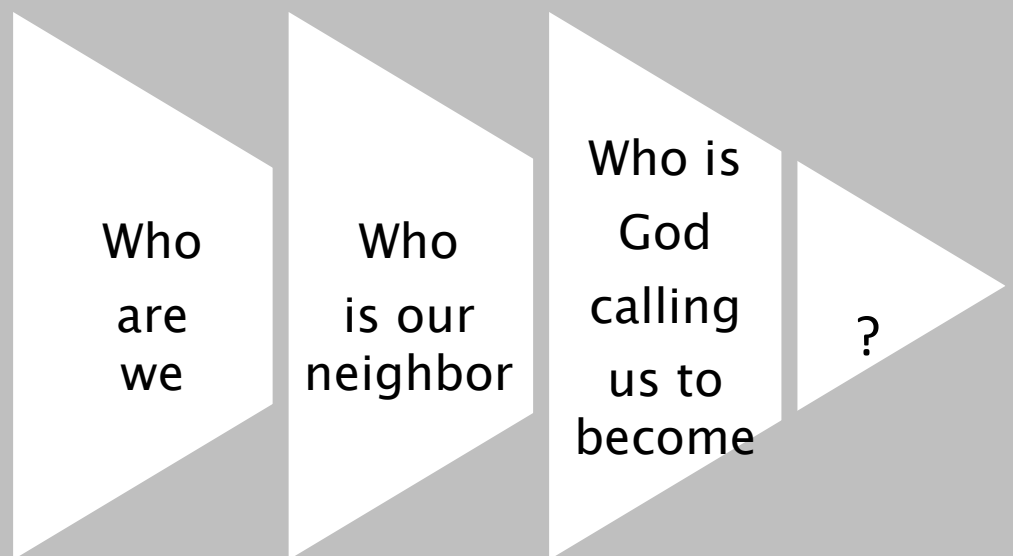


Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

# INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH



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

MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,  
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION  
**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Community of Faith, UCC  
Elyria, OH

Minister

ONE (Ohio NorthEast) Heartland Conference  
Living Water Association

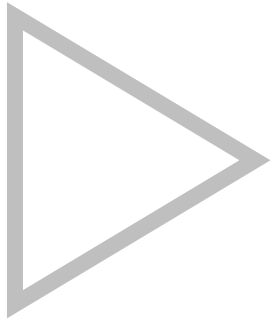
[Validation Date]

### LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

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

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

# 1. POSITION POSTING



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

## 1 a. LISTING INFORMATION

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Church name: Community of Faith, UCC

Street address: 9715 East River Rd, Elyria, OH 44035

Supplemental web links: None applicable

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

Conference: ONE (Ohio NorthEast) Heartland

Association: Living Water

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

*Nayiri Karjian, General Minister*

*Living Water Association, ONE (Ohio NorthEast)*

*Heartland Conference, United Church of Christ*

*960 Portage Trail, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221*

*Office: 330.940.2220 x 102*

*Mobile: 203.722.9174*

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

Summary Ministry Description:

We are a relatively young church and have just begun our journey. We are looking to become a church that both honors the traditions and faithful service of our members from their former churches, and acknowledges that our world needs us to constantly move toward an even more loving and welcoming one. We want to be a church where anyone who needs to see evidence of God's love, can enter our church doors and feel it surround them.

To accomplish that, we are looking for a compassionate minister that knows the Word of God and can relay that in a way our congregation, young and old, can truly hear. Our church is full of faithful servants of God, but we need a minister who can see our talents and inspire us to use them to move forward on our journey to a church that demonstrates the love God has for this world.

Photographs:





What we value about living in our area:

The variety of seasons, proximity to Lake Erie, values of the people, low cost of living.

Current size of membership: 279

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

Position Title: Minister

Position Duration:

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

Compensation Level:

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

## 1 b. SCOPE OF WORK

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### **Scope of work for full time PASTORAL POSITION**

#### **(40-50 hours weekly / 10-12 units)**

- preparation and leadership of Sunday worship including scripture study, crafting of liturgy and bulletin, sermon preparation, guiding and sometimes finding lay liturgists, planning of music in coordination with musical staff or volunteers, preaching, offering of prayers, etc.
- faith formation and vitality through prayer, Bible study, service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities and helping lay persons take advantage of them
- leadership development by working with people in the church to create ministry and programs
- pastoral care in collaboration with lay people (hospital and home visitations)
- community engagement and leading the way for the church to be an ambassador of God's love
- weddings and funerals for participants in the worshipping community
- strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry
- attend meetings and give leadership as needed to church programs, in collaboration with lay leadership
- participate in wider church activities such as conference and association meetings
- administration responsibilities (unless delegated) such as email and website
- faithful financial development and stewardship
- responsibility for supervision of staff
- availability to wider community for funerals, weddings, special worship programs, and as a representative of the church to local organizations
- counseling, listening and referral
- study and prayer to continually grow in faith and to improve skills so as to lead, teach and preach more effectively
- energizing and deepening the spiritual connections and faith understandings of others in all they do

#### Core Competencies:

Compassionate

Leadership skills (Pastoral Skills – spiritual depth)

Sense of Humor (sociable, relatable, approachable, interesting)

## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

---

Salary Basis: Conference guidelines.

Benefits: Salary plus Benefits – Benefits may include Health insurance, Social Security offset, Pension, Life and Disability, Continuing Education and other benefits in accordance with the wishes of the pastor.

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 nearby with a housing allowance

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

We anticipate that our minister would live in or close to Elyria allowing their presence at the church and within the community of Elyria on a regular basis.

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

None

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

The Living Water Association's Committee on Ministry is actively involved in support of any/all pastors in the Association, through:

- Communities of Practice for authorized ministers, which are small groups for professional and spiritual development,
- Healthy Practices for Ministry events, also for authorized ministers
- Strong collegial and ecumenical support in our community.

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

Not Applicable, we are looking for a full time minister.

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

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

During an envisioning retreat on June 26, 2019, the group discussed 5 goals:

Enhance spiritual development

Increase our outreach in community

Identify gifts and strengths

Effective programming for youth/children

Develop more intentional membership care

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

We anticipate our next minister will become familiar with and active in the community, meeting community and political leaders as well as leaders of other churches (our current minister has been active in the Elyria Ministerial group), and social relief organizations. Through those connections, and connections from existing church members, we would like to be even more active in our greater Elyria community.

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

Our church appreciates language that is inclusive and expansive, culturally sensitive and appropriate to the context of our time.

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

Caring for All Creation

Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice

Building Transformational Leadership Skills

Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions





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

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

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

When our congregation was surveyed, we overwhelmingly responded with our church being called to be faithful servants who help our church and community. We want to continue striving to be a welcoming, loving congregation committed to following the example of Christ and his teaching. We are called to be an inclusive place for all to experience the Community of Faith family.

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

Our Vision needs to emphasize that we as a congregation address the challenges and opportunities with the guidance of our minister, but more importantly with the congregation members actively stepping up in leadership roles. In 2019 a retreat was held where we established goals and visions. Several surveys followed, utilizing both community leaders and the congregation with the purpose of gaining information and input. We need to revisit those established goals: Enhance spiritual development; continue identifying our strengths and gifts; develop more programming for youth and children; further develop and enhance membership care; and especially we need to increase our outreach and be a more visible presence of Christ in the community. Our church members need to be encouraged to step up, sharing their strengths, formulating plans and ideas, following through on goals. Our visions and goals should be bold and hopeful, but also realistic and reflective of resources, time, money and other factors that influence the church's ability to reach them. Community of Faith needs to expand what is prevalent in our congregation and be known as a center for feeding people spiritually and physically in our community.



### 3. WHO ARE WE NOW?

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

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

#### 3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

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Describe your congregation's life of faith.

Our Mission Statement may best describe this:

“Community of Faith is to be the living presence of Jesus Christ: witnessing, teaching and serving with compassion and integrity, and living the Good News of God's unconditional love for all God's children. All are welcomed, and embraced in our fellowship of God's grace.”

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

Our congregation is a loving group that is generous in our mission. We value our teamwork in our various fundraising activities and outreach to the community. Another strength is our strong leadership and quality music in our worship services. We are also financially stable and good stewards with what we have.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

As our congregates gather for worship in the sanctuary they are welcomed by greeters and other members. There is a sense of fellowship and peace as we ready ourselves for worship in quiet contemplation. We open with a gathering song and prayer. Members serve as liturgists and read selected bible verses and everyone is then welcome to joyfully participate in the passing of the peace. Music is an important part of our church. Traditional hymns are sung and the choir presents uplifting anthems. Our youth are involved sporadically in various roles as well as the youngest coming forward for a children's message. The minister's sermon is relevant, inspiring, and often humorous. Our members and visitors share their joys and concerns during the service. Ours is a very participatory church. We close with the Lord's Prayer, a hymn, and the Benediction. A coffee hour follows where everyone can visit and enjoy fellowship.

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

We do not have a formally expressed educational program (we have a limited number of Sunday school participants) and have not expressed a faith formation vision. However, one recent exploration of faith was conducted around the book - "Power of a Whisper". Similar efforts are made 2 or 3 times a year allowing participants to develop a deeper appreciation for the role of the church in their lives.

Also, when conducting a recent confirmation class (generally not held yearly, but as a group of appropriately aged participants is identified) our minister worked with lay leaders to create a curriculum that spoke to those participants and their families.

We acknowledge that this represents an opportunity for improvement. And will welcome input and guidance on how to effectively create an explicit faith formation vision.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

Our primary governing body is the Executive Team, comprised of 9 elected officials with the Minister and Endowment Team chair serving ex-officio. They meet monthly and as needed to address the administrative and staff needs of the church. The Leadership Team, which also meets monthly, is responsible for the overall program of the church. The Leadership Team includes all members of the Executive Team, plus one representative of each programming team. All programming teams are volunteers and each of those teams names its own chairperson, schedules their own meetings, and sets their own agendas.

Programming teams include: Worship & Music, Mission & Outreach Team, Dream Team (Christian Ed/Faith Formation), Care Team, Building & Grounds, Church Family Life, Fundraising Coordinator, Landscape Team, and Women of Faith. The minister serves ex-officio on all programming teams, though especially Worship & Music.

The monthly Executive Team meeting runs for about 2 hours, but any additional meetings are typically much shorter. Worship & Music manages the flow of the service and music, and they meet monthly for about an hour. As for mission, we have a Mission & Outreach team that keeps our church active in the community and world through donations and activities. A Newsletter is sent once a month with happenings in the church and a message from the Pastor and any group needing to communicate to the congregation.

An example of a recent crisis was after a heavy rain which caused water to overflow the skylights in the flat roof of the education wing. After initially being triaged by members of the buildings and grounds committee, members of the Executive Team were called to approve the use of a third party to dry the affected areas.

- 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

### 3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

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



Church#: 521025

Assoc: 566      Schedule: 0      Community of Faith UCC      Elyria      OH      44035

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2015	285	86	12	0	0	291	6	0	285
2016	312	113	16	2	3	32	10	0	27
2017	316	110	32	0	0	15	11	0	4
2018	339	110	36	9	1	23	10	0	23
2019	275	140	0	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
2015	\$83,549	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00	\$83,549	\$79,745
2016	\$202,300	\$28,500	\$0	\$4,365	\$4,365	\$0	\$4,365	0.00	\$235,165	\$143,000
2017	\$171,829	\$34,898	\$0	\$9,158	\$9,158	\$1,171	\$10,329	0.00	\$182,158	\$154,955
2018	\$171,829	\$0	\$0	\$2,533	\$2,533	\$0	\$2,533	0.00	\$174,362	\$0
2019	\$264,894	\$0	\$0	\$7,336	\$7,336	\$0	\$7,336	0.00	\$272,230	\$0

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

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	195	
Number of active non-members:	10	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	205	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	0	No – Church is about 5 years old.
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	0	No
Less than 5 years:	100%	No Counting the membership / participants in the former churches which consolidated into Community of Faith, UCC : the breakdown would be approximately 75 more than 10 years, 8% between 5-10, and 17% less than 5years.

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>
9	8	9	6	10	14	35	70	44	

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	2%	
Households with minors:	8%	
Single adults age 35-65:	7%	
Joint households with no minors:	42%	
Single adults over 65:	41%	

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	45%	
College:	35%	
Graduate School:	5%	
Specialty Training:	10%	
Other (less than high school):	5%	

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	35%	
Adults who are retired:	60%	
Adults who are not fully employed:	5%	

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

We have teachers, business owners, healthcare workers, office employees, manufacturing employees, realtors, bankers, farmers, and tradespeople.

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?

We are pretty mono-cultural, primarily multi-generational American or European – probably 95 percent.

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

We think this is good to pursue, but do not expect to take this on during the pandemic.

### 3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i>
Adult Groups or Classes		
Altar Team	13	Minister, volunteers
Building and Grounds/men’s group	7	Group leader (volunteer)
Landscape Team	15	Group leader (volunteer)
Worship & Music Team	14	Minister, Music Director, volunteers
Care Team	8	Group leader (volunteer)
Circle One	9	Group leader (volunteer)
Church Chicks (C <sup>2</sup> )	7	Group leader (volunteer)
Sojourners	25	Group leader (volunteer)
Women of Faith	~20	Group leader (volunteer)
Crafters	10	Group leader (volunteer)
Noodlers & Hungarian Cookbook	17	Group leader (volunteer)
Dream Team	2-5	Group leader (volunteer)
Grief support group	2-5 as needed	Minister
Good Samaritan	4	Minister, volunteers
Mission and Outreach	13	Group leader (volunteer)
Church Family Life	9	Group leader (volunteer)

Baptisms ( <i>3 last year</i> )	130 (typically part of Sunday service)	Minister
Children's Groups or Classes Sunday School	2-10	Sunday School teachers
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	200 / 175	Worship & Music Team (14 people)
Church-wide Meals Burger Bash Paprikash and Cabbage Roll Dinner Spaghetti Dinner Oktoberfest	70 200+ 100 200	Ad hoc teams created for the events
Choirs and Music Groups Choir Bell Choir	30 12	Music Director Bell Choir Director
Church-based Bible Study (formed for Lent/Advent)	~20	Minister
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	130	Minister - First Sunday of the month
Community Meals Salvation Army 4-6 times / year	5-8 from church 20-40 Salvation Army diners	Volunteer
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	0	Minister
Drama or Dance Program	N/A	
Funerals ( <i>10 last year</i> )	Well attended	Minister
Intergenerational Groups	N/A	
Outdoor Worship	N/A	
Prayer or Meditation Groups Prayer chain (phone/email only)	25	Minister
Public Advocacy Work	N/A	
Retreats - Our Church's Future	20	Minister

Sales to Public Sausage Sale (Bi-Annual) Cookie Sale (Annual)	75 100	Ad hoc teams create for the events Ad hoc teams create for the events
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	N/A	
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	1	Minister
Worship (time slot: 10:30)	130	Minister – Worship & Music team
Young Adult Groups or Classes	N/A	
Youth Groups or Classes	5	Ad hoc thru volunteer advisors
Other	N/A	

Additional comments:

We are proud of the number of people participating and the variety of activities we have available to the congregation to bring people together, sharing God’s love.

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

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Tom French	No (retired)	Deaconess Hospital	Chaplain	Y
Paul Eaton	No (retired)	St. John’s - South Amherst	Minister	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:

Both participate in the same capacity as other members.



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

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Church secretary	No	Part time	Minister	1 year
Sextant	No	Part time	Executive Team	5 years
Organist	No	Part time	Executive Team	3 years
Music Director	No	Part time	Executive Team	5 years

### REFLECTION

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

We have a lot of different teams keeping involved and active in the church making the church a welcoming and nourishing place in our lives.

### 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

---

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$160,044
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	\$
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i> )	\$
Fundraising Events	\$17,500
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$
Grants	\$
Rentals of Church Building	\$7,550
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$6,000
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )	\$
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$
Other (specify): Sale of two properties on land contract	\$43,709
Other (specify): Misc income and donations	\$15,350
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$250,153</b>

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$206,082

Budget is part of the annual report and available to applicants on request.

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 34%

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? Yes (*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%*)

12.5% of the Mission and Outreach Team budget for the year.

What is the church’s current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: 0

Reason for debt: N/A

Are capital and other payments current? N/A

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.

Install vinyl siding on portions of the church building in 2020. Because of Covid-19 pandemic, start date is unknown. Project cost is approximately \$42,000.

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

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

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

What is the market value of the assets? \$1,412,000

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

Under certain circumstances

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? 5.5%

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: \$55,000 for Chancel renovation

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

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates: no comments.

#### Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$40,887 (restricted savings)

Investments (other than endowment):     \$72,325 (money market account)  
   \$40,406 (Certificate of Deposit)  
   \$93,676 (checking account)

Does your church have a parsonage? Yes, but only used as rental property

Fair market rental value of the parsonage: \$1,000 / month

How is the parsonage used? Rental property

Street / City / State / Zip: 9725 East River Rd, Elyria, OH 44035

Finished square footage: 1,606 sq. ft.

Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms: 3 bedrooms, 1 bath

Assessed real estate value: \$103,170

Available for minister residence: No

Expected minister residence: No

Condition of structure, systems and appliances : Good

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs : Property and  
Grounds team

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

Current church facility: 9715 E River Rd, Elyria tax value: \$1,190,260

(on 10 acres, with older outdoor pavilion and storage shed)

Parsonage: information listed in previous question – now rental only

Former Magyar church facility 6119 W. River Road, Elyria

Land contract in place \$100,000

Former Lake Ave church facility 310 Lowell Street, Elyria

Land contract in place \$355,000

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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

Our Worship space, Chancel, Community hall, class rooms and pavilion. The restrooms are not ADA compliant, but are on the same level and are somewhat accessible.

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

We feel we are good stewards of the church's finances, and financially stable. Our budget/finance team meets once a year to review/approve budgets submitted by ministry teams. Then it is submitted to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting in February.

### **3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

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

On June 28, 2015 three congregations of the UCC in Elyria, Ohio became one family of faith known as Community of Faith UCC. The three congregations that came together were the Lake Avenue UCC (310 Lowell Street, Elyria, Ohio), the Magyar UCC (6119 West River Road S, Elyria, Ohio), and the St. Paul UCC (9715 East River Road, Elyria, Ohio).

The creation of Community of Faith UCC was the culmination of the work of a Transitional Team made up of members from all three of the congregations. That team worked through the details needed to create the new church including development of a constitution, by-laws, and consolidation documents. In May 2015 each of the three congregations was presented and approved the documents that enabled the formal consolidation that occurred at a worship service on June 28, 2015 led by the Rev. Dr. Rita Root, Association Minister for the Western Reserve Association of the United Church of Christ.

Each of the three churches had a long history in Elyria. St. Paul was originally founded by German speaking Christians in 1871, and was the only one of 5 Elyria UCC churches with roots in the Evangelical and Reformed denomination. It was originally downtown, but moved to the township in the 1950's. Lake Avenue was formally founded in 1926 after efforts by a First Congregational minister in downtown Elyria to create a 2<sup>nd</sup> Congregational church on the west side of town. Their first services were in a borrowed facility, but ultimately they purchased land on Lake Avenue on the west side of Elyria and built a new church dedicated in 1926. And Magyar was originally Elyria's only Hungarian Reformed church founded in 1916 on West River Road S. They held their last Hungarian Service in 1989, and earned an excellent reputation for their Hungarian cookbook and other traditions.

The consolidation of the three churches was THE major event for our church. On March 27, 2015 the Elyria Chronicle-Telegram published an article entitled "Elyria Churches to Merge." In response and correction to that article, Pastor Kelley and Pastor Myers wrote a letter to the paper that included the following vision and objective of the merging Community of Faith UCC:

*Community of Faith UCC will be a place of welcome and inclusion of all – including doubters, skeptics, and non-believers. We are not here to judge, but to serve...not here to impose a set of beliefs, but to nurture a set of values that work to build a community of open-mindedness, honest, loving-kindness, and peacefulness. We're members of a denomination that believes that God is still speaking to us in new ways. What religion "was" is not what it has to remain to be. Our three churches are on a venture, a journey if you will, to respond to a society that has lost its faith in that which is bigger than itself and needs to reconnect with each other at a deeper spiritual level. We help connect people to their best selves, to each other, and to the sacred.*

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

The rearchitecture of the Chancel was our most recent change. Due to the volume of work, and length of time to complete the project, we met in the Community Hall. This actually became quite engaging, as people began sitting wherever chairs were available, thus getting to know more members. Plus, it seemed that more people stayed for coffee hour and fellowship.

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 values and practices we follow encourage discussion, prayer, respect, concern, and peaceful resolution and then make adjustments. All major decisions are made by the membership through Voting. Our Ways of Work, By-laws, and Constitution govern these processes and help to minimize conflict.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Kathy Ketchum (Community of Faith)	4	Y
Alana Kelley (former Lake Ave & Magyar)	2	Y
Bob Gross (former Lake Ave)	13	Y
Jerry Kruse (former Lake Ave)	10	Y
Alana Kelley (former Magyar)	8	Y
William Feldt (former Magyar)	15	Y
Bret Myers (former St. Paul)	2	Y
Allen Grothe (former St. Paul)	9	Y
Kevan Franklin (former St. Paul)	10	Y

(this is just the called pastors, not the interims filling in between them)

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

Our church is still very young. Community of Faith has only had one called minister, but we have learned that we depend heavily on our minister to bridge the communication gaps between church groups and keep us on a common path. While all members have pretty diverse backgrounds, many having long history with the former churches, virtually all can respect and support our minister as they guide us to where we are called to go.

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

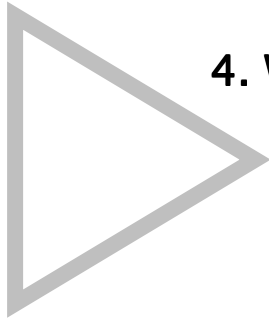
No. Though, Pastor Alana Kelley and Pastor Bret Myers did not pass the congregational vote for an initial six-month Co-Pastorate. The congregation decided it was best to begin a pastoral search at that time.

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



## 4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

- a. COMMUNITY VISION
- b. MISSION InSite

### 4a. COMMUNITY VISION

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

When researching our activities that extend outward into our community there were over twenty different activities we organize and participate in. Our Missions and Outreach programs include supporting food pantries in our town, serving Salvation Army dinners, collecting school supplies for area schools and donating Toys for Children at Christmas time as well as Gifts for Senior Citizens. Our crafters fill a mitten tree for scarves, mittens, and hats that are donated to our schools for children in need. Our community hall is also made available to various outside groups and is a meeting place for AA, NA, Scouts, 4H and even an exercise class and baton twirlers.

One member responded to our survey that there were too many service projects to list which may be the case. We have sponsored Emmanuel, donated to Team Rubicon (veteran support organization that enable veterans to use their skills to help communities in need) started the Good Samaritan Fund to aid members of the church or community with medication expenses or utility bills.

Although we help immensely in our community with instances of care, our involvement with advocacy and justice are limited.

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

We participate in Five for Five, and make donations to UCC Disaster Relief fund. We occasionally participate in conferences and workshops offered by the Association. Our current pastor serves on the Committee on Ministry of the Association.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using



language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).)

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

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

Our congregation has started to pursue some of these designations (A2A - our access is pretty good, but not great with our aging bathrooms). We consider ourselves welcoming but have not taken all the steps in the Open and Affirming designation. Our contributions go to some of the other designations as well.

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

Our church has had various participation through our missions and outreach team and our music groups:

Participation in the community service at Wesleyan Village

Stood with Jewish synagogue

Teatime for Peace at Mosque (Parma)

Sleep in Heavenly Peace (building beds for children in their homes here in Elyria)

Participation in CropWalk

Hosting joint UCC picnic in our pavilion

Conducting Trunk or Treat for Halloween

Participation in Blanket Sunday

Prior congregations participated with youth missions to Lotts Creek Kentucky

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.

Our activities support our mission statement. We focus on welcoming and encouraging attendees to feel the peace of Christ's presence through our compassion and integrity, and that is the focus of our mission statement. "All are welcomed, and embraced in our fellowship of God's grace."

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

We believe their time commitments are appropriately reflected in the Scope of Work.

## 4b. MISSION InSite

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

Elyria's population is relatively stable, with slight decline in school age children. Family incomes are slightly on the low side for Ohio – poverty is a potential issue.

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

Our church reflects the aging demographics of our community, and the mix of blue and white collar employment. Our racial make-up does not reflect the immediate geographic demographics, and we do not have the high proportion of single mom families of the community at large (45.5%).

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

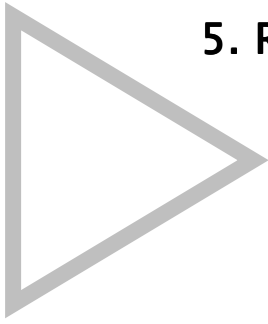
We serve an aging population well, but our ministry is not otherwise shaped to serve the needs of our community.

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

We are known to be an actively engaged church hosting meals (bringing the community together and raising funds for the church and missions). We also are known for the successful consolidation process that we went through in 2015, as well as the size and quality of our music programs (choral and bells). Finally, we've been told by visiting pastors they feel the spirit is alive at Community of Faith.

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

Most speak to the welcoming nature of our congregation and our minister. They say they felt comfort and acceptance for who they are, and wanted to share that with others.



## 5. REFERENCES

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

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

### REFERENCE 1

Rev. Nathan A. Russell / Senior Pastor / Washington Ave Christian Church  
(440-323-4213 / [nathan@waccelyria.org](mailto:nathan@waccelyria.org) / visitor and participant in Elyria Ministerial Assoc.)

### REFERENCE 2

Jill Taylor / Visitor  
(440-567-537 / [Jmtaylor157@gmail.com](mailto:Jmtaylor157@gmail.com) / Visitor and friend of current minister )

### REFERENCE 3

Debbie Frazier / Visitor  
(440-225-7190 / Email / Visitor and friend of current member )

### PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES

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

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

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

Anything else you wish to share.



Tuesday, November 17, 2020

Dear Colleague:

Grace and peace to you from God, the Giver of Life; Jesus, the Instigator of Justice; and, the Holy Spirit, the Wind of Surprise. I pray this letter finds you well as you navigate the liminal space of discerning a potential call to serve Community of Faith United Church of Christ in Elyria, Ohio, as its next pastor.

Community of Faith has a unique history. Three congregations partnered with one another to form a new church. While each group has retained unique elements of its identity, each participates in mutual, self-giving love. Community of Faith is a model for the Trinity, and the church's perichoretic dance gives vibrant life to its worship, work, and witness. From cabbage roll sales, chicken paprikash dinners, and other gatherings around tables, Community of Faith embodies the love of God and neighbor.

Ministry in the context of a global pandemic has not been easy on any congregation, especially those that have limited full-time staff and technological resources. Community of Faith has no website, social media presence, or online worship. These platforms are absolutely critical and represent a growing edge for the church. At the same time, having a Facebook page is not going to grow the church. The next minister will need to inspire the congregation and cultivate a discipline of imagination within the church so that Community of Faith can claim what makes them distinct on the crowded religious landscape of Elyria.

Northeast Ohio continues to gradually recover from the great recession. We are economically disadvantaged, and the area has not bounced back with the country at-large. The opioid epidemic has troubled many throughout the region. A lack of efficient public transportation also thwarts economic growth and keeps oppressing the minoritized and the dispossessed. In 2020, Elyria City Commissioners named racism a public health crisis, and the confederate flag is still sold at the annual Lorain County Fair.

When I began my ministry at Washington Avenue in September 2018, I met clergy from Community of Faith and quickly found an ecumenical partner. Following the tragedy at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Community of Faith and WACC partnered with each other in showing up to our local synagogue and proclaiming our unified stand against violence, phobias of any kind, and hatred.

Ministry on a rapidly shifting landscape is a challenge, but it is also an opportunity, and I remain convinced that this area is ripe with potential and possibility. Community of Faith is the strongest UCC congregation in town, and the church has much to offer as it partners with God in bringing the reign of heaven to earth. I am also eager to work with you as a co-laborer and co-conspirator, dreaming and scheming toward the future God wants and ultimately will have.

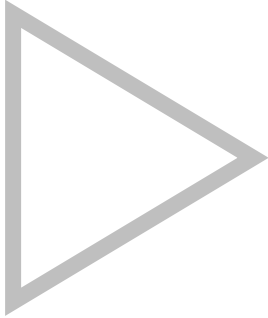
Peace along the way,

Rev. Nathan A. Russell, Senior Pastor  
Pronouns: he/him/his

---

Washington Avenue Christian Church ♦ 301 Washington Avenue ♦ Elyria OH 44035-5124  
440-323-4213 ♦ waccelyria.org ♦ nathan@waccelyria.org

## 6. CLOSING THOUGHTS



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

### 6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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While this music has not been used in our church, this song spoke strongly to our search committee: Song of a Faithful Servant (by Don Besig and Nancy Price).

It expresses the emotion and calling that keeps us faithful to God and our church.

Some of the lyrics include:

“Lord I’m glad I found the Power of Your word”...

“And answered when I heard You call my name”...

“Lord, I am Your Servant, Your humble, grateful Servant”...

“Help me share Your love, in all I do and say”...

“Help me be Your Servant every day!”

As in Isaiah, 6:8:

“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here *am* I; send me.”,

we humbly pray that God will speak to our next pastor so they can hear the call to join us as we seek to serve God in all that we do.

## 6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

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

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?

Primarily the Search Committee, nominated by the Executive Team. We conducted and incorporated results from a survey of church members. We also used materials maintained by the office secretary and Church Historian, and sought occasional guidance from our current minister on interpreting the Profile questions.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Our Search Committee and the congregation have prayerfully considered where we are and where we are called to go. We pray that you can see in the words written here our attempt to express that. If you have questions or concerns, we look forward to hearing them and will clarify to the best of our ability.

Signed:



Andrew G Behm

Title: Chair of Search Committee

Date: Dec 1, 2020

## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment: Faith Community UCC is a congregation in good standing with the Living Water Association, has a living ministry to its members and the wider community as well as potential for the future. Following the merger the church truly blossomed into one community, cohesive, harmonious, united in faith and mission. Elyria, as many other communities, can benefit from Faith Community's ministry as the congregation discerns new ways of engaging in its wider community

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

Staff Comment: Yes.

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

Staff Comment: Yes.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: 

Name / Title: Nayiri Karjian, Association General Minister

Email: [nayiri.agm@livingwaterone.org](mailto:nayiri.agm@livingwaterone.org)

Phone: cell: 203.722.9174

Date: December 5, 2020

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*