

## Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

# INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Who  
are  
we

Who  
is our  
neighbor

Who is  
God  
calling us  
to become

?

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

Zion United Church of Christ  
Lowden, Iowa

Settled Pastor, Half Time  
(Zion Will Entertain the Opportunity for Interdenominational Sharing of a  
Pastor with Another Congregation)

Eastern Iowa Association  
Iowa Conference

Validation Date: March 18, 2024

### 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)*

## INSTRUCTIONS

The new Local Church Profile supports the calling and discernment of United Church of Christ congregations with their current or future pastoral leadership.

For many congregations, the interim time between ministers is an intentional season that is guided in part by the preparation of a Local Church Profile. Using the Profile, the church can discover its data and express its story for the reliable discernment of a search committee and the beginning of a new pastorate. Searching ministers will want to see this document in its entirety.

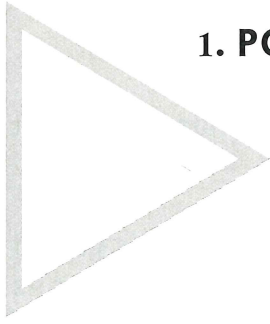
The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – WHO ARE WE NOW, WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR, and WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years. Known together as the "Discovery Document," these three sections can be completed by a visioning group, a governing body, a transition team, or other group – not just the search committee – in order to draw forward the gifts and imaginative possibilities of a congregation. The church's engagement with the "Discovery Document" might not have the same sequence as the completed Local Church Profile that is read by candidates.

Some questions are easy to answer. Some are not so easy. Prompts are provided to stimulate narrative response if needed; these italicized prompts are merely examples from which to choose or to inspire your own. Efforts to answer the questions will prompt conversations and explorations and story-tellings and many prayers. As the Spirit moves throughout the process, congregations will shape a collective articulation of Christ's leading (WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME). This last question to be answered becomes the first section to be read by searching ministers in the Local Church Profile, and it is boldest and most actionable piece for faithful leadership into the future.

Your conference can provide materials referenced in the Local Church Profile, such as the 11-Year Report containing data as reported by your congregation annually to the UCC Data Hub, and MissionInsite reports containing demographic information on your community. More information on types of pastorate in the United Church of Christ can be found in the Call Agreement Workbook. Be sure to use the Call Agreement Workbook's Scope of Work to describe in this Local Church Profile the position being sought.

When it is time for ministerial search, the conference can counsel you on posting the Local Church Profile together with your public listing at UCC Ministry Opportunities (<http://oppsearch.ucc.org>).

The last page of the Local Church Profile contains a statement that parallels the consent statement signed by ministers in the UCC Ministerial Profile. In keeping with the covenantal relationship between a church and those it seeks to call, this statement encourages an open, honest exchange of information. On behalf of the United Church of Christ, and on the basis of the best knowledge available to them, your conference staff will validate your completed Local Church Profile when it is ready to be shared in relationship with prospective new leaders.



## 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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**Church name:** Zion United Church of Christ

**Street address:** 402 Main Street, Lowden, Iowa 52255

**Supplemental web links:**

Website: [www.zionucclowden.org](http://www.zionucclowden.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/zionucclowden](http://www.facebook.com/zionucclowden)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/channel/UC-g\\_9eogQfmI54EELGwzgbw](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-g_9eogQfmI54EELGwzgbw)

**Additional ecumenical affiliations** (*e.g. denominations, communions, fellowships*):

N/A

**Conference:** Tri-Conference

**Association:** Eastern Iowa

**UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:**

**Name:** Jane Estrada

**Title:** Search and Call Administrative Support Staff

**Telephone:** (605) 774-3530

**Email:** [jane@ucctcm.org](mailto:jane@ucctcm.org)

**Summary Ministry Description:**

*In a short paragraph, reflect on where your church is going and what it might look like when you get there. What do you need to get there? Who are you seeking to join you on this part of your church's faith journey?*

Zion seeks to continue its rich history of building an environment where all people know the grace and healing love of God as expressed by the faith, acts, and deeds of our church.

We are looking to embolden our membership through evangelism and service to our current members and to the community. We are seeking to call a pastor who will guide us, pray for and with us, cheer us, and walk with us on our faith journey, providing us with tools/resources and spiritual guidance along the way.

**Photographs:**

*Insert 1 – 3 images of your church, its people, its parsonage or building or gathering space, etc.*



Exterior



Sanctuary



Stained Glass Windows



Fall Church Workday Volunteers (Pictured in front of Parsonage)



Sunday School Students With Items for Food Pantry



Vacation Bible School Participants

**What we value about living in our area:**

Lowden, a rural community with its roots primarily in agriculture, is close-knit and actively supports its many civic organizations. For a small town, Lowden boasts a vibrant business community—law office, many ag-related businesses, 3/30 Golf and Country Club, library, hardware store, floor covering store, and plumbing and heating company. The community supports scouting and 4-H clubs for kids, providing them with a safe environment to learn and grow. The Lions Club supports the local community with its various events. Lowden is one of the feeder communities into the North Cedar Community School District. Many of our residents are long-term residents; others having migrated from larger metropolitan areas in search of quiet, small-town living.

Lowden is centrally located in Eastern Iowa—only an hour’s drive from larger metropolitan areas (Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, Iowa City, the Quad Cities) that offer additional entertainment, shopping, healthcare, higher education, and sporting opportunities.

**Current size of membership:** 100 Active Members

**Languages used in ministry** (*other than English*):

None

**Position Title:** Sole Pastor

**Position Duration:** Settled

**Compensation Level:** Half Time

**Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?** Negotiable, based on benefits desired

**1b. SCOPE OF WORK**

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

- Spiritual (Able to discern and meet the spiritual needs of members and to encourage new membership)
- Caring (Able to meet the needs of individuals, foster a culture of care)
- Sociable (Actively involved in the community)
- Encouraging (Inviting to youth and younger adults to be involved in the life of Zion)



**Core Competencies:** Spiritual, Nurturing, Sociable

*(List three core competencies that you imagine could be foundational in your next minister's relationship with the church. For example, a church seeking a pastoral care minister might hope to call someone who is caring, sensitive and sociable, while a church seeking an executive minister might want an organized, detail-oriented and time-conscious person.)*

**1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT\***

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\*BECAUSE WE ARE SEEKING TO CALL A HALF-TIME PASTOR, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ARE NEGOTIABLE.

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

**Benefits** *(choose one):* Salary plus Benefits (negotiable)

**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)?**

Negotiable. We have a parsonage that is available for our pastor to live in.

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

Negotiable; however, Zion expects its pastor will be physically present in the church building/pastor's study two half days per week (8 hours/week) if pastor's schedule allows, and expects its pastor to lead Sunday worship (including Children's Time if children are present in the congregation), participate in Council meetings, teach confirmation, and perform weddings/funerals. With these expectations in mind, local residence or within reasonable commuting distance is preferred.

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

Zion is open to consider incentive proposals.

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

UCC, Eastern Iowa Association  
Tri Conference Shared Staffing  
Communities of Practice

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

Zion is seeking a half-time pastor. Zion is willing to explore interdenominational sharing of its settled pastor with another congregation.

**1 d. 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.**

Zion's called Pastor will have significant opportunities to lead the congregation and help bring to life the following specific ministry goals:

- A teacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the common person
- Embrace the life of Zion UCC in order to maintain and advance a framework that nourishes the spiritual life of the church
- Growth in faith

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

Faith is ever-evolving and we as members of the Zion community desire to continually learn and grow as Christians. We would expect our next called pastor to share the message of Jesus Christ in order to help us to develop a deeper personal relationship with God, to promote hospitality to both members and non-members of Zion, and be foundational in spiritual guidance.

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

No special language requirements as our community and congregation are predominantly English speaking. The community is largely made up of Caucasians borne of a German heritage; however, Zion is open to a pastor who is culturally aware and willing to engage in tough conversations around culturally sensitive issues if, as, and when they arise.

**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.**

Zion has identified the following four marks as being particularly important characteristics of our newly called Pastor:

- Spiritual Foundation for Ministry  
A lived faith showing love of God, trust in Jesus, and openness to the Holy Spirit. As the church's spiritual leader and guide, our Pastor encourages us to embrace and act upon our faith, respond to challenges of discipleship, and bring the congregation closer to God through worship, care, and service.
- UCC Identity for Ministry  
Our Pastor acknowledges Jesus Christ as the sole Head of the Church, participates in the various activities of not only the local church also our conference and association. Our pastor is expected to be mindful of the stewardship of resources, including financial support of the church in all of its settings. Our pastor should have the ability to teach the congregation on the diverse histories that comprise the United Church of Christ; to guide the congregation in the broader evaluation of faith traditions; to share the key elements of the UCC's Statement of Faith along with Zion's Constitution and Bylaws and their relationship and implications to the life of Zion.
- Personal and Professional Formation for Ministry  
Our Pastor demonstrates exemplary standards of moral maturity in all areas of personal and professional life, including a strong commitment to the education and nurture of our children, and responsibility to one's self, family, church, and community.
- Knowledge and Skills for Ministry  
Our Pastor possesses the ability to perceive how a person's individual perspectives and interests shape communications and appreciate the virtues and limitations of those perspective and perceptions. Our Pastor is able to grasp, evaluate, and respect the justifications that people give for their opinions. In addition, our Pastor possesses the skill of presenting biblical interpretation in common sense terms. Our Pastor is able to discern God's mission in the world and based on that, lead ministries of compassion that support fullness of life for all people. Our Pastor is able to preach the good news, lead worship, and participate in the sacraments in a faithful manner. Our Pastor is able to

provide effective and appropriate pastoral care and Christian education as well as equipping and motivating others to share in these ministries.

## **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?**

God is calling Zion to be caring, inclusive and welcoming to all, to live in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ, and to be faithfully attentive to those of our members, the community, and the world in need of comfort, grace, and a sense of belonging.

God calls us to be attentive to the uniqueness of each individual who walks through our doors but at the same time to be inclusive of that uniqueness to form a congregation following the calling of the Holy Spirit in a collective advancement towards a more faithful, Godly way of life.

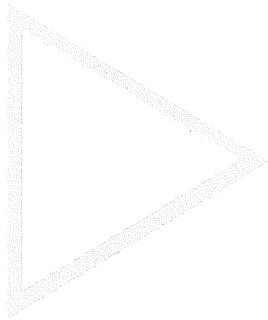
### **Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.**

*For example, describe two experiments your congregation has initiated or engaged in the past year, what were the results and where do you see your next steps? Has your church had a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement; if so, where do you see that plan/vision taking you?*

Zion’s identity is deeply rooted in its Christian faith. In order to faithfully sustain the needs and desires of the congregation, a Vision 2000 program was initiated to learn, through small group discussions, the direction of our faith practices and where changes or augmentation was warranted in the eyes of our congregation. Information gleaned in that process and throughout the transition and current pastoral search has required the church to reexamine its ministry and outreach programs and determine that a half-time shared settled pastorate is the direction Zion should pivot to in the future.

A challenge that Zion faces is with regard to its finances. Zion's 'problem' is different than those experienced by similar small churches in similar small communities. Due to the bequests of generous members of the church, Zion enjoys a healthy endowment fund. Zion is blessed with young families; however, their financial obligations prohibit tithing at historical levels. We are needing to rely upon endowment funds to meet our day-to-day financial obligations. The future of Zion is troubling if the current trend towards reliance on endowment funds to serve the souls in the pews persists.

### 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.**

*For example, what beliefs and commitments are stated in your congregation's purpose statement or membership vows? How is God most often described in worship liturgy? In what ways would you describe the Holy Spirit in your midst?*

Congregants of Zion UCC deepen and broaden their faith by being forgiving, all encompassing, welcoming, and loving. All persons, regardless of race, gender, religious background, or other characteristics are welcome at Zion and are invited to join together in our mutual faith journey. Our life of faith is led in part by preaching that is spiritually nurturing, mentally engaging, and realistically connected to the lives of the listeners. Our mission work reinforces our life of faith as we participate in worldwide, nationwide, regional, and local causes. Zion supports the common foundational premise of continually examining, discussing, and growing our faith together with God in order to grow in the love of God and our neighbors through worship, mission and fellowship.

##### **Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.**

Zion's strengths are many and include our outstanding volunteerism, not only for church activities but also for community events; our eagerness to help all; our openness to all who come through our doors; and our support of and commitment to our many mission projects. Zion has an enthusiastic Christian Education program. Leaders and their classes are out in the community supporting local events and purchasing supplies for the Food Pantry from the local grocery store. In 2020, Zion had its inaugural live nativity scene during Advent and that practice has continued. In the Fall, the Sr. High Youth Fellowship assists older members of Zion and others in the community with fall clean up of their yards. Zion's membership as a whole is most supportive of the Missions projects that are undertaken, including gathering school supplies, office and cleaning supplies for the Church; hats/mitten/gloves for low income families in the Winter; and socks for homeless or warming shelters. Zion's membership provides strong participation in church activities and events such as the Spring Dinner (the church's annual fundraising event) and mid-week Lenten services with area UCC churches.

**Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.**

*For example, where does worship take place, and what is it based around? What was a recent baptism like? What are some words used to describe good preaching?*

Sunday morning worship takes place in our beautiful sanctuary. Prior to worship, congregants share announcements, happy (or sad) moments in their lives, and invitations for support for various church committee or community events. The cornerstones of worship are learning the teachings of the Bible through lectionary and preaching (largely based on the Gospel passage for the week), time with our children, music, and prayer. Passing of the Peace involves handshakes, hugs, smiles, and warm greetings. Lay leaders present the scripture.

During the school year, Sunday School-aged children are present in worship through the Childrens' Time at which time the children are invited to the front of the sanctuary for a fun and age-appropriate, sometimes interactive lesson, and then are excused for Sunday School, and the post-confirmation aged congregants remain for the remainder of the service. Also during the school year, the confirmation students serve as acolytes and occasionally participate in worship.

Baptism of infants, children, youth, and adults occur through the year as Zion acknowledges and encourages fellow worshippers and servants of God. New members, including confirmands, are welcomed during worship.

Holy Communion is offered on the first Sunday of the month and for other occasions per the church year. Holy Communion is open to all. Non-alcoholic grape juice is offered.

Zion enjoys a rich musical history. The church is blessed with a bevy of talented singers, pianists, and organists who willingly share their talents with the congregation. “Special music” may involve a junior high or high school student sharing music on their band instruments or piano. From September through May, the adult choir shares musical pieces. Zion has a full set of handbells and is always looking to resurrect its handbell choir as an added enhancement to Sunday worship. Final work on complete restoration and refurbishment on Zion’s pipe organ was completed in 2023, thanks to a very robust and successful capital campaign, and now the organ is restored to once again provide a rich and powerful presence at worship services.

Special worship services throughout the year include Totenfest in November to honor those congregants who have passed away during the prior year, Thanksgiving Eve and Christmas Eve worship, joint mid-week Lenten worship with four neighboring UCC churches, a Palm Sunday procession of the palms (traditionally followed by the Rite of Confirmation), Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship in conjunction with neighboring UCC churches, and Easter worship. Also, seasonally throughout the year, Mother’s Day, Memorial Day, Father’s Day, and Independence Day touches are added to the regular worship routine.

The Sr. High Youth Fellowship, Sunday School youth, and confirmation candidates regularly contribute to worship.

For the past several years, outdoor worship with a neighboring UCC church has taken place one Sunday during the summer months, typically followed by a communal potluck meal.

Zion’s worship is largely casual in nature---casual attire, casual conversation as the congregation gathers prior to worship, casual presentation of announcements. Zion prefers a predominantly pastor-led worship. We enjoy relatable sermons translatable to everyday common life experiences as opposed to scholarly anecdotal dissertations.

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

*For example, how are young people in leadership? How do people continue to form their faith over a lifetime? Name a topic studied or curriculum used recently; what was the impact of this study on those who attended?*

Zion believes that an individual’s faith formation starts at an early age and steps towards those formative years including making ‘church’ interesting, fun, and down to earth for its youth. Zion’s Christian Education Department offers Sunday School from September through May, roughly coinciding with the public school calendar. As discussed above, Sunday School students participate in Sunday worship through the Children’s Time, then are dismissed to the

Educational Building for further instruction. The children occasionally participate in Sunday worship.

Zion is committed to preparing its youth with tools for faithfully navigating future life experiences through confirmation as well as teaching our youth vital principles of the UCC beliefs, practices, and history. Zion's expects (and its Constitution currently requires) that our called Pastor will assume responsibilities for providing confirmation instruction. In the past, confirmation curriculum has been taught via a two-year program.

Vacation Bible School is typically offered in July in an evening format for five nights. The program has evolved into a shared program with a neighboring UCC church and has also attracted youth from non-UCC affiliated families, due to its reputation of offering fun and engaging themes for the participants.

Zion's Sr. High Fellowship (post confirmation age youth) are actively involved in hosting a meal for Zion's members, typically in December, and performing a host of events largely involving service to the community, such as fall yard clean up. The Sr. High Youth Fellowship prepares and serves Easter Breakfast for the congregation. Another youth group has recently emerged—"The Sunday Evening Bash" group which includes high school students from the North Cedar School District who meet for devotions, presentations, and fun fellowship, all while learning about God.

**Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.**

*For example, how are decisions communicated in your church? How are teams or committees organized? Where does your church struggle for vision?*

Pastoral staff consists solely of our pastor. Office staff includes a church secretary and a financial secretary. Others on payroll include a custodian and four organists.

The governing body of Zion is our Church Council consisting of six elected voting members of the church, each serving three-year terms. The Council is led by the Council President and meets monthly, or more frequently as the need arises. Decisions are communicated to the general membership by announcements or Council minutes. One Council member is assigned to each church committee to serve as a liaison between the committee and the Church's governing body.

Committee reorganization took place in late 2021. Now, rather than 15 committees carrying on the work of the church, we now have five consolidated committees, namely Church Life, Faith Formation, Stewardship of Resources, Missions and Outreach, and Worship.

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



As stated above, the church council meets monthly for an average of 2-3 hours per meeting. The amount of time spent in meetings is completely dependent on the issues at hand. With the exception of monthly Council meetings, the pastor is not required to be present at Committee meetings but is required to be notified of when the committees are planning to meet.

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

The Church Council is relied upon to lead the membership through times of difficulty or uncertainty, such as what occurred when the pandemic changed our regular routine of worship, service, and activity. Congregational meetings can be called by the Council to inform and apprise the congregation of unusual or emergent situations and to seek approval for major proposals, if required by the Church's formative documents.

**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**

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*Add here the 11-Year Report developed with the help of your conference staff, UCC Data Hub, and MissionInsite)*

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



Church#: 221470

Assoc: 260      Schedule: 0      Zion United Church of Christ      Lowden      IA      52255

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2010	280	89	32	4	0	5	8	0	1
2011	276	75	36	5	0	0	12	0	-7
2012	267	77	41	0	0	2	11	0	-9
2013	267	80	36	0	2	1	3	0	0
2014	258	66	30	5	0	1	10	5	-9
2015	259	70	24	0	0	5	4	0	1
2016	257	72	29	5	0	3	10	0	-2
2017	254	62	25	0	0	2	5	0	-3
2018	261	65	24	8	8	0	9	0	7
2019	252	48	23	0	0	0	8	1	-9
2020	248	48	16	6	0	6	10	5	-3

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
2010	\$96,354	\$0	\$2,627	\$1,147	\$3,774	\$365	\$4,139	2.73	\$100,493	\$0
2011	\$137,897	\$0	\$3,450	\$1,111	\$4,561	\$122	\$4,683	2.50	\$142,580	\$73,139
2012	\$117,875	\$0	\$1,927	\$2,915	\$4,842	\$29,247	\$34,089	1.63	\$151,964	\$116,442
2013	\$113,634	\$0	\$2,193	\$5,310	\$7,503	\$465	\$7,968	1.93	\$121,602	\$91,525
2014	\$112,996	\$0	\$1,491	\$3,104	\$4,595	\$324	\$4,919	1.32	\$117,915	\$0
2015	\$121,774	\$0	\$842	\$1,648	\$2,490	\$0	\$2,490	0.69	\$124,264	\$86,023
2016	\$7,706	\$0	\$1,845	\$5,176	\$7,021	\$179	\$7,200	23.94	\$14,906	\$76,370
2017	\$126,757	\$69,000	\$2,821	\$1,970	\$4,791	\$1,517	\$6,308	2.23	\$133,065	\$76,681
2018	\$53,146	\$0	\$1,468	\$2,738	\$4,206	\$0	\$4,206	2.76	\$57,352	\$85,461
2019	\$53,146	\$0	\$1,960	\$1,690	\$3,640	\$1,155	\$4,795	3.67	\$57,941	\$80,701
2020	\$132,500	\$0	\$1,485	\$2,104	\$3,589	\$0	\$3,589	1.12	\$136,089	\$71,183

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2015-2020	-4.25	-31.43	-33.33	140.00	275.00	8.81	44.14	9.52
2010-2020	-11.43	-46.07	-50.00	33.33	87.50	37.51	-4.90	35.42

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

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Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	100	Yes
Number of active non-members:	10	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	110	Yes

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	82%	Yes
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	0%	Yes
Less than 5 years:	18%	Yes

Number of total participants by age: **(Based on “active” participation of members)**

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>
0	6	0	0	2	7	12	14	13	Yes

Number of members in various household types: **(Not presented as a percentage)**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	11	Yes
Households with minors:	57	Yes
Single adults age 35-65:	12	Yes
Joint households with no minors:	52	Yes
Single adults over 65:	21	Yes

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
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High school:	43%	Yes
College:	32%	Yes
Graduate School:	.02%	Yes
Specialty Training:	23%	Yes
Other (please specify):		Yes

Number of active members in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	27	Yes
Adults who are retired:	21	Yes
Adults who are not fully employed:	5	Yes

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

Farming, agribusiness, teaching, computer/technology, healthcare, care giving, health/beauty, truck drivers, clerical, business owners

**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?**

Zion’s heritage is predominantly German and our racial make up is nearly wholly Caucasian. From Zion’s perspective, diversity includes socio-economic and racial components.

**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:**

Zion has had conversations in the past regarding diversity but has not used the Welcoming Diversity Inventory or any similar inventory.

### 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	0	
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	1 baptism	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	15 kids, 2 teachers	Christian Education Director
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	101 (Christmas Eve), 67 (Easter)	Pastor, Church Council, Musicians, Youth
Church-wide Meals (December meal after worship)	1 Meal, attendance unknown	
Choirs and Music Groups	1 (volunteer group for special occasions)	Choir Director
Church-based Bible Study	0	
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i> Approximately 15 times per year	36	Pastor, Church Council
Community Meals	1 (Spring Dinner), Served 245 people	
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>	2	Pastor from neighboring UCC church
Drama or Dance Program	0	
Funerals <i>(number last year)</i>	1	Pastor, Church Council

Intergenerational Groups	0	
Outdoor Worship	40	Pastor, Worship and Music Committee, Council
Prayer or Meditation Groups	0	
Public Advocacy Work	0	
Retreats	0	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community (Vacation Bible School)	75	Christian Education Director, Pastor
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	0	
Worship (time slot: 9:30 a.m.)	43	Pastor
Worship (time slot: _____)	N/A	
Young Adult Groups or Classes (Sr. High Fellowship)	8	Parent(s) of Participating Youth; Pastor is available for guidance
Youth Groups or Classes	0	
Other		

**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).**

N/A

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
N/A				

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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:

**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
Custodian		PT	Council	11 years
Secretary		PT	Pastor	Hired 2023
Financial Secretary		PT	Council	Hired in 2017
Organists (4)		PT	N/A -- Independent contractors	Various ranging from 47+ years to 4 years
Groundskeepers		PT	Council	Various

The Church Council handles supervision of staff.

**REFLECTION**

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

Many of Zion’s members are retired or semi-retired; the core members (45 of our 100 members) are active in Zion’s overall ministry. Additionally, many of our members commute to jobs out of town, reducing the available time for individuals to commit to or volunteer for activities or events at the church. That being said, Zion UCC functions optimally as a church ‘unit’ whenever a call is put out for action.

**3e. CHURCH FINANCES**

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

Source	Amount
--------	--------

Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$69,226
Endowment Proceeds <i>(as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)</i>	\$ 0
Endowment Draw <i>(beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”)</i>	\$ 43,000 (Taken from growth on our investments to meet additional budget requirements as needed)
Fundraising Events – Spring Dinner \$3545	Included in line below
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose (Designated Ministries, i.e., memorial, minister’s scholarship, organ, parsonage, spring dinner, technology)	\$ 33,456
Grants	\$ 0
Rentals of Church Building	\$ 250
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$ 0
Support from Related Organizations <i>(e.g. Women’s Group)</i> (Evening Circle: Assistance to support Ukrainian family, CROP walk)	\$ 400 XXXXXX
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$ 0
Other (specify): Benevolence Offerings	\$2,293
Other (specify):	\$
TOTAL	\$ 148,225

**Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$122,217.11**

*Attach most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer’s report as shared publicly with the congregation, or – if your church does not pass an annual budget – list current budgeted expenses here.*



## 2022 GENERAL FUND CONSOLIDATED BUDGET

### INCOME

General Fund Giving	74,000.00
Endowment Fund Withdrawals	72,715.30
	<hr/>
	<b>\$146,715.30</b>

### EXPENSE

Administrative Assistant Wages	8,000.00
Conference Meeting Fees and Dues	2,050.00
Custodian Wages	2,400.00
Financial Secretary Wages	1,000.00
Misc. Ministry Expense	700.00
Musicians	6,500.00
Office Supplies	4,270.00
Pastor Salary and Benefits (full time)	84,320.30
Pastor Moving/Travel	6,000.00
Payroll Taxes and Workers' Comp Insurance	3,950.00
Property and Building Maintenance	3,325.00
Property Insurance and Inspections	11,000.00
Utilities	13,200
	<hr/>
	<b>\$146,715.30</b>

**Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage?** 69.7%

**Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church?** No.

**Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year?** *(indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year)*

- Our Church's Wider Mission
- 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%)*

Zion's OCWM support is based on whatever monies come in that are specifically ear-marked for OCWM.

**What is the church's current indebtedness?** \$0.00

Total amount of loan debt: N/A

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.** None.

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2015	Metal Roof on Sanctuary	\$66,000	\$66,000	Protection of real property
2015	Organ Chamber Refurbishments	\$22,000	\$22,000	Maintenance and care of pipe organ
2018	Technology (Sanctuary Projector System)	\$9,900	\$9,651	Enhancement of worship experience
2018	Parsonage Roof	\$17,225	\$17,225	Protection of real property
2020	North Furnace and A/C	\$12,675	\$12,675	Enhancement of worship experience and use of church facilities
2021	South Furnace and A/C	\$11,500	\$11,500	Enhancement of worship experience and use of church facilities

**If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:** Heating and Cooling Replacement Fund

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2022 - 2023	Masonry and Organ Repair	\$92,000	\$92,000	Enhancement of worship experience and use of church facilities

**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? Approximately \$692,728.09**

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

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

2022: 6.2%            2016: 3.72%

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

2018: \$44,700

2019: \$61,700

2020: \$30,000

2021: \$35,000

2022: \$43,000

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

This is difficult to gauge due to stock market fluctuations.

**Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:**

**Other Assets**

**Reserves (savings): \$0**

**Investments (other than endowment): None**

**Does your church have a parsonage? Yes**

**Fair market rental value of the parsonage: \$800-\$900/month**

**How is the parsonage used?** Presently empty  
**Street / City / State / Zip:** 311 Jefferson Street, Lowden, IA 52255  
**Finished square footage:** 2,1128  
**Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms:** 4 bedrooms, 1 ½ bath  
**Assessed real estate value:** \$140,000  
**Available for minister residence:** Y  
**Expected minister residence:** Negotiable  
**Condition of structure, systems and appliances:** Good  
**Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs:**

Building and Grounds Committee

**Describe all buildings owned by the church:** Sanctuary, Educational Building, Parsonage, Storage Building

**Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:** None

**Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?** (*worship space, pulpit, fellowship space, facilities, etc.*) All, except educational building basement, sanctuary balcony and chancel area, and parsonage.

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

*For example, when was a time the church made a major budget change? How is the budgeting process done? What new ministry initiative has your church financed?*

Compared to other similarly situated churches in our locality, we have an unusually large endowment fund. Our budget is developed by comparing the prior year budget to the current year expenses and making adjustments as necessary.

**Have we financed a new ministry initiative?** No

### **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.**

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

1. COVID-19 changed the way Zion worshipped for the better part of 2020 and early part of 2021. The leadership found creative ways to make worship available and provide faithful support to its members via technology and an “every person” phone calling campaign. The church made updates to technology for online viewing, livestreaming, and PowerPoint. Zoom and Facebook chats were used to enable those at home to participate in worship, meetings, and activities
2. Zion transitioned from a monthly newsletter to weekly news updates online and via email.
3. As with many local churches, Zion continues to suffer a decline in active membership, either through the deaths of older members, transfers of members to other churches out of town, and declining involvement. Zion continually looks for way to re-engage members who have ceased active roles in the church.
4. Zion is cognizant of the difficulty of securing a pastor to come to a rural church on a part-time basis. Zion’s congregation voted in mid-2023 to proceed with exploration of sharing a pastor with another congregation, both on a part-time basis with the end result being to call a settled pastor for a combined full-time position between the two congregations.

Most Important Event:

The celebration of our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013. Multiple worship services, recognizing and celebrating our various organizations and the roles they played in Zion’s history, took place over the course of a year.

**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.**

*For example, what is an example of a recent conflict and something your congregation learned from it? Describe an occasion when your church experienced conflict without being able to resolve it well. Does your church have policies, protocols or structures for dealing with conflict?)*

We have no written policies, protocols, or structures, per se, for dealing with conflict, but as a general rule, it is always best to gather as much information as possible about all perspectives to the conflict and not rush to a decision. Also, it is a particularly important to honestly approach the conflict with the understanding that not all ‘sides’ will be pleased with the outcome. The

main goal, however, is that all perspectives to the conflict are presented and respected, and that the underlying priorities and reasons for the conflict are understood by all involved.

Conflicts arising at committee meetings are discussed until an amicable resolution is reached. The Council deals with conflict through discussion/negotiation culminating in a majority vote.

A conflict that was difficult and perhaps not resolved optimally was with a former pastor and largely involved the concept of sabbatical. At that time, Zion was not able to accommodate the request for sabbatical and because it was the first that had been requested by any of Zion’s pastors, the church perhaps did not completely understand the concept. The Council/ congregation felt that the issue was not presented in a sense that explained the activities contemplated to be undertaken by the pastor during the sabbatical or what the resulting benefit to the congregation was projected to be. Ultimately, the pastor resigned.

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

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Stephen Stepp	8	Y
Barbara Muhs	12	Y
Vernon Clausing	4	Deceased
Stephen Voelker	4	Retired

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

We have enjoyed diverse styles of ministerial leadership in the past nearly 30 years, with each of the above ministers excelling in different areas. These diverse styles occasionally has led to active members becoming inactive during the course of one’s ministry, only to become active again when a ministerial change occurs. We expect open and honest dialogue with our pastor.

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

**Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?** N

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



## 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?

*For example, which service activities has your church participated in this past year? Where has the church participated in global connections of care and justice? What is currently transformational in your church’s engagement with neighbors near or far?*

Zion has a dedicated room for its Food Pantry, which is run by volunteers from the Missions Committee. The Food Pantry is open to the public one Saturday morning per month or as needed per personal inquiry.

Zion has for many years participated in the North Cedar Bells Program through the community school district which provided Christmas gifts and food baskets for underprivileged or low income families with children. That program is now shifting to a more individualized program, with Zion’s involvement catering primarily to the Lowden geographic area rather than the entire school district area. Zion’s involvement is not only in a monetary sense, but also in the purchase of gifts for the families by our congregants.

Our Mission Committee gathers school and classroom supplies in August for area students and teachers. At Christmas 2020, a sock drive was organized by the Mission Committee and many pairs of socks were donated to a local homeless shelter. That activity continues. Zion’s mission gifts are not limited to only local causes. Over the past several years, monetary support has been given to the following groups and agencies: Lowden Fire Department, North Cedar Christmas Bells, Deacon’s Fund, Water for Wells, Chains Unleashed, five special offerings of the UCC (One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, Our Church’s Wider Mission, and Christmas Fund), Friendly House, King’s Harvest, Elizabeth Dole Foundation (in support of service families) and Global Ministries.

Zion hosts Vacation Bible School (VBS) in July for not only its children and youth but also children and youth from neighboring churches and communities. In 2022 and 2023, VBS was a collaboration between Zion UCC and St. John's UCC in neighboring Clarence, Iowa with 75 children attending in 2023.

Zion's Evening Circle (a womens' group that meets once a month) does a variety of activities to support the life of Zion and fellowship of its members.

Congregants participate annually in the CROP activities which are open to all members.

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

Zion sends two congregants to the Annual Meetings of the Iowa Conference, United Church of Christ meeting, and the Eastern Iowa Association, United Church of Christ.

**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.**

- Accessible to All (A2A)
- Creation Justice
- Economic Justice
- Faithful and Welcoming
- God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
- Border and Immigrant Justice
- Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)
- Just Peace
- Global Mission Church
- Open and Affirming (ONA)
- WISE Congregation for Mental Health
- Other UCC designations:
- Designations from other denominations
- None

**Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?**



Our pastor introduced the congregation to the *God Is Still Speaking* statement approximately 10 years ago. The other witness statements above have not been actively pursued, but the Council would consider the above statements if approached.

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

Members of Zion and Trinity Lutheran Church have partnered to provide food supplies and meals to needy members of the community.

**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.**

N/A

**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?**

Zion's expectation is that its pastor will be involved and will ask members for their participation in furthering the ministry of Gospel of Jesus Christ. We would expect that our pastor would be open and actively open communicate with the members of Zion so that the ministry can move forward but not become overwhelming. Zion believes that spreading the Good News is a team effort, not to be undertaken only by the pastor or only by the membership.

#### **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?**

In reviewing the MissionInsite Report, the following items were identified:

1. 97% of our community is made up of white (non-hispanic) individuals. The greatest percentage of ethnicity is German (37%), followed by "unspecified/unclassified" (25%), with other races/cultures representing lesser percentages. These trends are largely expected to remain constant through 2030.

2. Our community has a lower percentage (5.44%) identified as living below the poverty level compared overall to the State of Iowa (6.87%). The median household income is \$61,183 with the greatest weekly per capita spending going towards transportation (39%), followed by living expenses (26%), health care (18%), entertainment (10%), and apparel/related items (6%).
3. 65% of our community is in the civilian workforce, 33% are not in the workforce, and 2% are unemployed. Of the larger occupational vocations, 17% of our work force (aged 16+) is involved in agricultural/construction; 19% in educational services; 16% in manufacturing; and other areas (each with less than 5%) include entertainment services, real estate, professional services, public administration, transportation. Our workers work largely away from home (93.58%) (as compared to 95.46% State average) while 6.42% work from home (as compared to 4.54% State average).
4. As family households are changing across the nation, our area is trending toward 75% of children living in households with married parents, 16% of children living with a single mother, and 9% living with a single father. The bulk of our households are 2-person households (56%).
5. To simplify educational statistics in our area, we currently have 6.31% with less than a high school diploma, 40% with a high school diploma, and the remainder with some college (Associate, Bachelor, Graduate, or Professional degrees).

Our cost of living is lower in our small towns than in the larger metropolitan areas. We are close to many amenities that are offered in metropolitan areas of Dubuque, the Quad Cities, Iowa City, and Cedar Rapids.

**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 demographics are consistent with and similar to neighboring communities (limited ethnic diversity, i.e., Caucasian, English-speaking, German descent).

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

We have many people within our community who are unchurched. We strive to come up with items to interest and intrigue people to come and see what exciting things are happening at Zion. Also, we compete with Sunday morning sports and leisure activities.

Other aspects of Zion's ministry, including the church's spiritual life, worship, and caring culture are a response to the age ranges and family dynamics in our immediate geographical area.

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

Zion is known for its members' volunteerism for community events. Even our children are involved: our Christian Education department periodically visits the local Fire Department in support of their fundraising events.

Our sanctuary is well known for its beauty and architecture and for how well it is taken care of.

Our pipe organ, which has been recently restored, is truly a priceless instrument, and is renowned among organists from area churches.

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

Our pastor's Sunday message is Bible-based, centering on our lives as Christians and God's love for us.

New members with young children are drawn to Zion by our Christian Education Department, which may in fact start with their child attending Vacation Bible School on a whim. Some families eventually migrate from their childrens' Sunday School or youth events to Sunday morning worship. Other members have said that they find Zion to be truly welcoming while being mindful and attentive of the significance of the new members' spiritual upbringing or habits.

Our church members comprise a close-knit community of friendly and welcoming people.



## 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

Name / Position / Setting  
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)  
Peggy Kedley, Former Lowden City Clerk  
(563) 941-5348

### REFERENCE 2

Name / Position / Setting  
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)  
Barry Hoffmeier, Former Lowden Mayor  
(563) 941-5245

### REFERENCE 3

Name / Position / Setting  
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)  
Judy Norton, Lowden Businesswoman  
(563) 941-5301



## 6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

### 6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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*Include here any prayer or dream for the minister you imagine journeying toward you... a poem, for example, or a Scripture passage or a piece of music that is meaningful to your Search Committee:*

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the guidance of your Holy Spirit in the preparation of our Local Church Profile. We pray that at each section of the Profile preparation, we have considered all aspects of the ministry at Zion with a proper focus on a review of our history, where our ministry is right now, and our hopes for continuing the ministry of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know this first step in the process of our pastoral search will only give a beginning look at our local church and we pray for further Holy Spirit-led conversations between church and candidates going forward.

In Jesus name we pray,  
Amen.

## 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.

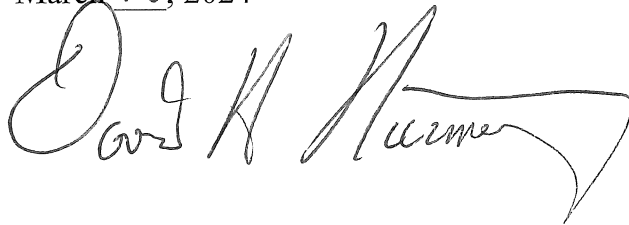
As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about 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? (for example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.)**

Members of the Transition Team  
Organizational Leaders

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed: David Niermeyer  
Search Committee Member  
March 10, 2024



## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:

Name / Title:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

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*

