care	1989	

\*Residency program

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



Our congregation appreciates the spiritual leadership our ministers provide. It was evident in the 13-part series on the Theology of the Purposes of the Church led by 3 of our ministers. Their message was that the Purposes are more potent when we understand the theological connections. Leadership expressed through sermons that stir the soul and engage the intellect are highly valued as well as leadership in helping us to transform Faith into Action. Our ministers collaborate with our lay leaders on the Leadership Council and Deacons, and they are also spiritual guides to help our leaders make decisions that further our aspiration to be a loving, spiritual, relevant, and transforming community. We have also seen that a collaborative style works well and empowers us to share our gifts. That is true in the relationship with ministers and the congregation and lay leaders and among the ministers. As a result, we have transitioned from a more hierarchical Senior Minister model to a more collaborative one with a ministry team and Lead Minister.

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

Yes

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

No

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

No

## WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

COMMUNITY VISION

MISSION INSITE

### COMMUNITY VISION

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

Plymouth has a deep and abiding passion for both community and global ministry, lived out on small and large scales. Plymouth has long established in-house community outreach programs such as

the weekly Drop-In Center for adults with mental illness and disabilities, Groveland Food Shelf, and Third Sunday Meal (augmented by bike repair, donations of toiletries and essentials, resource information).

Neighborhood groups share our space. 12-Step groups, Academia Elze (Spanish Immersion charter school), Stevens Square Neighborhood Association, zAmya Theater, VocalEssence, and Groveland Food Shelf either rent or have rent-free arrangements.

Through volunteerism we support over 20 organizations, including Habitat For Humanity, Meals on Wheels, Gun Violence Prevention Group, Climate and Environmental Justice, Rental Assistance through a collaboration with downtown churches, Immigrant Welcoming Committee, Lydia Apartment Connections, American Indian Initiative, Sew Good Goods, Simpson Partners, and Whittier School Volunteers (Tutoring).

Weekly during the program year, we invite families and individuals to participate in a project called 100 Hands where we do a variety of service projects for our neighbors from repackaging food for our food shelf, making sandwiches for the local shelter or taking hot drinks outside in the cold to people waiting at the bus shelter.

On a larger scale, Plymouth members founded Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative and continue to participate at a high level on projects such as recently-completed Great River Landing which will house and support 72 formerly incarcerated men. Plymouth also supports Families Moving Forward - another of Beacon's initiatives - where homeless families are housed in our education wing and cared for by church volunteers for one-week stints twice per year.

Our Global missions support a connection with a church in Cuba, A clinic in India (International Village partners) and a program in Sierra Leone (One Village Partners) which also had its beginnings at Plymouth.

Our current transformational engagement has been the development of our Radical Hospitality committee which is exploring ways to offer extravagant welcome to our neighbors in need.

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

Clergy and lay members have been involved in the Minnesota Conference. Our clergy have been on the Board of Directors, Chair of the Pilgrim Point Camp Committee, and members of the Committee on Ministry. Plymouth members have attended the Annual Conference and served on MN Conference committees.

Check all of the following "statements of witness" that apply to your UCC faith community. (Find more information on these statements at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).)

- ☐ Accessible to All (A2A)
- ☒ Creation Justice
- ☐ Economic Justice
- ☐ Faithful and Welcoming
- ☐ God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
- ☒ Immigrant Welcoming
- ☒ Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)
- ☐ Just Peace
- ☐ Global Mission Church
- ☒ Open and Affirming (ONA)
- ☐ WISE Congregation for Mental Health
- ☐ Other UCC designations:
- ☐ Other similar designations in affiliated 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?

Because we are Schedule II members of the UCC, we have not made formal "Statement of witness" with the exception of the Open and Affirming statement. However, we have active commitments to accessibility, creation justice, Immigrant Welcoming, Racial Equity and Global Missions. Theologically, the church would support the intent of the statements of witness.

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

Our congregation has been very active in Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative. We have hosted and participated in ecumenical worship services with other downtown churches, synagogues and mosques. We have created interfaith educational experiences with many other religious groups such as the Zen Buddhist Center, Temple Israel and area Mosques.

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.

Mission Statement: "The people of Plymouth Congregational Church humbly seek and serve God within, among, and beyond ourselves." This mission statement is fleshed out in the Purposes of the Church (See Attachment #3).

Plymouth Church is governed by the Deacons and 6 boards, each board has from 5-20 active committees. Over half of these 60 plus committees function outside of the church in the neighborhood. The congregation is a group of committed people who strive to deepen their faith perspective so that they can put their faith into action and minister to each other and the community in transforming ways.

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?

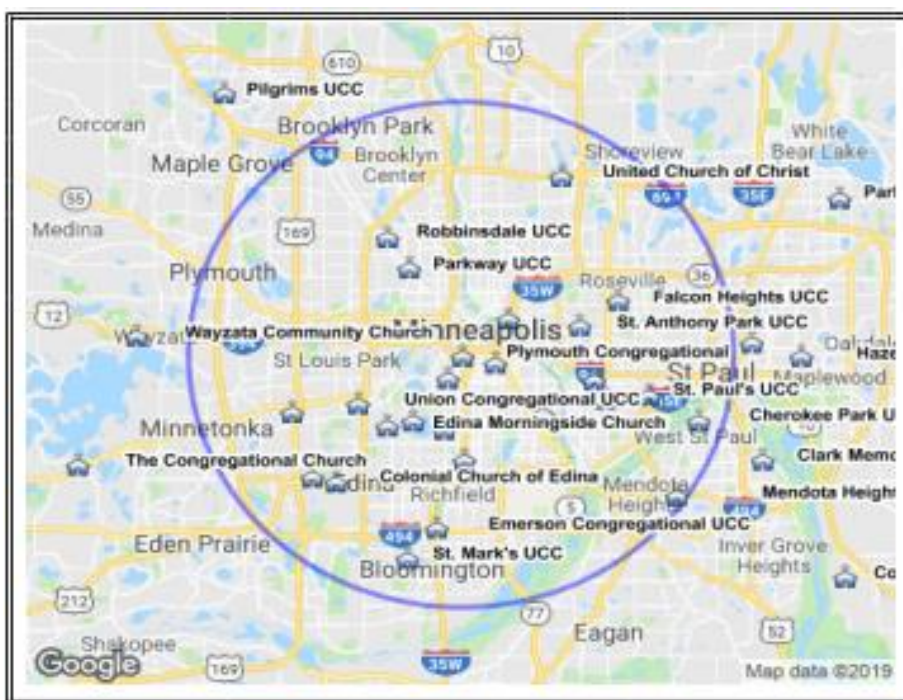
Plymouth Church has been very supportive of their pastor's involvement in the Minnesota UCC conference and committees, neighborhood and regional committees and organizations that align with Plymouth's mission. Former pastors have been on the Board of Directors for United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities.

There is travel money available and some workload support for wider church involvement.

## MissionInSite

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

Plymouth is a destination church pulling members from over 106 cities in the Greater Twin Cities Area. However, according to the church registry, almost 70% of the households that attend Plymouth are concentrated in 5 cities (Minneapolis 44%, St. Paul 10%, Edina 7%, Golden Valley 4%, St. Louis Park 3%). Below is a general representation of where Plymouth draws the majority of its members in relationship to other UCC churches in the area.



Plymouth's demographics mirror the age trends seen at like UCC churches in our area: 40% of our members are over the age of 65, and 30% are below age 34.

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?

Plymouth is located in the Stevens Square neighborhood of the Central community in Minneapolis. The racial demographics of the neighborhood are as follows: In 2019, 58% White, 21% Black/African American, 11% Latinx, 4% Asian, and 5% other ethnicities. Contrary to this, Plymouth is

95% White. Current initiatives within the church such as the Racial Justice Initiative and the Growth Task Force work to expand the church's reach into the surrounding community. Although the scope of people at the church come from a wide area, only 7% of the households at the church come from the adjacent communities. It truly is an opportunity for Plymouth to increase its membership within local area (within 1 mile of the church). This would both expand and racially diversify the church going population. The hope for the future is to develop a community that is warm and accepting to all people, especially those who we consider our neighbors.

Along those lines, Plymouth has greatly supported socio-economic support programs in the area. The MissionInsite report indicates that the average household income in the area is \$66,246. In addition, Plymouth founded what is now Groveland Food Shelf and launched the Plymouth Neighborhood Foundation, now named Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative. Through Beacon, Plymouth has had the opportunity to work with other surrounding churches to support housing in the surrounding area.

How are the demographics of the community currently shaping ministry, or not? As a progressive congregational church, the community demographics that have shaped our ministries most significantly include: families with children, the LGBTQIA+ community, the mature and retired, and the racial justice community.

In the past two years, Plymouth has seen a strong influx of church school participation in all age groups. Most would align this growth to the implementation of new curriculum focusing on cultural awareness and the sustained growth of the first service. Families with children at the church are representative of the work that is currently taking place at the church in its current transitional time. The strong LGBTQIA+ presence and the continual focus on racial justice work are two causes that families have shown strong representation and support.

As indicated in the church demographics, a large contingent of mature and retired members continue to be highly active in Plymouth's programs. Adult spiritual formation offers a wide range of didactic and activity-centered opportunities to learn about meditation, spiritual yoga, compassionate communication, immigration, gun violence , white

privilege and town hall meetings with city officials. These are consistent with our church's belief that knowledge enhances spiritual growth. Our ministers' preaching style has been to make sermons relevant and connected to engagement in the world.

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

Plymouth has long been known for its willingness to take on significant issues that demand significant attention. One of those issues is homelessness in the Twin Cities. Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative is one of Plymouth's most well-known initiatives surrounding the homelessness issue. Beacon is a collaboration among multiple faith communities providing temporary housing, permanent housing efforts, and systemic changes to the overall housing system. Plymouth's leadership around homelessness for the past 20 years was the impetus for the creation of Beacon.

Just as Beacon grew out of a Plymouth housing initiative, the choral group VocalEssence began as an extension of the Plymouth music program under the leadership of organist/choirmaster Philip Brunelle, and has grown into its own highly successful entity. The Plymouth Music Series, as it was known at its inception in 1969, started with a bang when American composer Aaron Copland came to Plymouth to conduct his choral music for the first time. Fifty years later, now a premiere national and international choral group, VocalEssence contributes to choral music through the commissioning of over 300 new works and over 500 premieres. VocalEssence's work extends into education as well; more than 120,000 students have participated in the VocalEssence WITNESS program, and a new VocalEssence initiative is the creation of VocalEssence Singers Of This Age, a dynamic group of young people from Twin Cities high schools that reflect the diversity of our community.

Another initiative that Plymouth is known for is its progressive work surrounding the LGBTQIA+ community. Plymouth took an active role and prominent stance on same-sex marriage, and defeating the marriage act, and many members of the church worked tirelessly to help legalize same-sex marriage. Plymouth's senior minister had the honor of officiating the first legal same-sex marriage in Minnesota. Plymouth has been a longtime supporter of the LGBTQIA+ community in the Twin Cities.

Plymouth is known for its celebration of the arts in all its forms. The Literary Witness series brings influential American writers and poets to the Twin Cities and our theater and art gallery showcase diverse artists and voices. Our music ministry for all ages includes guest artists, commissioned pieces, and music that connect us to the Divine. Recently, Plymouth founded Theater 45 Degrees, which just completed a “Step Back Listen Up: Stories we all need to hear” series of 6 presentations by local groups who tell stories, for example, of racial and economic injustice, immigration, and disabilities.

Also of note, Plymouth is known for the large embroideries that have hung in our main fellowship hall for over 40 years. The artistry and dedication of our Needlers has been an immense source of pride for Plymouth. And the embroidery that hangs during the Fall months contains depictions of people of color that have caused pain to people both inside and outside of our congregation. During the 2018-2019 church year we as a community undertook a broad conversation about the embroideries, their imagery, and their place at Plymouth. We began the conversation because as stated in our Church Purposes, we strive to “Nurture a welcoming culture to all” and to “Further social, economic, racial and environmental justice.” Some of our own members and neighbors told us that we were not living our purposes. On the other hand, another of our purposes is to care for one another, and so we also held the need to care for the individuals who created the embroideries with only good and honorable intentions, as well as those who see the pieces as central to our church heritage and feel that removing the artwork would amount to denying history. The process has not been easy or comfortable, nor have we found consensus regarding what the church’s next steps should be. Our Leadership Council implemented an Embroideries Action Plan in the Spring of 2019 which called for an indefinite period of rest for the Fall Embroidery, and in response there was a congregational vote in November 2019 in which an alternative plan was proposed which would have continued to display the Fall Embroidery. The vote affirmed the original plan and Plymouth is now focused on healing on the other side of a contentious but important conversation. History will show how community leaders come to think of this facet of Plymouth, but it is our prayer that through this time we have demonstrated our openness to feedback, our deep desire to live out the teachings of Jesus, the seriousness with which we attend to our Covenant, and our commitment to doing the hard work of dismantling white supremacy.



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

For many, Plymouth's exceptional music program and long history of strong, insightful preaching were the factors that brought them to our church. For others, our work in social justice or our arts events were the introduction. And for still others, our youth programming - combining participation in music (choir and handbell programs) and the arts (dance and theater programs) with a spiritual education that encourages children to build community, ask questions and find their own path - brought them through our doors. Regardless of the initial reason for visiting, a primary reason people give for why they remain and become involved is the opportunity to travel with like-minded people in a dogma-free community setting that embraces asking questions on the individual spiritual path.

Plymouth is a large community and the need for connections has led to Reflection Circles which enhances connection with others through sacred conversations and fellowship/interest groups which number 80+. Some fellowship groups have enjoyed mutual support and shared memories for over 20 years.

## REFERENCES

### REFERENCE 1

Rev. Sarah Campbell  
Team Lead Minister, Mayflower Church  
(612) 824-0761 / [scampbell@mayflowermpls.org](mailto:scampbell@mayflowermpls.org)  
[www.mayflowermpls.org](http://www.mayflowermpls.org)

Rev. Campbell leads Mayflower Church, Minneapolis, which could be considered a close cousin to Plymouth, as it also is a Progressive Christian Church joined through the congregation's covenanted relationship.

### REFERENCE 2

Rev. Judy Zabel  
Senior Pastor / Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church  
(612) 871-5303 / [judy@haumc.org](mailto:judy@haumc.org)  
[www.haumc.org](http://www.haumc.org)

Her assistant can be reached at [dawn@haumc.org](mailto:dawn@haumc.org), (612) 435-1312

Rev. Zabel belongs to the Downtown Clergy group, an interfaith collective of clergy leaders who meet monthly and take turns hosting and preaching at the interfaith Thanksgiving morning service. Plymouth Church clergy belong to this group, too.

### REFERENCE 3

Lee Blons  
CEO/President, Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative  
(651) 789-6260 ext. 204 / [lblons@beaconinterfaith.org](mailto:lblons@beaconinterfaith.org)  
[www.beaconinterfaith.org](http://www.beaconinterfaith.org)

Ms. Blons heads Beacon, which has its roots as Plymouth Church Neighborhood Foundation. Since taking the name Beacon in 2012, the nonprofit has continued to grow rapidly. Through the years and changes, our partnership has remained strong and Ms. Blons has worked closely with several of Plymouth's clergy members.

## CLOSING THOUGHTS

CLOSING PRAYER

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

### CLOSING PRAYER

We asked our church school classes, What is your prayer for who God brings to be our next Lead Minister? Here are their responses:

Kindergarten/First Grade:

We pray for someone who sings, and listens, and cares. Who leads the church. Who is always doing stuff. Someone who is a good storyteller, who challenges me to ask good questions (a parent chimed in). Someone who will help us to be more kind and help us pollute less. Someone who breathes oxygen.

Second and Third Grade:

We pray for someone who is nice and rewards niceness. Someone cuddly, welcoming, caring, brave, and smart. We pray that they have a cat. We pray for someone who makes good choices, stays focused, and is not afraid to take care of problems. Someone who is generous, funny, accepting of everyone, is a good storyteller. Someone who takes action.

Fourth and Fifth Grade:

We pray for someone who is wise, like Gandalf or Dumbledore, who will work with all types of people. We pray for someone who treats everyone with respect and who will challenge us. Someone who gives short sermons and gives us snacks and donuts. We pray for a good storyteller who is relevant to today.

Sixth and Seventh Grade:

We pray for someone who is really good with kids and able to share fun stories. A thoughtful person, considerate of all ages in the church. An interesting, charismatic person. Someone who is open to ideas from the congregation and takes them into consideration. We pray for someone cool: young enough to relate to the kids but old and smart enough to be wise and knowledgeable and make good decisions. We pray that services would be shorter, and that

kids would be incorporated into the sermons. We pray for more things designed for older kids, not just little kids: mature coloring books, fidget toys, more movement, technology, food, and more modern music.

#### High School:

We pray for a minister who is willing to listen, to be open to ideas, and interested in learning and growing. We pray for someone who is willing and eager to listen to us, yet doesn't try to be one of us, someone who is engaged in what is happening at church and in the world, and someone who has an interesting life outside of church. We pray for a good personality, a dynamic speaker, and compelling sermons that make us think. We pray for someone to engage our minds and fill up our hearts. We pray for someone who sees our age gaps, is interested in millennials, and young adults in the ages between high school and starting a family. We pray our minister will be outgoing, shake hands, get to know families and young people and learn our names. We pray someone is as excited about us as we are about them.

## 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?  
Church staff, ministers, Archivist, Deacons, Leadership Council,  
Ministerial Search Committee
2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Name / Title / Date:

## VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment: *True. Plymouth is a Schedule II church, but many of its members and clergy participate regularly in the life of the Conference, the UCC, and serve on the Conference Board and committees.*

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

Staff Comment: *True.*

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

Staff Comment: Plymouth is a generous and benevolent church in its mission giving. OCWM is not the principal beneficiary of this generosity, but Plymouth's mission giving aligns closely with the values of the UCC and the Conference.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: 

Name / Title: Rev. Richard Wagner/Associate Conference Minister

Email: rickw@uccmn.org

Phone: 612-871-0359

Date: Dec. 11, 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*

## Attachment #1:

### Plymouth Lead Minister Job Description

## **Job Description: Lead Minister**

### **Plymouth Congregational Church**

#### **Position Summary**

Plymouth Church is looking for candidates for an exciting new position of Lead Minister. This is a unique opportunity to come into a new position at a time when the church is attracting new, younger members and the ministerial and administrative team is performing at a high level. The Lead Minister will lead and collaborate with two other Ministers, both of whom are highly engaged and masters of their crafts. The administrative team, which will report to the Lead Minister, includes highly competent leaders who work very well together. This is an exempt, full-time position. The position will report to the Deacons; the other Ministers also have a direct relationship with the Deacons.

This position will serve Plymouth's public witness to faith both within the congregation and in the wider community. Duties will include worship leadership, care for the overall life of the church, teaching, pastoral care to members in need and promoting Plymouth's outreach ministries.

#### **Key Accountabilities, Responsibilities and Duties:**

##### **Ministerial Excellence**

The first and foremost accountability of the Lead Minister is to create and nurture the spiritual health of the church. Excellence in preaching is key as is the ability to support the broad perspectives on spirituality in the congregation. Being able to attract new people to Plymouth and strengthen the commitments of current members will be important.

- **Spiritual Leadership:** Provide strong spiritual leadership by demonstrating a knowledgeable, mature spiritual foundation and an ongoing spiritual practice. Bring overall leadership to the ministerial team in carrying out the mission of the church. Contribute spiritual leadership and guidance for members of the church.
- **Theological Leadership:** Demonstrates a progressive theological perspective and will emphasize Plymouth's "Purposes of the Church" as a guide to our life as a Christian community. Has the courage to be a public advocate when needed.
- **Preaching:** Able to take on significant preaching duties. Has the ability to inspire through a thoughtful and intellectually challenging preaching style that touches head and heart. Proven strength in preaching ability. Effective at preaching in both formal and less formal worship services.
- **Ministerial Leadership:** Able to perform the duties of ministry with excellence, including officiating at weddings, baptisms, funerals and providing pastoral care.



- **Growth:** Able to significantly contribute to a unique, dynamic vision for Plymouth, willing to take risks, be entrepreneurial, and have the practicality and persistence to see a plan through.
- **Stewardship:** Has skills, experience and affinity for raising money to fund the organization and its programs. Understands that Christian Stewardship is much more than just raising funds.
- **Major Gifts:** Demonstrated interest in and ability to solicit major gifts from donors within the church.
- **Arts:** Appreciation of the outstanding music and arts programs at Plymouth, the Lead Minister will work to sustain Plymouth's excellence in this area and actively support the arts as a ministry of the church.

### **Leadership and Management**

Having superb leadership and management skills is a critical success factor given the size and scope of Plymouth Church. The current model of participative leadership is one that we would like to continue and build upon. The ability to lead large teams and manage the physical plant and budget are requirements of the position.

- **Leading and Managing Others:** Has proven skills in collaboration, effective team leadership, team membership and delegation. Track record of achieving results through and with others, leading the team as the team leads the church. Ability to effectively manage and supervise employees and lay leaders and prioritize and delegate work to meet deadlines.
- **Operational Management:** Understands organizational dynamics and the operations of a large church. Efficiently and effectively manages the day-to-day operations of the church using sound judgment and the ability to represent the church in public and community setting. This position is accountable to the overall mission of the church and maintaining collegial relationships with staff, Board members, colleagues, and lay leadership.
- **Budgetary and Fiscal Management:** Ability to manage the budget and the physical plant and modify controllable spending to meet overall financial objectives. Address critical issues as needed to ensure the integrity of the church as well as the safety and well-being of its staff and members. Works collaborative with church leadership (Deacons, Leadership Council, etc.) to keep them apprised of problems that are persistent or vexing in nature.

### **Social Justice Leadership**

Plymouth has a long history of leadership in social justice and the lead minister must be both passionate about and committed to advancing social justice, both within the church and in the

larger community. Ideally our new lead minister will have experience collaborating with leaders of the other churches and organizations on social justice initiatives.

- **Outreach:** Manifests a strong orientation toward equity, inclusion, and justice. Capable of building strong relationships with partners outside of the church. Passion to grow Plymouth into a social justice leader through the continued hard work of addressing head on the issues of racism and the other “isms” that intersect with racism.
- **Civic Leadership:** Active partner with the leaders of the other downtown churches worship services and city-wide initiatives addressing joint issues such as homelessness.

**Other Accountabilities/Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Plan worship with the ministerial team, the Organist/Choirmaster.
- Lead staff meetings or share leadership with the ministerial team.
- Provide leadership to the Deacons and Leadership Council with respect to the vision and mission of the church.
- Oversee overall administration of the church.
- Work with the Personnel Committee on issues of staff salaries and church policies.
- Supervise: Business Administrator, Executive Assistant to the Lead Minister/Director of Communications, Organist/Choirmaster, Minister for Congregational Care and Worship, Director of Spiritual Formation and Theater and Outreach Coordinator.

**Qualifications:**

- Ordained, Master of Divinity or equivalent.
- Progressive theological perspective.
- Experience in leading a large church.
- Ability to handle multiple priorities.
- Well-developed organizational, personnel and administrative skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills with sensitivity to the needs of families.

Attachment #2:  
Plymouth 2020 Narrative Budget

**PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
**PROPOSED 2020 OPERATING BUDGET (July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020)**

	<b>FY 2018 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2019 Forecast</b>	<b>FY 2019 Budget</b>	<b>FY2020 Proposed</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>				
<i>Contributions</i>				
Pledge income	\$ 1,615,257	\$ 1,517,000	\$ 1,511,000	\$ 1,500,000
Non-pledge income	166,940	205,000	159,000	215,000
Open Offering	23,655	28,500	19,000	28,000
Strobel Drop-in Donation	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
<i>Total Contributions</i>	<u>1,825,852</u>	<u>1,770,500</u>	<u>1,709,000</u>	<u>1,763,000</u>
<i>Other Income</i>				
ELZE School	3,500	42,000	42,000	57,858
Leases, Fees and Other Earned Income	175,310	172,115	170,650	190,000
* 4% of Commingled investments	195,000	215,896	215,896	229,450
* Commingled Investments, add'l to cover gap	32,627	8,961	152,791	119,067
<i>Total Other Income</i>	<u>406,437</u>	<u>438,972</u>	<u>581,337</u>	<u>596,375</u>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>2,232,289</b>	<b>2,209,472</b>	<b>2,290,337</b>	<b>2,359,375</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<i>Staff Related</i>				
Clergy	445,005	245,471	257,285	336,067
Music	166,756	172,972	177,995	179,976
Education & Outreach	125,318	157,240	189,390	127,988
Administrative Staff	336,663	389,843	363,392	389,419
Building Staff	326,067	334,355	349,300	364,640
Other Employee Expenses	32,041	22,000	22,000	22,000
<i>Total Staff</i>	<u>1,431,850</u>	<u>1,321,881</u>	<u>1,359,362</u>	<u>1,420,090</u>
<i>Other Expense</i>				
Boards and Programs	73,860	79,749	97,875	98,775
Community Fund	152,217	100,000	100,000	100,000
Administration/Operations	169,997	184,887	201,300	207,200
Building	294,716	308,038	315,300	316,810
Major Building Improvements	91,322	200,000	200,000	200,000
Food Service	18,327	14,917	16,500	16,500
<i>Total Other Expense</i>	<u>800,439</u>	<u>887,591</u>	<u>930,975</u>	<u>939,285</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,232,289</b>	<b>2,209,472</b>	<b>2,290,337</b>	<b>2,359,375</b>
<b>NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>
<b>Christmas &amp; Easter offerings, 100% is distributed</b>				
Christmas Offering		<b>FY 2019 Actual</b> \$48,850		
Easter Offering		24,567		

\* These do not reflect actual withdrawals from investment fund. Plymouth's policy is to use cash from other sources before withdrawing from investments. These transactions are closely tracked so that we honor donor-restrictions. Actual withdrawal from Investments has been much lower in recent years.

## PROPOSED 2020 OPERATING BUDGET (July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020)

		FY2020	
		Proposed	NOTES TO 2020 PROPOSED BUDGET
<b>REVENUE</b>			
<i>Contributions</i>			
Pledge income	\$ 1,500,000		Pledge payments received, reflects trend of decreasing pledging units.
Non-pledge income	215,000		Gifts that are made but not tied to a current pledge; this appears to be increasing.
Open Offering	28,000		Gifts given anonymously in offering plate.
Strobel Drop-in Donation	20,000		Designated gift for our Drop-in Center
<i>Total Contributions</i>	<u>1,763,000</u>		
<i>Other Income</i>			
ELZE School	57,858		Adding 2 classrooms in 2020
Leases, Fees and Other Earned Income	190,000		We expect to add a new tenant in 2020
 * 4% of Commingled investments	 229,450		Per Governance, this is 4% of Commingled fund balance, averaged over 36 months.
* Commingled Investments, add'l to cover gap	<u>119,067</u>		Amount needed to balance budget; see note below on actual withdrawals. Add'l 2%
<i>Total Other Income</i>	<u>596,375</u>		
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>2,359,375</b>		
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<i>Staff Related</i>			
<i>All Full-time employees budgeted at 2% increase</i>			
Clergy	336,067		We are budgeting for a 3 clergy model. Includes Choirmaster/Organist (Philip), leaders of Handbell and Chapel Choir, and musicians for both worship services.
Music	179,976		
Education & Outreach	127,988		Includes Programs Mgr, Children's Dance, Young Voices, and Nursery. Outreach staff includes Drop-in Coordinator and a .5 Outreach Coordinator.
Administrative Staff	389,419		Maintains our current Office Staff structure. Increasing staff hours related to increased activities in building (e.g., first service, ELZE school).
Building Staff	364,640		Includes Staff development, training, mileage reimbursements, and other related expenses.
Other Employee Expenses	22,000		
<i>Total Staff</i>	<u>1,420,090</u>		
<i>Other Expense</i>			
Boards and Programs	98,775		Includes budgets for boards and program-related activities.
Community Fund	100,000		Funds distributed to outside organizations, chosen by the Community Fund committee.
Administration/Operations	207,200		Supplies, Communications, Insurance, IT services, phones, etc.
Building	316,810		Utilities, snow removal, trash, security, property taxes (parking lot), general maintenance.
Major Building Improvements	200,000		Plan to address water issues in 3 locations, Parking lot repair. Subject to change if urgent issue arises.
Food Service	16,500		Sunday and Wednesday meals and beverage service.
<i>Total Other Expense</i>	<u>939,285</u>		
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,359,375</b>		

NET INCOME (LOSS)

-

Christmas & Easter offerings, 100% is distributed

Christmas Offering

Easter Offering

\* These do not reflect actual withdrawals from investment fund. Plymouth's policy is to use cash from other sources before withdrawing from investments. These transactions are closely tracked so that we honor donor-restrictions. Actual withdrawal from Investments has been much lower in recent year.

Attachment #3:

Purposes of the Church

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# The Purposes of the Church

We, the people of Plymouth Congregational Church, humbly seek and serve God within, among, and beyond ourselves.

## - *Within* -

**We find sanctuary for our spiritual journey in the Congregational tradition. We:**

Seek the sacred in ourselves and all others.

Cultivate our deepest and best selves.

Nurture our capacity to love.

Live in the hope of renewal and transformation.

## - *Among* -

**We walk together in covenanted Christian community. We:**

Care for one another.

Cultivate a spirit of gratitude, love, joy, compassion and inclusion.

Honor many pathways to the sacred.

Deepen our understanding of our faith tradition.

Nurture a welcoming culture to all.

## - *Beyond* -

**God's creation benefits from our love lived out in the world. We:**

Invest our time, talent, and treasure consistent with our values.

Serve people in need.

Advance human rights.

Further social, economic, racial and environmental justice.

Share our vision of progressive Christianity, while respecting all faith traditions.



### Purposes of the Church – Children’s Version

As the people of Plymouth Congregational Church, we make a promise to God that we each will...

1. Look for the special gifts in ourselves and in others.
2. Work to be the best ME I can be.
3. Always show people we love that we love them.
4. Understand that change is part of life, and we hope to change for the better.
5. Care for one another.
6. Continue to practice gratitude and love.
7. Realize that there are lots of ways to see and experience God. Even if your way is different than my way, your way is not wrong, nor is mine.
8. Always learn more about what it means to be part of THIS church
9. Welcome everyone into our community and make sure they know we are glad they are here!
10. Volunteer, donate money, or use our talents to make the world a better place.
11. Serve people in need.
12. Help all people in the world (not matter their age, race, gender, religion, ability, income etc.) be treated equally fairly and with respect.
13. Do things to help people, the planet, and animals – we all share this one world.
14. Let others know about why our church is great, while learning about and respecting different religions, churches, and faith traditions.

Attachment #4:  
Reference Letters

*Administrative Office  
2610 University Avenue West Suite 100  
St. Paul, MN 55114*

*T: 651. 789 6260*

*Families Moving Forward Program Center  
1808 Emerson Avenue North  
Minneapolis, MN 55411*

*T: 612. 529 2185*



October 29, 2019

Lead Minister Search Committee  
C/O Chris Bohnhoff  
Plymouth Congregational Church  
1900 Nicollet Ave  
Minneapolis, MN 55403-3789

Dear Search Committee,

As a long-time partner, it is my honor to provide a reference for Plymouth Congregational Church as you seek a new Lead Minister. Over the past 20 years, I have come to know the congregation at Plymouth as leaders in our organization's work to end homelessness and housing instability for our neighbors, and to advance justice through equitable housing in Minnesota.

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative grew out of the desire of Plymouth members to create homes for the neighbors they saw experiencing homelessness every time they came to worship. By forming what was then called the Plymouth Church Neighborhood Foundation, we worked to purchase a vacant building across the street from the church that became Lydia Apartments, supportive homes for individuals in addiction recovery. There was significant opposition to this initiative at the time, but Plymouth stood strong in its conviction that we all do better when we all have a home. Although services were picketed and a lawsuit was brought against the church, Plymouth boldly supported affordable housing. Sixteen years later, Lydia Apartments has provided home to hundreds of individuals and received neighborhood support to double the number of apartments.

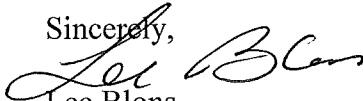
Since Lydia, Beacon has grown to be a lead developer of supportive and affordable housing, and leaders from Plymouth have been involved every step of the way – from contributing visionary leadership at the outset of new housing initiatives, to showing up with elected and public officials, to providing shelter in their church building for families experiencing homelessness. Plymouth has also provided significant financial support for Beacon, including contributions from individuals as well as gifts made by the church. Our organization has grown into a collaborative of nearly 100 congregations, built on values that originated with Plymouth decades ago: community, collaboration, action, justice.

Over time, I have been able to witness Plymouth adapt and move forward through change, meeting new challenges and building new skills as a community. As part of the Beacon collaborative, our organizers have had the opportunity to work with congregation members who have formed a leadership team to support Plymouth's engagement in housing justice. These team

members have been trained as skilled community organizers, taking action to build a powerful base in their own congregation and within the collaborative.

Today, Plymouth continues to be a valuable and active collaborating congregation, gracefully embracing growth as our collaborative of congregations in the Twin Cities metro has also continued to grow. Plymouth has continually risen to the challenges of maintaining robust volunteering, and organizing community resources and support. We are grateful for the opportunity to walk alongside you in our shared journey to build more equitable, inclusive communities where all people have a home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lee Blons".

Lee Blons

President and CEO

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative



Mr. Chris Bohnhoff  
Plymouth Congregational Church  
1900 Nicollet Avenue South  
Minneapolis MN 55403

November 19, 2019

Dear Mr. Bohnhoff,

It is my pleasure to provide a letter of reference for Plymouth Congregational Church. For many years, Plymouth's senior pastors have engaged in the Downtown Clergy Group. This interfaith group gathers monthly to support interfaith efforts to work to end homelessness, to provide moral leadership for the City of Minneapolis, and to support one another as we share the work of leading congregations in these anxious times. We have enjoyed spirited and respectful conversations that have resulted in deep friendships and new insights and understandings. We look forward to welcoming your new senior minister when he/she/they arrives.

Plymouth Congregational has been a great partner in ministry. We have partnered with Plymouth in the congregational meals program to feed those who are living in poverty. Our partnership with Plymouth in supporting Groveland Food Shelf has been long standing and will continue. We have supported Simpson Housing Services and Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness (DCEH) which has just been rebranded as Align Minneapolis. Because we share the belief that God has blessed us to be a blessing, we will continue to look for ways to strengthen and grow our missional partnerships because by working together, we can really make a substantial impact in this neighborhood.

Our congregations have enjoyed many years of merry music making together. We join together to worship at the Interfaith Thanksgiving worship services. This gathering each year reminds us that people of all faiths can work together and create beloved community. Plymouth has always been eager and willing to engage in efforts to partner with others to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.

I give thanks for Rev. Paula Northwood. Her calm, steady leadership has been a blessing both to Plymouth and to us, your ministry neighbors and friends. We are praying for your congregation as you discern and pray for your next leader. May God lead you to the leader/s who will provide the kind of leadership you need to flourish and move forward with joy, bearing much fruit for God's kin-dom.

In partnership,

Judy Zabel  
Senior Minister

(612) 871-5303  
511 Groveland Ave,  
Minneapolis, MN 55403  
[www.haumc.org](http://www.haumc.org)

# Mayflower

Community Congregational  
United Church of Christ

It is in the DNA of Plymouth church to transform society, to make it more just, more beautiful, more honest, more hopeful. At the beginning of every literary witness event, in which Plymouth church hosts, for the Twin Cities, an influential American writer, such as Tracy K. Smith, Mary Oliver, Robert Bly, the welcomer sets the stage with these words: "All you need to know about this church is that, a year after its founding 160 years ago, it fired its first minister for NOT taking a strong enough stand against slavery."

This is not just history. I have observed for the last 15 plus years, close up, just five miles down the road, how Plymouth church has an outsize influence in the city, the state, the nation. As one of the downtown high steeple churches, it is usually the earliest adopter of creative new initiatives.

I share some examples of how Plymouth has been a bold leader.

A homeless person was sleeping outside the minister's office. This planted the seed. Plymouth built 40 units of supportive housing across the street, not bending to the considerably well organized NIMBY protests on Sunday mornings. Then Plymouth created a non profit that is now Beacon housing with a staff of 30. Beacon still builds but it also organizes at every level of government for more housing for human beings.

In just one year, MN went from defeating a discriminatory amendment to passing an amendment for marriage equality in the state of Minnesota and Plymouth church was at the heart of this organizing effort.

Plymouth is at the heart of the arts community in the Twin cities in music, literature, theater; exploring and expressing the diverse voices, stories, images that is our state.

Plymouth is intensely religious and intensely non-creedal, in keeping with its congregational roots; Not religious "lite" but rather open to and desirous of exploring all different understandings of the word "God", while deepening commitment to God's dream of justice.

Plymouth is passionate about the future of the progressive Christian church and so has been, through the years, at the epicenter of shaping new young leaders—both through the Lilly residency program and a series of summits for emerging progressive leaders in the U.S.

I hasten to add that Plymouth is not a lone ranger in all of this holy work. It partners well with other religious organizations, and non and for profit organizations thereby helping to make the Twin Cities one of the most vibrant religious, artistic, literary, and justice seeking places to live.

As for the Lead Minister position, it is a plum position for all of the above reasons and this. Because so many members of Plymouth church are leaders in their own work world—CEOs of non profits and for profits, they know how important it is to let leaders lead and what parameters to put in place to allow the leadership to flourish.

One final observation. There are many high values at Plymouth—community, artistic expression, God's dream of justice, aka "the Kingdom of God". But to be a Progressive Christian church in these times there needs to be increasing clarity about the *highest* value. The progressive church is not dying. When it is driven by a passion for the kingdom of God, the people will come! Just recently Plymouth church courageously clarified its highest value. The future is exciting.

*M. Sarah Campbell*  
Team Lead Minister