

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

St. Stephens UCC
Merrill, WI. 54452

Associate Pastor of Faith Formation and Congregational Life

Wisconsin Conference, Northwest Association

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

INSTRUCTIONS

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

For many congregations, the interim time between ministers is an intentional season that is guided in part by the 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.

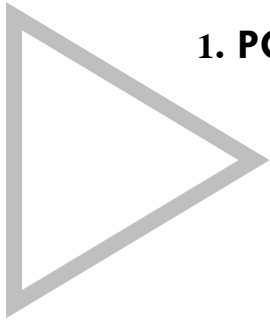
The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – **WHO ARE WE NOW**, **WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR**, and **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME** – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years. 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

Church name: Saint Stephens United Church of Christ
Street address: 903 E. Second Street, Merrill, WI 54452
Supplemental web links: www.ststephensucc.net

Contact for submissions of profiles and correspondence:
Ms. Jennifer Porath
Search Committee Communications Secretary
jporath@wipfli.com

Wisconsin Conference Northwest Association
UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person Name:
The Rev. Rob MacDougall
Title: Associate Conference Minister
Phone: (715)308-6120
Email: rmacdougall@wcucc.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?

Where are we going? That's a great question, even more so as we emerge from Covid and begin doing the work to figure out what church is going to look like and how we might live into this changed future.

We have recently called a new Senior Pastor and we are already making plans for incorporating the wisdom we have gleaned from the last year as we move forward. We anticipate we will need someone who can function in the old ways while helping us bridge into a new hybrid church of in person and digital media ministry.

What we're doing in the meantime is saying "yes" a lot. We are working on breaking a culture of resistance and hesitation. In particular, we're saying yes to hands-on mission work and to outside groups using our building. We know our general direction: toward more faithfulness in broadening expressions; toward deeper engagement with our community to even better meet the needs of the people and raise the standard of living in our town; toward a more extravagant welcome. We are seeking someone with a pastoral heart who leads with love and is anxious to become part of a ministry team that is comprised of staff and volunteers. We imagine this person to be engaging and creative - willing to help us imagine a new and deeper faithfulness, rooted in tradition, with a spirit of innovation. We anticipate a person who is centered around the gospel - the life of Jesus - and the richness and challenge for life that this congregation offers.

Photographs:

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





What we value about living in our area (2 – 3 sentences):

Living in central Wisconsin gives a true appreciation of the seasons. Merrill offers a comfortable blend of “Northwoods” opportunities such as hunting, fishing, boating, and camping, while being near cultural opportunities like the arts, sporting events, and shopping. In the center of the state, Merrill is just two hours from Appleton, Green Bay, Eau Claire, and Madison, and just 20 minutes north of Wausau, home of the Rib Mountain/Granite Peak ski area. Merrill is a small city that is ready to respond to the needs they see in the community.

Current size of membership: 487 giving units and 774 Head of Household

Languages used in ministry (other than English): None

Position Title: Associate Pastor for Faith Formation and Congregational Life

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

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

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

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? Yes

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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

- Planning and executing the church's education program for all ages in collaboration with the Senior Pastor and Christian Education Team.
- Sustain and expand the youth group.
- Assist in worship and lead in worship and being comfortable in both roles.
- Train volunteers, Sunday School teachers, Messy Church hosts and others who wish to participate in and develop skills for faith formation and discipleship training in the church.
- Coordinate Mission Trip opportunities for youth and adults.
- Assist with and lead funerals, weddings and services of recognition as needed.
- Visit congregants who are hospitalized, in long-term care facilities and homebound.

Core Competencies:

(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.)

- The ability to work as part of a team with long range planning and responding to current emergent needs.
- Openness and insight to see opportunities for non-traditional worship and points of contact for people who no longer see Sunday morning worship as part of the spiritual life.
- The ability to use technology to maintain current relationships and develop new relationships through digital social media ministry.

Worship is still the center of the life of our congregation, and we rely on it to bring the good news and give us life. We seek someone with a creative spirit found in the image of the Creator, so our worship might be as compelling as it is enlightening. We are open to exploring alternative ways of worshipping and involving all the generations in telling the Gospel story.

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis: Follows conference guidelines

Benefits: Salary includes optional benefits, also along conference guidelines.

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

We believe proximity to the life of the church is valued by the congregation and integral to becoming engaged in the church and broader community.

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

The Wisconsin Conference offers a student debt reduction program.

If our Associate is still a Member in Discernment, we offer the Schmidt Scholarship for seminary tuition and related costs. We have a history of nurturing ministers within this congregation and embrace the opportunity to do so.

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference: There are a variety of collegial opportunities available to clergy in our area. The Merrill Ministerium is a collection of local pastors and chaplains who gather monthly for fellowship and collegial support. The Merrill District is a gathering of UCC clergy in our

corner of the Northwest Association that meets monthly September-May. Pre-Covid this group met here at Saint Stephens and we plan to again, but currently we are meeting by Zoom monthly. The group discusses books together and generally does check-ins about life and ministry, and shares ideas and resources. The Wisconsin Conference also has Communities of Practice. These are small gatherings of clergy that gather in confidential settings to share the life and work of ministry.

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

We have multiple opportunities for bi-vocational employment involving teaching, social service agencies, chaplaincy programs and a variety of non-clergy employment opportunities.

If the candidate is interested in making this a part-time position to pursue their seminary, continuing education, CPE units or authorization goals, we will provide the office space for virtual instruction and study and offer scholarship assistance in addition to the salary.

We are interested in making this position work and in making this a life giving and vocational building opportunity for the person called. We will make it work.

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

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

Much of the church's existing programming is effective with a senior minister and lay leadership. However, we envision growth for our future. Growth may be defined as gaining in numbers or dollars, but more importantly, we envision new, meaningful and relevant ways to connect with our community and one another. We desire to discover and live more fully into what sets us apart from other churches in our community: a progressive theology, a welcoming spirit, and a desire to live out the gospel in particular ways.

We imagine an associate minister who will join the team in collaboration with

the congregation and senior minister to further our spiritual growth and expand our mission outreach.

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

Saint Stephens is known for its leadership in community outreach within our city/area. The local food pantry originated here and continues to be a well-supported priority. We've been leaders and strong supporters in the Crop Walk, Fill the Gazebo (food drive for the various food pantries) Food 4 Kids, Christmas Spirit Giving Tree and other local ministries and agencies. We are currently providing the administration and organization for the Food for Kids program providing 200+ bags of food for kids every weekend at 5 different elementary schools. We participate in the Lunch in the Park (a summer lunch program for kids). We have entered into an agreement to provide space for Lincoln Industries to use in their community-based education program for Developmentally Delayed adults. We are re-starting our free weekly meal, "Dinner at Five," on Mondays with new volunteers and new ways of relating to the community.

These missions and programs have been embraced by the congregation after someone from within or outside of the church has become passionate about a need and brought it to the church.

One of the interesting outreach ministries we offer from our building is our Medical Ministry. It's a loan closet for the community to come to borrow medical supplies such as walkers, canes, commodes, wheelchairs, and an assortment of other devices that are loaned out for as long as someone needs it. We just ask that they return it when done so we can loan it out again.

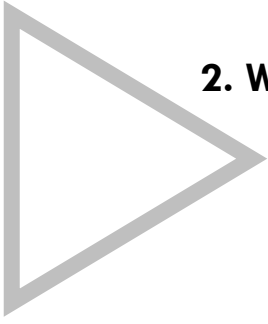
There are certainly pieces of ministry that require the pastor's expertise, but we are most interested in someone with the leadership skills to help empower the congregation to continue searching out needs and passions, and then designing creative ways to make that impact, however large or small.

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

We have no specific language or culturally specific requirements, as the community is primarily English speaking, of German and Scandinavian descent. We're learning that living in the Northwoods of Wisconsin does have its own cultural elements. We are starting to do work to understand stories that are not our own, and therefore understand ourselves better.

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.

- Understanding the power of the Holy Spirit at work through the elements of Christian worship to nurture faith.
- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.
- Providing hope and healing to a hurting world.
- Practicing the radical hospitality of God.



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?

Our Vision: “We are a Christian community called by God’s Love to be a force for good in our neighborhood and our world.”

Our Purpose: “We seek to tell stories of God that challenge our assumptions, to open our doors wide with radical hospitality, and to use our own hands and feet to change the world.” We have taken bold steps in this direction and continue to wonder as a congregation how we might be guided to push our limits further.

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

In some ways God is calling Saint Stephens to address emerging challenges alongside challenges that others have already faced. As a former logging, mill, and factory town, our people are still struggling through what de-industrialization looks like as a community and individually. There is still an industrial labor force, but the area itself has been in a period of stagnation as the work to discover what comes next is still in process. Several industries, however, are expanding in Merrill. Two window and door manufacturers are expanding their plants and adding about 200 skilled labor jobs. The Weinbrenner Shoes Thorogood Boot factory with plants in Merrill and Marshfield is expanding and adding jobs as well. These longstanding industries are finding their niche in the marketplace and continue to offer good paying, skilled labor employment.

Economically, the city of Merrill is middle-class and working class, with a fair number of working poor, some that are truly impoverished, with outliers of a handful of homeless and of upper middle class on the other ends.

After two decades of transition, the church is better prepared to embrace today's concerns than it has been for quite some time. There is a clear willingness to move forward to address the concerns of the wider church. We are not currently ONA, but we are moving further toward progressive theology. Much of the conversation is around Biblical interpretation and the value of creating a safe space to worship and belong for all people.

There is plenty of energy present and still in the wings, to engage the spiritual needs of people today. Of course, the ever-present conversation about generational differences does come up, but in ways that there is an openness and desire to help meet the needs of generations that are underrepresented in the life of the congregation. We are finding that we provide an alternative church option for people in our town who are oriented toward church but reject the more exclusionary theology of other local churches.

The congregation is not afraid of politics. However, there are many political and social viewpoints represented in the congregation, so politics is best approached through the life of Jesus in a way that leaves space for personal choice, rather than theological mandate. We are open to being challenged in the ways of Jesus that help us live more faithfully.

God is calling us to continue to push our own boundaries to become more extravagantly welcoming and to better care for our community.

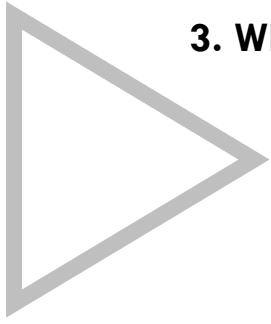
Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.

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?

We have had a radio ministry broadcasting our 9am service for over 30 years and with Covid we have begun livestreaming our 9am and other special services. We have invested in better sound system and video technology and expect to continue that ministry and expand our online presence. It has been well received by the congregation even as we have grieved not being able to worship together in person.

We recently adopted a new strategy in promoting the many ministries we support. We are focusing on one mission per month, our monthly mission focus, to better tell the stories of our special offerings and mission partners.

This monthly focus has inspired people's generosity with an average of \$2,000 a month contributed to homeless shelters, domestic abuse agency, our 5 for 5 offerings and our various hunger ministries.



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

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?

We are a devoted congregation. You will find many walk into the sanctuary, find their pew, stand, and pray before they take their seat. Communion is important, both because of tradition, but also because the sacraments have special meaning to this congregation. People come to worship to be fed by what they hear from music and the word - both scripture and preaching. Tradition is very important, but there is plenty of space to experiment and try new things. Anything can be worth trying once, and if it works, there is space to incorporate it. There is also plenty of room for growth in this area, in terms of adult education, retreats, and spiritual practices. The God of love and forgiveness is the God that is worshiped in this congregation.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

Saint Stephens quickly embraces no-nonsense, concrete projects and missions. We are known to be generous in our commitment to projects and our acceptance of others. Some strengths of our congregation are:

- Willingness to try new things
- Openness to being led by clergy and lay leaders
- Deep concern and desire to serve and engage in the community
- Loyal and steadfast; we keep our commitments
- If you’re willing to ask, people are willing to help

- Most progressive church in town
- New energy and growth, after many years of transition
- We are willing to work and willing to learn
- We don't place the responsibility of growing the church solely on our ministers' shoulders, and we see it as a collaborative enterprise.

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?

After a year of foregoing in person worship, we have begun in person worship with guidelines in line with the Wisconsin Council of Churches. For the last year, we have held worship to be broadcast on our local radio station and livestreamed through Facebook.

We are now offering our 9am "vintage" service, broadcast on the radio and livestreamed with Sunday School at 10am. Beginning in October, we will offer a Wednesday evening service at 6pm that will be more informal and contemplative.

We primarily use *The Chalice* hymnal, have a choir and a chime choir.

Communion is offered monthly and other special holidays. Baptisms are celebrations of the congregation, most often witnessed by the Sunday school children surrounding the baptismal font. In response to Covid, we have allowed "private" baptisms with family only to protect infants from exposure.

Communion is important to the congregation, and our clergy stress the importance of the "open table," and that there are no barriers to receiving communion for anyone who desires to partake.

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

We have been rebuilding our educational programming over the last couple of years. With our new Senior Pastor, we are exploring new curriculums with greater online resources for our teachers and leaders; we are beginning the Messy Church program this summer;

we are planning to have children in worship beginning this fall and have Sunday School after worship.

Parents and children alike are responding with excitement to these changes and looking forward to trying new things and being more involved in worship.

One of our more recent changes came in our Confirmation program. In January 2019, our confirmation program changed to be a largely self-directed spiritual exploration for 9th and 10th graders. The intention behind this is to accommodate already busy schedules of youth and families. It also is a way for the youth to take ownership of their own spiritual growth through the completion of specific projects that provide hands-on opportunities to experience key elements of our Christian tradition. Confirmands have class once a month for discussion and choose mentors to help them along this journey.

Confirmation is led by our Senior Pastor, who believes in the learning method of “watch one, do one, teach one” so the “upper class” of the 2-year program are expected to teach a 15 minute segment sometime during their 2nd year.

Our Youth Group is in a rebuilding process after Covid and we are focusing on revitalizing it with fellowship and mission focus.

In the past we had two youth groups, a middle school (grades 6-8) and a high school (grades 9-12). The Associate Minister led and coordinated all things youth group, with the help and aid from lay leaders.

Both youth groups met once or twice a month. These gatherings consisted of service projects, lock-ins, movie nights, and regular get-togethers where the youth learned about one another and what the church does and can look like, all while having fun!

Our Senior Pastor thoroughly enjoys adult Christian Ed programs and has begun a weekly bible study and plans to offer Living the Questions 2.0 in the fall along with an adult study at Messy Church.

We are always open to new ways of engaging the lives of our members and those outside our community, considering the changing culture and schedules, but also people's desire for spiritual growth and nourishment.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

We have a Mission Committee that coordinates the various ministries our congregation takes part in.

- Food for Kids provides a weekend's supply of food for elementary students every Friday (about 200 students a week)
- Summer Lunch program works with 4 other churches to provide lunch for children every weekday through the summer—we have Taco Tuesdays.
- Support of Haven, a domestic abuse shelter.
- MAC Home—warming center and homeless shelter for those experiencing homelessness in Merrill,
- ReBoot—an educational and support program for Veterans
- Bluejay Nest—a pantry for food, school supplies, hygiene supplies and other items for students at the high school
- The Merrill food pantry
- Annual community Thanksgiving Meal

The Mission Committee coordinates the various groups and people who feel passionate about these ministries.

This frees members to become part of other groups about which they are passionate rather than becoming burned out by over-commitment of their time to a single group. It also allows for new missions to form and completed missions to dissolve as needed. An example of this is our new Green Team. We are still living into this intentional way to create new paths and missions.

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

The person called to this position would be expected to staff the Christian Education Committee and attend the one hour or so monthly meeting, organize teacher training

and orientation sessions and attend other meetings if they are interested in the work of that committee.

The person will be asked to attend Council meetings and Church and Ministry meetings as needed, perhaps not the full meeting but to give a report and share any concerns or ideas.

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

When Covid-19 hit, the Council met with the Associate Pastor (the only pastor on staff at that time) and worked out plans for following CDC guidelines, shifting to an all radio and the new livestream option for worship. The Council met mostly via email during the stay-at-home order and then resumed meeting after 2 months to monitor the situation and our faithful response to the health and spiritual needs of the congregation.

- 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/No]. Yes.

3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

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

Year	Basic Support	Other UCC Giving	Total OCWM	Other Gifts	Capital Payments	Operating Expenses	Total Local Expenses
2020	\$7,320	\$1,840	\$9,160	\$16,173	\$52,681	\$313,993	\$366,674
2019	\$6,000	\$4,431	\$10,431			\$354,486	\$354,486
2018	\$4,964	\$2,031	\$6,995	\$12,060	\$153,607	\$354,486	\$508,093
2017	\$7,785	\$7,406	\$15,191			\$361,701	\$361,701
2016	\$5,416	\$5,568	\$30,440			\$361,701	\$361,701
2015	\$7,172	\$7,094	\$15,513			\$361,701	\$361,701
2014	\$6,825	\$6,045	\$25,740	\$2,924	\$26,939	\$361,701	\$388,640
2013	\$14,461	\$5,979	\$20,810	\$3,835	\$4,670	\$391,621	\$396,291
2012	\$15,937	\$6,337	\$33,660	\$1,250	\$4,206	\$375,167	\$379,373
2011	\$9,557	\$4,331	\$16,742	\$1,200		\$332,156	\$332,156
2010	\$6,869	\$7,929	\$19,948	\$1,200	\$	\$340,685	\$340,685
2009	\$30,000	\$11,296	\$44,780	\$1,230		\$365,101	\$365,101

Year	Average Weekly Attendance	Christian Education/Faith Formation Program	Active Christian Education Participants
2020	136	☑	75
2019	200	☒	148
2018	200	☑	148
2017	240	☒	35
2016	240	☒	35
2015	240	☒	35
2014	240	☑	35
2013	241	☑	148
2012	312	☑	177
2011	271	☑	211
2010	279	☒	150
2009	274	☑	150

Year	Confirmations	Confessions of Faith	Reaffirmations of Faith	Letters of Transfer	Deaths	Transfers	Other Removals	Total Membership
2020	9			2	29	1	17	454
2019								490
2018		14		1	17	5		490
2017								497
2016								497
2015								497
2014	14	13	5		25	1		497
2013	16	5	2		12	22	9	491
2012	33	19			22	2	9	511
2011	13	6			25	3	29	492
2010	7	6		1	12		233	530
2009	19	16			22		7	761

3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	454	Y
Number of active non-members:	20	Y
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	474	Y

There are over 900 “Active Members” on our church record keeping database. The numbers above are the numbers reported to the UCC Yearbook and reflect our best guess “pre-Covid” numbers of actual “active” members, i.e. those who worship regularly in person, by radio or by livestream and who contribute time, talent or treasure to the church.

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	90%	Estimate
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	5%	Estimate
Less than 5 years:	5%	Estimate

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>
35	32	22	32	49	75	85	83	76	Estimate

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	15%	Per data in ACS
Households with minors:	14%	Per data in ACS
Single adults age 35-65:	7%	Per data in ACS
Joint households with no minors:	53%	Per data in ACS
Single adults over 65:	11%	Per data in ACS

Education level of adult participants by percentage: Data Not Available

Percentage of adults in various employment types: Data Not Available

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

Within our congregation, working adults are employed in a wide variety of fields including municipal (includes police/fire/EMT), health care, manufacturing (factory workers), farming, retail, and white-collar industry. A good number of our congregation members are employed at one of our area’s largest employers, Church Mutual Insurance Company.

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?

Most of the members of our congregation are white and are of European descent. German immigrants founded the church and descendants of German immigrants continue to have close ties within our congregation. We are still discovering what diversity looks like for us. We are certainly not of one political mind and share a wide range of opinions and beliefs.

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:

Diversity in this congregation is divided into people who are online and who are not. We serve members of the community with our Blessing Box, regular contributions to Haven (agency for abused women), MAC Home, serving homeless people; weekly dinner for anyone; the local food pantry, and other ministries to the struggling within our community. Our diversity is based more on socio-economic status than ethnicity.

3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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	6	Aerobics instructor
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	7	Pastor with family and staff
Children's Groups or Classes	11	Christian Education Committee
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	800/500 2019 numbers	Pastors, musicians, worship committee
Church-wide Meals	Not during Covid, we are getting really hungry.	

Choirs and Music Groups	40	Music staff
Church-based Bible Study	12	Senior Pastor
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	300	Monthly. Pastor, Church Council, Home Care Teams
Community Meals	100+	Volunteers
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	9	Pastor and Mentors
Drama or Dance Program	N/A	
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	18	Pastor with family; music staff
Intergenerational Groups	35	Volunteers (pre-Covid number)
Outdoor Worship	30	Pastors, volunteers (pre-Covid)
Prayer or Meditation Groups	12	Volunteers (pre-Covid)
Public Advocacy Work	8	“Green Team”
Retreats	15	Pastors and lay members (pre-Covid)
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	N/A	
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	1	Pastor with couple
Worship (time slot: Sunday, 9am)	220	Pre-Covid; Pastors, musicians
Worship (time slot: Wednesday, 6pm)	12	Pre-Covid; Pastors, musicians
Young Adult Groups or Classes		Currently none
Youth Groups or Classes	28	Pastor, volunteers
Other Monthly 3 Senior Communities Assisted and independent living Worship/devotional services	30 at each	Pastor, organist, 3-4 volunteers

Additional comments:

We are just beginning a monthly Messy Church event which is an intergenerational immersive worship event and family dinner.

We are obviously in the process of rebuilding our youth group and youth activities after our Associate Pastor for Youth left the church and subsequently underwent a Fitness Review which resulted in the Termination of his standing as an Authorized Minister.

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)
None				

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: N/A

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
Rev. Mike Southcombe Senior Pastor	Yes	Full time	Church & Ministry/Council	Nov. 1, 2020 to present
Terra Holdridge Administrative Director	Supervises Administrative Assistant	Full time	Sr. Pastor	Dec. 2020 to present
Tim Ruprecht Facilities Manager	Coordinates Court ordered Community Service volunteers	Full time	Sr. Pastor	January 2020 to present
Administrative Assistant Kim McCaskill	No	Part time	Admin. Director	Feb. 2019 to present
Darlene Johnson, Accompanist & Director of Chime	No	¾ time accompanist salary	Sr. Pastor	Sept. 2007 to present

Choir				
James Bjorklund Music Director	No	Part time	Sr. Pastor	May 2017 to present

REFLECTION

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

If we look at the longevity of most parishioners in this congregation, it reflects that the majority of the congregation values tradition. There was a lag in growth during our times of transition. However, as we see a rise in new membership and the transition to a new and growing staff, we are finding new energy and vision for the life of our congregation.

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$ 277,317
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	\$ --
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$19,451
Grants	\$--
Rentals of Church Building	\$1,250
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$--
Support from Related Organizations (<i>e.g. Women's Group</i>)	\$--
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$--

Other (specify): Scrip proceeds	\$8,000
Other (specify):	\$--
TOTAL	\$306,018

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$387,741.00

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

See attachment at end of document

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 51%

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

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

- Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
- One Great Hour of Sharing
- Strengthen the Church
- Neighbors in Need
- Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? *(recommended 10%)*

OCWM is currently gathered via gifts designated for a specific purpose from our congregation. There is a long history of Saint Stephens supporting OCWM. We have recently reinstated OCWM back into the operating budget, and we also rely on individual specifically designated donations. We pledged \$52,000 to the conference camping programs over 3 years and kept that commitment current.

We are also current with our "dues" to the Association.

What is the church's current indebtedness? 0.00

Total amount of loan debt:

Reason for debt:

Are capital and other payments current?

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.

In 2017 St. Stephens UCC began a Capital Fund campaign to address delayed maintenance and improvement projects including: a new organ; updates to electrical systems; new roof for the sanctuary and Memorial Hall; new roof, windows, siding and other improvements to the parsonage; a new boiler for the church and other work that is still being evaluated.

When the NOW! Campaign was initiated the congregation was dealing with rough estimates of the cost of some of the major projects. They also voted to use some bequests they had already received and any undesignated bequests during the campaign as part of the total for the campaign. The initial estimate of the new boiler system, for example, was \$500,000. By staying with a steam system, updating the existing steam traps and not replacing the entire piping system the actual bid for the new boiler is \$150,000, with about \$30,000 for the steam trap replacements and \$5,000 for asbestos abatement.

Also, a boiler replacement fund, an organ fund and a few other funds already existed, and they were all rolled into the receipts for those particular projects. With that background, the numbers are as follows:

UCF Funds Transfer	\$101,000.00	
Reinke Bequest	\$6,000.00	
Bequest Unspec	\$3,750.00	
Bequest Unspec	\$63,427.00	
Bequest Unspec	\$52,355.00	
New Roof Fund Transfer	\$10,000.00	
Electrical Fund Transfer	\$70.00	
Trivia Night Receipts to NOW!	\$885.00	
Havey & Associated ADJ	\$39.10	
Other Gifts	\$2,887.00	
Pledges Received to Date	\$252,854.56	As of 1/20/2021
Non Pledged Received to Date	\$46,282.00	As of 1/20/2021

Pledge History to Date	
Total Pledges	\$383,981.00
Pledges Rec'd	<u>\$252,854.56</u>
Remaining Pledges	\$131,126.44

Total Income	\$539,549.68
Less Total Paid Out	<u>\$368,551.22</u>
Total NOW! Funds remaining	\$170,998.44

Current/Completed Projects	Total Cost	Paid from Designated Funds	Paid from NOW! Funds
Capital Campaign Expenses	\$ 27,056.62		\$ 27,056.62
New Organ (Including Electrical)	\$ 107,361.64	\$ 25,658.00	\$ 81,703.64
New Roof (Sanctuary, School & Parsonage)	\$ 173,829.00	\$ 18,985.00	\$ 154,844.00
Parsonage Remodel	\$ 119,549.21	\$ 16,450.00	\$ 103,099.21
Update Parking Lot Lights to LED	\$ 1,881.00	\$ 1,881.00	
Hunter Security System	\$ 5,989.12	\$ 4,141.37	\$ 1,847.75
	\$ 435,666.59	\$ 67,115.37	\$ 368,551.22

Funds Available for Future Projects

NOW! Funds (see above)	\$170,998.44
New Boiler Fund	\$9,540.00
Unspec. Bequests	\$14,223.63
Unspec. Bequests	<u>\$59,915.45</u>
Total Available Funds	\$254,677.52
Remaining Pledges	<u>\$131,126.44</u>
Total if all pledges received	\$385,803.96

There are two major projects left: the boiler replacement with a total of about \$185,000 and we now see that the stained-glass windows need some refurbishment with an estimate from 2 companies at around \$150,000.

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe: Wrapping up this year, see above.

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

We did not have a mission component in the campaign but have reinvigorated our mission focus in other ways.

Does your church have an endowment? **Yes**

What is the market value of the assets? As of 4/30/2021 value is \$880,000.00 of which \$600,000 is principle which cannot be used and \$280,000 is available for the church to use as needed.

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

There has been confusion and conflicting opinions on this over the years. Some of the confusion stemmed from a lack of transparency as to what the principle and the unrealized gains were within the funds. We have just completed a review of the fund going back to its inception in 1962 and have a clear understanding that the principle is the \$600,000 stated above.

Our Senior Pastor has experience in developing endowment policies, and we expect to have one in place by our next Annual Meeting.

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

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: No part of the endowment has been used in the last 5 years.

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? Even with the new policy being considered, the endowment should never be depleted.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$

Investments (other than endowment):

We currently have one other primary investment other than the endowment fund and other smaller funds designated for specific purposes.

1. The Staats Memorial Scholarship Fund is invested, and draws are taken from the earnings each year to award scholarships to students graduating high school and planning to attend college and/or attending college as set forth in the guidelines when the money was gifted to the church as a scholarship fund. This fund is

currently valued at approximately \$360,000 after disbursing \$45,000 in scholarships for 2021-2022 college year.

2. We also have the Schmidt Scholarship fund, a Capital Improvements Fund, an Anniversary Fund, the Ushers' Fund and a few other minor funds held in reserve for specific use.

Does your church have a parsonage? Yes, it is occupied by the Senior Pastor.

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

The church property consists of the church itself that is part of a larger church building complex consisting of multiple classrooms (a former three-story school building), a wing containing offices and restrooms, a large entry/narthex area, a large multipurpose lounge, and both large Fellowship Hall and Choir Room on a basement level, in addition to the parsonage and two separate parking areas which make up the church's total real estate assets.

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

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

The majority of our church facility is accessible to wheelchairs. The altar area (several steps) and the pulpit are not wheelchair accessible.

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

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?

The last budget change occurred roughly 8 years ago. In the past, we did not budget based upon projected income, only for planned expenses. We now incorporate projected income into our budgeting process. This comes primarily from the previous year's income since the congregation does not engage in a pledging campaign. This is due to many church members' experiences with friends and families in other churches in town that have excommunicated members because they failed to meet a pledge. And we stand firmly against this practice. We are currently working on a stewardship campaign to help the congregation understand the value of regular scheduled giving. Pre-Covid, each year of the last five, the congregation has given more in their regular weekly offering than the year before. This year of Covid along with the conflict over not

choosing our former Associate Minister as the Senior Minister did see a drop in giving but we are returning to pre-Covid levels gradually.

The budgeting process is as follows: The executive committee looks at the prior year expenses and estimates what the current year amounts will be based on those numbers. It is then presented to the entire council who approves and presents the proposed budget to the congregation at the annual meeting. The congregation is able to discuss the budget, and it must be approved by a majority vote.

We care a lot about mission projects, and we have taken on Merrill Community Food For Kids, under our 501c3 umbrella, and gather outside donations for this project. We also gather donations for and fund other projects on an as needed basis outside of our operating budget with regular success.

Since the budget year of 2015, we have paid all of our bills on time, without using any savings to meet our obligations. We now use ACS Technologies REALM financial and membership management system, and have multiple means of accountability (Administrative Director, Senior Minister and church leaders), and our senior minister and church council have a commitment to financial stability and solvency that has not always been present.

It is our expectation that this level of committed collaboration and intentional budgeting and spending will continue.

3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

Obviously, the shutdowns and changes associated with Covid 19 have changed everything about worship, meetings, and programs. St. Stephens was quickly able to pivot to an online presence through Facebook and we had the advantage of a longstanding radio broadcast. We are still processing the long-term effects of the last year but know that we must continue to expand our online presence and alternative styles of worship services.

After a decade of struggling for clear leadership and vision within the church, in 2014 we called a new Senior Pastor who became a dynamic presence in the community,

drew the congregation together in mission work and rejuvenated many of our ministry programs. We then called an Associate Pastor whose primary focus was children and youth ministries and revitalizing our Sunday School and youth programs.

Our Senior Pastor resigned for family concerns to be closer to his wife's work and to their parents through illnesses. The congregation grieved his leaving and began a search for a new Senior Pastor.

We have called the Rev. Mike Southcombe who has 26 years' experience in parish ministry, conflict mediation, chaplaincy, and interim ministry. We are thrilled he chose a settled pastorate and grateful he brings his interim training to help us through the transitions that will inevitably come after the year of Covid-19.

He is once again reaching out to the community and we look forward to welcoming a new Associate for Faith Formation and Congregational Life to fill out our staffing needs.

Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.
See above and we are open to any further questions.

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?)

As we look back at the last year, we are like most churches and have seen more disagreements arise that we attribute to Covid 19 fatigue, languishing, and the overall anxiety in our culture and community now.

This anxiety rose to a peak when some within the church wanted to call our former Associate Pastor as the Senior Pastor. We can discuss all of the fallout from that conflict with a candidate. For now, we have come back together, the angst over lack of in person worship is lessened but does continue. This is a time of healing and reconnecting for us and for most other churches.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev. Michael Southcombe. (Sr. Pastor)	< 1	Y
Lucas Williams. (Associate Pastor)	6/2018 to 12/2020	Standing Terminated
Rev. Kyle Carnes (Sr. Pastor)	1/2014 to 6/2019	Y
Rev. Michelle (Holdorf) Miller (Associate Pastor)	3/2005 to 12/2016	Y
Rev. Linda Kuhn (Interim Minister)	9/2012 to 1/2014	Y
Rev. Jack Kraaz (Interim Minister)	7/2011 to 9/2012	Y
Scott Hawker (Sr. Pastor)	7/2009 to 6/2011	Standing Terminated
Rev. John Eldred (Interim Minister)	2/2007 to 6/2009	Y
Deb Kunkel (Associate Pastor)	10/2002 to 11/2004	Yes at time, has since resigned her standing
Rev. Ohris E. Bartholomew (Interim Minister)	9/2000 to 9/2002	Y
Rev. Scott Callaghan (Associate Pastor)	7/1996 to 7/2000	Y
Rev. David McBride (Interim Minister)	1/1996 to 6/1996	No
Rev. Earl R. Eckhart. (Associate Pastor and Sr. Pastor Designate under Rev. Kuck. Senior Pastor after Rev. Kuck's retirement in 1995)	11/1992 to 2/2007	Y
Rev. Dale G. Kuck (Senior Pastor)	1/1965 to 12/1995	Y
Rev. William S. Clyma (Associate Pastor)	6/1988 to 4/1992	Y

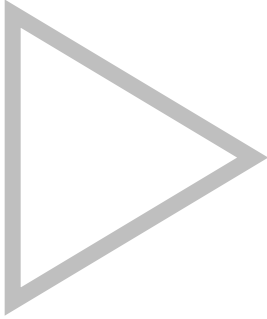
Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

We have learned that we are a resilient congregation. Throughout changes in leadership, we still gathered as a community of faith. Through our most recent pastors, we have learned that we can have a large impact in our community. We desire strong pastoral leadership, but we are able to survive in the midst of transition.

Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?
Yes, and we're happy to talk more about it.

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. However, as a result of actions taken while on staff, Rev. Hawker was subject to a Fitness Review of the Association after he tendered his resignation, and subsequently lost his standing in the UCC. Pastor Lucas' actions here may have had some bearing on his fitness review but the review was initiated for other reasons after his being called to another church.



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

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?

Our congregation is actively searching for ways to extend outside our walls. When a need is presented, we are open to offering whatever resources we can provide. For example, we were active in the Busia Compassionate Center in relationship with the WI Conference of Credit Unions, Dinner at Five (a free community meal), Re-Member (in Pine Ridge, South Dakota), Make a Difference Day, Food For Kids (providing food for school children throughout the year), and the Lincoln County Christmas Spirit Tree. We have established a Hospitality Corps that greets before the 9:00 AM service on Sunday. In 2018, we planned a new community outreach event, Oktoberfest. The event was a success for members of the congregation and community at large. We are in the planning process for our Fourth Annual event.

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

The congregation is connected to the Association and Conference primarily through the participation of our pastors in leadership roles in the adjudicatory levels of the denomination. We try to have delegates go to the Conference annual meeting which is a large celebration of church at the state level, at Green Lake Conference Center. We are a 5 for 5 congregation and have been for many years. We support the Wisconsin

Conference outdoor ministry United Church Camps, Inc. www.ucci.org and encourage our youth to attend.

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.) 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 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?

There has been no intentional study to become any of these. There have been some stirrings around becoming open and affirming and around engaging in the study to become a WISE congregation. There is a reasonable chance that this will become a full conversation in the near future. There was no intentional avoidance of these topics, but more of an absence of someone to spearhead any of these efforts.

We believe that these efforts should be led by the laity of the congregation if/when they arise. Even though we do not have any of these official designations, there is much from here that we support and the lack of these designations should not reflect a rejection of or disagreement with any of them in particular.

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

Covid has set back many community events. In the past we took part in an ecumenical Thanksgiving Service every year. Our pastor(s) regularly participate in the Merrill Ministerium, a collection of ecumenical pastors in town. In the past, our former senior minister participated in "an interfaith dialogue on peace in a polarized world" with Jewish and Muslim faith leaders.

Currently, our pastor is working with the Ministerium to hold a "summer evening of prayer" with praise bands and prayers at a local park, restarting the Thanksgiving service and possibly a community Good Friday event. The summer lunch program and the Food

4 Kids program both grew out of the churches working together. Again, the congregation is open to these sorts of things and looks for opportunities to worship, fellowship and serve together.

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.

Vision: We are a Christian community called by God's love to be a force for good in our community and our world.

Purpose: We seek to tell stories of God that challenge our assumptions, open our doors wide with radical hospitality, and to use our own hands and feet to change the world.

The intention for our process was an attempt to articulate who this congregation is, and has been from its origins, but to also articulate something aspirational-something that we knew we had not yet fulfilled and desired to still live into more fully. As mentioned above, the following programs and projects are some of the ways that we believe we are living into these two statements and we look forward to growing into them even more.

A large majority of our time is spent engaging in the acts related to our mission statement. For example, Food for Kids, Summer Lunch Program, and the Radical Hospitality Corps.

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?

The congregation is incredibly supportive and encouraging of work on behalf of the wider church and within the community. There is even some expectation that time will be spent outside the church walls and time is granted accordingly for work within the denomination and within the surrounding community.

4b. MISSION InSite

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

We have used MissionInSite in the past. During the past year, however, we have had other concerns. As we settle into a "new normal," we will again use this resource.

In the meantime, the Ministerium is looking at ways to reach underserved populations including the Latino communities, the mentally ill, and others.

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 congregation is predominantly European/Caucasian in heritage and ethnicity and the community demographics are the same.

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

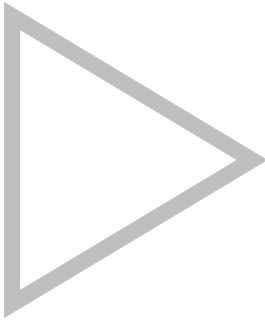
We are a product of the community demographics and reaching out to include others beyond our level of comfort. The greatest diversity is socio-economic, and we are addressing those needs as we are able.

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

When we speak to community leaders or even other community members, there is a sense that the community is talking about Saint Stephens around town and that we are engaged in the life of the community. They have a sense that something is happening, even if they don't know specifics of what we're doing.

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

They say that they like how warm and welcoming the church is, and they like the welcoming message they received. They say they've "heard good things" about Saint Stephens from others and wanted to check it out for themselves. They like all of the different things our church is doing in the community and want to be a part of it as well.



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. Kyle Carnes
Interim Pastor, United Church of Wayland,
Wayland, MI
517-206-6067
kyleandrew.carnes@gmail.com
Former Senior Minister, 2014-2019

Saint Stephens is the most sincere church I've ever served, with the least amount of pretense or need to impress. It is a church deeply committed to its roots and to its community. They are a church who is open to try new things, if they are led into them rather than being handled or told what the "new way" is going to be. They will be up for an adventure, and innovative ideas, again, if you lead them, rather than force the issue. I found Merrill to be a community that was not averse to change because they didn't want change, in fact in many areas I believe people definitely did want change. The resistance was that many simply believed it wouldn't make a difference either way, because forces beyond them kept things the same. The task then is to preach, teach, lead, befriend, and love in a way that change makes sense and makes a difference for good. Bring your whole heart and they will respond.

Even as the most theologically progressive church in town, it is a deeply "purple" church. Too quickly or too easily blending progressive theology as a straight line into liberal politics will be a non-starter. And yet, the belief that the core of the gospel is love, love of neighbor and caring for one another is the heart of this church. They desire devotional and spiritual growth. Lean into this, care for them, and they will go with you.

As for areas of growth, like so many congregations they are still too dependent upon the leadership of the pastor to "do" church, but there are many who are willing to lead, with coaching, support, empowerment and companionship. Again, as with many organizations, in the absence of non-anxious leaders, the loudest, more anxious voices and forceful personalities, will fill the vacuum. There are good leaders in the church if they are nurtured to stand up, use their voice, and take the lead.

Some of the most meaningful experiences of my time at Saint Stephens were when we worked and grew together. The Church Council leadership retreats to Moon Beach were both life-giving and productive. The trips to Re-Member in South Dakota allowed for new relationships to grow and deepen. It was a time where individuals were challenged to grow spiritually, and they did. These times "away" from church always affected the larger whole when small groups were inspired in new ways. This also happened when we traveled to Kansas City for leadership conferences. Day in and day out, however, I valued working alongside staff and lay people who were deeply committed to the mission projects and congregational care of Saint Stephens.

This church is an unsung gem of the Wisconsin Conference and of the denomination as a whole. To be called as pastor and teacher to this place, is to be blessed. Take the time to learn who they are, and who they've been, and together your ministry will make a difference in the broader community for good.

I would be happy to answer any other questions you may have.

REFERENCE 2

July 2021

TO: Prospective Candidate

FROM: Chaplain Mary Pat Campbell, NACC, BCC, retired

RE: St. Stephen UCC

I spent three years at St. Stephen's as their pastoral associate. My responsibilities included visitation on all levels, some worship and committee work.

There are three areas within the St. Stephen congregation that I will focus on based on my ministry and observations.

SERVICE: individuals are invited to participate in congregational and greater Merrill community opportunities to serve. There is something offered for all age groups, levels of availability, interest, learning and expertise. From the Green Team (environmental) to Taco Tuesday (lunch for children in the park) needs are being met by the members of St. Stephen's.

WELCOME: "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." This statement is embodied at St. Stephen's. People come and go daily just to "stop by". Theological discussions "pop up" with enthusiasm. Merrill clergy and community members feel at home, included. As a Catholic chaplain I felt included by all, called to the Lord's Table, spiritually nourished.

PRAYER: Tradition is maintained by the pastoral team and participants who continue to offer a sense of familiarity and peace to the congregation through worship and prayer. The Wednesday evening service has a more modern feel (asked questions, why nots and spiritual wanderings). Prayer at St. Stephen's holds something old and something new in the midst of the life of faithful believers.

Two final comments. I experienced a true sense of joy at St. Stephen's. That joy was extended, lived out and internalized.

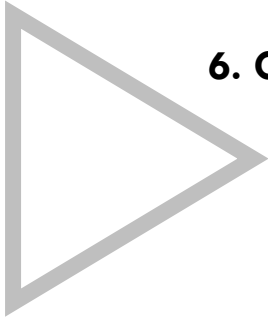
It is my hope that the St. Stephen Congregation becomes an "official" all inclusive community, The LGBT community in Central Wisconsin rural areas needs to be affirmed in a safe and open church setting.

In Christ,



Mary Pat Campbell

P.S. Your office has a window!



6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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:

My Lord, you have chosen me to be a leader among your people. I ask that you bestow upon me your wisdom and courage as I may go forth in this mission. Guide me as I review the profile of Saint Stephens UCC. May I be of an open mind as I learn of their history their present goals and their future dreams. Strengthen me that I may not fall into negative comparisons. Grant me great enthusiasm for the beliefs we share that are my passion that I may grow to be a vital part of this Christian community. If this is our mission, help us to fulfill it. If this is not our mission, bless us as we go forth seeking our separate missions. I ask all these things in your name. Amen.

6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

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

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile? *(for example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.)*

A Profile Committee made up of members from the Church Council, the Church and Ministry Committee and the Pastor. We also used results from structured dialogue groups. Our Administrative Director provided the current financial information.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

While we are truly searching for a full time Associate Pastor, we understand that ministry is evolving. If a MID or someone pursuing an alternative path to ordination were to apply and desire a less than full time position, we are interested in working out a mutually beneficial arrangement. We have a history of nurturing new ministers. We have a wall with pictures of “Sons and Daughters” of the congregation who were ordained here.

Signed:

William McIntyre

Chair Search Committee

October 8, 2021

6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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: Rev. Robert MacDougall

Email: rmacdougall@wcucc.org

Phone: 715-308-6120

Date: October 14, 2021

Date : 01/27/2021
 Time : 3:21:23 PM

St. Stephens United
 Church of Christ
 Analysis of Revenues &
 Expenses - Detail
 Fund: St. Stephens
 Principle Fund Balance
 January to December 2020

Accounts	YTD Actual (2019)	YTD Actual (2020)
Income		
General Fund Income		
400.005 - Weekly/Pledged Giving	\$290,511.44	\$277,317.35
400.010 - Loose Offering	\$4,294.19	\$611.00
400.011 - Eglving Processing Cost Contrib	\$0.00	\$6.50
400.015 - Memorial Offering	\$8,914.00	\$9,828.00
400.018 - Interest Earned	\$264.75	\$225.20
400.020 - Initial Offering	\$459.00	\$374.00
400.024 - Veterans Day Tribute	\$0.00	\$292.00
400.027 - Mothe's Day Tribute	\$0.00	\$726.00
400.028 - Memorial Day Tribute	\$0.00	\$145.00
400.029 - Falher's Day Tribute	\$0.00	\$685.00
400.030 - Communion Offering	\$5,040.00	\$2,385.00
400.035 - Ash Wednesday Offering	\$1,257.00	\$1,830.00
400.040 - Altar Flower Offering	\$275.00	\$260.00
400.041 - Virtual Poinsettia Offering	\$0.00	\$30.00
400.045 - Lenten Offerings	\$4,678.00	\$2,964.00
400.050 - Lenten Soup Supper Donations	\$901.00	\$499.00
400.055 - Maundy Thursday Offering	\$1,212.00	\$250.00
400.055- Maundy Thursday Meal Offering	\$180.00	\$0.00
400.060 - Good Friday Offering	\$917.00	\$263.00
400.065 - Easter Sunday Offering	\$3,717.00	\$2,238.00
400.066 - Easter Breakfast Ticket Sales	\$21.00	\$0.00
400.067 - Thanksgiving Comm Meal Offering	\$0.00	\$1,262.75
400.068 - Thanksgiving Offering	\$563.00	\$390.00
400.071 - Virtual Easter Lily Donation	\$0.00	\$35.00
400.080 - Choir & Music Offering	\$0.00	\$1,670.00
400.085 - Christmas Offering	\$6,709.00	\$825.00
400.090 - Sunday School Offering	\$963.26	\$247.00
400.110 - Pop Machine Income	\$42.65	\$92.70
400.111 - Challah Bread Free Will Donations	\$0.00	\$111.00
400.115 - Aluminum Cans/Scrap Metal Income	\$71.80	\$307.00
400.120 - Wedding Fees	\$1,850.00	\$550.00
400.125 - Use of Chairs, Tables, Church Bldg	\$500.00	\$391.00
400.130 - Building Use Fees and Rental	\$2,810.00	\$700.00
400.135 - Funeral Dinner Gratuity	\$745.00	\$200.00
400.136 - Funeral Service Gratuity	\$100.00	\$0.00
400.140 - Medical Equipment Ministry Offering	\$744.00	\$0.00
400.150 - Scrip Disbursement to General Fund	\$8,000.00	\$6,000.00
400.205 - Sale/Auction of Unused Items	\$541.00	\$823.46
400.225 - Oktoberfest Receipts	\$5,160.28	\$0.00

St. Stephens United
 Church of Christ
 Analysis of Revenues &
 Expenses - Detail
 Fund: St. Stephens
 Principle Fund Balance
 January to December 2020

Accounts	YTD Actual (2019)	YTD Actual (2020)
400.235 - Trivia Night Receipts	\$1,651.00	\$0.00
400.500 - Miscellaneous Income	\$20.00	\$0.00
405.091 - Property Tax Refund/Reimb	\$10.99	\$0.00
405.535 - Christmas Spirit Ham Donations	\$870.00	\$0.00
405.540 - Sam's Club Membership Rebate	\$250.00	\$37.75
410.000 - Credit Card Rewards	\$0.00	\$1,175.00
415.005 - Restitution	\$50.00	\$0.00
Total General Fund Income	\$352,333.36	\$315,866.75
Total Income	\$352,333.36	\$315,866.75

Accounts	YTD Actual (2019)	YTD Actual (2020)	Annual Budget (2020)	Proposed Budget (2021)
Expenses				
General Fund Expenses				
Personnel Expense				
500.100 - Salaries and Wages	\$168,486.97	\$174,291.80	\$220,000.00	\$ 196,260.00

500.105 - Contract Employment	\$4,272.22	\$487.20	\$2,000.00	\$ 800.00
500.110 - FICA - Church's Portion	\$13,142.26	\$13,212.13	\$17,000.00	\$ 15,272.92
500.115 - Pension & Disability	\$10,885.00	\$5,929.00	\$15,000.00	\$ 19,948.50
500.120 - Housing Allowance	\$7,999.94	\$7,999.94	\$8,000.00	\$ 2,640.00
500.125 - Professional Expense	\$5,424.18	\$475.85	\$0.00	\$ -
500.126 - Professional Expense-Senior Pastor	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
500.127 - Professional Expense-Assoe Pastor	\$0.00	\$2,381.70	\$2,500.00	\$ 825.00
500.130 - Mileage Reimbursement	\$3,286.54	\$810.65	\$2,000.00	\$ 1,200.00
500.135 - Continuing Education & Training	\$1,190.32	\$42.50	\$0.00	\$ -
500.136 - Continuing Ed/Training-Senior Pasto	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
500.137 - Continuing Ed-Assoe Pastor	\$0.00	\$550.00	\$2,000.00	\$ 650.00
500.140 - Health Insurance	\$9,797.35	\$11,159.60	\$20,000.00	\$ 26,784.00
500.145 - Dental Insurance	\$1,631.90	\$654.00	\$2,000.00	\$ 1,154.00
500.150 - Vision Insurance	\$283.00	\$100.00	\$400.00	\$ 132.00
500.155 - Life Insurance	\$0.00	\$316.89	\$0.00	\$ -
500.160 - Workers Comp Insurance	\$3,027.69	\$2,474.00	\$2,800.00	\$ 2,800.00
500.165 - Search & Moving Expense	\$0.00	\$4,167.68	\$1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
500.170 - Staff Expense	\$1,193.46	\$244.73	\$800.00	\$ 600.00
500.175 - Church Share: Wlac. Conf. UCC Ints	\$7,579.34	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -
500.190 - Hiring Exp. - Ads, BG Checks, etc	\$0.00	\$509.00	\$300.00	\$ 300.00
500.195 - Flexible Benefit Plan Annual Exp	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$ -
Total Personnel Expense	\$236,200.17	\$225,706.67	\$298,200.00	\$ 274,896.42

Program Expenses				
Congregational Expenses				
500.300 - Awards & Plaques Expense	\$0.00	\$513.30	\$250.00	\$ 250.00
500.305 - Hospitality Expense	\$683.40	\$662.08	\$1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
500.310 - Lenten Soup Supper Expense	\$789.42	\$339.67	\$800.00	\$ 800.00
500.315 - Public Relations/Marketing Expense	\$20.64	\$228.00	\$500.00	\$ 500.00
500.320 - New Members Expense	\$126.29	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$ 300.00
500.325 - Dues/Subscriptions/Devotionals	\$431.10	\$419.55	\$500.00	\$ 500.00
500.330 - Congregational Life Expense	\$2,603.63	\$5,220.76	\$2,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
500.335 - Pop Machine Expense	\$0.00	\$186.98	\$0.00	\$ -
500.340 - Refund Deposit-Ch. Use Expense	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -
500.345 - Kitchen Expense	\$0.00	\$79.11	\$50.00	\$ 50.00
500.350 - Maundy Thursday Meal Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$ 50.00
500.360 - Funeral Lunch Expense	\$61.93	\$22.35	\$150.00	\$ 150.00
500.370 - Advent & Lenten Box Expense	\$4,234.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -

Accounts	YTD Actual (2019)	YTD Actual (2020)	Annual Budget (2020)	Proposed Budget (2021)
500.375 - Oktoberfest Expense	\$5,248.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -
500.380 - Trivia Night Expense	\$329.62	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -
500.390 - Pastoral Celebrations	\$653.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$ 500.00
Total Congregational Expenses	\$15,181.65	\$7,671.80	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,050.00
Worship Expenses				
500.400 - Choir & Music Expense	\$946.99	\$841.99	\$1,000.00	\$ 700.00
500.405 - Communion Supply Expense	\$216.12	\$862.29	\$350.00	\$ 800.00
500.410 - Stewardship/Offering Materials	\$1,828.63	\$1,629.26	\$2,200.00	\$ 1,300.00
500.415 - Other Worship Expense	\$1,049.52	\$1,140.80	\$1,000.00	\$ 700.00
500.420 - Special Music Expense	\$500.00	\$100.00	\$750.00	\$ 500.00
500.425 - Pulpit Fill Expense	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Total Worship Expenses	\$4,843.25	\$4,564.34	\$6,300.00	\$ 5,100.00
Christian Education Expenses				
500.500 - Adult Education Expense	\$70.72	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$ 300.00
500.505 - Confirmation Expense	\$30.40	\$452.61	\$500.00	\$ 500.00
500.510 - Sunday School Expense	\$1,417.32	\$882.22	\$1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00
500.515 - Vacation Bible School Expense	\$257.01	\$409.47	\$400.00	\$ 400.00
500.520 - Youth Ministry Expense	\$472.49	\$409.32	\$700.00	\$ 700.00
500.530 - Nursery Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$ 250.00
500.535 - Leadership Institute Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Total Christian Education Expenses	\$2,247.94	\$2,153.62	\$8,950.00	\$ 4,950.00
Business Admin Expenses				
500.600 - Postage Expense	\$3,145.03	\$2,698.48	\$3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00
500.605 - Bank Fees Expense	\$50.44	\$102.19	\$175.00	\$ 125.00
500.610 - Office Supplies Expense	\$2,662.78	\$3,751.25	\$3,200.00	\$ 3,200.00
500.615 - Church Mngmt. Software Expense	\$3,253.25	\$3,671.75	\$3,800.00	\$ 3,800.00
500.620 - Copier Lease	\$5,124.08	\$5,005.00	\$5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
500.621 - Property Tax (City of Merrill)	\$268.12	\$510.21	\$450.00	\$ 550.00
500.625 - Copies and Copier Supplies	\$5,968.64	\$3,573.92	\$5,800.00	\$ 5,400.00
500.630 - Technology Management Expense	\$2,702.70	\$5,567.72	\$2,500.00	\$ 5,000.00
500.635 - Meetings & Ann. Mtg. Expense	\$3,021.22	\$80.00	\$1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00
500.640 - Telephone/Internet Expense	\$2,048.54	\$1,820.56	\$2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
500.650 - Website Hosting & Expenses	\$335.17	\$368.17	\$500.00	\$ 400.00
500.655 - Electronic Giving Expense	\$1,096.42	\$1,778.59	\$1,200.00	\$ 1,700.00
500.660 - Petty Cash Expense	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	\$ 100.00
Total Business Admin Expenses	\$29,866.39	\$28,907.84	\$30,075.00	\$ 32,575.00

Wedding Expenses					
500.845 - Wedding Disbursements		\$1,250.00	\$350.00		\$0.00
Total Wedding Expenses		\$1,250.00	\$350.00		\$0.00
Accounts		YTD Actual (2019)	YTD Actual (2020)	Annual Budget (2020)	Proposed Budget (2021)
Property Expenses					
500.700 - Janitorial Supplies		\$1,262.31	\$1,594.62	\$1,500.00	\$ 1,800.00
500.705 - Repairs & Maintenance Expense		\$2,978.97	\$2,673.10	\$3,800.00	\$ 3,800.00
500.710 - Garbage & Waste Removal		\$1,560.00	\$1,440.00	\$1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
500.715 - Snow Removal Expense		\$8,473.83	\$5,166.93	\$8,500.00	\$ 8,500.00
500.720 - Elevator Maintenance Expense		\$1,426.00	\$1,930.00	\$4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
500.725 - Multi-Perfl / Umbrella Ins Expense		\$9,892.89	\$12,640.35	\$10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
500.730 - Water Expense		\$1,636.36	\$979.98	\$1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00
500.735 - Gas Expense		\$13,360.26	\$9,676.71	\$12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
500.740 - Electricity Expense		\$8,701.41	\$8,828.95	\$9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00
Total Property Expenses		\$49,081.83	\$42,920.62	\$52,100.00	\$ 52,400.00
Mission Expenses					
500.800 - Mission Expense - Nonspecified		\$125.00	\$380.78	\$3,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
500.805 - Northwest Association Expense		\$2,236.50	\$2,205.00	\$2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00
500.810 - Pastor's Discretionary Fund Expense		\$1,308.67	\$1,274.29	\$2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
500.820 - Medical Equipmt. Ministry Expense		\$713.40	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 0.00
500.850 - Food For Kids Admin Expense		\$594.28	\$412.87	\$700.00	\$ 700.00
500.860 - ReBOOT Combat Recovery		\$95.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$ 100.00
500.900 - Radio Ministry (unsponsored)		\$ 570.00	\$ -	\$ 570.00	\$ 570.00
540.005 - OCWM Expense (Basic W/ Conf UCC)		\$372.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
540.035 - Re-Member Fund Mission Trip Expense		\$853.97	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 0.00
540.545 - Christmas Spirit Meal Expense		\$1,095.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Mission Expenses		\$7,393.80	\$6,272.94	\$10,200.00	\$ 9,770.00
Total General Fund Expenses		\$346,635.04	\$318,547.83	\$412,395.00	\$ 387,741.00
Total Expenses		\$346,635.04	\$318,547.83	\$412,395.00	\$ 387,741.00
Net Total		\$3,898.32	(\$2,881.08)	(\$412,395.00)	\$(387,741.00)

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