

## Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

# 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!

MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,  
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Union Congregational United Church of Christ  
Reinbeck, Iowa  
Intentional Interim Pastor  
Tri-Conference Ministries, Central Iowa



### LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- Position Posting
- Who Is God Calling Us To Become?
- Who Are We Now?
- Who Is Our Neighbor?
- References
- Consent and Validation

*“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.

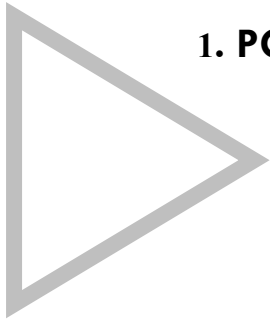
The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – **WHO ARE WE NOW**, **WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR**, and **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME** – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years.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

Street address: 225 Broad Street, Reinbeck, Iowa 50669

Supplemental web links: [FB Union Congregational United Church of Christ  
http://www.unioncongucc.org/](http://www.unioncongucc.org/)

Additional ecumenical affiliations: none

Conference: Tri-Conference Ministries

Association: Central Iowa

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person: Sarah Rentzel Jones

Associate Conference Minister: 808.631.2444 [sarah@ucctcm.org](mailto:sarah@ucctcm.org)

#### Summary Ministry Description:

Although our congregation is aging, we are open to change, including updating our church service in order to bring in and keep young families and community members of all ages. Our church and our community were established at about the same time, and we have gone through similar changes over the years. Just as our community and schools change to stay relevant, so must we.







What we value about living in our area:

Reinbeck is a great place to raise a family and set your roots for years to come. The Gladbrook-Reinbeck Schools have preschool through 6<sup>th</sup> grade at the G-R Elementary building and 7<sup>th</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> grade are at the nearby high school. The enrollment in the school district is increasing. It is an excellent school with successful academic and athletic achievements. Several of our members are employed by the district.

Reinbeck offers a daycare/preschool facility that has undergone recent renovations. The preschool has gone through the statewide verification process and is a certified preschool with a highly qualified staff.

The Cedar Valley is home to the University of Northern Iowa, and has employment, entertainment and shopping opportunities.

Although Reinbeck is a small community, there are many businesses that thrive here, so there are many employment options within our city limits. We value our way of life in small town, rural Iowa. Our families, our schools and our church are our top priorities.

Current size of membership: 102

Languages used in ministry: English

Position Title: Pastor

Position Duration

The candidate will serve as a resource as we transition from full-time to half-time pastor.

Any candidate may be asked to fill the vacancy on a settled basis if both parties are in Agreement.

Compensation Level

1/2 Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? Guidelines will be followed during negotiation relating to compensation.

## **1b. SCOPE OF WORK**

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### 1. Intentional Interim Pastor

2. Covenant
3. Half time Pastoral Position
4. Terms of call The Trustees will convene and review the candidate's qualifications in determining his/her compensation.

Core Competencies:

- Approachable
- Enthusiastic
- Detail-oriented

## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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Salary Basis: consistent with conference guidelines

Benefits: Salary

What is the expected living situation for your next minister? negotiable

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

Our preference is for the candidate to live within the community but are open to other options.

State any incentives:

We are open to negotiation.

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference:  
The Iowa Conferences offers and encourages participation in CCPE (Covenant Communities for Pastoral Excellence), which meets monthly. The Central Association has Commission on Ministry members meet with every pastor of the association biennially.

If applicable, describe how your church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment: We fully anticipate the need to be flexible in allowing time to accommodate a secondary employment.

## 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.

- Integrating current events into the pulpit
- Develop meaningful outreach activities attracting all age levels.



- Taking an increasing responsibility for the operation and vision of the church.

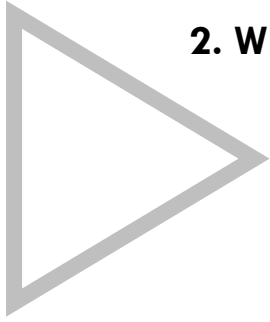
Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

We envision a pastor who is called to reach out to the disenfranchised, the bereaved, those in nursing homes, and **anyone** seeking spiritual guidance

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 are a monolingual congregation.

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.

- Engaging in mission and outreach
- Exhibiting a commitment to lifelong spiritual development and faithful personal stewardship
- Drawing on the ministry of Jesus Christ to confront injustice and oppression
- Strategically creating the future of God's church



## 2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

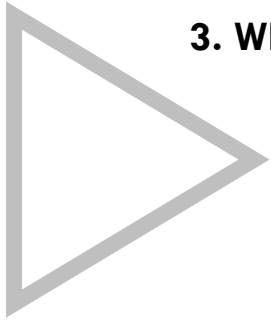
“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

We ask that God opens our minds that we may be accepting of all God’s children.

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

- We are the home to the local food bank. We were able to provide additional support by hosting a Souper Bowl of Caring Event.
- Funds were raised for CWS to provide hygiene kits.
- Our congregation continues enriching the life of a young man from Guatemala for his schooling, health care and supplementing his family’s income.
- The Union Congregation UCC has had a long history of supporting the Grundy County Relay for Life. Last year a \$300 was sent to GCRL.
- We continue to offer camp scholarships for children.
- 140 children experienced a brighter Christmas due to the efforts of several churches working together to fund Christmas in Grundy County.
- Additionally, we sent donations to Emmaus House, UCC Disaster, Back Bay Mission and participated in a food packing event.



### 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.

The purpose of the Church is to worship God, preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and celebrate the Sacraments: to realize Christian community and unity within this Church and the Church universal; to render loving service toward humankind; and to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

- Mission projects: We contribute to mission projects locally and across the country and world
- Compassionate support to members of our community and beyond: Members of our congregation always rise to the occasion whether it is giving of time or financial assistance.
- We are open to new ideas and welcome change.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Our church family enjoys a variety of styles of music from traditional to contemporary to gospel. The youth contribute to worship services as greeters, lay readers, acolytes and as participants in special programs during Christmas and Lent.

Baptisms are glorious celebrations of renewal. It affirms not only the new babe, but also immediate and extended family members and the entire congregation. The family is presented with gifts to commemorate the day. The sacrament is concluded by the pastor lovingly carrying the baby through the sanctuary: introducing the congregation to the newest addition to our church family.

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

Our vision is to begin building our children’s faith at an early age. This involves getting children actively involved in church school programs, confirmation and continuing youth ministry into their teen years. Our goal is provide a strong foundation well into adulthood.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

- When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?  
 Decisions are made by the Trustees, and the Diaconate/Worship Team. On average, approximately 5 hours per month are spent on planning.  
 Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?  
 Luckily, our “disasters” are confined to structural issues. Trustees are generally involved in addressing those issues. They meet, form a consensus for resolution and address the problem. We are very fortunate that when a need arises, our church family answers the call.
- 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? The boards have been meeting jointly to make revisions to our current Constitution/Bylaws to reflect our current methods of governance. At this time (05.2022), our Constitution/Bylaws are being amended. The plan is to present a revised plan to the congregation in the fall.

### 3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

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### 3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

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Describe those who participate in your church.

NOTE: children under the age of confirmation are not included in this table)		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	95	yes
Number of active non-members:	7	yes

Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	102	yes
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Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	87%	Yes
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	2%	Yes
Less than 5 years:	11%	Yes

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>
3	7	3	2	14	15	9	19	34	yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	9%	yes
Households with minors:	27%	yes
Single adults age 35-65:	6%	yes
Joint households with no minors:	37%	yes
Single adults over 65:	21%	yes

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	32.1%	yes
College:	26.6%	yes
Graduate School:	6.8%	yes
Specialty Training:	24.1%	yes
Other ( <i>less than a 4 year degree</i> )	7.4%	yes

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	40.5%	yes
Adults who are retired:	45.8%	yes
Adults who are not fully employed:	13.7%	yes

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

We are an agricultural based community, but our members are employed in Reinbeck and throughout the Cedar Valley in various industries. Reinbeck is home to a seed corn production facility, the Moeller and Walter lumber yard, nation-wide construction company, Peterson Contractors, Inc., and many local businesses. Our retired members are also active volunteers in our community.

Our schools and daycare employ members of our congregation. These are also places of employment for the youth of our community.

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. Mono-cultural is an apt definition of our population.

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)? Despite our mono-cultural composition, we welcome the opportunity to become more diverse in our composition and awareness.

### 3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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		
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	1	pastor

Children's Groups or Classes	Sunday School 8 Bible School 20	Previously Christian Ed
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	Christmas Eve 125 Easter Worship 120	Pastor
Church-wide Meals	See below	
Choirs and Music Groups		
Church-based Bible Study	Coffee with God (8)	Pastor
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	Monthly (# varies)	Pastor/Worship Team
Community Meals	In the past yes, but COVID limited our participation last year.	Congregation
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	2021-0 2022-3	Pastor
Drama or Dance Program		
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	2	Pastor
Intergenerational Groups		*Confirmation doubles as an "Intergenerational Group". Each confirmand is sponsored by an adult member of the congregation.
Outdoor Worship		
Prayer or Meditation Groups	Prayer Shawl 10	Members of the group
Public Advocacy Work		
Retreats		
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	0	Pastor
Worship Sundays 10:00-11:00 AM	45	Pastor
Worship (time slot: _____)		
Young Adult Groups or Classes		
Youth Groups or Classes		
Other Women's Fellowship		

Additional comments:



List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a ministry beyond a congregation).

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Rev. J. Allen Mittler	3-Way		Organist (once a month)	Retired from ministry

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 staff person serves as head of staff.

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Church Adm.	no	part	pastor	2 years
Custodian	no	part	pastor	5 years
<b>Seeking:</b> Intentional Interim Pastor Currently utilizing Pulpit supply pastors	yes	½ time		To be determined

## REFLECTION

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

We are looking to add new members to our congregation by creating more opportunities to attract young families. A multi-generational church built on a strong foundation is our vision.

## 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	See attachment below
Endowment Proceeds	Endowment interest goes to Mission
Endowment Draw	\$
Fundraising Events	\$
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$25
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$700 per month
Support from Related Organizations (e.g. Women's Group)	\$ N/A
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$ N/A
Other (specify):	\$
Other (specify):	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>

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



financial.pdf

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Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 49.6%

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? yes

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

- Neighbors in Need
- Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? OCWM is a budgeted item. Our contribution is of the “shared giving” designation.

What is the church’s current indebtedness? none

Total amount of loan debt: 0

Reason for debt: N/A

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 currently

If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, describe: none

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
		\$	\$	
		\$	\$	

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe: none

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
		\$	\$	
		\$	\$	

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

Does your church have an endowment? yes

What is the market value of the assets? Total Assets \$270,531.95

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? Special events, interest only

What is the percentage rate of draw: no draw on principal

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: none

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

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates: Our goal as a congregation is to keep the church on a solid financial foundation.

Other Assets: (05.06.2022)

LSB CHECKING	\$ 24,807.59
LSB MMDA	\$ 9,816.36
LSB NOW	\$ 347,513.45
MEMORIAL FUND CD	\$ 20,261.79
ENDOWMENTS INV.	\$ 270,531.95

Investments: MEMORIAL FUND CD \$20,261.79

Does your church have a parsonage? Yes, but has not been used as a parsonage for decades. Extensive remodeling would be needed to market it as “livable”.

Fair market rental value of the parsonage: \$700.00

How is the parsonage used? Rental property

403 Clark Street/Reinbeck, Iowa/50635

Finished square footage: 1,400

Number of Bedrooms: 4 Number of Bathrooms: 1

Assessed real estate value: \$100,720.00

Available for minister residence: it would require a great deal of work

Expected minister residence: no

Condition of structure, systems and appliances: fair at best

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs: Trustees

Describe all buildings owned by the church: only “the parsonage” and adjacent two car

garage

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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? All but the pulpit area

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

The trustees are key to the budgeting process. The trustees develop the annual budget which is then presented to the congregation for approval. Building maintenance tends to be a major item on the agenda.

### 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.

Our pastor is making connections between world events and the way our faith demands we react to those events.

We endeavor to be accepting of new members, many of whom represent diverse life situations. That endeavor is perhaps the most important as we review our last decade.

Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.

The church was forced to reappraise our pastoral needs for the long-term future. Our current pastor needed to know if he could continue for ten years and beyond as a settled pastor. We could not make any guarantees. He sought a new position and the governing boards of the church sprang into action to find a viable alternative to a full, time minister.

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.

There have been minimal conflicts over the past 20 years. Our Pastor/Parish committee, Trustees and Worship Team are called into service when issues arise.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
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Rev. J. Allan Mittler	August 1980-July 1997	yes
Rev. Joel Love	July 1997-present	yes
Pastor Bob Fread	December 2020-May 2022	yes

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership: We are a multi-generational congregation that continues to allow opportunities for all ages, and accept change guided by leadership.

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

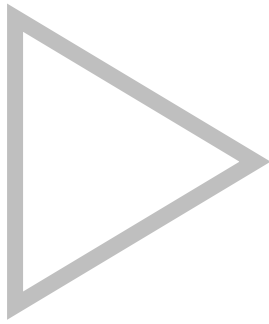
No

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Ask us

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

No



b. **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?

We are proud of our 5 of 5 commitment for many years. We endeavor to continue with the same level of giving in the future.

Christmas in Grundy County is a local mission project providing gifts to local families during the Holidays.

Emmaus House, Back Bay Mission, UCC Disaster and CWS are just a few of our recipients of funding. Our church raised \$1,300 to aid Ukraine during our Easter campaign.

Describe your congregation’s participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ,

We have an ongoing relationship with a young man from Guatemala.. We serve as his sponsor and assist with his basic survival needs and education. He has been visited by members of the congregation.

In addition, we participate in Blanket Sunday annually. Our youth join forces with adults to tie blankets and distribute them to various locations.

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.

Accessible to All (A2A)

Creation Justice

Economic Justice

Faithful and Welcoming

God Is Still Speaking (GISS)

Border and Immigrant Justice

Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I’M)

Open and Affirming (ONA)



WISE Congregation for Mental Health  
 Other UCC designations:  
 Designations from other denominations

Just Peace  
 Global Mission Church  
 None

Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future? Yes We wish to be acknowledged as a church that sees beyond the needs of our local parish.

Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional). We join forces with other churches to provide summer Bible School for the children in our community.

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. It would be advantageous for the congregation to have additional guidance with time allocation.

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? 50/50

Spending half of a pastor's time in service to the congregation and the other in service to the wider church, seems to be the perfect balance.

#### **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 data projecting the changes in demographics in the next five years is minimal.

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 Union Congregational UCC mirrors the demographics of the Reinbeck community.

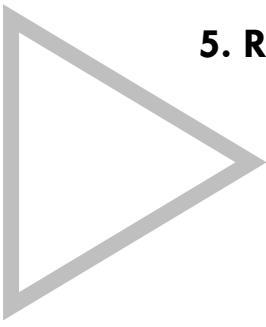
How are the demographics of the community currently shaping ministry, or not?

97.5% of the community lives above the poverty level. *“To whom much is given, from him much is expected.”* Mission projects address the needs of that remaining 2.5% in our community and beyond.

What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for? We have many community leaders that are members of our congregation. The location of the church and our openness invites it’s usage for community events including Miracle on Main, community organizational meetings and the Reinbeck Arts Festival. Our church service is also known for being open to all. Inclusion is our forte.

What do new people in the church say when asked what got them involved? Many of our new members have a family member already in the church. In addition, the pastor is very approachable and his demeanor has drawn new families. When one new member was asked why she and her husband opted to serve on boards, her answer was simple. “We were asked.”

## 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.”

**Reference for:** Union Congregational United Church of Christ, Reinbeck, Iowa

**Reference:** Jeannie Melhus  
Past Moderator, Trustee and Organist  
[jeanniemelhus@gmail.com](mailto:jeanniemelhus@gmail.com) 515-339-5527

**Strengths of this congregation:**

Active core group of members who support the church with giving of time and money  
Diverse mix of both liberal and conservative members  
Congregation that is actively involved in the community  
Congregation that works with other community congregations in joint services, VBS...  
Mission endowment which supports local and global needs  
Congregation that values tradition but is open to contemporary worship services  
Beautiful church and grounds

**Weaknesses of this congregation:**

Diverse mix of both liberal and conservative members (included this as a strength also because of their ability to work together despite differences)  
Attracting new members in a rural community

**Personal Experience with Union Congregational United Church of Christ:**

I no longer live in the community of Reinbeck but still consider this congregation as part of my family.

My three children were confirmed in this church and both my husband and I were involved with the youth groups. The congregation was very supportive of the youth ministry, with many members volunteering to chaperone the youth on an annual mission trip.

We also had an active group that assisted in the ministry of our senior members.

Whenever a need is identified (whether it be financial, personal or mission), this congregation will find a way to meet that need. During my time there, we had several capital improvement projects, started the mission endowment fund, and hosted the community food bank.

This congregation is very supportive of the pastor, church staff and leadership, and the community of Reinbeck. I felt very blessed to be a part of the congregation.

**Reference for Union Congregational United Church of Christ, Reinbeck, Iowa  
April, 2022**

Having worked with the former pastor as a colleague and with members of Union Church for about twenty years, I am pleased to tell you what I see there.

The church has a long and strong place in the life of Reinbeck, cooperating with other congregations of other denominations to serve the community through programs such as food drives and vacation Bible school. Union also has proved to be a strong supporter of the ministry of the wider United Church of Christ. One of my first times to preach to the congregation was as a representative of Back Bay Mission; the congregation responded strongly to the appeal I put forth to them. The summer camp program of the Iowa Conference has also benefited from Union, both in campers and in leadership. In terms of the life of the congregation itself, I have witnessed a warm fellowship and a deep concern for one another on the part of members.

Besides serving as an occasional supply preacher during times when their pastor was away, I have also seen the church at work in several other ways. As I mentioned, early on, Union Church invited me, as a representative of Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi, to preach and to introduce to them the ongoing work of the Mission. Members showed real interest in the Mission and made a significant financial gift to its work. When the United Church of Christ celebrated its fiftieth anniversary some years ago, Union Church served as a center for several congregations and hosted the online national event; I was pleased to attend that festive and informative event. In addition, my wife and I were able to participate in a midweek series during Advent. The series was well-attended and the participants were actively engaged in the presentation by the pastor.

I have not been privy to the struggles, if any, of the congregation. I know that a previous pastor had retired in Reinbeck and continued to serve the congregation as organist for several years. I do not know whether there was any clash of wills between previous and then present pastors. I suspect that, like many congregations located in small towns, there is an ongoing effort to maintain numbers, to attract and hold members.

In addition to these comments, I want to point out that Reinbeck is conveniently near to the Waterloo - Cedar Falls area, where many opportunities of a larger community are available, including shopping, and the sports, theater, and music offered by the University of Northern Iowa and by local community groups.

Each time I visit Union Church, I am impressed by its members' faithfulness, loyalty, and commitment to one another, to the community of Reinbeck, and to the ministry of the United Church of Christ.

James Altenbaumer  
Retired Pastor



**From:** brian scheumann [brianswscheumann@gmail.com](mailto:brianswscheumann@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** UCC  
**Date:** May 4, 2022 at 7:38:48 AM  
**To:** blocklav@att.net

Reference for Union Congregational church of Christ, Reinbeck, Iowa

~~strengths of this congregations ministry.

+ always there to help in time of need.

Example: having been the full-time organist for a period of four years, I played for numerous funerals for families that did not have any church home. Being born and raised a Missouri Lutheran, this would never have happened in that church. Pastor Love was always very gracious and making these families feel like they were coming home to their church family. The ladies aid, along with some of the men, would also furnish a wonderful lunch after the services.

That is just one of the many things that the church does great.

The church is beautiful and is taken care of with much pride and love.

During my period of being organist at the UCC church, Pastor Love would do a midweek contemporary service that was well attended by people that couldn't attend the traditional service on Sunday mornings..

~~ areas for improvement:

After being gone from this area for 30 years, and moving back in February 2017, I could not believe how attendances had gone down in numbers. This was not just in the UCC church, but just about every other church in this community.

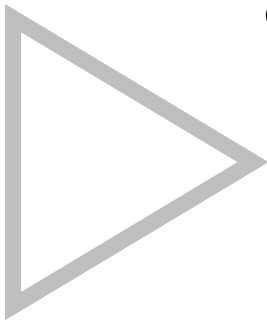
~~ significant experience:

I witnessed a very personal experience of my own. As I had mentioned earlier, I had moved back in February 2017. Within a two month period of moving here, my partner of 27 years passed away suddenly...

The cards, phone calls, texts, & friends stopping to bring food, or just visit was unimaginable..Something I'll never forget & cherish forever..As this church is filled with love and compassion.

Sent from my iPhone

## CLOSING THOUGHTS



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

### 6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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*Almighty God, You who called the universe into being, You who formed our innermost being and called us to be your people:*

*We give you thanks for your constant presence. Through seasons of constancy and even change, you are with us-calling us into deeper waters, calling us together in your spirit of unity, calling us into the world to serve others.*

*May the churches experiencing loss and change hold fast to the promise that your mission is bigger than any single pastor or local church. Grant that such a promise would bring both comfort and discomfort-comfort in a season of change and discomfort as it drives us all to love you and each other.*



*Strengthen us to be your Church in all times and seasons of life-a place where all are truly welcomed and embraced in your love: a place where the story of your love and grace and mercy are embodied.*

*We offer our prayers in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

### **Covered in the Master's Dust**

Ben Gosden

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

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?

- Barbara Brandt      Diaconate member/Former church administrator
- Cody Bystricky      Former Christian Education Cmte.
- Roxanne Larsen      Administrator/Financial Secretary/ Diaconate

- Nancy Lauterbach Diaconate Chairperson
- LaVonne Block Trustee

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

The Union Congregational United Church of Christ looks forward to the search process. It has been our intention to compile the most accurate data regarding our church community. We endeavor to give any prospective candidate a true representation of who we are, as well as our vision for the future.

### 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:

Name / Title:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

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*

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**

