

Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ

Equipping, supporting and resourcing congregations and clergy for effective ministry

Position: The Wisconsin Conference of the UCC seeks a full-time Associate Conference Minister.

Priorities: The Wisconsin Conference values diversity in race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity and sexual orientation. We continually strive to widen our circle of inclusion, and thus seek a diverse candidate pool.

Scope of ministry: Regional responsibility for 75 congregations and care for all authorized ministers in the Southwest Association and half of the Southeast Association. This portfolio also includes some conference-wide programmatic and project responsibilities. Residency expectation is anywhere within the greater Madison area.

Primary responsibilities:

- Guide pastoral transitions (develop expertise in the profile and candidate process)
- Communicate all search and call information with the search and call coordinator
- Staff and resource Association Church & Ministry Teams
- Staff and resource Association Administrative Teams
- Guide Members In Discernment and those seeking Privilege of Call or Lay Authorization
- Provide support and accountability care to authorized ministers and congregations
- Preach/participate in worship (anniversaries, ordinations, installations, invitations)
- Attend monthly field staff, wider ACM staff and full staff meetings
- Attend Association, Conference, AM21 and General Synod meetings
- Utilize leadership skills in conflict resolution and guiding compensation negotiation
- Guide congregations to resources related to organizational change and re-visioning ministry
- Encourage cohort learning for clergy – mentor, coach and Communities of Practice
- Cultivate opportunities for shared ministries and openness to emerging ministry models
- Develop a working knowledge of the Manual on Ministry and MESA best practices
- Promote justice work and foster ecumenical relationships with counterparts in other faith traditions

Candidate Qualifications:

Theology and social justice stances consistent with UCC
Sensitivity and skill in bridging range of perspectives
Authorized Standing in United Church of Christ
Significant local church pastoral experience
Strong team player and trust builder
Attentiveness to self-care
Strategic collaborator
Spiritual depth
Pastoral heart
Leadership Instincts
Non-anxious presence
Exceptional self-motivator
Gifted in discerning priorities
Strong EQ and self-awareness
Excellent communication skill set
Joyful, positive, gracious, resilient spirit

Conference Snapshot: The Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ (<http://www.wcucc.org/>) consists of four associations, 215 congregations and nearly 40,000 people. The Conference staff comprises 12 talented team members. Our Conference office (The Trost Center) is located just north of Madison and provides a spacious and beautiful setting for ministry and Wider Church meetings. The congregations of the Wisconsin Conference are hearty, faithful and resilient. We savor our long and rich history from both the Congregational Christian and Evangelical and Reformed traditions, yet we also welcome new models for ministry and innovative ways to engage the world spiritually and prophetically.

The churches of the Wisconsin Conference continue to provide steady support to Our Church's Wider Mission and to our UCC special offerings. Many of our congregations have cultivated thriving community-based ministries and active justice working groups. Our Outdoor Ministries inspire people of all generations through three incredible camp and retreat settings: Pilgrim Center (located on Green Lake), Moon Beach Camp (located in the far north near Eagle River), and Cedar Valley Retreat Center (located near West Bend). We recently launched a new online learning institute called the Damascus Project (a shared leadership and education endeavor with the Minnesota Conference). In 2019, the Wisconsin Conference hosted General Synod 32 in Milwaukee.

Residential expectation: We anticipate this ACM will reside in the greater Madison area.

Compensation: The salary/housing range is \$70-\$75K, along with a full and generous benefit package.

Application: Please direct your UCC profile to Susan Taylor at the Conference Office (staylor@wcucc.org or 608-846-7880) and forward a cover letter that responds to these questions: 1) Why are you interested in judicatory work, and why this position in particular? 2) What unique skills, gifts and experiences would you bring to this ministry?

Application deadline: Oct. 15, 2021

Anticipated start date: Early 2022

Contact person: Rev. Franz Rigert, Conference Minister (frigert@wcucc.org or 414-704-2625)

SOUTHERN WISCONSIN LANDSCAPE

The region served by this Associate Conference Minister includes all of the Southwest Association of the Wisconsin Conference, plus a portion of the Southeast Association (see map).

The Southwest Association contains 48 churches, 20 of them Open and Affirming congregations. Twenty-six congregations have more than 100 members. The association has 102 ordained ministers, five licensed ministers, three commissioned members, two members in discernment and 60 retired members of the clergy.

The portion of the Southeast Association served by this ACM contains 27 congregations, nine of them Open and Affirming. Eighteen congregations have more than 100 members. This portion of the association is served by 16 ordained ministers, and there are 15 retired members of the clergy.

The geographic region served by this ACM stretches from the western suburbs of Milwaukee, south to the lakeshore cities of Racine and Kenosha, and then west along the

Illinois line to the Mississippi River. As you move west, the region is notable for rolling farmland dotted by small towns, the resort community of Lake Geneva, and the larger cities of Beloit, Janesville, Monroe and Madison.

Madison is the state capital and home to the University of Wisconsin, a cultural touchstone and arguably the most influential institution in the state. Several vibrant UCC congregations, from 75 to 550 members, serve greater Madison. Whitewater and Platteville, both home to significant UW campuses also fall within the region served by this ACM.

Although state government and UW remain the primary drivers of the Madison-area economy, the region is home to a growing tech sector and to UW Health, the university's internationally renowned health system that serves more than 600,000 patients each year in the Upper Midwest and beyond with 1,750 physicians and 21,000 staff at seven hospitals and more than 80 outpatient sites.

Green County, a popular 19th-century landing spot for Swiss immigrants southwest of Madison, has the highest per capita UCC membership in the country and is home to one of the largest congregations in the state, St. John's in Monroe, with 728 members.

Most counties in the region are more than 90 percent white, although there are pockets of growing diversity. Kenosha County's Black and Hispanic populations rose 9.3 percent and 25.3 percent, respectively, between 2010 and 2020, according to recently released census data. In Racine County, the Black population rose 7.1 percent and the Hispanic population 23.8 percent. In Dane County (Madison), the number of Black residents rose 20.2 percent and the Hispanic population 45 percent, while the county's Asian population soared by 55.2 percent.

COVID-19 severely disrupted congregations in the Wisconsin Conference, just as it did everywhere else. A recent informal survey of congregations showed that some pandemic-related changes are likely here to stay, especially hybrid worship and more reliance on virtual meetings. In some communities, the pandemic revealed or exacerbated challenges such as food insecurity. The Conference considers itself fortunate, however, to have entered the pandemic in solid shape in terms of size, financial strength, loyalty and commitment to the UCC, and it expects to exit the pandemic in a similar condition. One Conference pastor summarized the COVID-19 experience this way: "I've found this to be an exhausting, creative, Spirit-filled, draining time that continues to push us to corners we may not have otherwise explored."

Wisconsin Conference UCC

Associations and Associate Conference Minister (ACM) Deployment

Northeast Association: 56 churches

Northwest Association: 60 churches

Southeast Association: 51 churches

Southwest Association: 48 churches

ACM staffing regions

Northwest ACM: 60 churches

Eastern ACM: 80 churches

Southern ACM: 75 churches

