

## Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

# INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Who  
are  
we

Who  
is our  
neighbor

Who is  
God  
calling us  
to become

?

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

First Congregational United Church of Christ (UCC)  
Red Oak, Iowa

Pastor

Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota Conference

July 14, 2022

### 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.

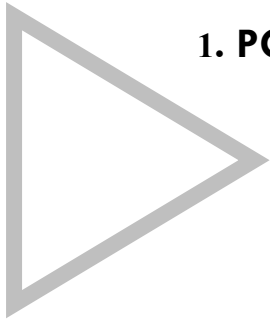
The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – **WHO ARE WE NOW**, **WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR**, and **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME** – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years.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

Street address: 608 Reed Street (zip 51566)

Supplemental web links: <https://www.facebook.com/UCCRedOak>

Additional ecumenical affiliations: None

Conference: Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota

Association: United Church of Christ

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person (Name, Title, Phone, Email): Sarah Jones, Associate Conference Minister. (808) 631-2444 sarah@ucctcm.org

Summary Ministry Description:

Our church, while unique in the area as open and affirming, consists of older (though not very conservative) people. Doctrinal orientation is very broad, so not a lot of certainty or security to be found there. We are warm and open, with a solid old building and nice property just off downtown, equally solid financing (a recent large \$gift), but struggling for how we can grow in size and age diversity.

Photographs:

See Facebook page

What we value about living in our area: Small town intimacy and friendliness; outdoor work/recreation (Agricultural area; naturally tall grass prairie savannah; gently rolling hills); metro area within 50 miles (Omaha, Nebraska/Council Bluffs, Iowa).

Current size of membership:

Over 70 listed members; attendance about 10-12 weekly.

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*): None; but one Spanish-speaker available

Position Title: Pastor

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

Compensation Level:

¼ time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? Yes

## 1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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Plan and lead Sunday morning worship service; give sermon/lesson

Perform weddings, funerals, and other special services (Easter and Christmas, for instance)

Visit ill and otherwise restricted members at least monthly

Be available at the church office least two hours per week for counseling

Perform baptisms

Core Competencies:

Caring, sensitive, and sociable; intellectually curious and open

## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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Salary Basis: \$24,000

Benefits:

Workers' compensation insurance

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

No parsonage; open to a commuter, within 55 miles

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

Regional denomination association  
City ministerial alliance

If applicable, describe how your church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment:

Monday through Friday hours flexible; Sunday service hours also flexible

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

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

We desire to be a center for grace and mercy, especially to the neediest among us, showing inclusivity, tolerance, and justice and fostering local and global peace; and be an example in that for other churches and organizations to follow. To do that, we need encouragement and guidance from not just each other but a leader who can focus on our spiritual health and growth in worship and knowledge of God.

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

Speaking the message of God's love

Leading us in actions of mercy and justice

Specify language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling.

First language must be English; knowing Spanish desirable. Must appreciate other cultures and be attuned to cultural terminology, including that of gender

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 Ministers* that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

Providing hope and healing to a hurting world

Drawing on the ministry of Jesus to confront injustice and oppression

Developing a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life experiences

Strategically creating the future of the 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?

An open, affirming, safe place where people can experience God’s grace and mercy

We recently received another generous monetary bequest and have begun discussing ideas for its use (there are no restrictions), from needed maintenance to our old building to enhancements to our worship (such as a pianist and new sound system); as well as ways we can serve the community. This discussion has been on hold because of the search for a new pastor

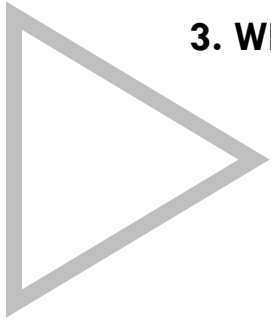
Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.

We held a vigil for justice in reaction to the murder of George Floyd by police

We held a prayer vigil for Ukraine shortly after Russia invaded

With a more local focus, we participated with other churches in a weekly soup supper (we led the effort once a month) to feed needy folks in our community; it stopped because of COVID and has not restarted

While we are motivated to do such things, we are discouraged that they have not brought more committed participants to regularly join us. On the other hand, being small enabled us to be quite flexible during COVID, with online services, and in warm weather, meeting outside



### 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.

Our emphasis is on the love of God and his desire that every person know and experience him as fully as possible.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

Open and affirming of wherever people are in their life journeys. We seek social justice for the disadvantaged and marginalized, in our community, our country, and around the world. We are a thoughtful and inquisitive group, in spite of our age

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Traditional format but informal, as we are so small a group. Usually 2-3 hymns, scripture reading, sermon, time of sharing, benediction

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

Nothing beyond Sunday services and occasional seasonal Bible or book study

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

There are a few committees; the Governing Board meets most often, 4-5 times a year  
Decisions can be made quickly by email

- 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



### 3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

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See our 11-year Missioninsite report (supplied by the UCC)

### 3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

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Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	15	
Number of active non-members:	0	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	15	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	15	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:		
Less than 5 years:		

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		8	4	

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:		
Households with minors:	0	
Single adults age 35-65:	0	

Joint households with no minors:	5	
Single adults over 65:	4	

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	2	
College:	11	
Graduate School:	2	
Specialty Training:		
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	2	
Adults who are retired:	13	
Adults who are not fully employed:		

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

Teaching, facility management

Former teachers, farmers, a city administrator, an investigator, non-profit development director, etc.

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 of mainly northern European heritage; however, several of our members are involved in native American issues, values, and rituals

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 had that conversation more than once and our group has included transgender, gay, lesbian individuals; and a Black gay pastor for a time

### 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	7	Periodic lunch groups; lay and pastorally led
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	1	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes		
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	20	Pastor
Church-wide Meals	10	Lay leaders
Choirs and Music Groups		
Church-based Bible Study	5	
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	10; once/month; Easter and Christmas	Pastor/lay leaders
Community Meals	30	Pastor/lay
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>		
Drama or Dance Program		
Funerals <i>(number last year)</i>	1; 200 people	Pastor
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship		
Prayer or Meditation Groups		

Public Advocacy Work	5	Lay
Retreats		
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	1; 15 people	
Worship (time slot: Noon--cool months)	10	Pastor
Worship (time slot: 8:30 a.m.--warm months)	10	Pastor
Young Adult Groups or Classes		
Youth Groups or Classes		
Other		

Additional comments:

We are flexible; adopted the noon and 8:30 Sunday time slots to accommodate our last pastor because we shared her with another church

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)
None				

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

### REFLECTION

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

There is a small, dedicated, group of older people, well-educated. No growth; shrinkage.

### 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$38,000
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”</i> )	\$
Fundraising Events	\$
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building (We allow free use)	\$0
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$0
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women’s Group</i> )	\$0

Transfers from Special Accounts	\$
Other (specify): Checking account	\$20,000
Other (specify): Memorial fund	\$9,100
TOTAL	\$67,100

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$48,946

See attached

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 45%

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)

- 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? 5%

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: \$0

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.

If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, describe: None, did some cosmetic improvement of 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary (Fall, 2021)

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

		\$	\$	
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If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

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

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

Does your church have an endowment?

Not technically, but have received some substantial bequests with no restrictions

What is the market value of the assets? \$350,000

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

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? Historically low, but a projected budget deficit of about \$10,000 for 2022

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years:

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

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

#### Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$3,200

Investments (other than endowment):

Does your church have a parsonage? No

Fair market rental value of the parsonage:

How is the parsonage used?

Street / City / State / Zip:

Finished square footage:

Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms:  
Assessed real estate value:  
Available for minister residence: Y/N  
Expected minister residence: Y/N  
Condition of structure, systems and appliances  
Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

Two-story building finished in 1915 with elevator and basement; brick clad; fire escape and ramp; working bell tower; third-level room above narthex; tile roof; about 250 seating in sanctuary (not air conditioned); chapel seats 70 (air conditioned); Steinway grand piano

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:

A full, grassy lot adjacent (to the East)

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? All but basement, one storage room, the room above the narthex, and the fire escape

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

We have a substantial invested \$ from bequests, but a projected deficit of \$10,000 and an old building needing repair (roof, and tuck pointing of brick)

### **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.

2000—Voted to be Open and Affirming

2009—Conducted first same-sex wedding

Celebrated our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021

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

Hiring a Black, gay pastor (Don Morgan) was a big step, but was remarkably smooth, having already worked through the decision to be officially open and affirming.



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.

We tried to discuss church and state in relation to our own Boy Scout troop flag (from a generation past) and the American flag on our stage. This offended several attendees and one left us. We probably should have preceded this with some Biblical/historical teaching before jumping into the symbols in our midst.

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

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Sterling (Mac) McHarg	8	Y
Elizabeth Dilley	9	Y
Donald Morgan	8	Y
Jenny Folmar	2	Y

Between Elizabeth Dilley and Don Morgan, John Chaplin served as interim pastor for several months

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

As appreciators of diversity, we’ve loved the pastors listed above

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

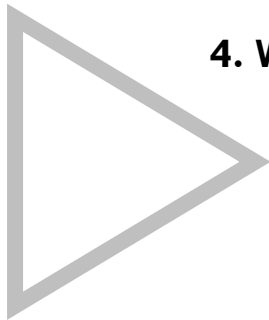
N

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

N

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

N



## 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?

See list below

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

In the past ten years, we have participated in the following:

Food pantry

Food baskets

Mitten Tree (hats and gloves as well)

Undie Sunday (underwear and socks)

Blessing Box

Soup supper

Prayer vigils (George Floyd and Ukraine)

BLM protest

God is Still Speaking sign

Exploring Spirituality

Native American speaker on his spirituality (Leo Yankton)

City-wide Lenten lunches (pre-COVID)

Pride parade in Council Bluffs/Omaha

Annual Junction Days parade (founding of the town as a rail junction)

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.

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

Possibly

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

Our pastors have participated in a city-wide affiliation with other pastors (half dozen or so in number)

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.

We do not have a mission statement per se; however, we have the following reason for being (our "object") in our constitution/bylaws:

The object of this church shall be to unite followers of Jesus Christ for the purpose of sharing in the worship of God, and in making God's will dominant in the lives of people, individually and collectively, as set forth in the life, teachings, death and living presence of Jesus Christ. This church is an "open and affirming" congregation of the UCC, and we welcome all who wish to participate.

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?

As a part-time minister, we understand priorities must be agreed upon, with some flexibility on both the pastor's part and the church's part. As stated earlier, or first priority is the leading of Sunday worship (hours flexible); second is conducting weddings, funerals, and special services

(such as holiday-related); third is visiting ill and/or house-bound members; fourth is counseling individual members; fifth is community involvement

#### **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?

Most people seem uncertain of faith in God and don't trust institutions and leaders, including the church. They say they want community but don't feel they have the time to invest in it.

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?

We are older, more educated, and progressive than the surrounding area

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

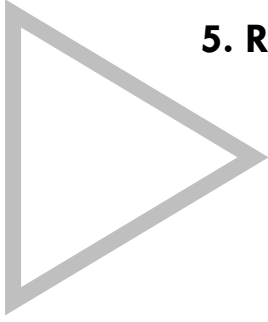
They don't seem to be

What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

We are "the liberal church" in our area, which some appreciate, and some are wary of

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

There have been no new people in several years. Previously, we had limited involvement with two gay couples. In the past and presently we have some active folks who are not Christian, but appreciate our openness to the Divine and the diversity of his creation



## 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

I am writing to share with you the perspective of a community member of the Red Oak first Congregational UCC church.

The members of this church truly exemplify the teachings of Christ. They are dedicated, open, accepting, generous, loving, thoughtful, helpful; they truly walk the walk, as we are called to do.

They are a blessing to this community in many ways. They help the needy, they speak up, they welcome and accept people in our area that are not accustomed to that kind of treatment.

Although the congregation is small, as most congregations of the era are, they are mighty. The community is lucky to have them, and they will be a loving parish to work with.

Sincerely, Jan Norris, Red Oak, Iowa

--

Jan Norris

712-621-4427

jan.norris2@gmail.com

REFERENCE 2

See next page.

Kathy Davis  
Retired elementary teacher  
Red Oak Community Schools  
1-712-623-3451  
f\_kdavis@hotmail.com  
Former member of UCC Red Oak

#### Reference for First Congregational UCC

After my husband and I were married in 1977, we decided to attend the church his parents attended. Ross and Coralie Davis were long-time members of First Congregational. Both of our children were born during this time, and baptized into the church family.

We enjoyed the warm, intimate atmosphere provided. Our children thrived on all the attention they received, especially at cookie time following the service. Both children attended Sunday school, while I was, for a time, the adult leader. Our oldest child was confirmed in a small class of four. My husband was on the Board of Directors and I was installed as a deacon, so we were totally immersed in church life.

When our youngest child was eight years old, we made the difficult decision to leave. There were no children attending Sunday school, so our youngest was alone. We chose to go to a church that had a healthy youth program to meet her needs in 1993.

Both of Fred's parents had their funeral services at the Congregational Church, as well as those of many other community friends. We attended the anniversary celebration last year and reconnected with several former pastors who were outstanding, notably Martha Robertson, Elizabeth Dilley, and David Raymond.

### REFERENCE 3

None

### PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES

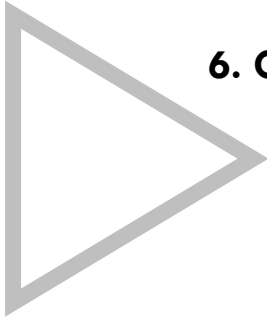
Describe some areas of strength in this church's ministry.

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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As you can tell (and as God surely knows), we are open, curious, and active; but are also older and facing daunting trends in the culture that are affecting and shrinking many churches, yet we are responsible for a substantial building and for managing a substantial sum of money, for our size. We would appreciate a younger, dynamic person who may have strategies for increasing our numbers a bit without negating our fundamental character.

## 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 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?

The search committee, with some help from the historian and treasurer

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed: Steve Turman

Name / Title / Date: Search Committee Chairperson, July 14, 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

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: July 14, 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*