

## Local Church Profile for Churches Seeking a Designated Term Pastor (DTP)

### Church Contact Information

Full Name: ***Canaan Congregational Church***  
Address: **PO Box 66, Canaan NY 12029 (Mailing Address)**  
**1670 County Route 5, Canaan, NY (Physical Address)**  
Phone: **518-781-4775**  
Website: **[www.canaanucc.org](http://www.canaanucc.org)**

Additional Denominational Affiliations:

UCC Conference: Southern New England  
Association: Berkshire Association  
Area Conference Minister Name: Rev. Terry Yasuko-Ogawa  
ACM email: [ogawaty@sneucc.org](mailto:ogawaty@sneucc.org)  
ACM phone: (860) 761-7192

### Position Details

*In a paragraph or two for each item, please answer the following prompts, or fill in the requested information.*

1. Describe the ministry position for which you are seeking a pastor. *(This will be the first impression most candidates have of you. Highlight your gifts and graces as well as your needs so that candidates have the best sense of connection to and curiosity about your position. Include keywords that will help candidates search. It must be **no more than 2,000 characters, including punctuation and spaces, and in a single, unformatted paragraph**).*

Our pastor is a spiritual guide, encouraging exploration and challenging us to deepen our faith. As a collaborator, the pastor engages with our community. Our congregation is well educated and engaged, connected to the Berkshire Association and wider community. Both innovative and mindful of tradition within this church founded in 1785, the pastor crafts integrated worship and study that is uplifting, contemplative, thought-provoking, and connects us to the sacred. Mindful of three recent traumas—(1) the devastating fire that consumed our 1829 brick church in 2017, which opened new opportunities to design and build a new building; (2) the deaths in 2019–2021 of nearly a third of our congregation, including our pastor; and (3) the pandemic isolation experienced by all of us—the pastor will encourage many and varied forms of being together that promote strengthening our bonds and relationships. Recognizing the maturity of the congregation, the pastor occasionally (although not exclusively) incorporates appropriate topics of wisdom, loss, legacy, and end-of-life issues. Interested in maintaining our shared efforts with our neighboring faith groups, such as the local Buddhist temple, our nearby Chatham-area churches, and several UCC churches, the pastor encourages participation in study groups, joint ministry efforts, and social gatherings. The church is situated in the Berkshire-Taconic range within a roughly 2-hour drive from both New York City and Boston. More than half the homes in Canaan are second homes. Of the full-time residents, many are aging and are retired. There are few families with children, but in the summer the population increases by 50%, including many

families with children. The option to manage and coordinate ***Creating Space Arts and Spirituality Collective***, an integral part of our church's ministry, is open to the pastor as a part of compensated ministry. We have entered into an Intentional Bridge Ministry with Rev. Quentin Chin. It may run concurrently with a new pastoral leadership.

2. Name 3 core competencies that you feel you will need in your DTP.

First, a deeply thoughtful, creative, theological person

Second, a collaborative communicator and builder of consensus

Third, one who embraces a vision of expanding what church **is**, especially in the community

3. Position Scope: \_\_\_\_\_ Fulltime \_\_\_\_\_  $\frac{3}{4}$  time \_\_\_\_\_ **X**  $\frac{1}{2}$  time \_\_\_\_\_  $\frac{1}{4}$  time

4. Position Duration: 3–5 years \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is the DTP eligible for the settled position? \_\_\_\_\_ **X** Y \_\_\_\_\_ N

If yes, how will that be discerned? By mutual discernment and agreement, through an annual review with the Church Council and discussion of renewal of contract or transition to settled pastor within the three- to five-year time frame.

### **Designated Term Ministry Goals**

*The focus of a designated term ministry is to work toward the church's declared purpose for a specific season. Whereas, the purpose of an Interim Pastor is to help a congregation prepare for their next Settled Pastor, a Designated Term Pastor is called to assist the church with meeting specific goals within a specific time period. These are the most common reasons that churches choose a Designated Term Ministry.*

1. Please choose all the reasons for choosing a DTM that applies to you.

- \_\_\_\_\_ New ministry development, start or continuance  
\_\_\_\_\_ **X** Revitalization of current ministries and church vitality  
\_\_\_\_\_ Legacy/hospice  
\_\_\_\_\_ **X** Reassessment of ministry, which may include:  
    ▪ exploring merger, yoking or unification with another church  
    ▪ assessment of properties  
    ▪ Staffing restructuring  
\_\_\_\_\_ Major conflict/healing

2. In a paragraph or two, explain how you discerned that a DTM was right for the church at this time. Recently we have had substantive self-study, including three Appreciative Inquiry sessions in the last 12 years. Also, after the 2017 fire, we, of necessity, had to closely review our place in the

community, our future, our financial position, and our energy. Creating Space Collective, a spirituality and arts collective, which cultivates an openness to the sacred and encourages people to communicate with one another through the medium of artistic expression, came out of the Appreciative Inquiry session in the fall of 2020. We feel now we are poised, focused, and have continuity in our ministries. We are ready to focus on rebuilding our community presence following the pandemic. We have entered into an Intentional Bridge Ministry with Rev. Quentin Chin. The goals of this agreement are to strengthen our lay pastoral caregiving (Called to Care) and lay-led liturgies and through discernment based on reading of **Toward the Better Country** by L. Gail Irwin and other readings including the UCC's Church Legacy Workbook, to prepare for our church's and the wider church's future. This part-time agreement has a maximum time frame of eight months commencing in January of 2023. It may run concurrently with a new pastoral leadership.

3. Please explain your goals for this Designated period using the table below.

|    | <b>Goal:</b> with specificity, describe what you hope to accomplish during this time.  | <b>Commitment:</b> describe how the congregation will prioritize and participate in reaching this goal?   | <b>Assessment:</b> describe how the congregation will know the goal has been accomplished   |
|----|--|---|---|
| 1. | <b>Keep our relationship with local contacts vibrant.</b> Partner with neighboring churches and local faith organizations for events, perhaps hosting a fundraiser for a community mission such as Canaan Neighbors Helping Neighbors, and participating with Chatham Silent Pantry, Interfaith Anti-Racism Group. | Two to three events per year with a goal of at least one event that would benefit a non-church organization, and one that benefits the church; all events would showcase the new church building and the church's interest in community building because we are too small to do it ourselves. | Successfully stage two or three events without feeling overwhelmed. Positive feedback from community members, local press affirming our being a community resource. |
| 2. | <b>Sustain our creativity.</b> Manage the ongoing <i>Creating Space Arts and Spirituality Collective</i> programming and outreach.   | Network and support this program of arts and spirituality workshops September–May because this also sustains our own creativity and feeds us!   | Increase participation in workshops, increase our reach with new and repeat participants, recruit new teachers and workshop leaders.                                |

|    |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|
| 3. | <b>Maintain a solid welcoming base for elders.</b> Revive the <i>Wisdom Circle</i> for our elders (part of our pastoral care), a fellowship group to meet on a regular basis. | Encourage lay people to organize and structure this to meet the needs of the participants (timing, location, theme, etc.) because we value our elders and their wisdom and wish to have them/us fully involved. | Regular participation, returning participants, participants inviting friends and others to join. The emergence of new ways of connection through this and keeping folks from isolation is critical. |
|----|---|---|---|

## Who We Are

*In a paragraph or two for each item, please provide the following.*

Church's Mission Statement:

### **OUR STATEMENT OF MISSION**

**To encourage spiritual exploration  
and build inclusive community;  
To share our talents and gifts  
in service to our world;  
Humbly following Christ's example.**

### **OPEN AND AFFIRMING STATEMENT**

**Following the spirit and inclusive way of Jesus,  
we embrace the diversity of God's creation.  
We welcome people of any sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnic, cultural,  
or economic background, and ability.  
Everyone is invited to participate fully in our worship  
and in the ministry of the Canaan Congregational Church.**

Brief Church History: The Canaan Congregational Church has a long history of strong lay leadership and relatively short-term pastorates since the late 1980s. The short length of these pastorates was positive in that we were a launching pad for newly ordained ministers who, in several cases, went on to notable careers. Much of our congregation is comprised of well-educated, retired, or close-to-retirement professionals, including those who have had long careers in social work, education, finance, and engineering. We are generous and a socially responsible, justice-minded group, liberal leaning and politically aware. Our vote to become Open and Affirming was unanimous.

Additionally, the Church has a commitment to environmental stewardship. We diligently worked to attain a "Green Congregation" (Level One) environmental status, which was conferred to us by Rev. Jim Antal, Conference President, in 2016, an admirable task in a 185-year-old brick building. We undertook as a ministry publishing a Directory of

Environmental Organizations in 2016–2017, we held an Interfaith Celebration for the Earth, and we hosted a controversial community-wide forum related to natural gas pipeline expansion.

The Church is situated in the Berkshire-Taconic range within a 2-hour drive from both New York City and Boston. More than half the homes in Canaan are second homes. Of the full-time residents, many are aging and are retired. There are few families with children, but in the summer the population increases by 50%, including many families with children.

***Creating Space Arts and Spirituality Collective***, a ministry of the Canaan Congregational Church, is a spirituality and arts collective, which cultivates an openness to the sacred and encourages people to communicate with one another through the medium of artistic expression. Past offerings have included Textiles and Sacred Scripture, Songwriting, Poetry, Yoga and Centering Prayer, Contemplative Prayer, and A Spirituality of Nature. Planned future offerings include Storytelling, and Creating an Altar. When offering these gatherings and workshops, Creating Space includes people from the wider community, connecting the church to a larger audience.

### 1. 2-3 Significant Events:

- The most significant event in recent years was the ***devastating fire of November 2017***, when our 1829 brick church burned. Eventually, it was determined that it could not be rebuilt, and we voted to have it demolished. We rebuilt a flexible, adaptable, energy-efficient building with the insurance proceeds. We opened the building for worship two weeks before Christmas 2019, but shut our doors because of the pandemic in March 2020, and began virtual worship services. We reopened with hybrid worship in mid-2021, which continues to this day.
- We have suffered the ***loss of many members from death***, including the death of our pastor, Rev. Dr. Charles Close, over a short time period. Lay and clerical leaders, the heart and soul of the church, are mourned and heartily missed. Of our 44 members, 9 passed away during the time period June 2019 through December 2020. Several other members have moved.
- ***We are once again in transition***. Our designated term pastor, Rev. Patty Fox, was called shortly after the death of Rev. Close in June 2020. She ended the second year of her designated term contract with us early to take a full-time position in Maine. In November 2021, she left her other part-time position with West Stockbridge UCC. The relationship we'd begun building with West Stockbridge was short-circuited because of that severance. We had been worshipping together frequently and sharing music, mission, and study groups under Rev. Fox's pastorate.

### 3. Church Strengths:

- We have resilient, competent, and intelligent lay leadership.
- We are adaptable and agile in management style and worship.
- Our building is beautiful, energy-efficient, and flexible. We worked closely with our architect to create a sacred space that is acoustically and aesthetically uplifting and welcoming.
- We welcome varied worship and annually hold a Poetry Sunday (where we share poems at a picnic at someone's home), a water communion (where we bring waters that have

meaning to us—perhaps from summer travels—and mingle them), and occasionally hold Taizé meditations, lectio divina, and similar contemplative and meditative sessions.

- We have no mortgage or debt.

#### 4. Church Challenges:

- Our membership is small.
- The majority of our members are 60 years and older.
- We have few people to fill committees and need to be flexible and creative to manage effectively.
- We rely on volunteers for many things, but must employ people for certain tasks for which we cannot find volunteers: bookkeeping, cleaning, etc. This is an additional strain on our budget.
- While we have been financially stable because of favorable investment returns, we are heavily dependent on our reserves, which is not sustainable in the long run.

#### 5. Experience of Conflict:

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. On a scale of 1-5, where would you rank your church's level of conflict? 1

*(Based on this work by Speed Leas 1. Problem to solve 2. Disagreement 3. Contest 4. Fight or Flight 5. Intractable)*

Please explain why you chose this level.

We value our shared history and have a commitment to democratic and shared decision making. We make every effort to address problems in a timely and constructive manner. We recognize that our church consists of individuals who may not always have the same approach. We value our differences and see that as a strength.

Describe your congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict.

In response to concerns such as our decreased membership and the catastrophic 2017 church fire, we have continued to engage our dedicated lay leadership and pastors in multiple groups addressing such challenges. These include church-wide Appreciative Inquiry, and in streamlining the organizational structure to better fit our small and again reality, fewer and only necessary committees (e.g., building committee, vision committee, transition team). These groups have developed and communicated recommendations to the church council, and ultimately, to the congregation at large.

We encourage our lay leaders to express their opinions and concerns directly in meetings of trustees, deacons, and missions team members. Similar openness is encouraged at church council meetings attended by various committee chairpersons and the pastor.

Major decisions are made by the congregation at annual and/or special congregational meetings which may be called to address critical concerns (e.g., next steps after the 2017 building fire). This process allows for individual expression of concerns and disagreement, constructive discussion, discernment, and consensual resolution. Mutual respect, willingness to listen, and exercise of prayerful patience allow our congregation to minimize conflict and personal disappointment.

### Basic Church Statistics

*Yearly average*

|              | Church Membership | Weekly Worship Attendance | Children & Youth Participation | Adult Ed Participation |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Pre-pandemic | 44                | 19–20                     | 1                              | 6–8                    |
| Current year | 36                | 15                        | 1                              | 12                     |

|              | Income | Overall Budget Expense | Mission Giving | Reserves & Endowment Principals |
|--------------|--------|------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Pre-pandemic | 51,853 | 60,753                 | 4,236          | 205,394                         |
| Current year | 65,946 | 65,946                 | 7,350*         | 248,843**                       |

\*Mission current year includes Memorial Garden giving; \*\*Reserves current year as of 12/31/2021.

### Compensation

**Total Compensation Package Amount or Range: \$35,569 was the compensation paid previously. We recognize this is not within current guidelines and are willing to negotiate a reasonable and appropriate level that recognizes experience, expectations and time commitment. We anticipate negotiable around \$40s.**

Package offered: ☐ Total Package, no additional monetary benefits offered  
**(choose only one)** ☒ Total Package Includes Benefits (please list the benefits that are offered)  
 plus: \$500 Professional Development reimbursement and \$100 Travel allowance reimbursement

Housing: ***Pastor can allocate compensation in any way desired in writing (salary/housing split)***  
☒ Housing allowance only  
☐ Parsonage only  
☐ Can offer either

Please explain briefly your process in discerning your compensation. This is the salary that the DT pastor would have been offered in 2022–2023 contract renewal (a 3% increase), June 2022

+ + +

Updated 1/2022

## 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 document 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 leader for the interim time 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.

\_\_\_\_ Susan W. Bues \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Search Committee Chairperson  
(typed is sufficient)

November 16, 2022  
Date