



HIGHWATER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC **LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE**

1213 Dutch Ln NW, Newark, OH 43055

<https://highwaterchurch.org/>

Heartland Conference UCC, Central Southeast Ohio Association

UCC Association Staff Contact Person: *Rev. Melodie Rezac, Administrative Minister/Registrar*, 740-503-4803, melodie.cseoa@heartlanducc.org

Summary Ministry Description:

Highwater Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, located in a rural area in North Central Licking County about seven miles NE of Johnstown, Ohio and seven miles NW of Newark, Ohio is looking for a full-time, settled pastor. Highwater has a rural, small town feel with the city close by. Highwater's mission statement is to be an active family of faith in North Central Licking County, dedicated to building awareness of God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit through meaningful worship, diverse service, and genuine fellowship. Our congregation is in its 180th year of existence, and we strive to blend our rich history with what is relevant in our world. We strive to impact our community and achieve peace within ourselves and peace in our world. We are a small laid-back congregation with an average worship attendance of about 50 individuals (less than half of what we were prior to COVID). People feel at home, come as they are, are valued and loved! We are farmers, teachers, retirees, professionals, moms and dads, grandparents, and friends. We are mostly an agricultural community with a mix of old and new and liberal and conservative. We are looking for a pastor that can lead and grow a group like ours.



SCOPE OF WORK

The pastor will fulfill the usual pastoral duties of preaching, teaching, calling, and administering the sacraments. The minister provides for the worship life of the congregation, supplies pastoral care and leadership, works with the council and committees, visits the sick, administers baptisms, conducts funerals, and weddings, and helps guide a church through complexities, challenges and opportunities.

The pastor will assume the duties of leadership and serve the congregation through:

- Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship including scripture study, crafting the liturgy and bulletin, sermon preparation, guiding and sometimes finding lay liturgists, planning of music, preaching, offering of prayers, etc.; including working and coordinating with the office assistant and Music & Worship ministry chair to coordinate weekly services.
- Faith formation and vitality through prayer, Bible study, service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities and helping lay persons take advantage of them
- Leadership development by working with people in the church to create ministry and programs
- Pastoral care in collaboration with lay people
- Community engagement and leading the way for the church to be an ambassador of God's love
- Weddings and funerals for participants in the worshipping community
- Strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry
- Attend meetings and give leadership as needed to church programs, in collaboration with lay leadership
- Administrative responsibilities (unless delegated) such as email, website, church supplies, etc.
- Faithful financial development and stewardship
- Responsibility for supervision of staff
- Counseling, listening and referral
- Working collaboratively with the lay leadership of the church to include attending Church Council and other meetings, and fostering an environment conducive to active lay participation, effective problem solving, stewardship and growth
- Reaching out in Christian love to children and youth of the congregation, and working in close partnership with the congregation in maintaining and enhancing a strong, multi-faceted Christian education program
- Sensitivity and appropriate action in response to the needs and concerns of the congregation and the community at large
- Study and prayer to increase faith and to improve skills so as to lead, teach, preach better
- Energizing and deepening spiritual connections and faith understandings of others in all they do
- Availability to wider community for funerals, weddings, special worship programs, and as a representative of the church to local organizations

Core Competencies:

Our congregation has identified the following core competencies as the most important for our new pastor.

PREACHING AND INSPIRING WORSHIP: Faithfully communicates the Christian faith by proclaiming sermons that are biblically based and theologically sound, aimed toward providing practical insights for Christian living whether for spiritual nurture, prophetic challenge or care and comfort. Is able to plan and implement inspiring, authentic worship as a personal and corporate encounter with the living God, integrating faith, the church's traditions, the scriptures and the sacraments. Helps congregational members apply their faith to daily life.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE: Demonstrates a ministry style that is supportive and healing, revealing that loving relationships are the heart of a healthy, growing church; provides intentional structures that are pastoral in nature, and is an effective pastoral visitor.

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH: Intentionally cultivates relationships with pre-Christian people and other seekers so they can become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ who are actively participating within the life of the church and community; sees that others in the church are equipped to cultivate similar relationships in their life.

RELATIONAL WITH YOUTH AND CHILDREN: Makes time for youth, meets them in connection with their life situations and their communities of faith. Associates and shares one's life with the youth to whom we seek to minister by being available, being accessible, and walking alongside them. Structures ministry in such a way that lends itself to a continual bumping or colliding with youth. Has a deep, sensitive, personal concern with the whole life of the youth to whom God has called us to minister. Teaches and communicates the gospel effectively in an ever-changing youth culture. Understands and ministers to youth in their unique culture. Ministers to the whole family, understanding family dynamics and being proactive in partnering and involving parents. Creates a community for a group of young people so that they can feel secure, loved, and nurtured. Has the capacity to care for and give guidance, addressing the diverse needs and changes of adolescence.

CASTING VISION: Developing a greater vision to better hold congregation together; learning to better communicate vision throughout the church; thinking bigger picture; communicating a more concrete vision; gaining buy-in from the congregation for future state; setting core values of the church; developing philosophy of approach to target audience.

COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis: \$52,000 - \$60,000, depending on experience. Salary includes optional benefits. Full-time.



Ministry Goals:

We envision our next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve the following ministry goals.

- Increase and retain membership, including a focus on attracting younger congregants.
- Promote and provide care for one another in our church family.
- Rebuild youth programming.
- Make worship services more relevant.
- Expand our community service.
- Integrate each member into the fellowship and service of our church community.
- Engage in a strategic planning process to create a church vision, values statement, and guiding principles.

God is calling us to become a re-emerging and re-built congregation blended into a cohesive and unified unit to continue the works of God, re-growing our family of faith, focusing not just on one age group but on people of all ages as well as all walks of life, and invigorating our current programs while offering opportunities for new programs and growth. Working cooperatively together, the welcoming atmosphere that Highwater has been known for in the past will continue into the future.

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Highwater's mission statement is to be an active family of faith in North Central Licking County, dedicated to building awareness of God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit through meaningful worship, diverse service, and genuine fellowship.

Highwater's congregation has many strengths and positive qualities. The congregation is a family-oriented community of caring people who love and support one another. They are open, friendly, and welcoming. There are many families with a long history with the church and many rich traditions. There is a strong sense of family and a willingness to serve the community and our members in need. Whatever the church may need, our members step up to the challenge. The congregation is a community of members that work well together, encourage each other, and love and support one another.

Sunday services take place in the sanctuary that was built in 1918. Highwater offers two Sunday services. The 8:30 am service is typically a quiet, peaceful worship environment. On a typical Sunday before the COVID-19 pandemic, the 8:30 service had between 15 and 20 worshippers (12-15 currently). This service is shorter than the 10:30 service, with no children's message or praise music, but the sermon message is the same as the 10:30 service. Our 10:30 am service is provided both in person and livestream and is typically a bustling, loud, energetic blend of young families—lots of children—and patient elders. After the children's message, children leave for Sunday school. The 10:30 service typically attracts 30-40 attendees (60-70 pre-COVID). During the summer months, only one service is provided at 9:30 am. Currently there is no adult Sunday school. Bible study has been offered on Mondays at noon and on Wednesday evenings.

Our Narthex provides a welcoming atmosphere with comfortable seating and a coffee bar. In addition to our sanctuary, worship and fellowship take place on site in the Legg Center. The Legg Center is a large community room with a stage that serves as a fellowship hall as well as an indoor basketball court. Outside on the grounds is a shelter house with picnic tables and playground equipment. Also included on the property is a prayer walking path.

To describe good preaching, the congregation uses words like engaging, spiritually uplifting, motivating, positive, encouraging, real, warm, making connections, accepting, pertinent to everyday life, bringing members together, meaningful, genuine, relatable, comforting yet challenging, politically neutral.

Our ministries include Music and Worship, CARE, Membership and Outreach, Fellowship, Christian Education, Stewardship, and Missions. We have two active Women's groups, Women in Service to Highwater (WISH) and Creating Relationships & Empowering Women (CREW). A copy of the church's bylaws and constitution are available upon request.

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Highwater UCC currently has approximately 100 church participants, with 57% having been with the church for more than 10 years. Like many churches today, Highwater's congregation has been steadily aging, struggling to attract younger families. Most congregants are over fifty years of age. Most younger members are relatives of older members. Approximately 50% are working adults in a wide variety of occupations, while the other 50% are retired.

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings?
Adult Groups or Classes	10	Pastor
Baptisms (<i>number last year</i>)	2	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	5 - 10	Parents/Grandparents/Pastor
Christmas Program, Easter Worship and Christmas Eve	110/70/50	Pastor & Worship and Music Ministry
Church-wide Meals	80	Fellowship Ministry
Choirs and Music Groups	10	Worship & Music Ministry
Church-based Bible Study	10	Pastor

Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	Once a month	Pastor/Worship & Music Ministry
Community Meals	One/month	Missions ministry
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	5	Pastor
Drama or Dance Program	20	Musicians, parents & grandparents
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	3	Pastor
Outdoor Worship	Parking lot (Covid)	Pastor
Retreats	One/year (prior to 2020)	Women's group
Weddings (number last year)	-	
Young Adult Groups or Classes	-	
Youth Groups or Classes	-	Parents & Grandparents

The church currently has two employees. These include the church secretary and the custodian. These positions are part-time. Additionally, we are currently searching for a part-time youth coordinator. All positions report to the pastor.

CHURCH FINANCES

Highwater UCC has no debt obligations. Highwater owns the church building itself including the sanctuary and multipurpose wing, totaling about 20,000 square feet. The worship and fellowship spaces are wheelchair accessible. Highwater does not have a parsonage.

The congregation approves the annual budget in November, which includes expenses and giving expectations for the coming year. Our General Fund budget is \$150,000 to \$160,000, with actual spending at year end \$130,000 to \$140,000, with giving in the same range, most years we add a small surplus to our "reserve fund" currently at \$20,000. Reserves (savings) total \$67,000.

Highwater has many named funds which our members support in addition to faithfully giving to the General Fund, such as: Building Fund, five discretionary funds, Food Pantry and Salvation Army meals. Giving support to these funds total \$15,000 to \$25,000 annually. Most of our non-worship activities have been greatly impacted by Covid-19.

Currently the Highwater Memorial Endowment fund totals \$370,000 and is invested with The Vanguard Mutual Fund Co. Up to 80% of the annual earnings of this fund may be used for capital improvement, major repairs or a new program. Very little has been dispersed from this account. An advisory group is responsible.

The Highwater Budget details total amount for each staff position to include all costs of employment, not net pay for that person. The 2022 Budget for the Senior Pastor is \$69,850; this is then negotiated as to how that amount is allocated among salary, housing, retirement, medical insurance, etc.

The "C" Family Fund: Highwater was wonderfully blessed to receive a large bequest from the estate of long-term members totaling \$500,000, of which we receive \$50,000 each year for 10 years.

Of note, in the last 20 years our congregation has donated or fund raised over \$1,000,000 to fully pay for a major addition and subsequent upgrades to our physical plant.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Roughly 25 years ago Highwater Church added our Legg Center to better serve our community. The Legg Center includes a full gymnasium, stage, commercial kitchen, nursery, office space, two meeting rooms, bathrooms, and a narthex. This expansion has allowed the church to hold plays, athletic events for local youth programs, bible studies, staging areas for food prep for mission work, local meetings and banquets from which dinners can be served at these functions. This addition has made people outside of the congregation aware of our church. Other capital improvements include a large, paved parking lot, and a playground for the youth. In the past ten years Highwater has also added a community shelter for outside events and meetings. In 2019, the cry room was renovated, and the Narthex was redecorated, making it more welcoming. In 2020, the elevator was replaced. The church installed equipment to facilitate live streaming in 2020, in response to COVID-19.

Highwater church has turned 180 years old which is a significant feat for churches today. This speaks volumes to the dedication of the community.

Highwater can track its pastoral history starting from 1898. From this point we have had 39 full time pastors. Four full time pastors have been called in the last 40 years. Over the past 30 years, Highwater UCC has been blessed with steady and effective leadership. Three interim pastors are listed below due to their significant contribution to Highwater.

Rev. James Legg (1983-1993), Rev. Ron Hall (1991-2007); Rev. Gale Green, interim (1999); Rev. Bertie Dell, interim (2007); Rev. Torie Front (2007-2009); Rev. Ed Lopeman, interim (2010-2011); and Rev. Scott Schieber (2011-2022).

COMMUNITY VISION

Highwater's relationships and activities of our congregation extend outward in service and advocacy. However, because of COVID our Missions last year were not typical. A more typical year included support locally for blood drives; packing summer lunches, serving summer lunches to area children, Angel Tree Tags, sorting and distributing Christmas presents, and serving one Sunday meal a month for the Salvation Army. We also collected school supplies and hats and mittens for local school children. In the past, we have monetarily supported the Licking County Coalition of Care and the Food Pantry Network. We have provided food and served meals at St. John's UCC in downtown Columbus, and we have been involved with Church World Services providing clean-up buckets on the national level and school supply kits and hygiene kits that were sent nationally and internationally. We have hosted and funded a food packing for Haiti that provided 15,000 meals.

In 2016, we made a Mission trip to UCC's Back Bay Mission and, as was mentioned previously, in the past we have served a fifth Wednesday meal at St. John's UCC in downtown Columbus, Ohio

Highwater's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities include serving Salvation Army lunches in Utica as a collaborative effort by all the local churches. Packing and preparation of the lunches is also supported by many churches. Utica churches also invite us to be a part of the Lenten Lunches series.

A popular social event at Highwater is the annual hog roast and auction. The meal of pulled smoked pork, vegetable, salad, and homemade desserts is known throughout the county. Following the meal, an auction of hand-crafted items and a variety of merchandise donated by local businesses are sold by a professional auctioneer. This evening of entertainment was started to raise money for the building fund for the Legg Center and has continued ever since.

WISH serves the community by hosting and preparing meals for community organizations such as the annual Township Trustee meeting, the Homemakers' Group, and the Homer Alumni banquet. Funds raised from these events support church improvements and scholarships for graduating seniors pursuing a college degree.

The Finn Fest is another annual activity geared toward the children providing games, competitions, and an afternoon of fun to raise money for Down Syndrome.

MISSION InSite

Much of our data from our MissionInsite report matches Ohio trends. We are expecting a moderate increase in population, especially an increase in school-age children. This could be an opportunity to reach out to more families with school age children and increase our youth Christian education programs. The western portion of our county is in the beginning stages of large industrial development, including two new leading-edge Intel processor factories. While Highwater will likely not be directly impacted by these changes, there will be a greater increase in population living and working within the county. This could be a greater opportunity to welcome new families and visitors to our church.

Highwater's internal demographics are very comparable to the demographics of the neighborhoods around our church. The community diversity index in our area is very homogenous, with 93.4% of the population being white (non-Hispanic).

The education levels within the congregation are very similar to the averages in the surrounding community, with most of the congregation having some level of education beyond high school. The area around the church is very rural, with many members of the congregation having some connection to agriculture (family or profession).

While the poverty level in the areas surrounding the church is lower than state averages, there are still needs within our community, especially around food security. The church ministry puts forth a large effort to help mitigate that concern in a variety of ways, including monthly meals for the Salvation Army, serving free lunches at parks throughout the summer, and packing meals to send farther abroad. The church also works to ensure that the members of the congregation have meals when they are in need.

When new people in the church are asked what got them involved, the one thing that we often hear is the welcoming nature of our congregation. There is a sense of community within the church and that is felt by both new attendees and long-time members. The church hosts several

community-wide events and there are several groups (both church sponsored and local community groups) that utilize the facilities, and this brings in individuals and families from outside the church. This fosters familiarity with the congregation and facilities and the welcoming nature of the congregation. All of this encourages people to return. New attendees and members are encouraged to become involved in events and ministries within the church. This helps build the community in and around Highwater and fosters the connections between those within the church.

REFERENCES

Savanna Dixon, Volunteer Coordinator with The Salvation Army of Newark Ohio

(740-345-8120/Savanna.Dixon@usa.salvationarmy.org)

Highwater church has been committed to volunteering their time to The Salvation Army every first Sunday of each month. Highwater provides dinner to the public every month and has been doing so for a long period of time. Highwater has been a blessing to The Salvation Army we are so thankful for their service.

I have only been the volunteer coordinator for only seven months, so I have not worked with Highwater for a long period of time. As far as I know there is nothing, I can say that they need to improve on at this time.

I have no significant experience with Highwater at this time, however I am very thankful to all their hard work and effort they put in to helping The Salvation Army as well as serving the community.

The Salvation Army is blessed to have consistent and devoted volunteers, thank you so much Highwater Church for your years of service with The Salvation Army.

Dave Baker, Law-Baker Funeral Home, Owner/Operator (Retired), Utica, Ohio

(740-504-3328/bigpawpawbaker@gmail.com)

Having worked with Highwater Ministries as a funeral director for many years my experiences have been nothing but positive. The strength of Highwater lies in its parishioners. I have attended many events at Highwater over the years and was always treated like I was a member.

On a professional level I have had several of my largest services at Highwater Church. I was always amazed at the support I was given in these situations by the parishioners.

Pastor Jason Snyder, Heart of Ohio Cooperative Ministry, Utica UMC, Brandon UMC, & Lock Federated UMC

(419-688-9057/jasnyder105@gmail.com)

Highwater is ecumenical. They have helped serve at the local food pantry in Utica. They have served with other churches to help feed the children in the Utica area during the summer at Miller Park. And their previous pastor served on the ministerial association that helped plan out Lenten lunches, and other community outreach ideas.

No areas of improvement were identified.

I have really appreciated working with Highwater and their folks in serving our children through the summer lunch programs. It is a huge need in our community, and it takes all of us working together to make this possible.

In my experience, this congregation is loving and caring and serves the community well. I hope their next pastor will continue to push them out of the safety of the four walls and into their community and beyond so that people can experience Jesus' love through them.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Luke 10:2

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.

The full congregation contributed to the contents of this profile through their participation in the Congregational Survey for Ministry at Highwater UCC in February 2022. The search committee prepared the initial draft which was reviewed, edited, and approved by the Church Council.

Jacqueline H. Parrill, Moderator

June 3, 2022

VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:  Rev. Melodie Rezac

Name / Title: Rev. Melodie Rezac, Administrative Minister/Registrar

Email: melodie.cseoa@heartlanducc.org

Phone: 740-503-4803

Date: June 6, 2022