

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Federated Church of Charlton, Massachusetts
Senior Settled Pastor



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Summary Minister Description

The Federated Church of Charlton is looking to take our strong foundation and move forward with a settled minister who is Biblically and theologically grounded; who is involved (connecting faith to action as with mission work both within and outside of the community); who is able to empower and guide leaders; and above all a minister who is caring, sensitive and inspiring.

We need to grow our membership, increase our community and congregational outreach and pledges, and continue to serve the needs of our congregation.

Church Name	Federated Church of Charlton
Street Address	64 Main Street Charlton, MA 01507
Website	http://www.charltonfedchurch.org
Facebook Page	https://www.facebook.com/charltonfedchurch

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

The Federated Church of Charlton is a member of the Central Massachusetts Association and the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC) and was most recently a member of the Clara Barton District (which was eliminated in 2016) and the New England Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA).

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person	Rev. Elizabeth Garrigan-Byerly Cell: 508-244-4311 Garrigan-ByerlyE@sneucc.org
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History of the Federated Church of Charlton

- Our church descends from many churches active in the Charlton community over the centuries. The first of these was founded in 1761, six years after the town was formed in 1755. We are the 1st church to be founded in this community and the only one on the town common.
- Caleb Curtis (1727-1802) was the 1st minister. He blessed the Minutemen who left our town to fight at Lexington and Concord in April 1775, was the area's representative to the Continental Congress, and in the summer of 1776, he read the Declaration of Independence from the pulpit as ordered by the Massachusetts General Court. At the time of its construction, this was one of the largest meetinghouses in all of Worcester County.
- In 1798, our 2nd building was constructed with 100 pews on the main floor and 50 on the balcony. It was one of the largest meetinghouses in the region.
- In response to the Unitarian controversy in 1825, the First Congregational Calvinistic Church was formed. A Unitarian Church was also created, and shortly afterward, it united with the Universalist Society of Charlton, becoming the First Union Society of Charlton, which held Christian Universalist beliefs. The First Congregational Calvinistic Church and the First Union Society would draft Articles of Federation in 1922, creating the Federated Church.
- In May of that same year, the Universalist Church building burned. The property was donated to the town of Charlton so that the Charlton High School could be built there. The building is currently used as the Charlton Town Hall. A plaque by the front door testifies to the generosity of the congregation.
- On Christmas Day, December 25, 1939, the Federated Church building burned to the ground. Despite the challenging economic times, the Federated Church raised funds to build a new building that opened in 1941, just two years after the disastrous blaze.
- The Educational Wing was added to the present church building in 1964, and the building was made handicapped accessible in 2001.
- In March 2011, a special service marked the church's 250th anniversary, drawing political leaders and four former Federated Church pastors: Reverend Tom Bentley, Reverend Tom Howard, Reverend Jerry Kupperschmidt and Reverend Hal Wilson.
- The Reverend James Chase came to the church as pastor in 1987. He served the church and the community with great distinction until illness forced him to retire in September 2020.
- The Reverend Gary Shahinian is currently the Intentional Interim Minister, a role he began in October 2020.

What we value about living in our area:

The town of Charlton has a population of 13,000 and is growing at an annual rate of 2.6%. Located in the heart of Massachusetts, the town is next to Sturbridge, home of Old Sturbridge Village, the largest outdoor living history museum in New England. Just 12 miles to the east is Worcester, the second largest city in New England, where 13 colleges including Clark University, WPI and the College of the Holy Cross are located. The city also boasts nationally recognized cultural and historical organizations such as the preeminent repository of early Americana, the American Antiquarian Society; Mechanics Hall, one of the nation’s finest concert halls; the Hanover Theater which hosts live theater and musical touring shows; a science center and zoo complex called the Ecotarium; and the Worcester Art Museum, one of the world’s finest small regional museums. Worcester is undergoing a revitalization with the opening of Polar Park, the home of the Worcester WooSox, the minor league baseball team for the Boston Red Sox. The city also presents many opportunities to enjoy live music, shopping and restaurants.



One of the largest townships in the state, Charlton is full of pastoral landscapes, forests, streams and lakes that are accessible for hiking, fishing, boating and swimming. The town also features many historic homes and structures such as the restored Rider Tavern and the Northside Schoolhouse. The community has experienced rapid growth in recent years in part because of its abundance of affordable land and highway access to Boston, Hartford, Providence and Worcester as well as to the seashores



of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island and the mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire, all of which can be reached within 90 minutes.

The community is also close to three international airports: Logan (Boston), T.F. Green (Providence) and Bradley (Hartford).

Current size of membership:

Our full membership currently stands at approximately 160 people.

Languages used in ministry (other than English):

None

Position Title	Senior Pastor
Position Duration:	Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister moves church membership to the congregation
Compensation Level:	Full time
Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?	Yes

1B. SCOPE OF WORK

The Pastor, when called, must become a member of this church. The Pastor shall preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and shall have charge of the stated services of public worship; he/she shall administer the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of every month except during his/her vacation. He/she shall officiate at services of baptism and reception of new members. He/she shall promote the spiritual welfare of the Federated Church of Charlton and those whom it serves. He/she shall be a member of all boards and committees ex officio, with vote. The pastoral relationship may be dissolved either by the Church or the Pastor by a written notice of such intention at least 60 days in advance. The Pastor shall assist and advise all officers and committees, promoting an efficient, harmonious functioning of the total church program and organization. The Pastor, like other church members, shall be directly responsible to the members of the church.

We are seeking a minister who is Biblically and theologically grounded and involved and is going to connect our faith to action.

We are seeking a minister who is Biblically and theologically grounded and involved and is going to connect our faith to action. He/she will empower, guide and train leaders, make connections with the community, inspire congregants through sermons and be a voice of the church in the community.

Responsibilities include:

- » Lead Sunday worship, including crafting liturgy and choosing of congregational prayers. Preach engaging and practical sermons fulfilling the church's statement of faith. Plan worship with support of the Board of Deacons and Choir.
- » Value and promote shared leadership in worship and administration and the creative contributions of participants.
- » Prepare Sunday bulletin, monthly newsletter and electronic communications (with assistance from the church secretary).
- » Administer church's two sacraments of baptism and communion as well as weddings, funerals and confirmation/new member classes for participants in the worshiping community.



| Ecumenical Cross Walk, Good Friday, 2022

- » Demonstrate depth of Biblical knowledge. Lead and participate in Bible study, book studies, theological based educational series, and offer lay people resources as needed.
- » Support and encourage lay people in creating and carrying out ministry and missions of the church such as hosting guest ministers, activities fitting our statement of faith, and joint interfaith activities.
- » Provide support for Christian education, faith formation and children's/youth programs (in conjunction with the Sunday School Superintendent).
- » Administer church business and oversee the church staff, performing necessary and appropriate administrative tasks.
- » Support faithful financial development and stewardship.
- » Attend meetings and provide leadership development in working with the congregation's governing body and its program committees.
- » Provide counseling, listening and making appropriate referrals, as well as visiting members in need.
- » Be an ambassador of the church's values in the community. Participate in wider church UUA/UCC activities such as conferences. Maintain a collegial relationship with area clergy associations.

Core Competencies:

We would sum up the three core competencies we are looking for as:



We surveyed our congregation in April 2022 and asked a number of questions regarding what kind of church we want to be in the future.

When asked what we are looking for in our next pastor, the following qualities came through:

✓ SPIRITUALITY	knows the Bible; strong prayer life; preaches the Gospel and can apply God’s Word to today’s issues; loves and deeply cares for people; strong faith, genuine, sincere and experienced in sharing the Gospel
✓ INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	friendly/people-person; caring and loving personality; approachable; enthusiastic/outgoing; self-confident; optimistic; patient/compassionate; empathetic; thoughtful; genuine; great communicator
✓ PERSONAL QUALITIES	willing to visit members, shut-ins and people in hospitals/care facilities
✓ ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS	organized; can delegate; maintains office hours; sets goals; proactive; leads by example; great public speaker; experience with youth; clear vision for the church and can articulate it

1C. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Position Title & Duration:

Senior Pastor, Settled

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

Total support package meets conference compensation guidelines

Benefits:

Salary plus benefits

Incentives:

Potential of a 3-month sabbatical to be discussed during negotiation, as well as relocation expenses and additional incentives (to be negotiated)

Expected Living Situation:

We have a parsonage available. This is a free-standing two-bedroom home constructed in approximately 1950. It is adjacent to the meetinghouse.



If the minister does not live in the parsonage, we would hope he/she would live in Charlton or at least within easy commuting distance so that he/she can be engaged fully in both the work of our church and in the life of the community of Charlton.

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

Local ecumenical clergy meet on a regular schedule in our area. In addition, there are communities of practice within the UCC communities.

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

We would be open to support our minister’s additional opportunities as they arise and are presented.

1D. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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



RECOVER AND HEAL

We need to recover and heal our own Church community. The church community responded with compassion and care when presented with the news of our previous minister, Rev. Emeritus Chase's serious illness and subsequent death from colon cancer in January 2022. We have also been impacted by working with interim ministers since Rev. Chase's departure while in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges faced moving to virtual services and in-person restrictions. As part of this healing process, we need a minister who will be kind and compassionate, a good listener, and someone who is willing and able to visit one-on-one with parishioners. This was identified as the most important characteristic our congregants are looking for in a recent church-wide survey.



SHARE AND COMMUNICATE

As much as we need individual pastoral care, we also need to develop the tools to share and communicate communally. We have tough questions we need to answer, as we further define who our Church community is now and what we want it to be going forward. Embracing the spirit of Christ, we need to find ways to discuss and decide these issues with fairness, rationality, kindness and love. We have made strides towards this goal with congregational surveys and online and in-person conversations.



STRENGTHEN OURSELVES

Once we have defined ourselves, we need to strengthen ourselves. This strengthening will come first from Christ. By following his teachings and being open to and willing to embrace his spirit we will gain the strength and courage to be fully present Christians in the 21st century. This strength will also manifest itself in the corporate body of the church and thus we need to find ways to grow our congregation and to increase the resources needed to sustain the physical buildings, our paid and volunteer staff, and to sustain the missionary work we do within Charlton and the wider world.



BE MORE FULLY PRESENT

With renewed strength we can then be more fully present in the communities surrounding our own church family. In the past we engaged in both adult and youth mission trips each year, and we are eager to resume these programs, which often took our members to distant communities within the United States. While we also engage in local food pantries and halfway houses, many in our congregation would like to see us engage in more, sustained local mission work.

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

Not applicable at this time

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:

Based largely on the history of our church and on recent survey results, the areas of excellence which resonate with the Federated Church of Charlton can be found in part in all eight of the areas delineated in this document.

Specifically, our congregation values a pastor who is Biblically and theologically grounded; who is involved (connecting faith to action as with mission work both within and outside of the community); who is able to empower/guide leaders; and above all a minister who is caring, sensitive and inspiring.

These qualities are best reflected, in part, in each of the areas of excellence discussed in The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministry:

- » **Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation** – Loving God; living a life of discipleship; praying actively; nurturing spiritual practices.
- » **Nurturing a UCC Identity** – Acknowledging Jesus Christ as the sole Head of Church and communicating passion for the oneness of the Body of Christ (John 17:21).
- » **Building Transformational Leadership Skills** – Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call; working collaboratively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity; encouraging leadership development of self and others through continuing and lifelong learning.

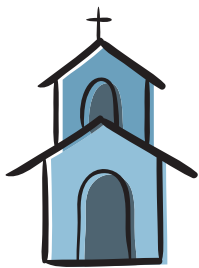


| Youth Mission Trip

- » **Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions** – Exhibiting knowledge, understanding and continuous study of Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament; bringing life to sacred stories and traditions in worship, proclamation and witness.
- » **Caring for Creation** – Providing hope and healing to a hurting world; stewarding the resources of the Church.
- » **Participating in Theological Praxis** – Practicing theological reflection and engagement as part of one's sense of ministerial identity; experiencing and appreciating a variety of theological perspectives.
- » **Working Together for Justice and Mercy** – Engaging in mission and outreach; building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence.
- » **Strengthening Inter- and Intra-Personal Assets** – Exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity; understanding and ministering to stages of human development across the lifespan; demonstrating excellent communication skills.

As a federated congregation, these “Marks of Excellence” as noted here represent the best matches for our church in terms of our expectations and hopes for a new settled pastor.

"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)



Like all churches over the past several years, ours is hurting. We are still dealing with COVID-19 and all its permutations and, while we now have returned to in-person service, our numbers are diminished. We are confronted with large global problems from the threat of a third World War, to inflation and a possible recession, to global climate change, and we are part of a wider political and social culture that is often divisive and toxic. Additionally, we are in mourning for our long-serving and much-loved pastor. All these components have frayed the fabric of our community.

The Reverend Emeritus James E. Chase served this church as pastor for 33 years. He passed away from colon cancer in January 2022. It is believed that Rev. Chase contracted this cancer while serving as an emergency fire chaplain at Ground Zero after the 9-11 terrorist attacks. He was much beloved in both our church and secular communities. Jim wanted to serve us as long as he could, and we wanted to honor this commitment. We felt this was the Christian thing to do and what God was calling us to do. However, it did mean our church suffered a very long interim period as we waited for Jim to recover and then to pass on. During this period, we were served by a Bridge Pastor, several guest preachers, and an Intentional Interim Pastor who is still with us. Though our not having a Settled Pastor has hindered the rejuvenation of our church, and the uncertainty of our status continues to be a source of frustration for many in our family, we have made much progress overcoming the devastating loss of our beloved Minister Emeritus Chase and are on a healthy journey of discovering who we are as a congregation.

We need to recover and heal our own Church community. In doing so we need a minister who will be kind and compassionate, a good listener, and someone who is willing and able to visit one-on-one with parishioners.

This was identified as the most important characteristic our congregants are looking for in a recent church-wide survey.

As much as we need individual pastoral care, we also need to develop the tools to share and communicate communally. We have tough questions we need to answer, as we further define who our Church community is now and what we want it to be going forward. Embracing the spirit of Christ, we need to find ways to discuss and decide these issues with fairness, rationality, kindness and love. We have made strides towards this goal with congregational surveys and online and in person conversations.

Once we have defined ourselves, we need to strengthen ourselves. This strengthening will come first from Christ. By following his teachings and being open to and willing to embrace his spirit we will gain the strength and courage to be fully present Christians in the 21st century. This strength will also manifest itself in the corporal body of the church and thus we need to find ways to grow our congregation and to increase the resources needed to sustain the physical buildings, our paid and volunteer staff, and to sustain the missionary work we do within Charlton and the wider world.

With renewed strength we can then be more fully present in the communities surrounding our own church family. In the past, we engaged in both adult and youth mission trips each year, and we are eager to resume these programs which often took our members to distant communities within the United



Our annual "rake and run" brings the community together providing yard clean up at some of our elderly residents homes

States. While we also engage in local food pantries and halfway houses, many in our congregation would like to see us engage in more, sustained local mission work.

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

The research we have conducted during this transition period has identified two populations that are in need and to whom we feel particularly able to minister.

» **The first are people between the ages of 12 to 19.** Currently, there are few opportunities for these young people to gather and engage in healthy and inspiring activities. We have been blessed with a vibrant church school including a two-year confirmation process. While our attendance has suffered due to COVID-19, we are still maintaining a church school and feel we can build on this success to reach out beyond our own congregation and offer programs that will entice others to join us.

» **The other population is the elderly.** There is a large full-service senior living community in Charlton called The Overlook. We currently have about a dozen residents of The Overlook who attend our Sunday services and are active in our Church community. Beyond these individuals, we know there is much spiritual comfort from

which the residents of both The Overlook and the elderly within our community could benefit. We see opportunities for our church to work with The Overlook, the Charlton Senior Center, and other facilities and organizations within our community to provide Christian comfort and inspiration.

Charlton is a rural community blessed with lots of outdoor spaces for recreation including hiking trails and lakes for swimming and boating. Indeed, the struggle to maintain the town's bucolic nature in the face of rapid growth is one of the central issues facing the community currently. Our internal surveys have also identified outdoor activities as another possible program that the Church could sponsor. We see the potential to create fun activities for members of both our own church family and the wider region as something we could create. A larger mission of environmental stewardship and advocacy may very well emerge from these activities.

We recognize that one minister will not necessarily have the skill sets and temperament to effectively lead all these missions.

Indeed, the attributes of our next settled pastor may determine the focus and extent of our missions and we pledge ourselves to be open and flexible in our responses based upon the individual strengths and interests of our pastor.



Our church has actively participated in youth and adult mission trips, both locally as well as nationally including New York, Washington, DC, North Carolina, Louisiana and Texas.

3A. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation's life of faith:

POLITY: This church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its sole Head and places its temporal affairs in the hands of its members as they shall act from time to time under God's guidance. It cherishes the bonds of fellowship which bind it to other churches in the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association and acknowledges its commitment to and participation in the voluntary relationships with those bodies.

FAITH AND DOCTRINE STATEMENT: This church acknowledges as brothers and sisters all who profess and call themselves Christians and affirms the right and obligation of all such to follow the dictates of their own conscience as they are guided by the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and by the Holy Spirit.

Please see Statements of Faith on the following page



| Youth Mission Trip, 2018

Strengths or positive qualities of your congregation:

Looking back at our history and the results of our surveys conducted in 2021 and 2022, there are several key areas where our congregation makes a positive impact including:

- » **Mission Trips:** Yearly youth mission trips (locally and short distance); yearly adult mission trips (often involving travel); local mission activities (supper at an area shelter, helping out with Habitat for Humanity, financial contributions to mission activities)
- » **Active presence in the community:** Host Boy Scout troop; weekly AA meetings at our church; Garden Club events; affiliation with Masonic Home (nursing home) and Overlook Community (assisted living); participation in town parades/events, church antique show, auction, yard sales and other fundraisers; church meals in the community
- » **Sunday School:** Active religious education program for pre-K through 8th grade with current participation of approximately 20-25 students, with dedicated long-time teachers
- » **Local town church:** Hosting weddings, baptisms and funerals of non-congregational members
- » **Generous congregation:** Whenever asked, we always exceed our fundraising goals; numerous dedicated congregants sharing their time and talents
- » **Consistent membership:** Our survey showed the top reasons why our congregation remains coming week after week including: comfort with the church (friends, local, culture), familiarity with the service, active participant on committees, connection with the minister, personal growth opportunities, emotional support and strong connections to the UCC or UUA tradition

Statements of Faith

Charlton Federated Church United Church of Christ (UCC) Statement of Faith

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Amen.

(from The Apostles Creed, Chalice Hymnal #359)

It should also be noted that the UCC members also voted to use Robert Moss "UCC Statement of Faith", however the official voted on statement is the one documented above.

Charlton Federated Church Unitarian-Universalist (UUA) Statement of Faith

We believe in God, who is Love, Light, Truth, and Spirit, the Creator of the Universe, whom we are called to seek, know, and love; and whose nature was revealed to the world in the person and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. We believe that the universal commandment is to love and serve one another ... We believe in the full and final triumph of the grace of God over the powers of sin and death: that the mercy and forgiveness of God are victorious; that this victory of redemption is revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus ... We believe in miracles, such as the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which transcend materialistic views of reality. We believe that ... by reading the Bible (the authoritative textual basis of our faith) and other great texts of spiritual and moral wisdom with a discerning mind, and meditating to connect to the Spirit within, we may all gain a greater understanding of truth, which should be applied for the betterment of ourselves and our world.

Amen.

(from "Our Spiritual Perspective" of the Christian Universalist Association)

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers:

Our services have been predominantly traditional with some modern intermixed. As a result of COVID-19, we upgraded our sound systems and purchased video projection equipment so that our services can now be viewed live on zoom, recorded and uploaded to our social media channels.

Our worship service includes both pastoral and lay participation. A lay person handles the duties of the worship leader. Our pastor delivers the children's content and the sermon. We have always expected the messages to be both Biblically based and reflecting upon the spiritual, social and emotional issues that challenge Christians every day. We look to be guided in our thinking and inspired to spread the word of Christ's boundless love.



Our worship service consists of traditional music and hymns and we have an active choir. Occasionally we have a "praise and worship" Sunday. During the summer months, we are fortunate to have visiting soloists, instrumentalists and small groups. We also have a Christmas cantata.

We celebrate key events in our Christian calendar: Tenebrae, Palm Sunday, Easter, Christmas Eve, Martin Luther King, Jr Memorial, and recognition of Emergency Personnel and Scouts.

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

YOUTH EDUCATION

Sunday school for 5th-8th grades meets from 9:30-10:15 AM prior to Sunday services. Sunday school for pre-K through 4th grades meets during the worship hour. The children are involved in special performances for Easter and Christmas and as appropriate throughout the year.



Children entering kindergarten are given *The Beginners Bible*, and the children entering 3rd grade are given *The Adventure Bible*. These are used in class as well as the curriculum *Faithweaver Now*. This curriculum includes person to person interaction among the children that helps them build friendships. The children learn how to discuss different topics and share their own experiences and feelings with each other. We hope this time in Sunday School will help them in everyday life as they grow older.

The children are given many opportunities to grow in their faith including:

- » Two mission projects during the year and each year different projects are chosen. The older children have the opportunity to volunteer in a youth mission project.
- » The children join their families and partake in communion monthly. They volunteer in lighting the candles on the altar and ring the church bells at the start of service.
- » The minister preaches a special children's sermon at the start of service and they have their own collection that is placed on the altar.



Children actively participate in our annual Christmas pageant

The older children have an opportunity to assist with the younger classes as teacher's aids. This gives the older students responsibility to be in class every week to help with the children's lesson and projects for that day. This opportunity of helping and showing leadership with the young children will help the older children in the future in everyday life for years to come. During the 2021-2022 Sunday School year, we gave the older students a chance to show their artistic abilities by working on the bulletin board, including coming up with the idea and designing it. They really enjoyed it and were very proud of how it came out. We hope to do something with music in the future including some of the students who play instruments or sing.

Our confirmation process is a 2-year cycle with the first year being taught by the minister and the second year adding a mentor from the congregation. The youth each choose a mentor and work with the mentor and the minister to further evolve their faith before becoming a confirmed member of the church.

In the past, we have had an active youth group, which we hope to grow again in the future with additional membership. Since we live in a world where young people are distracted by electronics, we will need to entice them with interesting activities that go beyond game boards. Some of the most successful events have included pumpkin picking after a Bible lesson, movie night and a nature walk to find God in the natural world. The children also love music.

ADULT EDUCATION

- » **Bible/Book studies:** For many years, the congregants have actively participated in both Bible and book studies. Typically, the studies were held early on Sunday mornings, or after the worship service. Many books of the Bible were discussed during the past five years (pre-COVID-19), including Genesis, Exodus, Daniel, Matthew, Mark and Luke, John, Romans, Philippians and Revelation. We also read Uncle Tom's Cabin, and recently (on Zoom) connected the series, "The Twilight Zone", to biblical passages. These studies have both expanded the knowledge of the Bible, and also provided wonderful fellowship, even enabling a small group to "walk" with a member that developed cancer.
- » **Retreats:** Each year, the congregation has been invited to a mini retreat in autumn and a weekend retreat in spring. The nominal cost of the weekend retreat made it accessible to all that were interested. We have often had guest facilitators, who were Bible-based preachers with a background in social/emotional care. Our church is unique in that the retreats are not only open to Deacons, but the congregation at large. All who participate in retreats come away refreshed, closer to God and each other.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission:

The Federated Church of Charlton is governed by a Church Council which is chaired by the Moderator. The proceedings of each meeting are recorded by the Clerk. The Council is composed of one more officer, the Treasurer and all the chairs of the committees, task forces and special committees active at that time. The minister also is considered a member of the Council. The Council meets monthly on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 PM. Currently, we meet on Zoom, a COVID-19 necessity that turned into a habit that we now find very convenient. These meetings generally last 1-2 hours. Each committee meets once a month for approximately 1-2 hours. Special tasks forces and committees generally meet on the same schedule or more frequently depending upon the nature of their task.

Depending upon the nature of the problem, it may be solved by the committee discussing and voting on a resolution. These smaller, domain specific issues are generally resolved in a month. Sometimes chairs will come to the Council for advice or to question if the decision is beyond the authority of the committee. In its deliberations, the Council also decides whether this issue should be brought to the full congregation for a discussion and vote. In this they are guided by the Church By-Laws.

The standing committees include:

- » The Diaconate
- » Music
- » Religious Education
- » Stewardship
- » Missions
- » Flower
- » Head Ushers
- » Business and Technology

Currently the church also has an Open and Affirming Task Force, a Transition Team and, of course, a Pastoral Search Committee.

The Moderator sets the agenda for all Council meetings, and common practice has included a report from each committee and special group at every meeting. The exceptions are special meetings called to address a pressing issue or problem. Additionally, the Council addresses all Church matters and solves problems by vote or affirmation.

Communication, as always, is a challenge. We make regular lectern announcements during Sunday Service and email all congregants with notice of meetings and information about issues. We also announce meetings on our website and Facebook pages. Decisions of the church are generally announced at the meeting when they occur, and then from the lectern and by email to those not present. Despite our efforts, however, people still raise their concerns about being out of the loop and not getting notification of things.

The paid staff also makes decisions daily about their own areas of responsibility. If they feel they need assistance in making decisions or recognize that this matter exceeds their authority, they bring these issues to the minister or to the chair of the committee responsible. Some staff work directly and closely with their respective committees and do not involve the minister, these include Religious Education and Music primarily. The minister is responsible for overseeing the work of the paid staff and is expected to communicate regularly with all staff members and to conduct regular staff meetings. The minister is the principal communication link between the Council and the staff.

In the past several years we have had several instances where we had to make decisions quickly, which we have been able to do thanks to technology. Once the problem presented itself the Council convened a meeting and invited others directly concerned with the issue. Meeting on Zoom within a few days, the Council resolved the issue in one session. The solutions and or actions were then communicated to all by email and phone and announced at Sunday worship. In this way we have been able to solve problems usually within a week.

When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?	Each committee x 1-2 hours per month
Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?	Fortunately, we have not been struck with a crisis or disaster. Any time when we have needed quick action was handled as identified in the paragraph above.
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, copies are available

3B. 11 YEAR REPORT



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS

Church#:	784298										
Assoc:	905	Schedule: 0	Federated Church UCC				Charlton	MA	01507		
YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED		
2011	110	97	70	3	0	0	2	0	1		
2012	110	97	70	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2013	110	97	70	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2014	121	101	48	2	7	3	1	0	11		
2015	126	85	43	3	1	3	2	0	5		
2016	139	90	47	3	9	3	2	0	13		
2017	138	86	49	2	0	0	3	0	-1		
2018	138	79	36	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2019	138	79	36	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2020	138	79	36	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2021	138	79	36	0	0	0	0	0	0		

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPPLY CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2011	\$109,776	\$137,655	\$4,100	\$3,806	\$7,906	\$4,245	\$12,151	3.73	\$259,582	\$111,667
2012	\$109,776	\$0	\$3,137	\$1,066	\$4,203	\$0	\$4,203	2.86	\$113,979	\$0
2013	\$109,776	\$0	\$3,350	\$4,574	\$7,924	\$0	\$7,924	3.05	\$117,700	\$0
2014	\$154,330	\$0	\$3,350	\$5,048	\$8,398	\$5,216	\$13,614	2.17	\$167,944	\$162,141
2015	\$163,910	\$0	\$3,350	\$5,988	\$9,338	\$1,506	\$10,844	2.04	\$174,754	\$178,607
2016	\$1,808,351	\$0	\$3,000	\$22,237	\$25,237	\$0	\$25,237	0.17	\$1,833,588	\$166,514
2017	\$173,922	\$0	\$3,300	\$5,647	\$8,947	\$6,973	\$15,920	1.90	\$189,842	\$176,531
2018	\$162,000	\$0	\$2,919	\$1,861	\$4,780	\$2,650	\$7,430	1.80	\$169,430	\$162,987
2019	\$162,000	\$0	\$0	\$250	\$250	\$0	\$250	0.00	\$162,250	\$0
2020	\$162,000	\$0	\$3,000	\$433	\$3,433	\$0	\$3,433	1.85	\$165,433	\$0
2021	\$162,000	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$500	\$0	\$500	0.00	\$162,500	\$0

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2016-2021	-0.72	-12.22	-23.40	-100.00	-100.00	-91.04	-98.02	-91.14
2011-2021	25.45	-18.56	-48.57	-100.00	-100.00	47.57	-93.68	-37.40

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

3C. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church:

Number of active members:	100
Number of active non-members:	60
Total of church participants:	160

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

	Estimated Percentage
More than 10 years:	75%
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	20%
Less than 5 years:	5%

Number of total participants by age:

Age Range	Estimated Number
0-11	15
12-17	7
18-24	3
25-34	10
35-44	35
45-54	20
55-64	30
65-74	25
75+	15

Additional demographics:

Percentage of adults in various household types	unknown as we do not currently track this data
Education level of adult participants by percentage	
Percentage of adults in various employment types	
Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation	

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up:

As reflected in the 2020 Town of Charlton census:

White	Hispanic	Mixed Race
91.7%	5.7%	1.5%

We do not currently have a strong mix of ethnic heritages. At this point, we would align with the mono-cultural definition.

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one in the near future?

On February 28, 2021, in a special meeting, members of the Federated Church of Charlton voted to begin the process of deciding if our church should become Open and Affirming (ONA).

It passed by 74% yes, 17% no, 9% abstained. A team of five members was formed with Pastor Gary as our ex-officio member. The team first met in May 2021 with a Zoom meeting with guest Kathie Carpenter, from the Southern New England Conference ONA Task Team, who reviewed the process with us and provided some resources.

During the summer months, Pastor Gary Shahinian led a Bible study of the Task Team on Biblical texts that have been used against the LGBTQ community and PowerPoint presentation was emailed to all the members of the congregation. The movie, “For the Bible Tells Me So,” was shown with about 25 people attending, including five from the local Catholic Church. There have been two PowerPoint presentations during worship regarding the marginalized in our society.

Monthly articles for our church newsletter have been written, updating the congregation as well as providing information about the process and answering concerns we have heard expressed. Former members of our congregation who left because we were not ONA, have joined us for our meetings to share their thoughts and feelings about why they left and what it has meant to them. We have had one current member of the congregation give a testimony about the positive aspects of becoming ONA. Additionally, we invited back a former Interim Minister who gave a sermon that invited the congregation to imagine what it would mean for our church to become Open and Affirming toward the LGBTQ community. He returned in July 2022 and participated in a discussion following worship on the topic of becoming ONA.

3D. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Describe those who participate in your church.

Ways of Gathering	Estimated Number of People Involved	Who plans each of the listed gatherings?
Adult Groups or Classes	12	Planned by the minister and the Board of Deacons.
Baptisms (number last year)	2021=1 baptism Prior to COVID-19, on average 3-4 per year	Baptisms are approved by the Deacons. The ceremony is performed during Church Service by the Pastor and accompanied by a Deacon. There is a gift (book) presented to the parents from one of the Sunday School Children.
Children's Groups or Classes	20-25	The Religious Education Director plans Sunday School. The Minister initiates the confirmation process in conjunction with the Board of Deacons and church mentors. The minister plans youth mission trips in conjunction with the Missions Committee and the Religious Education Committee.
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	100-120	Lenten Week services are approved by the Deacons. Services for Maundy Thursday, a Cross Walk, Good Friday Services and Sunrise Service are done in unison with the local Charlton City Methodist Church. Christmas Eve Services have included a Children's Pageant performed by the Sunday School class and directed by the Religious Ed committee. In the past we have had two services on Christmas Eve; and earlier service for the Children's Pageant and then a later service.
Church-wide Meals	40-80 at each event	Stewardship Sunday luncheon (planned by Stewardship Committee); Annual Meeting luncheon (planned by youth mission trip participants); Easter Breakfast (planned by committee); Potluck Suppers (planned by committee).
Choirs and Music Groups	12 adult 10 children	Music Director/Church Choir plans weekly adult choir; Children choir for special services (Easter, Christmas, Children's Sunday, etc.).
Church-based Bible Study	4-8	There is discussion between the Deacons and the Pastor to conduct Bible Study sessions. A topic or Chapter is decided and the Pastor leads these groups over the course of 4-8 weeks.
Communion (served how often?)	70	Holy Communion is offered once a month, generally the first Sunday of the month. The Deacons are responsible for providing the bread and juice and distribute these pew by pew. Communion also occurs on Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve.

Ways of Gathering	Estimated Number of People Involved	Who plans each of the listed gatherings?
Community Meals	Average 10 for each meal	Coordinated by Missions Committee; locally served at Dismas House in Worcester, previously served at other area organizations. Youth mission trip involves a community meal.
Confirmation (number confirmed last year)	3-7 on average	Confirmation is a 2 year process. The first year is weekly meetings with the minister. The second year the confirmands meet on a regular basis with a church mentor.
Drama or Dance Program	N/A	N/A
Funerals (number last year)	Estimated 5-7 per year	Planned by minister. The church also provides funeral services for non-members in addition to members.
Intergenerational Groups	N/A	N/A
Outdoor Worship	Approx. 75 participate in Cross Walk 25-50 at Easter sunrise service	Planned by minister and Board of Deacons. Ecumenical Good Friday cross walk. Easter sunrise service.
Prayer or Meditation Groups	10	Previous small group prayer group organized by the minister.
Public Advocacy Work	N/A	N/A
Retreats	8-20, depending on location	The Deacons will discuss with the Pastor about having Diaconate Retreats. These can be done off site at a nearby facility, for one or two days. These have been led by an outside facilitator. We have also offered mini-retreats at the Church for all to attend. These have been led by the Pastor.
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	N/A	N/A
Weddings (number last year)	on average 2-3 weddings per year	Planned by the minister and the family. Church Music Director is also involved as needed by the family for music selection and performance.
Worship (time slot: 10:30 AM)	40-75	Services from September to June are held at 10:30 AM.
Worship (time slot: 9:30 AM)	40-75	Services during the summer, Mid-June, July and August are held at 9:30 AM. After Labor Day, we return back to the 10:30 AM schedule.
Young Adult Groups or Classes	3-7 on average	Ages 12-17 participate in confirmation process referenced above.
Youth Groups or Classes	presently 0	Currently do not have a teen youth group but have in the past.

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):

N/A

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:

N/A

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
Minister	Yes		Church Council and Pastoral Relations Committee	
Church Secretary		\$8,840 part time	Minister	5+ years
Sexton		\$7,410 part time	Business Committee	5+ years
Organist		\$17,000 part time	Music Committee	10+ years
Sunday School Administrator		\$6,898 part time	Religious Education Committee	2 years



Reflection: We try to serve all of our members. Currently one of our greater needs is with the youth, particularly teens, who have been active in the past. We also have a large percentage of older adults in our congregation.

3E. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$111,000
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	
Endowment Draw (beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal")	
Fundraising Events	
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	
Rentals of Church Building	
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$16,800
Support from Related Organizations (e.g. Women's Group)	\$600
Transfers from Special Accounts	
Other (specify):	
Other (specify):	
TOTAL:	\$124,800



COVID-19 and remote services have had a negative effect on attendance and income. Historically, the church has run with a surplus, which was either banked for unexpected current expenses or invested. The shortfall this year is being made up from check book savings. A snapshot of the balances is listed below:

- » Checking: \$140,000
- » Certificates of Deposit: \$52,000
- » Memorial Funds: \$37,000
- » Investment Funds: \$422,000

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

\$160,973

Attach most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer's report as shared publicly with the congregation, or – if your church does not pass an annual budget – list current budgeted expenses here:

Please see the following two (2) pages

Federated Church of Charlton
2022 Budget

Category	Description	2021 Annual Budget	Dec-21 YTD	2022 Annual Budget
EXPENSES				
Administration				
	Maintenance	800	-	500
	Office Supplies	500	838	600
	Postage	400	356	400
	Secretary	7,800	6,551	8,840
	Telephone	2,004	2,103	2,136
	Employee Payroll Taxes	2,289	1,734	3,073
	Total Admin	13,793	11,582	15,549
Building Maintenance				
	Contingencies	-	8,968	-
	Electric	2,100	1,813	2,100
	Elevator	1,475	2,795	1,475
	Fire alarm fee	750	794	794
	Heat	2,200	2,852	2,640
	Insurance			
	Basic Insurance	5,835	6,291	6,480
	Umbrella	361	350	361
	Workers Comp	1,151	900	1,185
	Total Insurance	7,346	7,541	8,025
	Janitorial Supplies	300	224	300
	Sewer	2,500	1,909	2,500
	Sexton	7,020	5,042	7,410
	Trash Removal	228	-	228
	Snow Removal	750	225	750
	Water Usage	650	546	650
	Parsonage Repairs	-	353	0
	Total Bldg Maintenance	25,319	33,062	26,872
Education				
	Curriculum	1,100	811	1,100
	RE Director	6,762	6,763	6,898
	Religious Ed Resources	600	624	600
	Total Education	8,462	8,198	8,598
Other Expenses				
	Parsonage Expense	4,650	1,953	4,650
	Diaconate	600	110	600
	Stewardship	350	-	350
	Total Other Expenses	5,600	2,063	5,600
Pastor				
	Annuity	8,570	9,566	7,000
	Continuing Education	1,000	481	1,000
	Family Protection	1,035	730	750
	Health Insurance	13,000	16,142	14,004
	Salary	53,825	53,825	53,825
	Travel Allowance	250	-	250
	Total Pastor	77,680	80,744	76,829
Worship				
	Guest Musician	350	300	350
	Guest Preacher	925	600	925
	Music Committee	750	587	750
	Technology Committee	-	-	818
	Nursery Care	200	-	-
	Organist	8,345	9,735	17,023
	Total Worship	10,570	11,222	19,866
Mission Expenses				
		7,089	6,814	7,660
Total Expenses				
		148,513	153,684	160,973

Federated Church of Charlton
2022 Budget

Category	Description	2021 Annual Budget	Dec-21 YTD	2022 Annual Budget
INCOME				
Offering				
	Misc		347	-
	Children's Offering	300	471	300
	Current Expenses - Pledges	90,682	112,421	101,736
	Easter and Christmas	1,100	2,892	1,100
	Lenten	1,300	1,035	1,300
	Loose	1,500	1,140	1,500
	Total Offering	94,882	118,306	105,936
Other Inc				
	AA Donations	300	300	600
	Gifts	100	944	100
	On the Green Ads	-	-	-
	Parsonage Rental	16,800	16,800	16,800
	Other/Hall Rental	300	566	300
	Total Other Income	17,500	18,610	17,800
Missions Income				
	Christmas Fund for Retired Clergy	-	290	-
	NIN	-	462	-
	Easter Breakfast	-	-	-
	OGHS	500	896	500
	Adult Mission Trip Scholarship	-	-	-
	Pledges	7,089	6,498	7,660
	Total Missions Income	7,589	8,146	8,160
Total Income		119,971	145,063	131,896
OVERALL TOTAL		(28,542)	(8,621)	(29,077)

Jim Jalbert - Annual Boiler Maintenance	\$ 1,200
Staples	\$ 700
Michael Moscatelli - sound and video	\$ 2,359
Donna Lamphrey - sound and video	\$ 693
Zoom Equipment	\$ 765
Leforte Electric - Electrical work for new camera	\$ 553
Donna Lamphrey - supplies to clean kitchen and dehumidifier	\$ 530
Baker Fire Equipment	\$ 477
CCLI - Movie License	\$ 225
Vacuum Repair	\$ 298
Misc	\$ 1,168
	<u>\$ 8,968</u>

Cash Balance at 12/31/20	151,368
CD Balances at 12/31/20	52,273
Total at 12/31/20	<u>203,641</u>
Cash Balance at 12/31/21	141,314
CD Balances at 12/31/21	52,531
Total at 12/31/21	<u>193,845</u>

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

48%

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

What is the church’s current indebtedness?

- » Total amount of loan debt: N/A
- » Reason for debt: N/A
- » Are capital and other payments current?: N/A

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 at this time

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

N/A

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

N/A

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

N/A

Does your church have an endowment?	N/A
What is the market value of the assets?	N/A
Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances?	N/A
What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)?	N/A
Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years:	N/A
At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last?	N/A
Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:	N/A
Other Assets	N/A
Reserves (savings):	N/A
Investments (other than endowment):	\$422,000

Does your church have a parsonage?

Yes

How is the parsonage used?	Currently used as a rental
Address:	66 Main Street Charlton, MA 01507
Finished square footage:	
Number of Bedrooms, Bathrooms:	2 bedroom, 2 bath
Assessed real estate value:	\$300,000+ in today's market
Available for minister residence?	Yes
Expected minister residence?	Optional
Condition of structure, systems and appliances:	Good
Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs:	Business Committee



Describe all buildings owned by the church:

Building, Land and Parsonage

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

N/A



| The Church parsonage is located next to the church on Main Street

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? (worship space, pulpit, fellowship space, facilities, etc.)

The Federated Church has a handicap access ramp at the back of the building. Upon entering the building from that ramp, there is an elevator that can take people up one level to the meeting house/worship service, as well as down a level to fellowship hall. There are removable pews to accommodate people in wheelchairs in the meetinghouse.

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 managed our finances well to this point with the church and parsonage paid for and no outstanding debt. Traditionally, we have not had large donations, including during our capital campaign. All commitments relative to pledges have been made. The church exceeded its goal during the last two capital campaigns and did so with relatively small donations.

However, we recognize that we need to increase our membership and financial support moving forward to maintain sustainability.

3F. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Significant happenings in the history of the church:

- » Federation of UCC and UUA
- » Burned and rebuilt

Most important in last 10 years

- » Rev. Chase's illness and the church's handling and compassion towards it

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

As discussed previously and below:

- » Health of our long-term Pastor, Rev. Chase and the impact that placed on the Church
- » Working with Interim Pastors for the past 2+ years
- » Pandemic and doing Church virtually during these past 2 years

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:

Not necessarily a recent conflict but one that continues to present concern for our church, was a decision we made in 2007 regarding a vote to allow for gay marriage in the church. There was a committee formed that met for over a year, presentations were made to the congregation, meetings were held for discussion, and a vote was taken. The vote asked whether the congregation's definition of marriage had changed and that answer was no, thus confirming that marriage was between a man and a woman. This resulted in the departure of some members of our church. We have heard from some of these previous members that this decision continues to impact their decision to not return.

In addition, we have heard from current members that our current ONA examination may lead to others looking to leave depending on what is decided. We recognize that this may be the case, however, we feel it is important to continue this effort. We keep going back to the thought process that this may bring more people into our Church than those that leave. We continue to pray on it,

have open discussions for all to attend, show films on the subject followed by discussion and have had Worship Services that allow us to look at our Church with an Open and Affirming perspective.

Again, not a conflict necessarily, however, our current state of long-term interim pastoral leadership has been difficult on the congregation. Some members have decided not to return to the Church until a full-time pastor is selected. This has made it difficult to continue our work when all members are not there to share their voice and assist with the process associated with such a task. It has resulted in more work with fewer people. There has been discussion of 'burnout' and 'exhaustion' from those working to maintain the operations of the Church while conducting this enormous task of surveying the members and writing the profile to start the search for a settled pastor. While at the same time, members ask why the process is taking so long. Some members have shared that they may return to the church once a settled pastor is in place. They want to wait to see what happens with the new pastor.



Another change in the church service was a decision to provide new music during the service and to offer what is called "praise and worship" once a month. Putting our traditional hymnal aside, music is more upbeat, and may include clapping, tambourines and displayed on a screen at the altar. Not all members were receptive to this new music and it was made obvious by body language or attendance on these Sundays. We feel that it is important to continue to provide these services for those looking for a more modern service and perhaps to attract and retain more youth or young families.

During the pandemic, we switched to doing service on Zoom. We did not hold in-person service for over a year and then when we returned, more restrictions were put in place about distancing, singing, passing the donation plate, distributing communion and other safety measures. Since our return, we have had to resort back to only Zoom when COVID-19 cases spiked again in Jan 2022 and then again in May 2022. The attendance on Zoom has been shrinking as members continue to be frustrated by the circumstances and each time we have to resort to Zoom it impacts our attendance and then poses the additional problem of being able to get people back at the Church.

In order to provide the Zoom service, we had to quickly install technology that would allow for cameras, microphones and other equipment in the Church, and then securing those with the technical abilities to be able to install these devices and then train others on how to use them each week for the service. Finding technical coverage every week has been difficult due to the skillset of our congregation (older population), fear of the technology and being responsible for this part of the service. We have started to recruit some teens to serve on this Technology Team, for community service hours and/or a stipend. They may have more ideas on best practices or ways to make the process easier, however, doing the Zoom service has allowed us to record the service and post it on the Church's Facebook page.

Our protocol for conflict is to address it quickly.

Let's talk about it, gather those best to address it: the Deacons, Pastor and committee members. Some issues are resolved verbally, others have been done in writing when necessary.

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

Staff Member's Name	Years of Service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev. James Chase	33	Y

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

Loss of Rev. Chase, our previous minister, when faced with declining health, had to step aside.
What we learned: strengthen of lay leadership, function/make decisions in absence of a ministerial leader

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

No

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

No

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

No

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

4A. COMMUNITY VISION

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

Community events, Boy Scouts, AA, Garden Club, Mission, After School program bodies.

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

SNEUCC Annual Meeting: delegates attend

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.) 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)
- ☐ Just Peace
- ☐ Global Mission Church
- ☐ Open and Affirming (ONA)
- ☐ WISE Congregation for Mental Health
- ☐ Other UCC designations:
- ☐ Designations from other denominations
- ☒ 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?

When we surveyed our congregation in early 2022, we asked what issues mattered the most to people personally. The general consensus is that we all want to help with issues, whether or not we follow the UCC or UUA stance on such social justice issues.

Issues that came out as most important were (and how we have helped in the past include):

- » Food/fuel security (we have offered non-perishable food items to those in need as well as gas cards)
- » Drug and alcohol abuse/addiction (we sponsor an AA weekly meeting in our church)
- » Domestic violence (donations/help with area shelters)
- » Affordable/rehab housing
- » LGBTQ safety
- » Refugee crisis (we have held fundraising activities).

Our congregation is currently discussing becoming Open and Affirming (ONA) and our ONA Task Force has sponsored events, guest speakers, and shared knowledge with the congregation with an anticipated congregational vote in the future.

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

At the local level, we participate in pulpit exchange with the Catholic Church, joint Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services and ecumenical Thanksgiving service.

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:

Broad mission statement (Bylaws) that does not speak to specific activities.

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?

The congregation expects the pastor will have community involvement and support these endeavors. The church has also supported the minister's sabbatical in the past, broadening our ministry.



4B. MISSION INSITE

Comment on your congregation's MissionInsite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area.

The Town of Charlton has experienced steady population growth and the report notes that the household change is expected to not change much in the next 10 years. Charlton is a very homogeneous town with a high education level, an average age of low to mid 40s, and a higher percentage of white collar vs. blue collar occupations. The majority of households are a family household, highlighting the opportunity for our congregation to grow our family involvement.

Relative to beliefs about God, the Charlton community appears to align with national movements, where more people seem to have "no opinion" relative to their religious beliefs. The very strong agreement with:

» "God is love and invites the world into a loving relationship" and

» "I have a relationship with one living God"

However, with 32.9% strongly agreeing that "Belief in Jesus does not require participation in a church" provides a challenge for our community.

Regarding social and moral values, the Town of Charlton shows strong agreement on:

» I believe strong families are key to social stability

» I believe tolerance is necessary for social piece and wellbeing

» I believe America has a moral responsibility to be a force for good in the world

Relative to religious preference, 64.5% of the Town identify with Christian Religious Preferences (36.3% Catholic, 21.9% Protestant and 6.4% other Protestant Denominations). Other Non-Christian religious preferences represented 11.7% and no preference/none was 23.8%.

In this study area, 32.3% are actively involved in a faith and religious community whereas 67.8% are not involved. When we look at our own church involvement, we do find similar results that a small population is the most actively involved. Of those who indicated participation, 58.1% had a weekly or more level of participation whereas only 7.2% were

involved in holidays only. Again, this does align with our church in that we have a regular attendance and see small spikes around the Christian holidays.

People have different reasons for not participating and 23.2% cite issues relative to their personal life (couldn't find the right faith community, demands of raising children, no time/less time, moved from community) while 34.5% cite personal faith concerns (no longer believe, unsure about beliefs, not relevant to their life). Church related reasons noted offer a great opportunity for our church to grow by looking at activities and reasons people have not been active and seeing if we can fill some of those voids - specifically help them "find the right faith community."

As far as life concerns, the priority list focused on: Ongoing impact of COVID-19, Social/political tensions/discord, Health crisis/illness, Financing the future/savings/retirement, Fear of the future or unknown, Racism/racial injustice, Personal health.

Ministry or program recommendations also provide opportunities for our church along the lines of:

- » Warm and friendly encounters
- » Quality sermons
- » Holiday programs/activities
- » Traditional worship experiences
- » Opportunities to develop personal relationships
- » Opportunities for volunteering in the community
- » Seniors/retiree activities
- » Adult social activities
- » Involvement in social causes
- » Celebration of sacraments
- » Family oriented activities

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?

Our internal demographics are very representative of the adjacent neighborhoods and the community at large.

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

With an increasing elderly population in our town, we are looking to expand our ministry. Family culture/demographics and how they spend their time in the community (sports, activities, etc.) prohibits some from attending church due to conflicting schedules.

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

In 2022, our transition team reached out to local community organizations and asked where the Federated Church of Charlton may have an impact on the community by asking what they think Charlton's biggest concerns are and what needs could our church fulfill to help address those concerns. We met with: Charlton Fire, Charlton Police, Masonic Home/Overlook assisted living facility, Charlton Manor Rest Home, Senior Center, Food Pantry, Town Administrator, Town Library, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, the AA Group that meets at our church, Garden Club, the Elementary School next to our church and the School Superintendent, local funeral home, local realtor, and attended the local clergy meeting.

Our previous minister was well known and active in the community, most notably serving as the Fire Chaplain and clergy responder during emergencies.

Overall, the community feedback was very positive regarding our church, as well as the many positive attributes of our community. All organizations saw an opportunity for us to work more together in the future, whether it be volunteering, serving as a resource of information, and offering counseling services.

In addition, our physical structure and central location seems like an ideal meeting location for groups (as AA and Boy Scouts currently use) for group meetings and community get-togethers.

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

Overall theme is that the congregation is friendly and welcoming.

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.

Please see attached

REFERENCE 1

Name	Father Robert Grattaroti
Position/Setting	Pastor, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 10 H. Putnam Ext., Charlton, MA
Telephone	508-248-7862
Email	bgratt@aol.com
Relationship to the Congregation	Long-standing friend of the congregation, guest preacher during pulpit exchange, local clergy

REFERENCE 2

Name	Reverend Joseph Bassett
Position/Setting	
Telephone	
Email	
Relationship to the Congregation	Former minister, friend of the congregation, guest preacher

REFERENCE 3

Name	Reverend Carol Smith
Position/Setting	
Telephone	
Email	
Relationship to the Congregation	Friend of the congregation, facilitated church retreats

6A. CLOSING POEM



*Based on 1 Peter 5:7 -
"Casting all your cares upon
him; for he careth for you."*

God Cares

God has a tender reason for everything
we face,

Just as each change of season makes
earth a sweeter place;

For every night a morning, for every thorn
a flower,

The rainbow bright adorning, the silver of
the shower.

Unfailing comes tomorrow to work his
will and tell,

God cares through joy and sorrow;

God lives and all is well.

6B. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

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

Church Counsel, Transition Team, Open and Affirming Task Force Chair and Committee Chairs

Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

N/A

Signature

**Name &
Title**

Jim Moran

Church Moderator
Member, Selection Committee

Date

October 26, 2020

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*



FEDERATED CHURCH OF CHARLTON
64 MAIN STREET
CHARLTON, MA 01507
www.charltonfedchurch.org

The Federated Church in Charlton is one of the strongest ecumenical ministries in Central Massachusetts. With one hand, it reaches Joseph's Parish and with the other hand holds woke individuals of the UUA. In Charlton the center holds.

Areas for improvement start with finding a small church minister since Andover Newton decamped to New Haven, Connecticut. This Federated congregation needs a minister who can recognize, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Nevertheless, the stresses of Covid on their basic program will now require a minister to pick up the pieces. Any wise minister can sift Jim Chase's long pastorate as a treasure rather than a memory to be buried.

One local question worthy of study - Is there a connection between "universal" Human Rights and the Universalist witness and theology of Aiden Ballou in and about the Federated Church?

At festive services sitting in the congregation I would always see one or two Fire Fighters in formal uniform. This bespoke the way this small town organized against the ancient enemy of all towns – fire. Their presence also served to remind us all that their Chaplain had gone to NYC to meet with urban fire fighters responding to 9-11. Their repeated opening question was, "Why did it happen, Padre?"

The Rev. Mr. Joseph A Bassett,
UUA Minister (retired).
109 Brooksby Village Drive
Peabody, Mass. 01960

Telephone 978-531-5081
e-mail revbassett@aol.com



St. Joseph's Church

10 H. Putnam Extension, P.O. Box 338
Charlton City, MA 01508-0338
(508) 248-7862 • Fax (508) 248-5832

Oct 5, 2022

Dear Jim,

My relationship with the Federated Church has been ongoing for some thirty years. It began with my friendship with Jim Chase years ago, and our churches always maintained a very warm relationship. In fact, your organist and your church secretary are members of our church.

I believe that churches should be havens of love and friendship which constantly point us to our Creator.

Praise God that in a world so divided by so many factors, the presence of God among us can be a uniting factor. Even though we are divided in our structures and our traditions, it is God, Father of us all, that can and should be a uniting force.

I believe it all begins with our friendship; that is why I was so blessed to call Jim Chase a dear friend for so many years. Any creedal or ecclesial divisions between us always were resolved by our love for God and for one another.

In your search for a Pastor, I would say that you pray for a person with a shepherd's heart, one who is caring, loving and open. A person who has the gift of being present to the people.

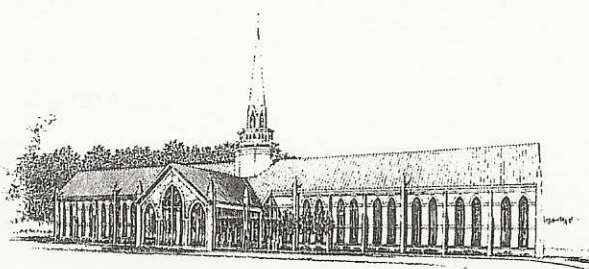
Our pulpit exchange and our monthly clergy gatherings were a real boon to me, and I know they helped solidify our bonds of friendship.

Please know that our community and myself will offer prayers that the Lord will provide you with a loving Pastor.

God Bless you,

Fr. Bob Grattaroti

Fr. Bob Grattaroti





CAROL L. A. SMITH, L.I.C.S.W.

37 Avon Ave., Shrewsbury, Ma. 01545; 508-425-3923; Clasmith333@yahoo.com

To whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter as a reference on behalf of the Transition Team of the First Federated Church of Charlton. I have worked with this church over the past 30 years as a faith-based psychotherapist for some of its members, a consultant to its pastor, a pulpit supply preacher and, quite often, as a retreat leader. Let me address some of the requests posed:

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

As I have worked with this church and its members, I have found that this church holds strength in its care for its members and for the wider town community. They are willing to help support and nurture one another in times of need.

This church, as I have come to know their Board of Deacons, desires to develop a strong spiritual life for the church.

This church has built a lovely mission program which enhances the lives of those who participate of all ages as well as those they serve through their mission work.

This church enjoys its children and youth and considers them vital to their mutual lives in faith.

This church is one that continues to be thirsty for the Word of God and participate, however many that may be at any one given time, in Bible study and personal spiritual growth.

This church enjoys having a good time together providing not only the foundations of a steady church through worship and Sunday school, but through enjoyable activities and events that bring the church in various constructs together.

Describe some areas for improvement in this church's ministry:

This church has built a strong foundation through worship and Bible study on the Word of God. However, it would benefit the whole church if it can explore ways to engage more of its members in this endeavor through small groups and wider church workshops.

This church may wish to consider continuing to reflect and act on ways to engage in the larger community and world community. Although the church has been about such in its story, it would be enjoyable to ponder even more ways to engage with others in the broader Church.

This church has been, for many years, a pastor-driven church where much good leadership has created a good faith foundation. They may wish to look at other models of leadership as they move forward.

As the Board of Deacons have developed their spirituality as board members and as individuals, they may wish to work together intentionally to develop programs for all members of the church to participate in such programs. This may require helping church members begin to identify their own hunger and thirst for a spiritual relationship with God.

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church's ministry:

Over the last 30 years or more, I have had the privilege of leading this church's Board of Directors in yearly spiritual retreats. They have impressed me with their devotion to their call on this Board and their desire to approach their work from a foundation of faith and love of Christ. They have always been willing to bring their full attention to the retreat, to be vulnerable in their sharing and commitment and to uphold on another in love. This experience, hopefully as deepened each of them and has, most certainly, touched me.

Sincerely,

Rev. Carol L. A. Smith