

# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

First United Church  
Bloomington, IN

Senior Minister

Indiana/Kentucky Conference, UCC  
Rochester Genesee Conference, ABC

Validation Date: February 8, 2020

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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)*

# 1. POSITION POSTING

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

## 1a. LISTING INFORMATION

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First United Church  
2420 East Third Street, Bloomington, IN 47401  
Website: <https://firstuc.org/>

*Denominations:* United Church of Christ and American Baptist Churches USA.

*Conference:* Indiana-Kentucky Conference

*Association:* Southeast Association

*UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:*

Rev. Chad R. Abbott  
Conference Minister  
United Church of Christ in Indiana and Kentucky  
(317) 924-1395  
[c.abbott@ikcucc.org](mailto:c.abbott@ikcucc.org)

*Summary Ministry Description:*

First United is an inclusive community of Christian faith known as a generous and giving church with a reputation for challenging the status quo. We are a congregation, located in a university community, with a long tradition of socially progressive values and activism. We seek a senior minister who is theologically grounded in progressive Christianity, a pastor with a vision for social action compatible with progressive values and with a talent for articulating that vision in the pulpit, while providing historical and theological context for deepening our understanding of Christianity's meaning and responsibilities in the contemporary world. Our aim is to advance and focus, not just sustain, our service to the community and our commitment to social justice.



Front of Church



Choir Practice



Solar Panels

*What we value about living in our area:*

Bloomington is a university town with approximately 85,000 residents located in the scenic rolling hills of southern Indiana, surrounded by forests, lakes, and farms, and within an hour's drive to Indianapolis. It is known as a liberal island in a conservative state. Indiana University - Bloomington, which enrolls 33,000 undergraduate students and 10,000 graduate students, contributes to a culturally enriched city. Bloomington is a blend of midwestern values and international influences, with a diversity of faith communities, a variety of restaurants, multiple sporting events, good schools and medical facilities, a vibrant downtown, and a rich artistic community. It is an open and accepting city that is recognized as LGBTQ+ friendly.

*Current size of membership:*

185 active members  
55 active non-members  
76 inactive members

Note: These numbers, drawn from the office manager's current Power Church program, are considered to be more accurate than corresponding numbers in the 11-Year Report.

*Languages used in ministry:* English is the only language used in ministry.

*Position Title:* Senior Minister

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

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

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*The senior pastor's primary tasks and responsibilities include:*

Preparation and leadership of worship: Coordinate church worship, including preparing thoughtful sermons and preaching them effectively. Conduct baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

Faith formation and vitality: Through prayer and study of the Bible and biblical scholars, conduct spiritual and intellectual study groups. Provide pastoral care through visits, calls, and messages.

Leadership development: Supervise staff and conduct regularly scheduled staff meetings, recognizing and calling forth the potential of persons as leaders and providing opportunities for their training and growth.

Community engagement: Promote and represent First United Church within our wider community. Participate in conference and association meetings.

Strategic planning: Establish, together with lay leadership, a clear, achievable, and compelling vision, accountable to the church's constitution and bylaws and its core values. Support and encourage faithful financial stewardship.

*Core Competencies:*

First United Church seeks a senior minister who is theologically grounded in, and overtly committed to, progressive Christianity and who provides sermons that are well developed, well delivered, stimulating, engaging, challenging, and attuned to current events.

We seek a collaborative communicator, a guiding presence who listens to the congregation and is willing to adapt to meet their evolving needs.

We seek a senior minister who practices self-care and life balance.

*Peer and professional supports available for ministers in our association:*

The Southeast Association of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference offers opportunities for authorized ministers to gather for fellowship, support, and education. The Southeast Association Committee on Ministry meets monthly and provides support to authorized clergy. In addition, the Indiana-Kentucky Conference sponsors an annual retreat for authorized clergy, and in recent years, this has emphasized personal care and renewal.

First United Church is dually aligned with American Baptist Churches USA. As such, any pastor called to the senior minister position will be expected to maintain ties with both the United Church of Christ and with ABCUSA. First United is a member of the American Baptist Churches of the Rochester/Genesee Region. The senior minister will be

invited to attend clergy events and regional business meetings of ABCRGR by Zoom or in person.

*Part-time/bi-vocational employment:*

Our interest is to have a full-time minister with no additional employment.

**1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT**

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*Salary Basis:* \$57,000 - \$86,000 (salary plus housing allowance), commensurate with experience.

*Benefits:* Salary plus Benefits

*Expected living situation for our next minister?*

Our church does not have a parsonage. It is our expectation that the minister will find accommodations near or within the Bloomington community. A housing allowance is part of the listed compensation above.

*Residential/commuting expectations for our next minister:*

It is an expectation that the minister will be able to live within close commuting distance to Bloomington. A housing allowance is part of the listed compensation above.

*Additional incentives:*

A paid three-month sabbatical available after every five years of full-time employment

Continuing education allowance

Annual review of salary and benefits, with cost of living increases

*Compensation Level:* Full Time

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

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

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*Ministry goals we envision for our next minister in collaboration with the congregation:*

Our ministry goals for the next minister, in collaboration with the congregation, include (1) enriching our spiritual growth and deepening our understanding of progressive Christianity for addressing the challenges of the contemporary world, (2) expanding our

voice in Bloomington-area issues of social and environmental justice, (3) extending a welcoming reach to young families, racial and ethnic minorities, and university students, (4) identifying a major community outreach project and/or expanding and focusing our involvement in a number of smaller outreach projects, and (5) improving transportation and accessibility for older members, for the blind, and for others of the congregation without access to automobiles so that they might better participate in church events.

*Our vision of how the new minister will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls:*

The senior minister can enhance our impact in the community through collaborative leadership with the council, boards, committees, staff, and membership of the church, by (1) facilitating a systematic assessment of needs, interests, and resources that match with potential community projects and (2) taking a leading role in the local area as a voice for the church to promote social change in partnership with other faith communities and secular organizations.

*Language requirements or culturally specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader:*

While English is the common language of the congregation, any additional language skills and cultural sensibilities and awareness would be welcome to advance our inclusive and supportive goals for an increasingly diverse community and congregation.

*Four areas of excellence that our next minister will display to equip the congregation's ministry in these areas:*

Drawing from the *Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry*, with reference to our perceived identity, community, and calling, we look for a senior minister with the following qualities:

- (1) A commitment to lifelong spiritual development, continuing education, and learning with a strong grounding in the history, theology, and scriptures of the Christian Church from biblical times forward.
- (2) Practicing theological reflection and engagement in teaching, preaching, and ecclesial and community leadership. Demonstrating excellent communication skills.
- (3) Drawing on the ministry of Jesus to confront injustice and oppression. Respecting the dignity of all God's people, including practicing self-care and life balance.
- (4) Nurturing care and compassion for God's creation.



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

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

### *Who is God calling us to become as a congregation?*

We want to enrich our spiritual foundation with non-literal interpretations of scripture and other sources of spiritual development.

Our congregation feels moved to become involved in community outreach projects in a more intentional and organized manner. This might happen with one large project, such as in our involvement with the Interfaith Winter Shelter (2009-2017), or by expanded involvement in smaller projects which already have an association with the church, such as the MCUM food pantry, the Area 10 food pantry, Opportunity House, Community Kitchen, Head Start, Jail Bingo, the Love Fund and others.

We desire to be a voice for compassion in the Bloomington-area conversation on issues important to us, such as those related to LGBTQ+, race, immigration, homelessness, ecology, food security, and mental health.

We also feel called to identify and provide for the needs of the congregants. Areas of concern are transportation, childcare, and care of homebound people.

Our current congregation is mostly white, older, and highly educated. We want to be more welcoming to other groups such as IU students, young families, and racial and ethnic minorities.

We want to be better at communicating who we are as a church to the Bloomington community through both traditional and electronic means.

### *How is God calling us to address emerging challenges and opportunities in our community and our congregation?*

In general, the congregation of First United has expressed a desire to dedicate itself to one or two major volunteer opportunities in which all can participate. This reflects the congregation’s experience of contributing to and hosting the Interfaith Winter Shelter from 2009-2017, which entailed a major, coordinated effort, involving many, if not most, members of the congregation.

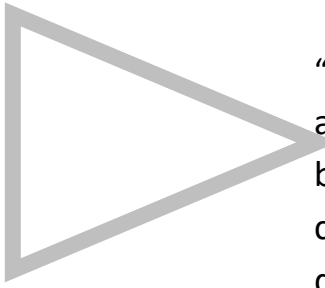
In order to accomplish this goal, the congregation will need to engage in some systematic assessment to determine areas of interest, identify resources, and assess strengths, with the goal of identifying which community projects best match them. At the same time, the congregation wishes to work with and support organizations that are already active in our



community, and that we already serve: e.g., Habitat for Humanity, My Sister's Closet, New Leaf New Life, Women Writing for a Change, Jail Bingo, and Head Start.

The congregation has also identified some areas of need within the church's own community of members and active participants. One such area is meeting the mobility issues of older members. There is a desire to increase accessibility to church activities, such as the monthly potluck. The congregation feels that it may need stronger transportation support for those unable to drive to church, and that it could better serve home-bound people through live streaming of the worship service.

### 3. WHO ARE WE NOW?



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

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

#### 3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

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*Our congregation's life of faith.*

The beliefs, values, and commitments of First United Church circulate around a core commitment to progressive Christianity. We are an open, welcoming, and affirming congregation that strives for diversity and inclusiveness. We affirm the dignity and worth of every person without regard to race, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, faith, nationality, ethnicity, or economic, marital, physical, mental, or emotional status, and affirm as well that all are valued in the eyes of a loving God. Among us are people who grew up Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Jehovah's Witness, Quaker, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim and more, including unchurched, agnostic, and atheist. We are a safe place to express doubt and explore spirituality with other seekers in a Christian context. We take the Bible seriously, but not literally. We practice independent and critical thinking, active questioning and learning, and thoughtful reflection—probing, challenging, and evolving our beliefs while seeking to live out our faith in service and social action. We are an environmentally conscious congregation committed to social justice.

*Positive qualities of our congregation:*

- We are a progressive Christian community with a long history of social activism.
- We are critical thinkers who desire to be challenged.
- We have strong grounding documents, including a robust constitution.
- We have a strong desire to be welcoming and inclusive of all kinds of people into our services and programming, including meeting accessibility needs.
- Newcomers can readily participate in the life of the church.
- We are willing to try new things consistent with our core values.
- We have an authentic sense of community when gathered together.
- We desire to be inclusive and conscious of the needs of others.
- We serve the community without proselytizing.
- We are generous, both financially and with our time; we dedicate more than 10% of our budget to outreach.

- We are environmentally conscious.
- We offer a strong music program, with a skilled choir and director.
- Our building is spacious and advantageously located within the community.
- We have a large church library with relevant and contemporary titles.
- We are debt free, with a healthy endowment.

### *How we worship:*

We are a progressive church with a traditional worship service. We have one Sunday morning worship service held weekly at 10:30 am, in addition to special evening worship services such as Candlelight and Carols and Ash Wednesday. Our worship service is guided by the Bible verses in the lectionary and/or current themes – International Sunday, World Communion Sunday, Just Peace Sunday, One Great Hour of Sharing, or Pride Month, for example. The liturgy is chosen/written with great care to correlate with the sermon and theme for the day as well as with progressive theology – gender neutral, no monarchical references, etc. – and has been identified as very meaningful to the congregation. Baptism is performed through sprinkling or immersion, according to the preference of the person baptized. Good preaching reinforces progressive Christianity, which may include educating members on the history of Christianity (for example, atonement theology was not taught for the first 1,000 years of the church) and understanding scripture in its historical context. Worship will likely include non-literal interpretations of scripture and viewing Biblical texts through the lens of social justice, with a willingness to challenge congregants’ understanding of scripture, even when it is uncomfortable to question conventional teachings. We also value and include non-Biblical, interfaith sources in our worship services. Our inclusive language New Century hymnal is supplemented by a vibrant music program, including choir, organ, piano, bells, and solo and ensemble performances.

The discernment process revealed that among the congregation are individuals who, while socially progressive, wish for a return to a richer, more traditional liturgical practice that can serve as a spiritual foundation, a touchstone or source of energy and inspiration, for engaging in good works. These individuals caution against focusing on outreach and social justice to the exclusion of our spiritual development.

### *The educational program of our church:*

At First United, our youngest worship participants are welcomed and encouraged to stay in the service with us, absorbing worship and participating at their own level. Towards the middle of the service, Children’s Time is held, where the “young and young at heart” join a worship leader for a child-focused story or lesson. Immediately following, children are invited to leave worship for Children’s Learning Time (held in classrooms adjacent to the sanctuary), which includes a lesson, snack, and craft. As our teenager population allows and opts in, confirmation classes are held to help them personally explore their beliefs. Youth group, filled with fellowship, service, and learning, is offered for teenagers as well. Youth participate in the life of the church as ushers or readers for the worship service (usually with parents), as musicians, occasionally on Boards, as nursery care workers, and in the seasonal children’s choir.

For adults, the hour prior to the worship service has traditionally been an Adult Education time, with an ongoing lectionary study, as well as intermittent studies on a variety of topics. Participation is scant but dedicated among those who attend. Our most recent special study lasted a year, and was titled, “Conversations on Race.” It focused on the issues of white privilege. It was a thoughtful and soul-searching class for the participants (who were mainly white), and many came away with new perspective and feeling moved to action. A vibrant Tuesday morning class of about 20 meets with the pastor for Bible study and conversation.

Despite the various educational offerings for adults, the vast majority of adults at First United still view the worship service as their time of education and faith development. Historically, our pastor’s sermons have challenged us to think deeply, have compassion for the world, and to look at the world/Bible in new ways. This effectively brings our faith journey to a new level of understanding. Indeed, church members report that their faith journey has actively evolved during their time at First United solely via the worship setting.

### *How we are organized for ministry and mission:*

We are a motivated and active congregation. The minister can expect to spend eight to ten hours a week in meetings with congregation leaders discussing programs, church finances, and support of individuals in the community.

As a congregation we do not shy away from difficult tasks or conversations, but we have some Quaker influence and do often prefer to seek consensus, rather than just rule by the majority.

One example of a place where the congregation has been preparing to act swiftly, but has been slow to make major decisions, is with our struggling HVAC and boiler system. We have been discussing for ten plus years that the main system is likely to fail, but with much reflection we continue to pursue minor fixes rather than a full-scale shift to geothermal heating and cooling, or some other major system replacement.

An example of our willingness to make difficult and thoughtful decisions occurred most recently in the summer and fall of 2018 when the church council decided to remove words that had been hung on the wall in the sanctuary when the church began services in our current location in 1957. As one of our early calls to social justice (and integration), our pastor had a portion of Matthew 23 displayed beside the pulpit as a visible reminder that we are all one in Christ. The words read, “One is your Master/The Christ/And you are all brothers.” However, by the turn of the century people had begun to express discomfort at the singularity of the word “brothers,” so after much conversation and debate the words “and sisters” were added in 2007. A decade later, the Building and Grounds Board heard feedback and accepted the charge to begin a conversation about removing or changing the words on the wall in May of 2018. The word “master” and the gender binary of “brothers and sisters” became a point of dissonance with our stated progressive values. Some African American guests responded negatively to the word “master.” The other guest was transitioning gender and responded to the lack of gender inclusivity in “brothers and sisters.” After several newsletter articles, a sermon on words

and their impact, and some small group discussion with council members, the Church Council approved a resolution in late November 2018 to remove the words from the wall before Advent services started without a full vote of the congregation. The church council received significant feedback from the congregation that more conversation and a vote of the full congregation would have been appropriate given the historical nature of the display. The council stood by its decision that preventing further harm to our members and guests should take precedence over history.

Our church leadership has a strong reliance on our membership. We need their passion, dedication, and trust. Our church leadership also feels accountable to, and a need to be transparent with, our members. We continually seek new ways to share messages, communicate about tough topics, and engage all who are willing in the work and deliberations of our community.

Overall, our congregation is not prone to quick or hasty decisions. We have a norm of thoughtful reflection, thorough discussion, and deliberate discernment.

Our constitution, bylaws, and annual reports can be provided upon request.

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

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The information in the 11-year report below is supplied annually to the denomination by First United Church. However, the total number of members indicated in the 11-year report is larger than our current records show. The total number of members reported below in section 3c is more accurate.

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC**  
**YEARBOOKS**



Church#: 180175

Assoc: 244      Schedule: 0      First United Church      Bloomington      IN      47401

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2008	183	160	45	2	9	6	7	99	-89
2009	198	165	75	0	6	14	5	0	15
2010	210	165	49	0	1	11	5	5	2
2011	231	165	48	0	25	2	6	0	21
2012	236	160	54	0	8	4	7	0	5
2013	250	180	54	0	19	1	6	0	14
2014	263	160	44	21	0	0	7	1	13
2015	274	140	39	17	0	0	6	0	11
2016	276	130	39	0	10	0	8	0	2
2017	281	130	20	0	12	0	7	0	5
2018	281	130	20	0	0	0	0	0	0

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2008	\$312,756	\$0	\$10,296	\$4,696	\$14,992	\$19,899	\$34,891	3.29	\$347,647	\$296,318
2009	\$313,414	\$0	\$10,296	\$4,810	\$15,106	\$43,178	\$58,284	3.29	\$371,698	\$307,449
2010	\$382,496	\$0	\$10,696	\$4,872	\$15,568	\$35,720	\$51,288	2.80	\$433,784	\$327,208
2011	\$436,853	\$0	\$9,438	\$100	\$9,538	\$35,820	\$45,358	2.16	\$482,211	\$356,853
2012	\$453,825	\$0	\$10,296	\$482	\$10,778	\$25,720	\$36,498	2.27	\$490,323	\$350,000
2013	\$436,522	\$0	\$10,196	\$575	\$10,771	\$30,500	\$41,271	2.34	\$477,793	\$354,000
2014	\$406,398	\$0	\$10,000	\$21,959	\$31,959	\$39,500	\$71,459	2.46	\$477,857	\$340,070
2015	\$425,169	\$0	\$11,000	\$2,012	\$13,012	\$32,019	\$45,031	2.59	\$470,200	\$319,460
2016	\$407,864	\$0	\$9,500	\$981	\$10,481	\$0	\$10,481	2.33	\$418,345	\$303,783
2017	\$413,131	\$0	\$8,600	\$2,388	\$10,988	\$44,300	\$55,288	2.08	\$468,419	\$308,600
2018	\$413,131	\$0	\$8,600	\$5,314	\$13,914	\$0	\$13,914	2.08	\$427,045	\$0

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2013-2018	12.40	-27.78	-62.96	-100.00	-100.00	-5.36	29.18	-10.62
2008-2018	53.55	-18.75	-55.56	-100.00	-100.00	32.09	-7.19	22.84

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

### 3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	185	
Number of active non-members:	55	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	240	

*Percentage of members who have been in the church:*

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	45%	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	33%	
Less than 5 years:	22%	

*Number of total participants by age:*

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
17	2	7	9	82	16	20	21	66	✓

*Percentage of adults in various household types:*

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	1%	✓
Households with minors:	32%	✓
Single adults age 35-65:	15%	✓
Joint households with no minors:	37%	✓
Single adults over 65:	25%	✓

*Education level of adult participants by percentage:*

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	9%	✓
College:	52%	✓

Graduate School:	35%	✓
Specialty Training:	2%	✓

*Percentage of adults in various employment types:*

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	39%	✓
Adults who are retired:	45%	✓
Adults who are not fully employed:	16%	✓

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

Many congregants have or have had an affiliation with the local university (or college) and are academics (or have them in their family). The service industry is represented through health care professionals, counselors, teachers and more. We also have a smaller group of blue-collar workers, most of whom also hold higher education degrees.

*The mix of ethnic heritages and overall racial make-up of our congregation:*

The congregation is mostly but not exclusively white. We are more diverse in LGBTQ+ membership because we are known for being open, welcoming, and affirming. Moreover, we value the diversity of ideas that comes from openness to differences of perspective and opinion.

*Our conversation about welcoming diversity:*

While our congregation has not formally undertaken a conversation on welcoming diversity in recent years, the challenge of achieving greater diversity is a lingering question and continuing concern.

Ideologically, the congregation is very welcoming, and we care about achieving racial/ethnic diversity, but we do not know how to act on that commitment effectively. A recent church survey, for example, highlighted climate change and food insecurity as the congregation's top priorities for future outreach work. We understand better how to address such issues. Individuals have expressed interest in diversity work, and previous racial bias trainings were held on site (with more planned for the future). The congregation's commitment to diversity extends in practice to those to whom we can offer our volunteer services but not so much with whom and how we worship.



We think of ourselves as a very welcoming congregation, engaged in “radical hospitality,” and have a strong desire to be more welcoming to all.

### 3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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	19	Staff
Baptisms ( <i>number last year</i> )	6	Sr. Pastor, Board of Worship
Children’s Groups or Classes	9	Children and Youth Coordinator
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	220	Board of Worship, Sr. Pastor
Church-wide Meals	90	Committee on Community Development
Choirs and Music Groups	15	Choir Director
Church-based Bible Study	4	Staff
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	Once a month	Board of Worship
Community Meals		
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	0	Sr. Pastor, Children and Youth Coordinator
Drama or Dance Program		
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	3	Sr. Pastor
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship		
Prayer or Meditation Groups		
Public Advocacy Work		
Retreats		
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		

Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	1	Sr. Pastor
Worship (time slot: 10:30)	120	Sr. Pastor, Staff, Board of Worship
Young Adult Groups or Classes		
Youth Groups or Classes	3	Children and Youth Coordinator

*Members or regular participants in our congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers.*

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Alvaro Nieves	No	Sandborn Baptist Church	Pastor	No
Hannah K Adams Ingram	4	Franklin College	Director of Religious Life and College Chaplain	No
Byron Bangert	No	ABC and Presbyterian Churches	Minister	Yes
Amber Kent	No	Universal Life Church	Minister	No
Carl Horton	4	Presbyterian Peacemaking Program/Presbyterian Church USA	Coordinator/Pastor	No
Jennifer Lane	4	Military	Active Duty Army Chaplain	No
You-Shin Choi	No	Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea	Ordained Pastor	No

Samuel Troxal	No		Spiritual Director, Obl.S.B.	No
Norman Overly	No	Japan	Commissioned as missionary	Yes
Jeanne Overly	No	Japan	Commissioned as missionary	Yes
Shelli Yoder	No	Church	MID	No
Derek Roe	No	Church	MID	No
Kim Yaussey Albright	No	Church of the Brethren	Pastor	Yes
Scott Callaghan	No	Church	Minister	Yes
Moureen Coulter	No	Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio TX	M.A. in pastoral ministry and studied at Christian Theological Seminary	No
John Spain	No	Church	Minister	No
Warren Wade	No	Bethany Theological Seminary	Certification of Achievement in Theological Studies	No

No former pastors of our church are currently members. Of the congregants listed above, only Derek Roe (Children and Youth Coordinator) and Shelli Yoder (Worship Coordinator) are part of the staff. The others move in and out of leadership roles, participate in church programs, and support the congregation as they are called, like all other congregants.

*Current staff, including ministers:*

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Interim Minister	Yes	Full Time		Six Months
Children and Youth Coordinator		Part Time	Sr. Pastor and Board of Christian Education	Four Years
Worship Coordinator		Part Time	Sr. Pastor	Three Years
Office Manager		Full Time	Sr. Pastor	Fourteen Years
Music Director		Part Time	Sr. Pastor & Music Committee	Six Months

*Reflection on our congregation’s overall ministry:*

As indicated by our congregation’s attendance at monthly potlucks, we are very engaged in our fellowship activities. We love learning about and getting to know each other. We are a very close community of individuals and have a great amount of respect and loyalty toward each other. We also have a large number of mostly retired adults who attend our Tuesday Morning discussion class, during which a portion of time is spent updating each other on how they are doing and identifying those who, attending or not, are experiencing any health or other concerns before moving on to viewing and discussing a lecture on a selected topic. To start 2020, the group selected Bart Ehrman’s “Great Course” lectures on the books of the New Testament placed in historical context.

We highly value our music program and have a history of both very strong choir directors and organists. Anyone can join the choir or bell choir, and we also hire section leaders. Because we have the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, one of the top music schools in the nation, we are well suited for finding talented musicians and singers.

Our young children’s attendance in educational programs is varied. We’ve had numbers ranging anywhere from low single digits to high teens on a given Sunday. Our number of young families has been growing recently, which has led to greater numbers in our Children’s Learning Time class. While we’ve been following Safe Church practices for over a decade, we’ve recently increased our efforts to meet the needs of young families, such as offering a parenting group and doing a security review of our building.

Our youth participation has declined in recent years. We are looking for more ways to increase their engagement, such as having youth Sundays. We do have youth working and volunteering regularly in our nursery. We hope that our young children will eventually graduate into and bolster the numbers participating in our youth group.

### 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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*Annual income (2019):*

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$264,930
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy)	\$110,100
Endowment Draw (beyond what is permitted by spending policy)	\$96,889
Fundraising Events	\$0
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$54,282
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$3,848
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$0
Support from Related Organizations	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$
Other (specify):	\$
Other (specify):	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$530,049</b>

Annual expenses (2019): \$431,850

First United Church 2020 Income Budget (Submitted for Congregational Approval - 1/15/2020)							
Income	Acct. No.	2018		2019		% of Budget	2020 Budget
		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual		
Identified Giving	4030	263,000	293,816	273,200	259,847	95%	262,404
Unidentified Giving	4040	5,700	7,226	7,200	5,083	71%	5,000
Endowment Distribution for Budget	4521	105,258	104,500	110,100	110,100	100%	101,426
Building Use/Miscellaneous	4610	6,430	4,681	4,600	3,848	84%	4,000
Carryover from Prior Year		15,000	15,000	21,400	21,400	100%	6,970
Hollis Fund Distribution for Budget		9,000	9,000	0	0		7,500
Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC)	4630	600	394	400	527	132%	500
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>404,988</b>	<b>434,616</b>	<b>416,900</b>	<b>400,805</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>387,800</b>

First United Church 2020 Expense Budget (Submitted for Congregational Approval - 1/15/2020)								
Expense	Acct. No.	2018		2019		% of Budget	2020 Budget	
		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual			
Senior Pastor	Senior Minister Salary	5061	60,756	60,756	61,968	52,682	85%	56,000
	Housing	5062	32,928	32,928	33,588	23,995	71%	24,000
	Pension	5063	16,242	16,234	16,566	12,899	78%	11,200
	Medical	5064	11,772	11,383	16,932	19,081	113%	11,967
	Social Security & Medicare	5065	7,776	7,776	7,932	5,194	65%	6,120
	Expense/Nonaccountable	5066	2,576	2,576	2,574	1,472	57%	3,250
	Cellular Phone Expense	5067	840	840	840	161	2%	840
	Books/Continuing Education	5068	3,000	584	3,000	383	13%	3,000
	Other Expenses	5069	3,000	2,590	3,000	5,983	199%	2,400
		<b>138,890</b>	<b>135,666</b>	<b>146,400</b>	<b>121,705</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>118,777</b>	
Administrative Expenses	Office Manager Salary	5155	29,400	29,400	29,988	29,988	100%	30,588
	Office Manager Medical Benefits	5156	11,772	11,383	12,006	14,486	121%	11,967
	Worship Leader Salary	5185	12,120	12,000	12,360	12,360	100%	12,612
	Worship Leader Expenses	5186	1,500	277	1,500	433	29%	1,500
	Office Manager Christmas Bonus	5270	200	200	200	200	100%	200
	Workers Comp. Insurance	5310	1,200	1,120	1,100	932	85%	1,000
	Publicity	5410	0	0	0	199		2,000
	Bank & Brokerage Fees	5419	1,000	643	1,000	621	62%	1,000
	Office Supplies - General	5430	3,500	3,844	3,500	5,044	144%	3,500
	Internet	5450	1,200	1,188	1,200	694	58%	1,200
	Computer Expenses	5453	500	436	500	32	6%	500
	Leased Equipment	5457	1,000	1,256	1,000	1,343	134%	1,000
	Social Security & Medicare for Staff	5461	8,268	6,924	8,266	6,411	78%	8,266
	Comprehensive Insurance	5480	9,600	8,929	9,600	8,900	93%	9,000
Professional Services	5490	500	60	500	2,033	407%	500	
Lay Leaders' Travel	5496	600	352	600	0	0%	600	
		<b>82,360</b>	<b>78,009</b>	<b>83,320</b>	<b>83,676</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>85,433</b>	
Building & Grounds	Utilities	5630	16,000	17,182	16,000	19,332	121%	17,500
	Cleaning Service	5710	30,804	30,804	30,804	30,804	100%	30,804
	Trash & Recycling	5720	1,020	1,048	1,020	1,397	137%	1,020
	Bldg. Maintenance & Supplies	5730	5,000	9,429	5,000	2,150	43%	5,000
	Bldg. Equip & Maintenance	5740	2,000	1,072	2,000	502	25%	2,000
	Heating/Cooling Maintenance/Repairs	5750	5,000	4,953	5,000	6,781	136%	5,000
	Fire Alarm Maintenance	5760	1,826	2,507	1,826	2,041	112%	1,826
	Energy Conservation Measures	5770	4,000	3,926	4,000	3,667	92%	4,000
	Lawn & Grounds Maintenance	5810	3,300	4,881	3,300	5,081	154%	5,000
	Grounds Equipment	5820	500	246	500	117	23%	500
	Shared Areas Maintenance	5830	4,500	5,781	4,500	4,831	107%	4,500
		<b>73,950</b>	<b>81,830</b>	<b>73,950</b>	<b>76,703</b>	<b>104%</b>	<b>77,150</b>	
Outreach	ABC Support	6010	8,600	8,600	8,100	9,000	111%	10,000
	UCC Support	6011	8,600	8,600	8,100	9,000	111%	10,000
	MCUM	6012	12,200	12,200	12,200	12,000	98%	12,000
	Amethyst House	6013	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	100%	1,100
	Community Kitchen	6014	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	100%	2,000
	GLBT	6015	800	600	800	800	100%	800
	Habitat for Humanity	6016	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	100%	2,000
	Hoosier Hills Food Bank	6017	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,500	75%	1,500
	Middle Way House	6018	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	100%	1,500
	Outreach Supplies	6020	250	125	250	50	20%	250
	My Sister's Closet	6021	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	100%	1,100
Area 10 Agency on Aging	6028	600	600	600	600	100%	600	

First United Church 2020 Expense Budget (Submitted for Congregational Approval - 1/15/2020)								
Expense	Acct. No.	2018		2019			2020	
		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	% of Budget	Budget	
Girls, Inc.	6030	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,000	91%	1,000	
Farm to Family (Healthful Food for All)	6031	300	300	300	300	100%	300	
Mother Hubbard's Cupboard	6032	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,000	91%	1,000	
Stone Belt	6033	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	100%	1,500	
Justice	6037	1,000	600	1,000	0	0%	0	
New Leaf, New Life	6038			1,000	727	73%	750	
		<b>45,750</b>	<b>45,025</b>	<b>45,750</b>	<b>45,177</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>47,400</b>	
Christian Education	Nursery Care	6210	5,500	4,001	5,610	4,103	73%	4,500
	CE Programming - Children	6211	600	561	600	427	71%	600
	CE Programming - Youth	6212	1,000	358	1,000	114	11%	500
	CE Programming - College	6213	200	0	200	0	0%	0
	CE Programming - Adults	6214	1,000	671	1,000	848	85%	1,000
	VBS Curriculum/Marketing	6215	500	192	500	0	0%	0
	Supplies & Equipment	6216	0	70	0	12		0
	Bibles	6217	100	97	100	0	0%	100
	Library	6218	300	49	300	377	126%	300
	Continuing Ed for Laity	6219	500	0	500	300	60%	500
	Fellowship/Community Events	6220	3,200	2,648	3,200	2,382	74%	3,200
	CLT Teachers	6223	2,000	470	2,000	242	12%	1,000
	Children & Youth Educ. Coordinator	6224	15,456	15,456	15,768	15,768	100%	16,080
	Play Friday Coordinator	6225	1,512	1,134	1,512	1,284	85%	1,512
		<b>31,868</b>	<b>25,706</b>	<b>32,290</b>	<b>25,856</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>29,292</b>	
Music	Music Director	6279	15,144	15,144	15,444	14,009	91%	15,756
	Organist	6280	14,136	14,136	14,418	10,774	75%	14,712
	Section Leaders Compensation	6281	10,780	8,615	11,198	9,035	81%	11,200
	Special Music	6282	1,000	1,525	1,050	1,175	112%	1,050
	Literature & Supplies	6283	500	739	800	619	77%	800
	Tuning & Repairs	6284	1,100	3,708	1,720	705	41%	1,720
	Bells	6285	500	75	500	0	0%	500
	Substitute Expense	6287	960	320	960	920	96%	960
	Continuing Education	6288	0	0	500	0	0%	500
		<b>44,120</b>	<b>44,263</b>	<b>46,590</b>	<b>37,237</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>47,198</b>	
Worship	Fellowship Meals & Supplies	6460	300	139	300	214	71%	300
	Nametags	6461	300	472	300	288	96%	300
	Coffee Hour	6462	750	575	750	769	103%	750
	Flowers/Gifts	6465	150	0	150	0	0%	150
	Pulpit Supply	6470	300	150	300	150	50%	300
	Special Worship Service Exp	6480	750	777	750	1,146	153%	1,250
		<b>2,550</b>	<b>2,113</b>	<b>2,550</b>	<b>2,567</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>3,050</b>	
CCD/MeRC	Denomination Identity	6551	100	45	0	0		0
	Printed Material	6552	100	23	200	96	48%	200
	Hospitality	6553	100	0	400	25	6%	400
	Supplies	6554	100	503	100	793	793%	400
	Social Engagement (Cares)	6555	100	0	300	0	0%	0
		<b>500</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>913</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>1,000</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>419,988</b>	<b>413,183</b>	<b>431,850</b>	<b>393,834</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>409,300</b>	
Budget \$ over/under Prior Year			-13,892		11,862		-10,688	
Budget % over/under Prior Year			-3.20%		2.87%		-2.54%	
Budget \$ over/under since 2014			-37,196		-25,334		-47,884	
Budget % over/under since 2014			-8.14%		-5.54%		-10.47%	
<b>Difference</b>			<b>-15,000</b>	<b>21,433</b>	<b>-14,950</b>	<b>6,971</b>	<b>-21,500</b>	

*Ministerial support as percentage of budget:*

Ministerial compensation package is anticipated to be between 28% and 33% of the church budget annually. In 2018 it was 32.8%. In 2019 it was 31%.

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

*Contributions made 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

*OCWM (Basic Support):*

Our Board of Outreach provides a suggested budgeted contribution for review on an annual basis. We have historically supported our denominational organizations with equal annual contributions. On average we spend a total of 5% of our annual budget on denominational support, divided equally between UCC and ABC.

*Church’s current indebtedness:* \$0

*Current or projected building programs:* There is currently no capital or building project or campaign under consideration.

*Capital campaigns in the last ten years:*

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2016-17	Solar Panel Array	\$160,000	\$158,575	Installed 307 solar panels, reducing our electric bill by almost 40% in the summer and providing a small energy credit to our annual budget

*Prominent mission components involved in the most recent capital campaign:*

Our congregation is strongly committed to the environment and sustainable living. As such, we worked to secure a generous matching donation from a member family to double the size of our solar array.

*Church endowment:*

Our church has an unrestricted endowment and six other restricted funds.



As of December 31, 2019, our combined investment accounts, stock clearing account, checking account, and Love Fund (described more fully in section 4a) had a total market value of \$2,342,100.07.

Budget supplements are drawn quarterly from the endowment. Withdrawals for major capital expenses etc. are drawn as needed with approval from the council and the church membership. Our church council works with a memorial endowment committee to propose an annual withdrawal as part of the church budgeting process. Our current process is for the Memorial Endowment Committee to propose a withdrawal percentage based on the average earnings of the last eight quarters. Generally, this has been around 5%.

The percentage rate of withdrawal has been under 7% annually for the last 5 years.

We use our endowment to help fund our annual budget, but we work to keep that amount modest and in line with church and community needs. Nevertheless, some members of the church express concern over running deficit budgets. Over the past five years we have had extensive conversation within our congregation about facility enhancements. On three occasions we have chosen to make additional withdrawals from the endowment, rather than host a capital campaign.

Year	Regular Withdrawal	Special Withdrawal	Reason	Total
2019	\$110,100.00	\$96,889.00	chiller replacement	\$206,989.00
2018	\$104,500.00	\$0.00		\$104,500.00
2017	\$95,850.00	\$0.00		\$95,850.00
2016	\$114,000.00	\$32,587.00	new sound system	\$146,587.00
2015	\$94,181.00	\$0.00		\$94,181.00
2014	\$59,995.00	\$20,000.00	fire alarm system	\$79,995.00

Based on the advice of the Church’s professional investment adviser, at the 5% withdrawal rate, the endowment might be expected to last indefinitely as long as a balanced investment portfolio is maintained.

It is important to note that in the last five years, our Memorial Endowment Committee has become more methodical in its approach to providing guidance. This began with establishing our policy on limiting withdrawals based on the past eight quarters average earnings.

*Other Assets:*

*Reserves (savings):* \$0

Note: As of December 31, 2019, \$270,478 of our Combined Investment Account is being kept in a Money Market fund, to provide cash flow for budget supplements and unexpected capital expenses, and to protect some of the account in the event of a market downturn.

*Buildings owned by the church:*

Our current property was initially purchased in 1954, and the original church structure was built in 1956 in the Modern style. The total square footage of our building is 26,546 square feet including our choir loft and Wayland Room (basement). In 2001 and 2003, our facility went through a major renovation which included a new HVAC system, new windows and doors, upgraded lighting, a flat rubber membrane roof being replaced with a metal roof, and metal clad siding being placed over the wood siding on the entire church. In 2014, we added a fire alarm system that is tied into the local fire station. In 2016, we installed 307 solar panels that supply roughly 30-40% of our electricity. Our structure is insured for \$6,827,000.

*Non-owned buildings/space:*

We have a shared-cost arrangement in our parking lot with our building neighbors (IU Credit Union and IU Health Care facility). Both of these businesses purchased land from our church to help fund our 2001 renovation.

*Spaces accessible to wheelchairs:*

All spaces with the exception of the pulpit/chancel/baptismal/communion table area, choir loft/balcony, and a basement space (once used as a meeting room for our teenage youth) are accessible.

*Reflection on how our finances and assets relate to our mission and ministry:*

When a major gift essentially established our endowment, the church, through much deliberation, decided to tithe by giving 10% of the gift to a local organization (Community Kitchen) for their building campaign.

It is important to many in our congregation that at least 10% of the church's budget goes to external ministries (charities, community organizations, and our denominations) – this

doesn't include special offerings like OGHS, or our special offerings at two Christmas season services.

Each annual budget is crafted based on input from boards and committees, and then the congregation/membership at large can (and does) provide further input. Thus, the church's major ministry areas are represented by our spending – all of which are important to church members, to varying degrees: worship/music; Christian education; outreach/community presence/justice & peace; and infrastructure that provides a safe gathering place for our faith community and our community partners, with an eye towards environmental sustainability.

Additionally, our congregation was one of the founders of the Interfaith Winter Shelter, which ran from 2009 to 2017. All of the money raised to support that initiative was kept in a separate budget, and those donations from our church were never marked as a part of our regular giving to the community.

Our Finance Committee and Memorial Endowment Committee are both advisory. They can make proposals to the Council, but do not have votes on financial matters.

### 3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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*Significant happenings in the history of our church that have shaped the identity of our congregation:*

First United was originally and for many years affiliated only with the American Baptist Church. (It was formerly known as First Baptist of Bloomington.) Our identity changed when we merged in the 1970s with a United Church of Christ congregation that had previously been invited to use our facilities for their Sunday worship. At that time, First United joined the UCC. Today, First United contributes equally to both denominations.

First United acted with intentionality to racially integrate in the 1950s. We were one of the first churches in Bloomington to take this step.

In 2008, First United officially adopted an Open, Welcoming, and Affirming policy towards the LGBT community. Today, this policy stands as an obvious manifestation of the congregation's strong commitment to progressive Christianity.

First United participated in and hosted the Interfaith Winter Shelter from 2009 to 2017. The congregation was deeply committed to this ministry and many congregants gave unstintingly of their time and effort in this endeavor. First United's participation in hosting the Interfaith Winter Shelter for seven years, which required marshalling tremendous human resources to accomplish, was the most important commitment in the life of the congregation during the past ten years. We especially value how it brought us together in common effort with a wider community of guests, volunteers from outside our membership, and many local faith communities.

*A specific change our church has managed in the recent past:*

The adoption of the Open, Welcoming, and Affirming policy, mentioned above, did not happen without conflict. The Southern Indiana Association of American Baptist Churches voted to exclude First United (a founding member of the Association in 1824) because they believed the church was wrong to consider an “avowed homosexual” for church leadership. First United then changed regions. We are now part of the American Baptist Churches of the Rochester/Genesee region, which has 48 congregations, many of which are Welcoming and Affirming.

*Our congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict:*

In general, members of the congregation of First United genuinely like one another and are not divided into factions or sub-groups. When disagreements occur, we are willing to listen and remain open to changing our minds, but not just to be agreeable. We bring strong Midwestern values to conflict (considerateness, kindness, courtesy), but with deeply held beliefs. We respect one another’s beliefs, no matter how different they may be from our own. In practice, we are pretty direct with conflict, in that we approach one another directly to discuss the issue at hand.

*Ministerial staff over the past 30 years:*

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Monica Dawkins-Smith, Interim Minister	2019 - Current	Y
Jack Skiles, Senior Minister	2006-2019	N (recognized with ordination in the ABC)
Caela Wood, Associate Minister	2007-2014	Y
Sharon Wildey, Interim Minister	2006-2006	Y
Kathy Donley, Associate Minister	2004-2006	N (recognized with ordination in the ABC)
John Krueger, Interim Minister	2004-2006	Y
J. Thomas Son, Senior Minister	2001-2004	N (recognized with ordination in the ABC)
Robert Curtis, Senior Minister	1981-2000	N (recognized with ordination in the ABC)

*What the church has learned about itself from past ministerial leadership:*

The past two senior ministers both left suddenly under difficult circumstances (see below). This led the congregation on each occasion to reflect on what it felt about the

events that led to resignation. The congregation re-committed itself to accepting and embracing the brokenness of all people and to loving them fully. In the most recent case, the congregation has also given thought to how it might improve the Pastoral Relations Committee to make it a more effective means of facilitating communication and providing support for the minister.

In addition, the congregation has learned over time that it values collaboration in the planning of worship, combining the creative energies and experience of the entire worship team.

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

No leader has been involuntarily terminated. In 2019, the most recent minister abruptly resigned after it was revealed that he had engaged in conduct inconsistent with the ministerial code of ethics. In 2004, the previous minister resigned suddenly when he divulged that he had engaged in professionally inappropriate behavior. While neither of these pastors was formally pressured to leave the church, it is possible that they felt pressured to leave under the circumstances of their misconduct coming to light.

*Has our church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?* No

*Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at our church?* No



## 4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

- a. COMMUNITY VISION
- b. MISSION InSite

### 4a. COMMUNITY VISION

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*How relationships and activities of our congregation extend outward in service and advocacy:*

First United prides itself on our outreach and connection to the community. We are known as a generous and giving church, both of our resources and of our time. When we received a large donation toward our endowment in 2011, we tithed 10% of that donation (totaling \$100,000) to a local non-profit, Community Kitchen, which offers free warm nutritious meals six days a week to those in need, in order to assist with the final paydown on their property. First United Church was a driving force for the Interfaith Winter Shelter for seven years, a major volunteer undertaking and unifying force for First United’s congregation, until these responsibilities were taken over eventually by Wheeler Mission, which provided a permanent shelter site. The purpose of the Interfaith Winter Shelter was to prevent winter deaths by offering Fellowship Halls from a variety of churches as a place to sleep for a population experiencing homelessness who had no other place to go. This project helped form our identity and is sorely missed by congregants who are hungry for another similarly challenging, consuming project that connects us, young and old alike, to serving those less fortunate, face-to-face.

First United also gives of our building space generously, which we see as a form of stewardship. Housed within our walls during the week are four Head Start classrooms, Area 10 Agency on Aging Mobile Food Pantry, multiple meetings of NA, AA, and Al Anon, a Mennonite congregation, practice space for Quarryland (a gay men’s choir), Indiana University musical performance space, and fellowship/kitchen space for the broader community’s use (non-profits, profits, and private events alike).

The church’s budget includes giving to local non-profit organizations and our affiliated conferences above a tithing level. In addition, we collect special offerings for non-profit entities at special services. We also support a self-administered Love Fund, which assists those in need to prevent shut-off of services, purchase of groceries, gas or bus tickets, and payment of rent, utilities, deposits, medical bills, car repairs, and more.

First United has long and deep ties with MCUM (Monroe County United Ministries) which offers emergency food but also focuses on lifting people out of poverty. First United was a founder of this organization in 1940, which now is a thriving independent organization. Despite First United’s relatively small size, it remains one of the top funders of MCUM’s food pantry, its Self Sufficiency Center, and its low-cost daycare for working families. First United collects non-perishable food and hygiene supplies to support MCUM’s emergency food pantry every month of the year, with a special effort

made in the weeks preceding Thanksgiving. (The year 2019 brought in nearly 2,000 pounds.) A seat on the MCUM Board of Directors is designated for a First United representative. There is interest within First United in partnering even more deeply.

Volunteer efforts come in spurts and are loosely coordinated through the congregation. More coordination and ongoing communication of opportunities is an expressed desire. Jail Bingo (offering some fun to those without fun) has some committed support, and the congregation regularly collects items for our homeless neighbors at the Shalom Community Center. We have supported Positive Link (services for those living with HIV and AIDS) with drives and volunteerism. We have coordinated volunteer shifts at the Community Kitchen and regularly encourage congregants to become volunteers at the Opportunity House thrift shop. We have dabbled in letter-writing campaigns, for example, to advocate for humane treatment of migrants, remediation of food insecurity, and gun control legislation.

A high number of congregants volunteer a significant portion of their time to local non-profit organizations independently of their affiliation with our church, such as MCUM, Hoosier Hills Food Bank, Community Kitchen, My Sister's Closet (a thrift store that focuses on job training and careers for women living in poverty), and many more.

First United has bold outreach on social justice topics in its DNA. First United was one of the first churches in Bloomington to integrate intentionally in the 1950s, including convincing local barbershops to offer haircuts to black men. More recently, First United took a stand on becoming Welcoming and Affirming, which led to the church being kicked out of our local ABC conference. (Church members are quite proud of this fact.) First United's reputation in town is one of challenging the status quo, encouraging people to do what is right, and leading the charge to bend the arc of the universe towards a kinder, gentler world.

### *How we connect to the wider United Church of Christ:*

In addition to supporting the denomination financially both through budget-line giving and special collections, we participate in the wider UCC in various ways.

At the Association level, First United has sent one clergy delegate and one lay delegate to most Ecclesiastical Councils in the last five years. Since we currently have two Members in Discernment (MID), we are also interacting with the Committee on Ministry quite often. We have had representation at our annual Association meeting in the past, though not in recent years.

At the Conference level, we have sent one clergy and one lay delegate to most of the Annual Gatherings. In 2019, Rev. Chad Abbott invited a number of people from our church to be part of the WISE team, which is tasked with providing resources for the Conference before and after an upcoming vote on whether the Conference will adopt a resolution at the 2020 Annual Gathering to make our Conference a WISE Conference.

At the National level, a couple of years ago, one of our MIDs attended the annual MID Gathering at the denominational headquarters in Cleveland. The following year, this

member was invited back to organize and help put on the event, which was hosted by MESA (Ministerial Excellence, Support, and Authorization), a ministry of the National Setting.

The church is also aligned with American Baptist Churches USA. It supports the denomination financially in the same way it supports the UCC. At the regional level, First United's senior minister is a delegate to the regional delegates meetings, and the church may also select two additional delegates. These delegates meetings are made available by video conferencing. The region has a biennial gathering to which the church may send delegates. The senior minister and one lay person elected by the church are also members of the Permanent Council of Ordination for ABCRGR, meetings of which are called as needed and also made available by video conferencing. The church is also encouraged to participate in a wide variety of other regional and denominational events.

*Statements that apply to our UCC faith community (checked):*

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

*Reflection on what the above statements mean to our congregation:*

While ONA is the only formal designation at First United Church, we are actively pursuing the WISE designation as well as accessibility goals as part of a safety and security consultation that is underway. We practice the GISS ethic; three times over the last seven years, we have had a racial-issues discussion group. In 2008 we replaced our regular Sunday School liturgy class with a Sacred Conversation on Race course led by a staff member; we hosted a speaker on the history of racial bias in US immigration policy in 2019, and we are planning an anti-racism training weekend in the coming year.

*Our congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities:*

We have had ongoing gatherings and group interactions with the Bloomington Islamic Center for years. Some of these events have also included participation by Temple Beth Shalom. Currently, we meet once a year with the Islamic Center and Beth Shalom for an interfaith discussion. In the distant past, we have had sister church gatherings with Bethel AME. We are participants in the Bloomington Multifaith Alliance, which meets quarterly in rotating religious centers. We are one of the four "First" churches in Bloomington: First United Methodist, First Christian, and First Presbyterian, and share in a rotating Good Friday service. We were strong participant-hosts of the Interfaith Winter Shelter for



7 years, November through March. A Mennonite congregation worships and shares supper in our building on Sunday evenings. They joined us for Christmas Eve service this past year.

*How our mission statement relates to time spent engaging in different activities:*

First United's mission statement, posted on its website, underscores our commitment to being an inclusive community of Christian faith. It affirms the ministry gifts of each individual. We welcome everyone of all abilities and identity to serve on a board, committee, or in an elected office, to teach a class, or in other ways contribute to the work of the church. We promote spiritual growth through multiple activities, from Children's Learning Time on Sundays, to youth groups, lectionary classes, spirituality talks and book groups. We celebrate our faith in meaningful worship that includes interfaith readings, open communion, the use of inclusive language, and the thoughtful relationship of scripture to current events, social and environmental justice, and advocacy. We build supportive community through coffee hours, potlucks, play Fridays (a monthly, intergenerational event of pizza, games, and crafts), and other activities. We minister to our neighbors by collecting and distributing food and clothing to the poor and by volunteering our time and contributing financially to multiple agencies in the community. We make space available for Head Start classrooms, twelve-step groups, Area 10 Agency on Aging Food Pantry volunteers, Quarryland Men's Choir, and others. We seek to follow in the steps of Jesus by reaching out without strings attached to welcome neighbors in need—people often disadvantaged and marginalized in society.

Our mission statement corresponds well to the ways we spend our time. Approximately 12 hours of the month are dedicated to board, committee, and council meetings. Several additional hours are devoted to collective worship, study, social activities, and volunteering. Until two years ago, we dedicated a great deal of time and energy collectively to hosting the Interfaith Winter Shelter for the homeless. We would like to increase and better focus our time spent on efforts to reach out to the community in service and social advocacy.

*Reflection on the scope of work assigned to our pastor:*

We expect our pastor to have a vision for social action that is compatible with the congregation's inclusive Christian values. Our ideal pastor would encourage, recruit, and delegate members to participate in existing community programs or organize new ones. We also desire a minister who takes a leading role in the local area as a voice of our church in influencing the conversation toward compassion. We expect dedication to these concerns to be a significant portion of the pastor's time, without adversely affecting other duties. We expect an organized pastor who can juggle a variety of responsibilities and adapt to the ever-evolving needs of the church, all while maintaining necessary boundaries and self-care. We expect our pastor to seek support when needed. We understand that our expectations are high, and we desire to do all we can to support our pastor in meeting them.

## 4b. MISSION InSite

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### *Comment on our congregation's MissionInsite report:*

On matters of race, income, and education, the MissionInsite reports for our community of Bloomington, Indiana indicate that it is homogenous ethnically and racially: predominantly White (82%) with 7.3% Asian, 4.0% Black, 3.6% Hispanic or Latino, and 3.1% Pacific Islander/American Indian. Economic data indicate that, while median family income in Bloomington is about the same as the state of Indiana generally, the poverty level is significantly higher than in the state, although that poverty rate is likely skewed by the presence of Indiana University students. The split between blue-collar occupations and white-collar occupations is about one-third blue to two-thirds white. The number of people living at or below the poverty line (19,376) is worse than the state average, whereas the Bloomington average for earning undergraduate and advanced degrees significantly exceeds the state average.

On matters of religious attitudes and affiliation, the MissionInsite reports indicate that religious belief and affiliation is on the decline. In 2017, about one third of residents were involved in a religious congregation or community, two-thirds were not involved, and the trendline was downward. Principal reasons given for non-participation were that religious people are too judgmental, beliefs are too strict, religious leaders and organized religion are untrustworthy, religion is too focused on money, and a disbelief in God. Others report that the demands of raising a family prevent involvement or they simply have too little time, that there is no good faith community available, church is old fashioned and boring, and they do not feel welcome or useful in a church community.

What is most likely to attract nonparticipants to a faith community? The report recommends warm and friendly encounters, quality sermons, adult social activities, and volunteer opportunities. One must also take into account the message. It is relevant to note that, within the Bloomington community, there is strong agreement that God is love and invites the world into a loving relationship as well as a strong belief that tolerance is necessary for social peace and wellbeing. There is also a somewhat strong belief in being good stewards of the environment and giving more attention to accomplishing economic justice. People in Bloomington generally recognize that race relations need to be improved, believe that abortion should be legal, and do not believe that marriage should be restricted to heterosexual partnerships.

### *How our congregation's internal demographics compare to those of Bloomington:*

First United's congregation reflects the community in which it is embedded. Demographically, we are predominantly a white congregation with some representation of minorities. Our membership is largely older/retired and middle-aged/professional. We are well educated. Our beliefs and values are progressive. We are open, welcoming, and affirming. We value active questioning, learning, and thoughtful reflection. We adopt an interpretative approach to scripture and a progressive theology. We are environmentally

conscious and committed to social justice. We are open to innovation in worship, and we have a rich tradition of socially relevant preaching from the pulpit. We socialize with one another, play together, work together, and maintain supportive and respectful relations with one another. We support multiple social services in our community financially, by making space available in our building, and by volunteering. Our congregation is self-governing. We work to provide childcare for parents during worship and other meetings and events. These are qualities that may help to attract nonparticipants to our faith community.

*How the demographics of the community shape our ministry:*

Our community is simultaneously middle class (even upper middle class) and economically challenged. A substantial minority live at and below the poverty line. Finding adequate housing is difficult. We live within a larger state context that is not welcoming to differences of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religion. First United Church offers an alternative exposure to religion through its commitment to progressive Christianity. Our congregation is not creedal, judgmental or narrow in its religious views or practices. It is a place where people from different traditions and at different points in their religious journey find safe harbor and sustenance. Opportunities to participate in our worship, study, social, and volunteer efforts are available but not imposed on anyone.

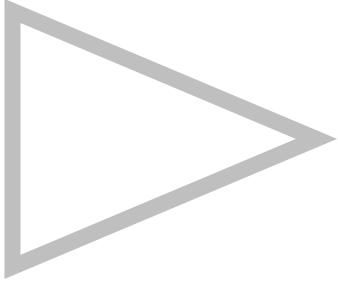
*What is our church is known for?*

First United Church is known for being explicitly progressive in its Christian identity and beliefs extended to addressing social ills in the local community. It has been a leader in this regard, even an outlier, to the extent that it is known in the community.

*What do new people say about our faith community?*

While we have attempted to express in this profile what we think characterizes the faith community at First United Church—where its emphasis is different than others and even unique in certain respects—there is ultimately a feeling people share when they visit and decide to stay. Most often people say it is hard to put words to that feeling. It seems different and special. We are just an open, welcoming, and friendly group of people comprising a very supportive community for new participants regardless of their beliefs or where they are on life's journey. New ways of thinking about the relevance of Christianity to life and society are alive in the conversation. People open up to one another, engage differences respectfully, learn and grow in the experience. People feel that they can be themselves in community with others. And they discover that what is true of First United today reflects a legacy of progressive commitment. Our older members remember and share stories of the church's earlier resistance to racial segregation and discrimination, its determination to affirm the ordination of a gay man, and more. This is a living legacy that renews itself with each generation and adapts to the challenges of the day.

## 5. REFERENCES



*Individuals who have agreed to serve as references:*

### REFERENCE 1

Rev. John Krueger, Retired UCC Minister  
317-498-0710 (cell); 317-467-1529 (home)  
john\_krueger425@comcast.net  
Previously served as interim minister at First United Church; knows our congregation well

### REFERENCE 2

Katie Broadfoot, Executive Director, Monroe County United Ministries  
812-339-3429, Ext. 11  
kbroadfoot@mcum.org  
Can speak to First United's involvement with the MCUM ministry

### REFERENCE 3

Dan Watts, Past President of the Interfaith Winter Shelter  
732-939-9426 (cell)  
wattbush@gmail.com  
Can provide details on First United's contribution to the Interfaith Winter Shelter project

### REFERENCE 4

Rev. Forrest Gilmore, Executive Director, Shalom Community Center  
812-334-5728, Ext. 122  
forrest@shalomcommunitycenter.org  
Can speak to First United's role in addressing the problem of homelessness and can locate our church within the broader spectrum of Bloomington faith communities



## CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

### 6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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Creating Justice (A Prayer)  
by Rev. Mark Sandlin

Good and gracious God,

It is easy to get so caught up  
in the business and troubles  
of our own lives,  
that we forget we are called  
to be transformers for justice  
in this world.

There is so much pain,  
so much loneliness,  
so much sickness,  
so much loss,  
so much injustice  
in this world  
that it can sometimes seem like  
“just the way things are.”

Let us never forget  
that Creation contains  
the possibility of  
heaven on earth,

a fellowship of humanity.

Let us never forget  
that the teachings of Jesus  
as well as the teachings  
of so many other  
great spiritual leaders  
can lead us to a world  
where suffering  
is greatly reduced.

Until that time,  
teach us not only to  
confront injustices  
but to comfort those who suffer  
and to be open  
to receiving comfort  
when we are the ones  
suffering.

Amen.

(ProgressiveChristianity.org, January 30, 2020)

## 6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

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

### *Individuals and groups in the church who contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile:*

A nine-member pulpit committee nominated by the church council and elected by the congregation assumed primary and collective responsibility for writing the church profile. In preparation for writing the church profile, the members of the pulpit committee participated with the congregation in a discernment process that involved nine two-hour meetings. A subsequent opportunity was provided for people who could not attend to turn in written responses to the questions discussed in the nine congregational meetings. Individual staff, council members, and congregants generously responded to the pulpit committee's specific requests for information about church finances, buildings, and history, the makeup of its membership, images of the church and its people, and guidance in selecting references. A draft of the church profile was shared with our conference ministers for review and then with the church's president to affirm our representation of the church and congregation.



Robert L. Ivie, Pulpit Committee Chair  
February 8, 2020

Signed on behalf of the members of the Pulpit Committee  
First United Church, Bloomington, IN

Laurie Eynon, Heather Farmer, Ralph Gaebler, Sara Ivey Lucas, Bob Ivie, Sandra Meder Hendricks, Rebecca Nunley, Ted Wininger, Don Wooldridge

## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment: Yes, they are in good standing.

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

Staff Comment: Yes, the ministerial history is accurate.

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

Staff Comment: Yes, the financial information is correct.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: *Chad R. Abbott*

Name / Title: Rev. Chad R. Abbott

Email: [c.abbott@ikcucc.org](mailto:c.abbott@ikcucc.org)

Phone: 317-924-1395

Date: 02/08-2020

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



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

*"Jesus answered them, 'Have faith in God!'" – Mark 11:22*