

FOR LOCAL CHURCHES SEEKING LEADERSHIP FOR AN INTERIM TERM POSITION

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 document that accurately reflects 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 a suitable leader for the interim time 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.

Michelle Camp

Signature of Search Committee Chairperson

January 31, 2022

Date



Church Name: North Community Church of
Marshfield

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02051

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Email: office@northcommunitychurch.org

Website: www.northcommunitychurch.org

Date of vacancy: January 31, 2022

Ministry flows from mission.

A time of transition in the life of a congregation is an opportunity to gain clarity on the church's mission. The Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ has a vision and mission of "Living the love and justice of Jesus" which is made manifest in partnership with God, through making disciples, creating ministry and service partnerships, and encouraging adaptive change and innovation in these changing times.

What is your local church's mission? (Please share your church's mission statement here or name that one needs to be developed):

NCC's *Mission Statement of Purpose* is:

"NCC will be a safe place for healing ourselves and others, for encouraging diversity and for supporting families, youth and children."

NCC also has a statement of *Purpose & Covenant*:

"We unite as a community of ecumenical Christians, seeking to grow in the love of God and in the love of our neighbors as ourselves.

We are conscious of our responsibility to serve God's creation by sharing our spiritual and material resources locally and world-wide.

Respecting freedom of religious belief, we covenant to achieve these purposes by worshiping God, following Jesus Christ, and fostering compassion, justice, and peace.

We welcome all, excluding none, to join us in this covenant."

NCC also has a welcoming statement, that was implemented after our church became Open & Affirming.

As best as you are able, describe 3 to 5 goals you would like to address during your interim term and some ways you will know these goals have been met:

1. Undertake a visioning exercise / process / explore a more active relationship with UCC
 - Create and implement a visioning process
 - Identify 2-3 top priorities to focus on
2. Define priorities for religious education programs for Youth / Children / Adults
 - Identify 2-3 keys areas of programming improvement
3. Review processes, planning, and procedures to see if there's a better way.
 - Leverage Breeze software
 - Improve use of website for communication
 - Identify areas that need technical support

4. Build positive momentum and reintroduce fun to church life

- Plan and hold events, virtually or in person

5. Improve communication and hold deeper conversations supported by the Behavioral Covenant

- Adopt Behavioral Covenant at Annual Meeting in March
- Develop a strategy for how to use the Behavioral Covenant in congregational life
- Elicit feedback periodically and adjust as needed

In paragraph or two for each item, please provide the following:

Brief History: The roots of North Community Church are long and go back to the 1700s. Our church building was erected in 1738 and was originally home to the Trinitarian Congregational church. As church life evolved over the years, North Community Church was formed when the Trinitarian Congregationalist, Unitarian and Baptist congregations of Marshfield came together to form one interdenominational church in 1928.

Over the years NCC has been the church for members looking to God for guidance, who have made the decisions, carried out the plans, lived their beliefs, and ministered through their church. We have always been and continue to be a community venture.

In 1957, the Congregationalists merged with others on the national level to form the United Church of Christ. North Community Church accepted this affiliation while maintaining its independent status as a community church. Ultimately NCC voted to fully join the United Church of Christ in 2006. Through our outreach ministry, we promote ecumenical understanding and service through contributions to the Massachusetts Council of Churches and the Massachusetts Bible Society. On February 25, 2018, at a duly called congregational meeting, the church voted to become an Open and Affirming Congregation within the United Church of Christ.

Church Strengths: We are a small church, but active for our size in living out our mission and faith. Within our church community our members compassionately support one another with calls, meals, cards, and rides when needed in addition to receiving pastoral care and visitation. Externally NCC is highly recognized and involved in the greater community and committed to outreach (10% annual funding).

NCC is a strong partner with the recovery community through hosting area AA group meetings for the past 30+ years, actively participating in the vigil for overdose awareness, having NARCAN available on our premises and donating our mission funds to the Marshfield FACTS (Community coalition for substance use awareness and prevention).

NCC members come from a large variety of faith backgrounds, which our congregation values and sees as an asset in worship and in living out our faith.

Our membership is resilient and proactively motivated to keep moving forward vs accepting the status quo. Evidence of this is seen in our recent undertaking to implement a behavioral covenant, growing to become an open and affirming church during an interim period, as well as making adjustments to continue our mission activities and do the work of the church amidst Covid and the changing needs of our community.

We seek to provide an enriching environment through our music program, offering programs for children/youth/adults and making our parish hall available for the congregation and outside groups (this is also a source of revenue.)

Significant Events: Evolution: Our church voted to become an Open and Affirming Congregation within the United Church of Christ during our last interim period in 2018 having voted to join the UCC in 2006. Additionally, the sanctuary was renovated and modernized in 2009 and we are currently planning a phased renovation of the Parish House.

Expanded community programming and fellowship in recent years: Originating the Rib Cook Off (now its own 501c(3) organization), offering Yoga, serving monthly Community Dinners, developing a Theater Arts program, participating in Marshfield diversity and pride events, providing lunch to Father Bill's shelter, organizing/funding annual adult mission trips to Biloxi Mississippi along with Youth mission trips (pre covid)/mission kindness, partnering with McKinney-Vento (which supports homeless children), and adopting an island.

Our Challenges (Many exacerbated by Covid):

A survey of our congregation in 2020 revealed some challenges. A primary one was lack of strong communication. As our pastor, church leaders and staff struggled to shift core church activities online and care for our most vulnerable members, some in our congregation felt we should have been more transparent and forthcoming with the challenges we were facing. Now we recognize the need to increase the effectiveness of our communication with our congregation by setting clear expectations, encouraging honest and safe conversations on difficult topics, and addressing polarization and triangulation when it arises.

NCC is a vibrant congregation with many gifted members who have passionate convictions. Like many faith communities, we have a small number of "high touch" members who have strong opinions about church processes and decisions. The communication challenges noted above made ministering to this group of church members difficult at times. Some members, frustrated by the limitations caused by the pandemic, blamed church leadership for the inability to hold in-person worship services and gatherings.

Pre-Covid, NCC had a small but well attended Sunday School and Youth Group. Our Youth Group was able to meet with some regularity during Covid. At the start of the pandemic, our Sunday School met frequently on Zoom but after a few months, Zoom fatigue set in, and attendance dropped. This past summer and into fall, the nice weather allowed our Sunday School to have classes outside. The current Omicron surge, coupled with the cold weather, has temporarily paused all Sunday School and Youth Group activities. As we look toward the future, we would like to "reboot" our Sunday School and Youth Group offerings and plan more cohesive and structured programming across all age groups, including adults.

Finance and development was another area of discernment for our church during the pandemic. Giving from 2020 to 2021 exceeded what we budgeted for, which was a pleasant surprise. Presently, giving is down slightly or flat, which is concerning since we increased our budget for this fiscal year. At the start of the pandemic, we adjusted our messaging about giving, recognizing that some of our members may be experiencing a loss of income. Our messaging remains consistent, but we are brainstorming stewardship campaign approaches (for time, talent as well as treasure) along with other innovative and creative ways we could raise funds. We have been visioning different ways to raise funds for capital improvements. Such as exploring the possibility of getting grants to help offset some costs we have related to building safety and maintenance.

Is there unresolved Conflict in Church? Yes No

Level of Conflict in Your Church (Low 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 High): 1

(As identified by Speed Leas, in a Leadership Magazine article in 1989:

1. "We have problems to solve, but we can do it!"
2. "We're not communicating. There seems to be a low level of trust...but we are talking!"
3. The focus has changed to "winners/losers!" Emotions are escalating. Some folks are leaving. At this level it is wise to seek outside help!
4. The goal is "divorce," and getting people to quit. There are active attempts to manipulate or sabotage processes. Open communication is not being practiced.
5. Not only wanting others to leave but seeking to hurt others in revenge!

Was the previous leader a contributor to the conflict? Yes No

No. Our previous leader went to great lengths to manage some of the conflict due to the reasons noted above.

If yes, please explain: _____

What has the congregation and leadership learned about its role in the creation and resolution of the conflict?

Our congregation has learned that speaking the truth in kindness and love is not always as easy as it sounds. Sometimes, our members tend to triangulate issues rather than address them with the person/s directly involved. We have seen a trend recently in using emails or texts to convey issues or concerns to avoid in person discussions. To address this, the church has drafted a Behavior Covenant, with the hopes that we can encourage our members to have open and honest conversations and to think before they speak. We fully recognize that we live in uncertain times and that as a society, we are very polarized. Despite that, we want to endeavor to do better and to meet people where they are as best as we can.

BASIC STATISTICS:

#Church Members	Average Worship Attendance	CE Participation	Adult Ed Participation
~115	~25-50	~25	~15

2021 Income	2021 Budget	2021 UCC Mission Giving	Reserves & Endowments	Compensation being offered
\$317,200	\$217,800	~\$7,000	\$650,00 (reserves) NCC is the recipient of 2 blind trusts, annual income from those trusts is ~\$125,000	Within conference guidelines

Generally, the starting place of negotiation for the Compensation Package offered to the Interim Term Pastor is the same as that of the most recent pastor.

Cash Salary offered Within conference guidelines
Conference Compensation Guidelines (salary range): Within conference guidelines

Housing

- Housing allowance only (Within conference guidelines)
- Parsonage only
- would offer either

- Pension Contribution (14% of Base Salary plus housing)
- Social Security Allowance
- Health Insurance Individual Family
- Dental Insurance Individual Family
- Vacation (1 week per quarter for full time)
- Meetings
- Business Mileage Reimbursed (IRS Rate)

One-time Criminal Background Check fee of \$140 reimbursed to the Interim Pastor.

Covenant/Contract will be for: 12 months 18 months or other (could be 12-18 months)

Is this full time or part time? Full time

The Interim Term Pastor will be selected by: The Interim Search Team

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Once an Interim Term Pastor has been chosen and a covenant has been signed, please forward the following documents to the Framingham Office (Deb Holmes – holmesd@sneucc.org)

- Copies of the Interim Covenant/Contract
- Documents outlining the conditions for terminating the covenant/contract.

It is customary that the church or Interim Ministry Pastor may terminate the contract only after 60 days' notice of such intent.

Associate Conference Minister:	Rev. Dr. Patty Kogut
Phone	508-244-4416
Email	kogutp@sneucc.org

Suggested Supplemental Materials to send to a candidate:

1. Newsletter
2. Worship bulletin
3. Annual Report

Position Listing for the National UCC Employment Opportunities:

(In 2000 characters of less, please describe your church and your goals for the Interim Ministry. This will be posted on our National UCC website for up to one month if together you and your Associate Conference Minister think it appropriate.)

North Community Church (NCC) in Marshfield Hills, MA, is an open and affirming church committed to widening our welcome to the greater community. We are seeking a full-time interim minister to help us build upon our many strengths to create an exciting vision for our church. As our interim minister, you will prepare and lead us in worship, provide pastoral care as needed and support our Search Team as they seek our next settled pastor. NCC is an active faith community that is especially passionate about care, mission, and outreach. We have a robust Called to Care Team that ensures we support one another with calls, meals, cards, and rides when needed. Our church proudly supports many Marshfield and southeastern Massachusetts based charities. NCC has a strong relationship with the recovery community and has been the home for several AA groups for more than 30 years. We are blessed with a talented choir and an acoustical group that delights us with beautiful music each week. Worship at NCC is more than a weekly ritual. We think of worship as spiritual balm for our souls during which we pause and reflect on how we can be Jesus' hands and feet in the world. Covid forced us to find innovative and creative ways to be the church. Although Covid challenged us, the past two years have been a reminder that we are a resilient congregation and the community we serve needs us now more than ever. We are ready to look ahead. We are eager to welcome an interim minister to help and guide us as we dream of ways to be an even more inclusive, intentional, and engaging community that is accessible to people of all ages, genders, ethnicities, races, and backgrounds.

Rev. Dr. Patricia Kogut

Area Conference Minister, Southeast Region

Southern New England Conference, United Church of Christ

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508-244-4416