

# INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE



The new Local Church Profile is not just for congregations in search of a pastor. *All* congregations are encouraged to engage in its process of discovery every 3-5 years. The UCC Local Church Profile reflects valuable data, assesses ministry, clarifies change, and helps advance the calling of the congregation. Not just to be completed by a search committee – the more participation, the better!

Rachel Hackenberg

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
**LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE**

First Congregational United Church of Christ in Geneva, Nebraska  
with

First Congregational United Church of Christ in Exeter, Nebraska

Pastor

Nebraska Conference: Nebraska Prairie Association

March 11, 2022

## LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

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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

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Church name: **First Congregational United Church of Christ**

Street address: **906 H Street, Geneva, NE 68361 and 106 W Tecumseh Ave, Exeter, NE 68351**

Supplemental web links:

- <https://www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-United-Church-of-Christ-Geneva-159986054047578>
- <http://www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-United-Church-of-Christ-of-Exeter-102806557784857/>
- [uccgenevane.org](http://uccgenevane.org)
- <https://sites.google.com/site/uccgenevane/welcome?authuser=0>

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

Conference: **Nebraska**

Association: **Prairie**

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person (Name, Title, Phone, Email):

**Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones** Associate Conference Minister      pronouns: she/her/hers      **808-631-2444 (cell)**

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?*

**No matter where on life's journey, we welcome you. Our warm and friendly community supports anyone in need and invites all to our church, within or outside our building!**

**We are a stable and well maintained congregation that seeks a pastor to recruit and retain.**

Photographs:

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

**Please visit our Facebook pages and websites to see our church in action!**

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

**We value having a self-sufficient community with many amenities and privileges. We are a rural community with a strong work ethic who provide the area with open arm support, be it education, vocation or recreation.**

**Our town/30mile radius has the following amenities: hospitals/pharmacies, groceries/home stores, clothing/gift stores, restaurants, visit our bustling Fillmore County Development Corporation: <https://www.fillmorecountydevelopment.org/>**

Current size of membership: **~200 friends and members between Exeter and Geneva**

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

Position Title: Pastor/Minister/Reverend

Candidates preference on title, please know we expect this position to be filled by persons seeking to “walk with us”, a top-down or bottom-up does not accurately describe this call

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

Our Cabinet’s Pastoral Relations Committee is in charge of organizing Search & Call, we are posting this role and sincerely seek a long term settled candidate to join us

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**

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

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.)*

Socially intelligent be willing to learn about us, and we will continue to reciprocate so all can grow in faith, making it a joyful journey together

Respectful and compassionate to successfully capture and outreach is a must for seeing new ways and approach and being approachable for new friends and current congregants

Organized and Detail Oriented would be helpful, we have strong tenure behind and beside to support our pastor

## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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Salary Basis

*(from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance):* **Details below**

Benefits *(choose one)*: **Salary plus Benefits and/or Salary includes Optional Benefits**

What is the expected living situation for your next minister

*(e.g. parsonage, living nearby with a housing allowance, living elsewhere to commute as needed)?*

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

Geneva would be the main focus for this call. In a rural area, any amenities or commute are easily accessible and there are many housing options available for discussion. The Exeter congregation is included in this call, and its expectations would be very small, however include Sunday worship (same lesson plan/sermon as Geneva), and the visits to hospitals, nursing homes, and homebound range in locations between Geneva, York, Lincoln and towns in between.

State any incentives *(e.g. school debt reduction or retention bonus after a certain number of years in position)*: We intend on utilizing the structure that has been successful to our prior pastors. We would be willing to understand a candidate's goals and if mutually agreed adjustments to the structure would be feasible.

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

There are communities of practice from the conference, and a strong network for the Tri Conference Ministries, and Fillmore County Ministerial Alliance! Clergy Coffee Hours, Moments for Ministers and other Zoom/in person groups- A great privilege for the strong pastoral community is embedded with this call- opportunity awaits!

Prairie Association has ministerial support groups that are available throughout the central and western part of Nebraska.

Locally there is a group that meets in person every month to six weeks. The pastors from Aurora, Hastings, Grand Island, Geneva, Nelson, and Clay Center take turns hosting the group. There is also an ecumenical (Disciples, Episcopal, Presbyterian, ELCA) group of pastors that meet bi-weekly to study the upcoming scriptures.

Nebraska Conference as a member of Tri-Conference Ministries offers support groups that are composed of pastors and spiritual directors from all three conferences. These are called Community of Practice Groups with a membership of 6-8 pastors in each group and we meet by Zoom every two weeks. For example, a CoP group has two members from South Dakota, three members from Iowa, and two members from Nebraska. Having colleagues from all three conferences has built relationships and rapport. It has helped them to feel connected as part of a big TCM family.

If applicable, describe how your church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment: We are open to negotiate multi-vocational statuses as they would contribute and deepen the journey of the minister and their pastoring of our congregations. Maybe you have hobbies and interests worth leveraging to some of those in our congregation?

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

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

We want to build-out, share and deepen what we currently have, not turn-over and undo what we have cultivated over the last decade. There is a significant recruiting and retention concern with ages 15-50 and it is paramount the answer to our call will outreach and pastor that opportunity.

There is nothing more important to our congregation than community and inclusivity, apparent in our county's ministerial alliance group and happenings outside of church walls. We are a social congregation! We are dedicated and caring with strong ethics with appreciation of our congregation's traditions.

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

We have a great group of young children in Sunday school that we hope to retain, however most of their parents are not active in the congregation. The retired members are active and very helpful and organized supporting cabinet/pastor/committees. Everyone in between, member or not, is out and among the community and we seek the minister to go-see and be willing to enjoy the journey and outreach with those networks of infrequent congregants.

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 a narrow culture across our community, please see the county profile.

We have very strong and smart professionals including entrepreneurs, be it technical trades, agricultural service industries, manufacturing/processing, many core roles such as hospital, school, government. These roles might be detracting from filling church pews and we have not successfully gotten a minister that can capture that audience for non-Sunday-morning activities.

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. We have this available upon request, our last update was from in 2016.

## 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?

The wall in our Geneva fellowship hall displays each annual confirmation class dating back many decades. Many of those individuals remain in this community with their extended family members, however they are infrequent visitors and their faith journey is unknown as they have not boomeranged back to us. They may attend Christmas and Easter but are otherwise living their lives without the UCC.

We ask God to lead our strong active members to learn better ways to outreach, as they have compassion and inclusivity but are not sure how to reach out and retain.

We are seeking our minister to have first and foremost an uplifting approach, ability to have energy for our structure and driving social welcomes.

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?*

- There was one evening of 'young couples' fellowship well attended, never repeated
- There are attempts to 'modernize' worship, however that has not attained or retained
- Sunday night praise band was achieved with zero increase or feedback
- Taking advantage of calendar opportunities (meteor shower watch, tailgate, hayrack ride)
- Very successful outreach projects, would love to discuss more of them!
- Multi- County wide hygiene pantry (SOS: Stock-Our-Shelves)
- Compassionate Cooks (preparing freezer meals with fellowship and filling freezers for any who need)
- Tremendous growth with Sunday School headcount ages 10& under

### 3. WHO ARE WE NOW?

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

- a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS
- b. 11-YEAR REPORT
- c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS
- d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING
- e. CHURCH FINANCES
- f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

#### 3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

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Describe your congregation's life of faith.

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

In our congregation, we try our best to embrace the message of our UCC denomination that says, "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." There is strength in our diversity, and even greater strength that we can leave those differences at our door and join together in the love of God and each other in this family that we call home.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

- Consistency (appreciation for hymnals, women's fellowship, and being a strong pillar for county's Ministerial Alliance)
- Warm welcome from the church with fellowship, joy and laughter
- We believe each person deserves compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity

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?*

- Pastor who draws sermon and God's light on every day and practical life scenarios
- Good Preaching is uplifting, thought provoking, moral and filled with integrity and honesty
- In Geneva, the sanctuary has beautiful updated organ and piano with traditional and talented players and a fun bell choir and co-ed adult choir
- In Geneva, there may be alternating Sundays where service is instead- in the fellowship hall around tables with PowerPoint modern music and coffee is enjoyed during service
- In Exeter, members enjoy pre-sermon coffee and post-sermon fellowship weekly
- In both Geneva/Exeter→ the pandemic has evolved us to enjoy 9am 1-800# call-in-to listen to service and 10:30AM Facebook broadcast of service for those not attending in-person
- Please watch any of our past services from our Facebook page to see who we are!

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

*For example, how are young people in leadership? How do people continue to form their faith over a lifetime?*

- This is shallow for us. We need help with this.
- Our (Pastor/Cabinet/Geneva) Christian Education arm needs substantial reinforcement as our adult bible study is meek and, again, post-confirmation through retirement age is hugely missing from programs and faith forming. Everyone respects the church/congregation, supporting the children to learn and respect it's values and opportunities, however

once confirmed they simply haven't returned for decades. Exeter's membership is 33, approximately 10-13 active with deep and widely formed faith journeys.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

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

- When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?  
There are a few handfuls of pillar/core individuals, not many meetings however those individuals need ENCOURAGED and supported by the pastor/leader to have better succession planning, shadowing and perhaps some diversity and inclusion for this congregation to evolve and survive with more of its membership. We have a very strong structure and committee organization with bylaws included, we need fulfillment and support of them.
- Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished? This congregation is fast and nimble when we need to 'congregate'! Natural disasters, family/community accidents, illnesses, homebound- always willing to support in any and all capacity. This is a core tradition among us.
- 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]

### 3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

*(add here the 11-Year Report developed with the help of your conference staff, UCC Data Hub, and MissionInsite) – see appendix for 11 year reports for both churches*

### 3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	<b>137</b>	<b>Annual Report number</b>
Number of active non-members:	<b>61</b>	<b>spouses/friends of the church (31)</b>
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	<b>34 average</b>	<b>Number doesn't include Facebook/Phone church attendees</b>

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	<b>90%</b>	<b>estimate</b>
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	<b>8%</b>	<b>estimate, including minor membership</b>
Less than 5 years:	<b>2%</b>	<b>estimate, including minor membership</b>

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>
2%	2%	2%	6%	15%	7%	8%	44%	14%	No, exact based off directory

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	0%	Please see distribution of members above
Households with minors:	15%	Please see distribution of members above
Single adults age 35-65:	5%	Please see distribution of members above
Joint households with no minors:	35%	Please see distribution of members above
Single adults over 65:	45%	Please see distribution of members above

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	95%	
College:	75%	beyond High School
Graduate School:	15%	beyond High School, College, Specialty
Specialty Training:	35%	beyond High School /Military
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	30%	Estimate: full time
Adults who are retired:	50%	
Adults who are not fully employed:	20%	Estimate: semi-retired

Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation: professional and vocational trained families with a wide range, here's our resources:

<https://www.fillmorecountydevelopment.org/resource-links>

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? **We are a very homogenous mono-cultural community. The bulk of “diversity” is highlighted through age, we are a respectful group, and age tiers express themselves more than any other ethnicity/race/heritage. What can the pastoral candidate do to help us strengthen each segment and intermix these groups? This is where we need help.**

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: **We have not had the discussion, as we welcome anyone who wants to worship with us. Recruiting and seeking out could be an untapped opportunity for us?**

### 3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i>
Adult Groups or Classes	<b>~10-15 Geneva ~10-15 Exeter</b>	<b>lay leader or pastor</b>
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	<b>zero in 2020 zero in 2021</b>	<b>Pastor</b>
Children’s Groups or Classes	<b>30</b>	<b>Christian Ed committee</b>
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	<b>109 = Xmas Geneva 46 = Easter Geneva</b>	<b>Pastor</b>
Church-wide Meals	<b>20-40</b>	<b>Annual meeting potluck (women’s fellowship)</b>
Choirs and Music Groups	<b>12 in choir 12 in bells</b>	<b>Worship &amp; Music Committee</b>
Church-based Bible Study	<b>~5-10</b>	<b>lay leader or pastor</b>
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	<b>~20 Geneva ~14 Exeter</b>	<b>Worship &amp; Music Committee</b>
Community Meals	<b>~ 6</b>	<b>committee (youth’s pancake feed, fundraising specific)</b>

Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	<b>1 in 2020 3 in 2021</b>	<b>pastor and sponsor</b>
Drama or Dance Program	<b>NA</b>	
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	<b>3 at Exeter 3 Geneva</b>	<b>pastor and funeral directors (meals offered by womens fellowship)</b>
Intergenerational Groups	<b>NA</b>	
Outdoor Worship	<b>Annual as inspired</b>	<b>Pastor &amp; Host (sunrise service, picnic lock-in)</b>
Prayer or Meditation Groups	<b>NA</b>	
Public Advocacy Work	<b>~5-6</b>	<b>Mission and Outreach Committee Low Rent Housing sponsorship</b>
Retreats	<b>NA</b>	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	<b>NA</b>	<b>Fillmore County Ministerial Alliance</b>
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	<b>0 in 20 or 21</b>	
Worship (time slot: 10:30AM)	<b>~30</b>	<b>Geneva - Pastor</b>
Worship (time slot: 9:00AM)	<b>~10</b>	<b>Exeter - Pastor</b>
Young Adult Groups or Classes	<b>NA</b>	
Youth Groups or Classes		<b>Same as Sunday School</b>
Other		

Additional comments:**N/A**

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). **Not Applicable**

If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation:

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staffperson serves as head of staff. **Not Applicable**

## REFLECTION

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

**Just because we have tenure in our steady congregation does not mean there is no opportunity for cross pollination of those experiences between any other demographic or activity- we have the energy however we need a pastor to help facilitate ministry and provoke our efforts. This opportunity also respects our deep appreciation for our worship traditions such as sermon flow, value of meaningful sacrament services.**

### 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$ 117,886.90
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	Gain +\$94,047.42
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i> )	19% net gain on endowments
Fundraising Events	N/A
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$12,849.44 (Memorial fund net balance)
Grants	N/A or minimal Covid funds
Rentals of Church Building	\$200
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$0 N/A
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )	\$0 (Covid)
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$53,249.22
Other (specify): Exeter pays Geneva for pastor coverage	\$32,555.22
Other (specify):	
TOTAL	We are willing to discuss our financial positions in deeper discussions with the candidate.

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

Attach the 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.

- Candidates can discuss this with local Search & Call committee upon request, 2021 Annual Report is available to review as of 1/30/22

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

- 55% of total expenses go towards ministerial support.
- Total Pastor package has included: (Geneva Salary, Exeter Salary, Housing & Utility, Social Security Reimbursement, Geneva Annuity, Exeter Annuity, Geneva Health & Dental, Exeter Health & Dental, Disability/Life Insurance

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)

- Typically, yes, all are given opportunity to be contributed
- ☐ 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 the operating budget, what is that percentage? (recommended 10%)

Typically, yes, all are given opportunity to be contributed

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: **none**

Reason for debt: **none**

Are capital and other payments current? **yes**

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget. **None**

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2016-2019	Rebuilt pipe organ	\$100,000	+\$130,000	Rebuilt pipe organ & new piano

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe: N/A Describe the prominent mission component(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign.

We are one of a very few churches in the region with a fully functional and utilized pipe organ.

It was damaged, restored and/or rebuilt and is back to wonderful functionality in Geneva.

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

What is the market value of the assets? **+\$400,000**

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

**Restricted funds specific requirements (repairs, piano, grounds keeping, etc.)**

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

**Net gain of +20%**

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: **Not utilized**

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

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

**There are 4 non restricted and there are 4 restricted line item endowment listings**

## Other Assets

Reserves (savings): **+\$50,000**

Investments (other than endowment): **+\$16,000**

Does your church have a parsonage? **No, previously sold prior to 2020**

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

**Geneva: Primary church/sanctuary and then an educational wing that is connected by a large fellowship hall and full kitchen. Street parking and yard space.**

**Exeter: New build in 1999, Primary church/sanctuary with meeting rooms, fellowship hall and kitchen, street parking**

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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

**Yes(worship space, pulpit(with use of added ramp), fellowship space, facilities, etc.)**

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 the time the church made a major budget change? How is the budgeting process done?*

*What new ministry initiative has your church financed?*

**No major budget changes in recent history, we have great checks and balances among responsibilities.**

**Cash wealthy with proper delegation to ensure net increase in value compared to any expenses used.**

**We are a very fiduciary conscious group.**

## 3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

- **Geneva: Overcoming obstacles of raising funds to repair the pipe organ brought our congregation closer together for the cause.**
- **Both Geneva/Exeter: Our most recent pastor did a great job of recruiting returning members to join our church events, however we have lost some of that due to pandemic and are fearful to not retain that of which we tried to regain. Again, we seek to recruit and retain as a main goal.**
- **Exeter: the fire totaling the original church building and the new fully handicap accessible church brought the congregation closer.**

Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past. Pandemic has garnered us to utilize Facebook for broadcasting Sunday sermons and 1-800 lines for those who can call in to listen. Otherwise, re-evaluating the 'new normal' and understanding where God will lead us with a new pastor. We have been struck with many deaths and divorces. Baptisms and weddings are fewer and farther between.

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?*) A recent conflict would be differences in personal opinions regarding ever-changing mask mandates in 2020-2022. Membership may have polarizing opinions, but our congregation made available different options to suit any person's opinions (Facebook services, or in-person with mask, etc. all while keeping a very up-to-date OneCall phone system to alert members of options for worship and activities. We value the welcomes, and encourage support for others with varying opinions. We have found that our church is very strong with checks and balances and systems. The pastor has a privilege of pushing more ideas and we welcome new ways to incorporate it to our "new normal" in 2022 and beyond!

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Stuart Davis (Geneva & Exeter)	4 years	resignation for continuing education ending 1/9/2022
Diane Ryder (Geneva)	3 years	retirement & relocation 6/14-6/17
Bill Switzer (Geneva) Interim	4 years	interim only 11/10-6/14
Detlef Schwartz (Geneva)	2 years	resignation 5/08-8/10

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership: We are best suited with a person who has curiosity and interest for people and places in and around the community, that likes to interact with all age groups. Ministerial leadership at minimum should be strong 'bedside manner' for those homebound/ill and willing to put forth effort with others for more joyful congregation opportunities. We have enjoyed pastors of a wide demographic of age, marital status, hobbies and backgrounds. We are willing to support their interests and individuality within any reasonable amounts!

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

Y/N/Ask us

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Y/N/Ask us

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?  
Y/N/Ask us

## 4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

a. COMMUNITY VISION

b. MISSION InSite

### 4a. COMMUNITY VISION

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How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?

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

**There are so many examples! Please review any of our monthly Newsletters which document our connections and engagement!**

**Link:** <https://sites.google.com/site/uccgenevane/newsletters?authuser=0>

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

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).)

Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

**We are open to any/all opportunities, below! We have alignment to many of the below.**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible to All (A2A)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creation Justice                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice                  | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other UCC designations:               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> God Is Still Speaking (GISS)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Designations from other denominations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Border and Immigrant Justice      | <input type="checkbox"/> Just Peace                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M) |  |

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?

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

**So many activities!**

**Please review our website, and don't hesitate to ask us more detailed questions!**

**Our Mission page:** <https://sites.google.com/site/uccgenevane/who-we-are?authuser=0>

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.

**No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!**

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? **Majority of our congregation would support a deeper study of our local connection to the wider church. We do not attend a significant amount of functions or grander UCC events, however generally speaking we would not be opposed to deepening this understanding.**

## **4b. MISSION InSite**

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Comment on your congregation's MissionInSite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown? **The trends don't prevail shaping opportunities, not much has changed, however the manufacturing industries are stable and if Geneva/Exeter are 'bedroom communities' for these businesses, the church(es) have the potential to open opportunities to those families.**

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?

**The Methodist church next door houses one of the largest daycares in the community which easily draws and retains many young families. The countywide community, at large, however is a very cohesive and collaborative community. We support and love our neighbors.**

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

**They are not, which is why our numbers are at a slow decline.**

What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for? **Good people, historically high energy and a lot of busy-body members who enjoy community action.**

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

**They are often very engaged whenever it fits in to their schedule/life: will donate if not able to attend, etc.**

## 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

Shaun Farmer / Farmer & Son Funeral Home  
(402-740-7893 / [spf8298@gmail.com](mailto:spf8298@gmail.com) / Funeral Home Director to many of our members & families)

### REFERENCE 2

Jill Schmidt / Chamber of Commerce Director / Owner Jill's Sweet Shop /Coordinator Community Christmas Store  
(402-366-2152 / [jschmidt01@windstream.net](mailto:jschmidt01@windstream.net) / Many different connections to our congregants)

### REFERENCE 3

Reverend Dr. Doug Griger / Geneva United Methodist Church / Neighboring church next door  
(402-759-3731 / [dgriger@greatplainsumc.org](mailto:dgriger@greatplainsumc.org) / County Ministerial Alliance worked closely with previous UCC pastors)

### PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES Please refer to reference contacts for prompts and questions/comments

Describe some areas of strength in this church’s ministry.

Describe some areas for improvement in this church’s ministry.

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church’s ministry.

Anything else you wish to share.

## 6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

### 6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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

**May your Good Spirit lead me on level ground.**

- **Ps 143:10**
- **Teach us Lord, so we may learn to move forward with confidence, knowing that You always walk with us. Continue to lead us by Your gentle way as we accomplish our mission here with our congregation and community. You have blessed us with a unified congregation to search for our pastor.**

**Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**

- **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18,**
- **Almighty God, we recall Your many and wonderful promises to us. Lord, we ask You to fulfill each one in our lives, as we face the many challenges that life throws our way. You always make all things work together for our good, for those who are called to your purpose. May we see each promise manifested through the working power of the Holy Spirit as we are taught and guided in everything we do.**

**And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.**

- **Romans 8:28**
- **We pray for those seeking insight and revelation knowledge into their prayer life, to lock this message inside their hearts and keep it there. Let us open our mouths and confess daily, in prayer. ALL THINGS work together for GOOD to those who LOVE GOD and are called according to HIS purpose!**

## 6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending suitable new ministers 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.)*

- The cabinet members elected and appointed a specific Search and Call committee to lead this profile and search & call.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

- Please do not hesitate reaching out to us, even for clarification of this profile- we are around and available!
- We are interested in applicants and learning about the available candidates.
- You (the candidate) and we (Geneva/Exeter) are happy to learn more about you if you have read this far into our profile! We welcome you to visit with us at your convenience as God guides us on this path.

Signed: Klaire Jorgensen

Name / Title / Date: Klaire Jorgensen, Search Committee Chair, March 11, 2022

## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment: Yes

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

Staff Comment: Yes

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

Staff Comment: Yes – some is stated as upon request, and so we invite interested candidates to inquire about that information.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:



Name / Title: Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones, Associate Conference Minister

Email: sarah@ucctcm.org

Phone: (808) 631-2444

Date: March 11, 2022

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



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*

Church#:	420420									
Assoc:	470	Schedule: 0	First Congregational UCC				Exeter		NE	68351
YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED	
2010	54	24	6	0	0	1	2	0	-1	
2011	57	25	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	
2012	57	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2013	57	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2014	43	15	0	1	0	0	1	14	-14	
2015	43	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2016	43	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2017	41	17	0	0	0	0	2	0	-2	
2018	39	17	3	0	0	0	2	0	-2	
2019	37	14	0	0	0	0	2	0	-2	
2020	36	12	0	0	0	0	1	0	-1	
YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2010	\$16,982	\$0	\$500	\$223	\$723	\$0	\$723	2.94	\$17,705	\$11,771
2011	\$22,605	\$0	\$500	\$243	\$743	\$0	\$743	2.21	\$23,348	\$15,504
2012	\$22,605	\$0	\$300	\$199	\$499	\$0	\$499	1.33	\$23,104	\$0
2013	\$22,605	\$0	\$450	\$652	\$1,102	\$0	\$1,102	1.99	\$23,707	\$0
2014	\$22,000	\$0	\$150	\$566	\$716	\$0	\$716	0.68	\$22,716	\$14,705
2015	\$22,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00	\$22,000	\$0
2016	\$22,000	\$0	\$150	\$230	\$380	\$0	\$380	0.68	\$22,380	\$0
2017	\$20,075	\$0	\$150	\$128	\$278	\$0	\$278	0.75	\$20,353	\$10,729
2018	\$26,954	\$0	\$150	\$652	\$802	\$165	\$967	0.56	\$27,921	\$10,753
2019	\$25,576	\$0	\$300	\$862	\$1,162	\$0	\$1,162	1.17	\$26,738	\$8,994
2020	\$21,593	\$0	\$150	\$255	\$405	\$0	\$405	0.69	\$21,998	\$12,391
% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		
2015-2020	-16.28	-20.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-1.85	0.00	-0.01		
2010-2020	-33.33	-50.00	-100.00	-100.00	-50.00	27.15	-43.98	24.25		

Please note: Zero values ("0" or "\$0") may reflect missing information in some years. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 2007.

Church#: 420490

Assoc: 470

Schedule: 0

First Congregational UCC

Geneva

NE

68361

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2010	221	62	33	0	0	0	3	96	-99
2011	221	62	33	0	0	0	0	0	0
2012	221	62	33	0	0	0	0	0	0
2013	143	62	33	0	0	2	6	74	-78
2014	143	67	26	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	146	66	35	3	0	6	6	0	3
2016	145	64	31	0	0	1	2	0	-1
2017	145	64	31	0	0	0	0	0	0
2018	142	66	37	2	0	4	7	2	-3
2019	142	66	37	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	135	39	35	0	2	0	7	0	-5

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2010	\$117,458	\$0	\$0	\$1,815	\$1,815	\$0	\$1,815	0.00	\$119,273	\$0
2011	\$117,458	\$0	\$3,000	\$1,522	\$4,522	\$0	\$4,522	2.55	\$121,980	\$0
2012	\$117,458	\$0	\$3,000	\$1,699	\$4,699	\$0	\$4,699	2.55	\$122,157	\$0
2013	\$117,458	\$0	\$1,000	\$2,183	\$3,183	\$0	\$3,183	0.85	\$120,641	\$0
2014	\$141,282	\$0	\$4,000	\$1,802	\$5,802	\$2,967	\$8,769	2.83	\$150,051	\$131,978
2015	\$150,790	\$0	\$3,000	\$1,885	\$4,885	\$561	\$5,446	1.99	\$156,236	\$143,000
2016	\$151,736	\$0	\$3,000	\$2,448	\$5,448	\$4,408	\$9,856	1.98	\$161,592	\$138,285
2017	\$151,736	\$0	\$4,000	\$2,972	\$6,972	\$0	\$6,972	2.64	\$158,708	\$0
2018	\$151,736	\$0	\$0	\$250	\$250	\$0	\$250	0.00	\$151,986	\$0
2019	\$151,736	\$0	\$3,000	\$3,216	\$6,216	\$0	\$6,216	1.98	\$157,952	\$0
2020	\$148,562	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$2,311	\$5,311	\$2,255	\$7,566	2.02	\$156,128	\$114,025

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2015-2020	-7.53	-40.91	0.00	-77.78	16.67	-1.48	8.72	-0.07
2010-2020	-38.91	-37.10	6.06	0.00	-92.93	26.48	192.62	30.90

Please note: Zero values ("0" or "\$0") may reflect missing information in some years. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 2007.