

## Supplemental Documentation for Designated Pastor Position

First Congregational Church of Kalamazoo  
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### 1. What circumstances have caused your congregation to seek a Designated Pastor at this time?

First Congregational Church (FCC) has enjoyed extended periods of strong pastoral leadership. Our most recent installed pastors have guided our congregation toward a reinvigorated focus on justice and mercy. Through a Designated Senior Pastor (DSP), the church is hoping to create stability and maintain momentum in existing programs. Our designated pastor will have among their strengths and goals, the ability to mentor members of our congregation into taking leadership roles within our walls and in the broader community on issues of social justice and equity. We have elected to call a Designated Senior Pastor (DSP) so that we may strengthen our own systems of operation, deepen our congregation's leadership capabilities, and walk in step with our pastor, aligned with the spirit, now and into the future.

### 2. What do you think is most needed by your congregation during this time and during the Designated Pastor's tenure?

During this designated pastor period we will be experiencing a time of healing, a celebration of where we are and what we have achieved, and a continued focus and energy toward justice in our community. A difficult interim ministry and concerns relating back to our most recently installed pastor have left some in the congregation in need of reassurance that this church will remain strong post-pandemic and commitment to fresh energy toward open and thorough communication. Many in our church family are ready for renewed focus on moving forward and celebrating who we are as a church.

### 3. What special skills, training, or gifts might be important in a Pastor who covenants to serve you during this time of transition?

Our DSP will be asked to center pastoral care, provide effective administrative structure and oversight, and nurture congregants in becoming effective leaders and disciples. People are best when they feel they are genuinely cared for. Our designated pastor will engage the congregation on a personal level especially in times of need. We also have a need for clear systems and communication. The ability to help us develop better processes for how the church does its work would be important. Our most recent installed pastor demonstrated a heart for social justice and was often the face of FCC publicly on justice issues. We appreciated that leadership but would like to see our DSP nurture leaders within the church body.

### 4. Please provide a brief history and major/significant events in this church's history.

FCC has been an anchor on Bronson Park, a community space in the heart of downtown Kalamazoo, for over 175 years. A dedicated family of faith has pulled together many times to support the church's needs. Successful capital campaigns allowed for the addition of our chapel and office area in the 60's. More recent campaigns funded the installation of a new Pipe Organ and restoration of our stained-glass windows. Most recently, we were able to successfully fund our atrium project and much needed structural repairs to our beautiful, historic building. FCC was also integral in the creation of the Children's Nature Playscape happening presently. The playscape will be a 10,000 Sq. Ft. space in the lot immediately adjacent to our church building, inviting the greater community's children to engage and explore nature.

5. What is the main mission emphasis of your congregation? Give examples of how your congregation offers mission and ministry to your community and world.

We have a long history of opening our doors wide to those most in need. FCC was a beacon in the time of abolition and a stop on the Underground Railroad. For many years the women of the church hosted an outreach ministry to the blind community of Kalamazoo, hosting a monthly dinner. For over 30 years our church has been home to the KDCCC which is a drop-in childcare center providing services to those with limited resources. Our church family has sponsored refugees from Vietnam and Syria. FCC hosts the congregation of North Presbyterian Church, a church whose ministry is committed to serving those with mental illness, in our chapel on Sunday mornings. Their church family had need for a worship space when maintaining their previous space was no longer viable. Our Mission and Social Justice team drives our mission to support the community both financially and with boots on the ground.

6. Describe Faith Formation involvement.

Our approach to Faith Formation invites wonder and curiosity, builds layers of biblical and theological literacy throughout life, helps members of all ages draw lines of connection between belief and action, and empowers children and youth to participate in the worship and ministry of the congregation. We use a combination of Young Children in Worship/Godly Play curriculum, and curricula developed in-house by staff and skilled volunteers who draw from Montessori, Waldorf, Orff Music and Frierian critical pedagogy.

During Formation Hour on Sunday mornings, elementary and middle schoolers spend half their time hearing/reading the month's Bible story and half their time in "Worship our Way," creating art and music that connects the Bible story to worship in concrete ways. As we have resumed in-person programming, we've had about 20 kids involved in Formation Hour with an average weekly attendance of 6-8. Our middle schoolers have the option of participating in a two-year Catechism class that focuses on identifying themes of Justice and activism in Christian scripture and history, exploring why it is valuable to practice faith in community with one another, and taking responsibility for our own beliefs. We have seven 7-9th graders in this year's class. Our middle school and high school youth group gathers twice a month for activities ranging from art parties to ethical foraging to face-painting at the local Pride festival. We've had about 12 youth involved in programs in the last year.

Here is a YouTube link to view our annual [youth-led service](#).

We have introduced six intergenerational festivals inspired by Waldorf festivals, with the purpose of connecting the seasons of the Christians year to the natural seasons we experience in Michigan. Our three fall festivals equip us with courage, purpose and focus as we move into a season of longer nights with trust that Christ, the Light of the World is coming to us. Our three spring festivals equip us to share light, hope and energy with the world. During COVID we adapted these festivals into home-deliveries with festival booklets and a craft kit, and we stay connected to 45 families this way.

We had just begun our first year of Our Whole Lives classes in 2019-2020, and hope to relaunch this program when we have regained some comfort and consistency with in-person programming.

Our Adult Faith Formation programming is similarly multi-faceted. Sunday mornings we have a class that meets before worship; most recently they have been discussing the UCC StillSpeaking Devotionals related to the lectionary texts for that day. We typically have anywhere from 4-12 adults present, and leadership is shared between members. We have begun an ongoing series of "Books that Changed My Life," inviting members to introduce and lead discussion around books that have shaped their faith and practice. A two-part "History of the UCC" is included in our orientation for new members, but the classes are open to all. Additionally, our Bible Study group meets twice a month on Saturday mornings, using Kerygma and other curricula, which has continued over Zoom during Covid. We also used Zoom as the platform for a Just Faith class on Faith and Racial Healing in 2021. This summer we are offering monthly "Patio Theology" outdoor gatherings at a local restaurant, with a focus on different topics each month: Sabbath, Belonging, and Environmental Justice. And members of our Transition Team will be leading a four-evening course in the fall, discussing Peter Block's book, "Community: The Structure of Belonging."

#### 7. Describe Small group ministries.

- Soul Sisters - monthly breakfast fellowship group for women; lay-led
- Aging with Attitude - monthly discussion group for seniors, lay-led
- Saturday Bible Study – twice/month adult study group, led by the Director of Parish Care
- Choir - weekly rehearsal, led by the Director of Music
- Bell Choir - weekly rehearsal, led by the Director of Music
- Women's Prayer Circle – twice/month prayer group, led by the Director of Parish Care
- Book Club - monthly discussion group for adults, lay-led
- FCC Angels - gathered on an as-need basis for hands-on projects around the church building, coordinated by the Director of Parish Care
- Youth Group - meets twice monthly on-site or locally for fellowship and service and/or justice-oriented projects, led by the Pastor for Faith Formation
- Children's Nature Playscape - meets regularly with other local bodies to plan and oversee construction of the community playscape next to our building, lay-led

#### 8. Describe the church governance/ministry teams.

## Administrative Core Ministries

- The governing body of FCC Kalamazoo is the Church Council led by the church moderator. The council is made up of the senior pastor, the moderator team, a representative from each ministry team, and three members-at-large. The church moderator team is made up of three people elected to rolling three year terms by the congregation. To provide continuity, a person serves one year as moderator-elect, the next year as moderator, and then a year as past-moderator. This three person team of moderator, moderator-elect, and past-moderator meets regularly with the senior pastor to provide executive leadership.
- Hidden Treasures Finance Team - Oversees all aspects of the financial affairs of FCC and is responsible for prudently investing all of the Church's funds, developing long-range financial plans and strategies, preparing the annual church budget, ensuring appropriate systems, policies and procedures to report the financial condition of the Church, and for oversight of the annual Stewardship ministry team.
- Property and Land Stewards - Serves to oversee the maintenance of our 94 year old building as well as planning for future needs to ensure the building will be available. FCC has provided sanctuary, blessing, and inspiration for our congregation AND has been a significant asset in service to the Kalamazoo community, including offering space at no cost to community groups and as a performance venue for local artists.
- Communication Team – Identifies and provides solutions for the communication needs of FCC to connect both internally and externally in ways that are timely and appropriate.
- Human Resources Team – Serves as a resource and support to the Council, Ministry Teams, Pastoral Relations Committees, and staff, including lay staff and pastors, with respect to personnel, employment, and workplace-related issues.
- Moderator Support Team - monthly support and discussion to help the current moderator team fulfill FCC's goals and objectives comprised of past and current moderators.
- Transition Team – helps FCC navigate during a time of substantial change and uncertainty through solving problems, facilitating communication to the wider congregation, helping equip staff with knowledge/learning needed to meet the challenges they encounter.
- Designated Pastor Search Team – conducts a search primarily using the UCC search process with support from the Transition Team.

## Spiritual Core Ministries

- Deacons – initiate regular check-ins with congregants and provide direct, personal spiritual and practical support to individuals as needed, including financial assistance through the Deacons’ Fund.
- Worship Arts Team – provides guidance and support for the music ministry staff towards creating spiritually uplifting worship and fellowship through artistic expressions in our congregation and the greater community.
  - Here is a YouTube link to our [2022 Pentecost/Pride service](#) – primarily created and by the Music Ministry & Worship Arts Team.
- Mission and Social Justice Team – puts faith into action while celebrating FCC’s open and affirming values. Builds relationships with, and provides resources to groups and organizations inside and outside our community, working to support and collaborate with existing resources rather than duplicate or replace them.
- Faith Formation Team – works to establish a culture such that Congregational members, parents, youth, and children will actively learn more about their faith and how to take their faith into their lives and into the world.
- Parish Care Team - listens, supports, and provides resources for the effective, efficient, and timely care of the parish in order to fulfill the example of Christ of sharing love, fellowship, and hospitality and to fulfill FCC’s wider purpose and vision.

## 9. Membership

<b>Membership as of January 1, 2021</b>	<b>622</b>		
Transfers and Resignations	6	Baptisms	3
Transferred to Inactive	0	Deaths of Members	4
Transferred from Inactive	0	Marriages (Member)	0
Adults received into membership	13	Marriages (Non-Member)	0
Confirmands	4	Births	3
<b>Membership as of January 1, 2022</b>	<b>629</b>		

The church is in the process of reviewing active membership following covid and members who choose to stream worship service.

## 10. Current Staff Configuration

- Ministers: All the People of the Church
- Senior Designated Pastor
- Pastor for Faith Formation
- Chaplain to the Staff and Transition Team
- Director of Children’s Worship Arts Ministry
- Director of Parish Care

- Director of Music
- Church Administrator
- Organist and Pianist
- Video Production Specialist
- Church Secretary
- Sexton
- Housekeeper
- Childcare Staff

11. Budget - FCC's current annual budget for church operations is \$670,500. Congregational giving comprises the majority of income; endowments ensure our historic property is maintained and made available for use by the wider community. Other funds held by FCC support the Kalamazoo Drop-In Child Care Center (in FCC) and the Children's Nature Playscape (on our property next door).

## 12. Scope of Work

Full time Pastoral Position (40-50 hours weekly)

- Plan the weekly worship to create an engaging, joyful worship experience including weekly sermon preparation and prayers during worship. Working with staff to ensure lay leaders, music ministries, youth ministries, and live stream are coordinated in meaningful ways.
- Engage in pastoral care for all members, especially those in need, in conjunction with staff.
- Offer counsel as required. Participate in weddings, funerals, baptisms as requested by the church body and wider community.
- Participate in the broader local community as a representative of the mission of First Congregational Church. A mission of extravagant welcome, justice, and mercy.
- Manage the office and pastoral staff to maximize potential, effectiveness, and engagement.
- Facilitate a weekly staff meeting, to encourage healthy dialogue regarding pastoral concerns, ongoing and future ministry ventures, staff development, and a shared vision of the ministries of the church.
- Develop the leadership skill set of the church by working with people in the church to create ministry and programs.
- Encourage faith formation and vitality through prayer, Bible study, service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities, and helping lay persons take advantage of them.
- Work with lay leaders and staff on strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry.
- Attend meetings and give leadership as needed to church programs, in collaboration with lay leadership.
- Communicate regularly and effectively with staff and congregation, including observations about the health of the church.
- Acknowledge and pursue faithful financial development and stewardship.
- Engage in personal development through study and prayer to increase faith and to

improve skills so as to lead, teach, and preach better.

- Participate in the UCC Conference and Local Association as time allows
- Be available as a resource to boards, committees and ministry teams and attend meetings of those groups as necessary.
- Administer self-care, so as to continue to be an asset to the church and the mission of Jesus Christ.

### 13. Compensation package

FCC follows the UCC Michigan Conference Guidelines:

[http://www.michucc.org/images/Salary\\_Guidelines\\_2021\\_GRID - completed\\_OCT2020-1.pdf](http://www.michucc.org/images/Salary_Guidelines_2021_GRID_-_completed_OCT2020-1.pdf)

