

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 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 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 relationship between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

Shirlee J. Fassell
Interim Search Committee Chairperson

February 22, 2022
Date

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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 MA Conference is living into this mission "Rooted in the grace of God, the mission of the Massachusetts Conference United Church of Christ is to nurture local church vitality and the covenant among our churches to make God's love and justice real."

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

Our Church Mission Statement:

"Embraced by the love of God in Christ, our mission is to love and serve our world. We seek to grow in Christ's family through our journey – inward toward faith and knowledge, outward toward love and justice – always rooted and nurtured in worship."

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:

- *Continue the work of Interim Senior Pastor Dallas Bradel and Coach Stacy Swain identifying what kind of church God is calling us to be and any obstacles that stand in our way.*
- *Understanding and naming the unresolved griefs.*
- *Continue revitalizing our youth programs. The Interim Senior Pastor will be expected to fully support our church's efforts to expand and enrich our youth involvement.*
- *Work closely with the Settled Pastor Search Committee to assist in the search and calling of a new Settled Pastor.*
- *Work closely with the Church's Communication Director to maximize communication activities during this period of remote worship. Work closely with the Reopening Task Force to plan and implement a reopening process that meets the spiritual and safety needs of our congregation.*

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

Brief History:

The First Church of Christ in Longmeadow was formed over 300 years ago after the local community had petitioned the state to form a town. Our church's history and that of our town are inseparable: indeed, establishing a congregational church was a prerequisite to becoming a town. We gathered in 1716 with the ordination of Rev. Stephen Williams who went on to serve our congregation for 66 years. In the succeeding centuries, our congregation grew, pastors came and left, and First Church assumed a pivotal role in supporting our local and regional communities.

Over the years, our town grew from a small merchant/farmer settlement to a white-collar, largely professional demographic. Our congregation reflects this change, and we have consistently searched

for new ways to support Greater Springfield and worldwide mission needs. Longmeadow has become more diverse in its ethnic and religious makeup, and First Church has embraced growing opportunities to help foster interfaith responses to mission and social justice issues.

In recent years, our congregation has spent intense effort discerning what we want our church to become. From 2012-2016, we partnered with an Interim Senior Pastor to develop goals and a vision for our future. During this period, our church decided to become an Open and Affirming congregation. This process also informed our Senior Pastor search process, leading to the successful calling of Reverend Pam McGrath as the first woman to serve as First Church's Senior Pastor. Reverend McGrath's three years as our settled Senior Pastor have been quite uplifting; she is a gifted pastor and wonderful storyteller who has had a profoundly positive impact on our church. We will grieve her leaving but celebrate the growth we've achieved during her short tenure and look to the future with hope and gratitude.

Church Strengths:

Members describe our church as very welcoming and inclusive while seeking to become more diverse. We have an active laity and a sense of concern for the wider community and the world. We are blessed with a dedicated staff who work well together and with congregation members. We have a strong music ministry led by a young and dedicated music director.

We seek to grow our faith and are willing to take some risks in order to do that. We are ready at a moment's notice to be the 'meeting house' for the community – for memorial services and in response to national and world events. We also continue to value and expand our interfaith activities with our faith partners.

Significant Events:

Our Challenges:

- *We have much to grieve! The retirement of our wonderful Senior Pastor Reverend Pam McGrath mid-2020 and our young and vibrant Music Director's move to Colorado in Dec of 2021.*
- *At the beginning of 2022 it became evident that the size of our congregation could no longer support two Pastors and it was decided by leadership to terminate the Associate Pastors position at the end of our fiscal year June 30, 2022. The Associate Pastor had made it known that she may apply for the settled Pastor position but at the February 16 leadership meeting she announced after much discernment she would not apply. She has been granted the long overdue sabbatical she is entitled to so her last Sunday with us will be April 24, 2022. Associate Pastor Marisa's decision will be grieved by many.*
- *We are working with Coach Stacy Swain to live into our mission statement. To increase lay leadership involvement, we are "spotlighting" a team each Sunday with a 1 minute invitation in an attempt to involve more of the congregation in the church's mission. The Deacons are also calling members of the congregation to stay in contact.*

- *Our church has committed to revitalizing our children's and youth ministries. Despite significant effort by our pastors, educational staff, and volunteers, we recognize that much more remains to be done in attracting and maintaining youth involvement.*

Is there unresolved Conflict in the Church? _____ Yes X No

Level of Conflict in Your Church (Low 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 High): Low-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 X No

If yes, please explain:

Reverend McGrath did a highly competent job dealing with any remaining conflict areas that she inherited when joining us.

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

BASIC STATISTICS:

#Church Members	Average Worship Attendance	CE Participation	Adult Ed Participation
283	90-100	8	15-50
	pre covid		pre covid

2020 Income	2020 Budget	2020 UCC Mission Giving	Reserves & Endowments	Compensation being offered
\$ 504,760	\$ 691,877	\$ 17,719	\$ 4,700,000	UCC 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 depending upon experience level

Conference Compensation Guidelines (salary range): \$ 85,061 - \$ 103.394

Total participation 75-110 people High = \$ 73,434-\$89,042 plus COLA for 2020 (3%?)

Total participation 110-190 people High = \$ 85,061 - \$ 103.394 plus COLA for 2020 (3%?)

Housing

 x Housing allowance only \$ tbd as part of salary compensation

 Parsonage only

 would offer either

Pension Contribution (14% of Base Salary plus housing)
7.65% Social Security Allowance
 _____ Health Insurance _____ Individual x Family 75% of UCC Plan A
 _____ Dental Insurance _____ Individual x Family 75% of UCC Plan A
 _____ Vacation (1 week per quarter for full time)
 _____ Meetings
 yes Business Mileage Reimbursed (IRS Rate)

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

Covenant/Contract will be for: X 6 to 12 months _____ 18 months or other _____

How do we decide this?

Is this full time or part time? *Full time*

The Interim Term Pastor will be selected by:

- *The Interim Pastor Search Committee will invite and review submitted profiles, interview selected candidates and recommend a single candidate to the congregation*
- *The committee's recommendation will be approved by a vote of the Leadership 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:	Terry Yasuko Ogawa
Phone	860-761-7192
Email	OgawaTY@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:

First Church of Christ in Longmeadow, MA is seeking an Interim Senior Pastor to serve for an estimated six month to one-year period. This position is in response to the loss of our present Interim Pastor who is leaving to begin a settled pastor position.

We seek an interim who will act as our spiritual guide and help us continue to build on the positive energy we have experienced working with our previous Interim Dallas Bradel and our coach Stacy Swain. We are looking for a seasoned leader whose dedication and energy is exhibited in the following priorities:

- To preach the good news, lead worship and participate in the sacraments in a manner faithful to the broader Christian heritage and appropriate to the characteristics of our church's specific culture and setting*
- To accept and promote diversity, to inspire others to do so, and to minister in a multicultural and multiracial, open and affirming, just peace, accessible to all, united and uniting church*
- To organize, implement and administer the operations of a complex organization, to initiate change when appropriate, and live out a servant leadership style*
- To lead and encourage ministries of evangelism, service, stewardship and social transformation*

Our 300+ year old church has been at the center of our community since its founding. We worship in an historic meeting house on a campus that includes our church school, meeting rooms, social gathering spaces and a Montessori preschool. Our congregation remains one of the largest in Western Massachusetts. We are blessed with an excellent and dedicated staff, including an Associate Pastor, Music Director, Administrator, Sexton and Communications Director. We seek an Interim Senior Pastor who can work closely with their staff and our active, engaged congregation as we transition between Settled Pastors.

Potential candidates wishing to learn more about our church are encouraged to explore our online presence through the following links:

Website: <http://www.1stchurchlongmeadow.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/firstchurchlongmeadow>

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3YIN6a8bLfarJ_OuQW8siw