

# Church of the Isles

Indian Rocks Beach, Florida

CHURCH PROFILE



MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,  
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION

**UNITED CHURCH**  
OF CHRIST



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
**LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE**

**Church of the Isles**  
**Indian Rocks Beach, Florida**

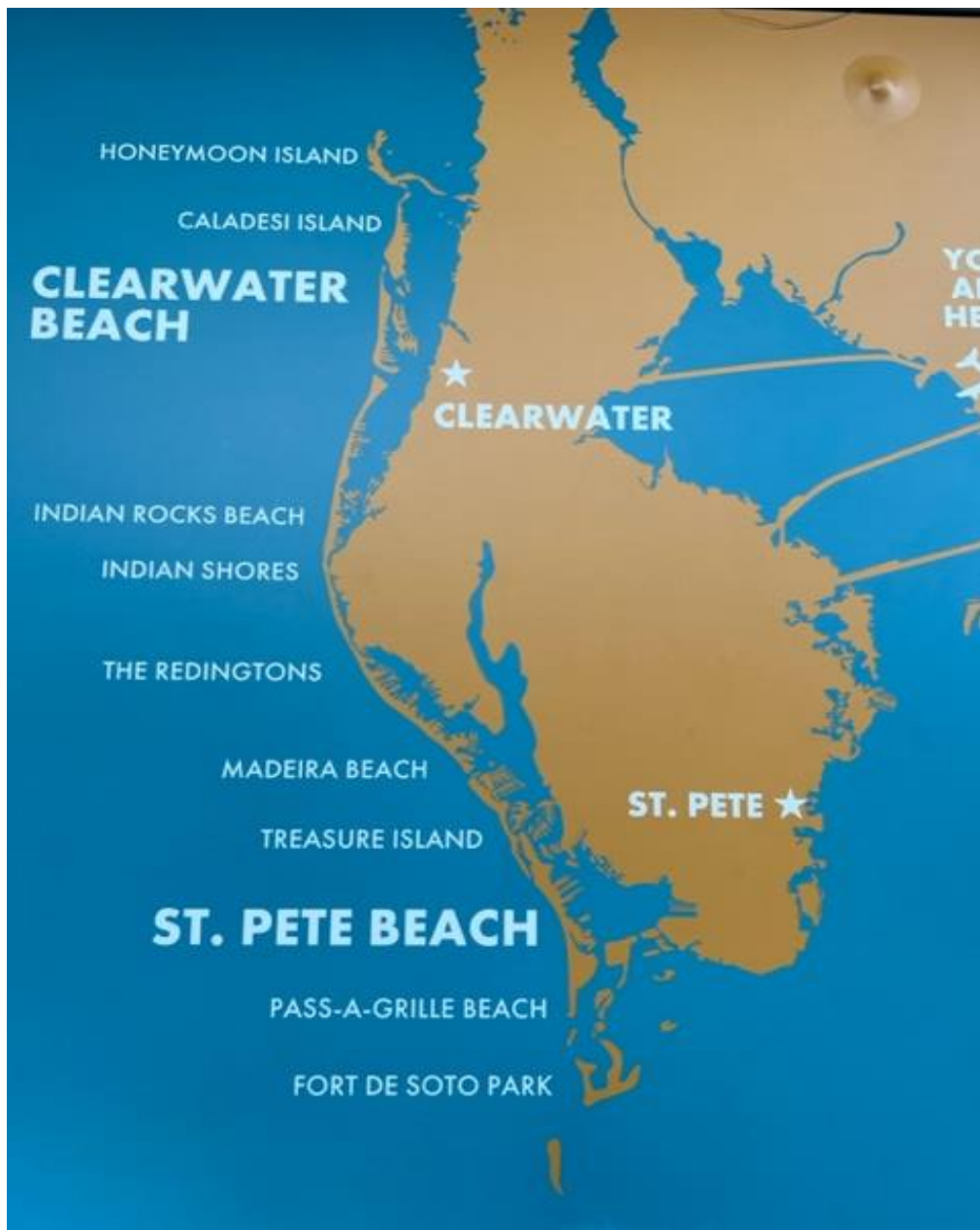
Settled Pastor Search

Florida Conference

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

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*“God is able to provide you with every blessing, so that  
having all sufficiency in all things at all times,  
you may abound in every good work.”  
(2 Corinthians 9:8)*



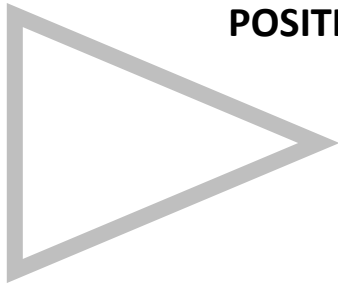
Church of the Isles in beautiful Indian Rocks Beach, Florida  
in Pinellas County  
in the Tampa Bay Region











## POSITION POSTING

LISTING INFORMATION

SCOPE OF WORK

COMPENSATION & SUPPORT

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

### **LISTING INFORMATION**

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Church name: Church of the Isles

Street address: 200 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Indian Rocks Beach, Florida 33785

Supplemental web links: [www.churchoftheisles.org](http://www.churchoftheisles.org) FaceBook- Church of the Isles or Beach  
Community Thrift Store

Conference: Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ

Association:

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:

Rev. LaTrell Harrison

Phone 404-734-4986

### **Summary Ministry Description:**

Church of the Isles is a small, loving congregation. We are active in helping each other and sincere in our outreach to local, regional, national and international communities of both Christians, other faith communities, and those who may be seeking to live successfully in a changing world. We are a fellowship intentionally seeking more multiculturalism, studying to be designated Open and Affirming, and continuing our mission of peace and justice. Our recently selected top five congregation-generated goals include: creating more opportunity for community engagement, completing our Open and Affirming objective, bringing in a full-time pastor, building our music programs and increasing our mission work. Our varying seasonal attendance and capacity to achieve recurring and longer-term goals, challenge us to seek creative solutions. We seek a pastor who can work with our existing strengths, help us identify strengths we have not yet tapped, provide leadership for increased community involvement, and assist us in marketing all of the positive attributes we share.

## **What we value about living in our area:**

Church of the Isles is located in a warm, gulf access beach community with dedicated locals, seasonal residents, and vacationers. Our church sits 2 blocks from the Gulf of Mexico in the Village of Indian Rocks Beach between the Gulf of Mexico and the Intracoastal Waterway. We consider our location a small piece of paradise. We are thirty minutes from Saint Petersburg, a city of 250,000 and we are a vital part of a much larger Tampa Bay community of nearly 2 million that includes several green spaces, parks, tourist attractions, universities and colleges, hospitals, shopping, professional sports, churches and other cultural amenities.



## **Beautiful Sunsets**



Beaches continually voted the best in the United States.



Climate for year-round activities and fellowship.



## Church Of The Isles Pastor Search at a Glance

Current Size of the Membership: **50**

Specify Language requirements: English. Additional language proficiency or welcoming capacities such as greeting in other languages are appreciated, but not a requirement.

Position Title: **Settled Pastor**

Compensation Level: **Full Time**

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? Yes

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

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The pastor of Church of the Isles will be expected

- To preach and teach the Word of God and administer the Sacraments to the congregation
- To plan and deliver sermons and lead worship in conjunction with the doctrines of the United Church of Christ.
- To officiate at special services such as weddings, funerals, and other spiritual events for the church.
- To work with the Deacons and musicians to develop and maintain worship that is inclusive, integrates the scriptures, and nurtures our congregants.
- To work with the Deacon Board to create a strong pastoral care component of our church's ministry. Promotes, educates, and advocates responsible biblical stewardship in the congregation as part of the Deacons' roles.
- To enhance the church's outreach to the congregation and community.
- To assist in growing the membership of the church.
  
- To direct the assimilation of new members into the life of the congregation in conjunction with the boards, committees, and ministries of the congregation.
- To participate in and promote congregational benevolence and mission work.
- To serve as an ex-officio member of all ministries, boards, committees, and organizations within the church.
- To assist the Church Council with financial matters of the congregation.
- To serve as a member of a team that screens and hires non-ordained staff, builds a sense of unity among church staff and participates in regular leadership meetings.
- To work with the Church Council and Resource Director to ensure that the facilities of the church are functional and in good repair.
- To encourage all organizations and ministries of the church to carry out their work with an emphasis on welcoming others to participate in the mission work of Christ.
- To participate in the activities of the Florida UCC Conference as appropriate.

## **Core Competencies:**

Church of the Isles seeks a pastor with skill and experience in growing a church or similar organization.

One of the most important characteristics of a pastor as identified by the COTI congregation is outstanding preaching that is focused on helping congregants lead effective lives. This characteristic is integral to growing the church.

As an already welcoming church, we seek a pastor who has the personality and temperament to enhance the welcoming nature of our church.

A settled pastor at COTI should possess the ability to engage in outreach and counseling with elderly members and members who are struggling with physical or emotional issues.

## **COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT**

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Salary Basis: Up to \$80,000 (depending on years of and types of specific experience, education level and anticipated fit with the expressed needs of the congregation).

Benefits: The salary basis above INCLUDES 3 percent toward retirement. (For example, 3% of \$70,000 = \$2100), the individual pastor's contribution to health insurance (depending on pastor's familial circumstances).

Housing Provisions: There are no additional housing provisions beyond the Salary Basis.

Housing arrangements are the pastor's personal preference. There are only a few single- family residences available in this beach community, however there are condo residences and rentals, depending on the season. Within a 5-10 mile radius, there are several available communities such as Largo, Belleair Bluffs, Seminole and Clearwater that offer a variety of housing options.

### **Residential/commuting expectations:**

Commuting from surrounding communities is generally very easy, but as a beach community, we often experience increased amounts of traffic during holidays, Spring Break, and high season.

### **Peer and professional supports available:**

In addition to the UCC Florida Conference and area ministers, there is nearby Calvary Episcopal Church on Indian Rocks Beach, and several UCC churches in Clearwater, Dunedin, and downtown St. Petersburg.

## **WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?**

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### **Ministry goals: Our next minister co-collaborating with our congregation**

Church of the Isles is seeking a fulltime pastor who with our congregation is

- Preaching and teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Caring for individuals and family networks in our congregation.
- Being a voice in the community and world that promotes peace, justice, equality, and care of the planet.
- Living in voice and deed as a diverse and inclusive church.
- Helping to maintain our seasonal membership/attendance and growing it where possible.
- Worshipping in creative and dynamic ways.
- Helping to sustain our beautiful beach environment.







**How we envision our next minister assisting our congregation in making an impact beyond our walls.**

Helping us to celebrate our gifts, identify gifts not yet recognized, and move in our community, nation, and world as ambassadors of God's mission.



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

English. Any additional language proficiency or welcoming capacities such as greeting in other languages are always welcome but not a requirement.

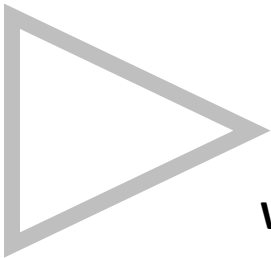
Experience in delivering and developing diverse messages and training.

This matters as we see ourselves as Open and Affirming in many areas of inclusivity.



## **Four areas of excellence that are expectations for our next minister to assist us in the development of our congregation's ministry.**

- 1) We expect our next pastor to be a caring individual who will tend to all of God's creation in the many realms of both emerging and growing life forms. This includes sensitivity to sustaining an environment that efficiently and effectively utilizes the resources God provides.
- 2) The next pastor must have the ability to listen to our individual, familial, formal and informal networks for their needs, interests, hopes, and dreams. Interpersonal skills and flexibility in attending to the older congregant are important.
- 3) Our pastor should lead us in building new membership/attendance and maintaining existing members.
- 4) We desire a pastor who will be attentive to the prospects for working with organizations, spiritual and otherwise, as we provide a strong community center for this beach locale.



### **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?**

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

#### **Who is God calling us to become as a congregation?**

We are called to be a welcoming, gathering place for our barrier island community. We envision our facilities as a hub for a variety of spiritual and cultural enhancement activities. Our welcome derives from the Lord's directives of Radical Hospitality. All are welcome, without qualification.

#### **How we are reaching out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of our community and congregation:**

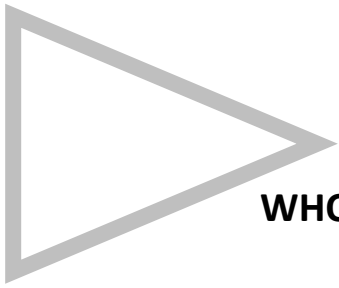
We have enlisted some new ways of identifying our goals and values as a congregation. In our "Rekindle the Gift" work during Lent of 2022, we met in 5 weekly sessions to share visions using a Top Five methodology. First, we generated ideas in individual and small group work, then the larger group named those things most important for becoming the church we aspire to be.

Coming out of Covid limitations with concurrently a period of an interim pastor, our congregation has expressed a strong desire to return to social and cultural activities that were sorely missed. One of our

primary goals is to increase/enhance these social and cultural activities by making our space available at a nominal cost or no cost to community residents.

Further, there was a clearly expressed intention to do the work to be an Open and Affirming congregation. COTI hosted a series of church meals, webinars, and conversations to seek consensus and hear the voices of our members and friends. On November 13, 2022 our congregation overwhelmingly voted to seek ONA designation. We have received our ONA designation and we are so proud of our congregation as we continue to be a beacon of hope for all in our community.





## WHO ARE WE NOW?

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

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

11-YEAR REPORT

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

CHURCH FINANCES

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

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### Our congregation’s life of faith.

Church of the Isles acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head and lives through the Holy Scriptures interpreted by the Divine Spirit through reason, faith, and conscience. We see the Holy Spirit and Faith as active presences in the life and mission of the church family.

### Strengths and areas of growth for Church of the Isles.

First and foremost, we are **Welcoming**. Although our church has never been a significantly diverse one, we welcome new people regularly, often tourists. We do our very best to make everyone feel safe, seen, and at home. We work hard to ensure the success of our missions, Pinellas Hope and our Beach Community Thrift Store. We are people of strong **Faith and Perseverance**. We rely heavily on our faith to ensure our commitments are kept and that our small church will continue to survive. We have a small but beautiful contingent of musicians who uplift our spirits and our sermons each Sunday. COTI also has several professionals with a wealth of **Expertise**.

We need to grow in how we communicate and govern. We need to be more generous in how we share in the responsibilities of running our church and our missions. We need to understand that the byproduct of growing our church should not be about paying our bills, but about making a stronger impact in our community. There needs to be a commitment from deacons and our pastor to ensure elderly homebound seniors and those in assisted living and hospice are receiving regular visits and pastoral care.

### Church of the Isles Worship

Worship typically occurs in the main sanctuary. However, we do have a beautiful chapel that was used for small services prior to COVID. On Sundays, we begin with centering music and move into worship which includes “passing of the peace.” Our fellowship hour after formal worship is seen by many as extension of worship as we spend time building community. One different worship experience is our tradition to have Easter Sunrise service on the beach which is well-attended by locals and vacationers. In the summer of 2022, we set aside three weeks to experiment with ‘summer church’ similar to Church Camp or Vacation Bible School. We had speakers from the congregation on various topics, scripture, and song and we discovered worship and study in the large fellowship hall.

Our congregation, though not a monolith, believes that “good preaching” is focused, dynamic, offers skills and scripture for successful living, and is time-limited, 15-20 minutes.



### **Educational program/faith formation vision of our church**

Our congregants have requested that we expand our Christian and life skills educational programs and that we consider developing a vibrant youth ministry. We have addressed those needs through individual meetings, sessions, activities and events. It is our hope that a settled pastor will help us institute these ongoing programs.

### **Organization for ministry and mission**

Our church is organized through a Church Council, Leadership Group, Board of Deacons, Missions Board and other committees. We have a Moderator, Vice Moderator, and a slate of Church Officers. Executive leadership meets for about 2 hours a week. Council meets monthly for roughly 2-3 hours and Deacons meet 2 hours per month. Other committees meet as needed and many groups meet on Sunday after church.

### **An example of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?**

An example of a crisis that we continually face is the threat of hurricanes. We have a telephone tree system that begins with the Moderator to contact every person and be sure they are safe. A member of the congregation who is active in Volunteers Organization Active in Disaster (VOAD) has designated every person's evacuation zone with plans on file for emergencies.

### **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?**

A copy is available upon request.

## **11-YEAR REPORT**

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Please see attached

## **CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS**

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Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	50	yes
Number of active non-members:	10	yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	60	yes

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	28%	yes
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	54%	yes
Less than 5 years:	18%	yes

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
	3	0	0	0	5	3	4	35	yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	0%	x
Joint household with minors:	2%	x
Single adults age 35-65:	3%	x
Joint household with no minors:	33%	x
Single adults over 65:	62%	x

Education level of adult participants by percentage:



		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	100%	x
College:	50%	x
Graduate School:	16%	x
Specialty Training:	4%	x
Other (please specify):	0%	

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	8%	x
Adults who are retired:	90%	x
Adults who are not fully employed:	2%	x

### **Range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:**

Real Estate, Education, Music, Medicine, Mental Health Services

### **Ethnic heritages at Church of the Isles and the overall racial make-up.**

Our congregation has limited diversity- culturally and generationally. Most parishioners are over 65 years old, there are 4 Black or Brown congregants, and 3 LGBTQ families.

### **Conversations about welcoming diversity:**

Church of the Isles has had 5 congregational meetings/opportunities to discuss diversity in the past year. The sessions were well-attended and we were working toward ONA designation. We had a strongly positive congregational vote to seek ONA designation on November 13, 2022. This was the culmination of a mini-revolution at our church and the process was a point of pride.

## **PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING**

Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i>
Adult Groups or Classes	24	Pastor Elizabeth Clement, Alicia Isaac, Curtis Watson, Linda Smith
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	1	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	0	
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	80-100	Pastor, Deacons
Church-wide Meals	30	Deacons, Church Staff, Volunteers
Choirs and Music Groups	6	Curtis Watson
Church-based Bible Study	6-10	Pastor
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	Monthly	Pastor, Deacons
Community Meals	50-100	
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>	0	
Drama or Dance Program	0	
Funerals <i>(number last year)</i>	3	Pastor, Deacons
Intergenerational Groups	0	
Outdoor Worship	150	Pastor, Deacons
Prayer or Meditation Groups	10-15	Pastor
Public Advocacy Work	0	
Retreats	0	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	0	
Weddings <i>(number last year)</i>	1	
Worship (10:00 am)	40-50	
Worship (time slot: _____)	N/A	

Young Adult Groups or Classes	N/A	
Youth Groups or Classes	N/A	
Other	N/A	

Additional comments:

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

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Elizabeth Clement	NO	Church	Interim Pastor	N
Alicia Isaac	NO	Church	Pulpit supply	N

If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation:

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff.

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Resource Coordinator		Part time-Salaried	Moderator	3 Years
Tech Assistant		Hourly	Resource Coordinator	1 Year
Interim Pastor		¾ time, Salaried	Church Council	1.5 Years
Pianist		Part time-weekly	Church Council	2 Years

## REFLECTION

Church of the Isles (COTI) accomplishes many things with few staff members, but many volunteers some of whom perform important clerical duties.

## CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	December 31, 2021	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving		\$67,271
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )		\$
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i> )		\$
Fundraising Events		\$4,908
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose (COTH)		\$109,647
Grants		\$
Rentals of Church Building		\$12,840
Rentals of Church Parsonage		\$
Support from Related Organizations (Thrift Store) ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )		\$42,982
Transfers from Special Accounts		\$
Other (specify):		\$
Other (specify):		\$
TOTAL		\$236,648

Current annual expenses

**See attached**

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church? **No**

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? (*indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year*)

- ☒ Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
- ☒ One Great Hour of Sharing
- ☒ Strengthen the Church
- ☒ Neighbors in Need
- ☒ Christmas Fund

**In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage?**

Contributions, supplemented by budget. The amount of support varies, but we allocate 10% of our Thrift Store profits monthly to Missions.

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: \$34,964

Reason for debt: Air conditioner repair, replacement

Are capital and other payments current? yes

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget. N/A

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

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

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe: N/A

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

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

Does your church have an endowment? **Yes**

What is the market value of the assets? \$292,922

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

There are specified circumstances that require multiple levels of approval before the draw can be made.

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? **0%**

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

We have drawn infrequently on the Heritage Fund (no draws in recent years). We have utilized monies from a mortgage payment to us at approximately \$3,000 per month for the last year.

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

Though we have not made a Heritage Fund draw in the last 5 years, we would expect that if we did have to access the Heritage Fund, it would last 10-15 years. Draws would likely be made for operating expenses as we do not anticipate any capital projects.

## **Other Assets**

Reserves (savings): \$76,892

Investments (other than endowment): \$ 0

Does your church have a parsonage? no

Describe all buildings owned by the church: Main church building and Thrift Store

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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

All interior spaces

## **Reflection:**



Our congregation has been committed over time to using our financial and human resources as we care for our immediate and surrounding communities. We have supported ministries to decrease human trafficking, youth hunger, education, homelessness, natural disaster relief, COVID assistance and many other programs. Our congregation is thoughtful, compassionate, and generous.

## **HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

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**Significant happenings in the history of COTI that have shaped our identity. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.**

A phrase that describes significant happenings in the history of our church in the past 10 years has to be “God’s grace is sufficient.” Despite a number of ministerial changes and the impacts of COVID, we are still standing with dedication, compassion, service and the palpable desire to move forward into the next chapter of our communities’ and church’s life.

### **Managing change**

Like many other congregations, we did a masterful job in coping with COVID. We learned how to use Zoom for activities and broadcast church services online which allowed us to stay connected to members and friends. Our efforts allowed us to keep our church open whereas many congregations were dissolved.

### **Our values and practices when it comes to conflict.**

Some of the most recent conflicts we’ve had in the church have revolved around the expectations we put on each other and our pastor. Historically speaking, the church has been divided in our opinions regarding the ONA process, youth ministry, and how our pastors have offered support to our homebound seniors and elderly congregants in assisted living and hospice. We have tried to resolve these conflicts through open communication with church leaders, prayer and reflection, as well as continuing education, but have not always been speedily successful. However, through our challenges, we have always tried to remain respectful of each other and have continued to come together as a church family to successfully run our missions and festivals. We are a small congregation with a lot of history. We do our best at managing our expectations before they lead to conflict. We need a strong pastor capable of comfortably leaning into this conversation, someone who can help us define our future plan, as well as assist us in managing and meeting our current expectations and commitments.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Don Hafner (Interim)	94-94	Y
Paul Bizer	95-2002	Y
Joyce Schroer (Associate)	96-99	Y
Roy Nyren (Interim)	02-04	Y
Mark Mendes	04-08	Y
Joe La Du (Interim)	08-09	Y
Ken Bridges (Interim)	03/09 – 10/09	Y
Jim Rapp	09-13	Y
Sue Sherwood (Interim)	7/14-9/14	Y
Marilyn Lewis (Interim)	10/14-3/15	?
Ty Sweeting	5/15-10/16	Y
Liz Clement (Interim)	11/16-10/19	Y
Shelly Wilson (Ret)	10/19-9/20	Y
Liz Clement (Interim)	10/20 – present	Y

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

The frequency of pastoral turnovers has encouraged us to engage in a very intentional, focused, structured, consensus-driven, and prayerful search for our settled pastor.

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

Yes

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Yes

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

Yes

## WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

COMMUNITY VISION

MISSION InSite

## COMMUNITY VISION

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### Relationships, service, and activities of Church of the Isles in our community?

For a small congregation, we are proud of some of the work we have done in the community:

- a) Monthly meals and a Christmas celebration at Pinellas Hope - homeless settlement
- b) Member of VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters)
- c) No Kid Hungry at Boca Ciega High School
- d) Greentown Kids Healthy Planet Work
- e) Financial gifts to Church World Services
- f) Books and Breakfast- Reading outreach in low-income St. Petersburg
- g) Thanksgiving meals for military families
- h) Giving for Hurricane Ian Relief
- i) Mayor’s Ladies’ Tea



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

Our interim pastor attends the annual meeting and other Conference events. We have utilized and brought conference staff to our church for assistance. COTI has participated in several seminars on ONA and social justice. Conference staff was an integral part of our 70<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary in December.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).) Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible to All (A2A)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Just Peace                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creation Justice                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming            | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> God Is Still Speaking (GISS)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other UCC designations:               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Border and Immigrant Justice      | <input type="checkbox"/> Designations from other denominations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M) | <input type="checkbox"/> None                                  |

**Areas our congregation is interested in working toward in the near future**

Economic Justice, Faithful and Welcoming, Inter-Cultural/Multicultural, and ONA.

**Participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional).**

There is one other church on the island - Calvary Episcopal Church. We have limited ecumenical and interfaith activities. Recently, the two churches participated in Blessing of the Animals. In previous years, before the arrival of their current faith leader, there was more collaboration. We are hopeful to develop additional interfaith activities with other churches in surrounding communities.

**Mission/vision statement:**

Church of the Isles Vision Statement: Loving God, Celebrating Christ, Serving All.  
What we do and hope to do are very closely aligned to our vision statement.

## **Scope of work assigned to interim pastor as aligned with our community ministry expectations:**

As we selected our current interim pastor, we identified three primary duties:

- To deliver sermons, provide Christian education, and administer the Sacraments.
- To develop a strong Pastoral Care program that serves as a community ministry for our members, friends, and broader community.
- To help us continue renewed enthusiasm for the work that we would do in our community.

Reflecting on these goals, we are aware that a great deal of community involvement was hoped for, but not yet achieved. As we move forward with a settled pastor, it is the congregation's expectation that our pastor designate a significant amount of time (25-30%) to ministry in the community.



## **MISSION InSite**

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The demographic data for our island town presents a small opportunity for church growth, but a larger opportunity for community engagement. There are few families with younger children moving to the island because of prohibitive costs and limited housing. Prior to the current housing bubble, Indian Rocks Beach was a destination for newly retired people. But again, prohibitive costs have created more of an environment for entrepreneurs interested in beach rental properties.

Important to one of our identified goals, increased community involvement, is creating access to a number of communities within a 6 mile radius. These communities are diverse in age, family structure,

ethnicity, political ideology and would benefit from specialized programs that we might consider offering especially if we could assist with transportation.

### **COTI's internal demographics as compared to our adjacent neighborhoods**

Our congregant population is similar to one of the main population cohorts that live on the island full time- an older (65 years+), retired, mostly white cohort. However, we are also a very transient community with half-year residents and vacationers.

### **How are the demographics of the community currently shaping our vision for ministry?**

Using the data for our community, but **mostly** that of surrounding communities to shape ministry is a primary goal that we feel is vital to the growth and health of our church. We want to work closely with our settled pastor and other resources for this.

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

COTI has a history of dedication to the community and provides service through its Thrift Store and participation in local service activities such as the Food Pantry. In previous years, COTI held a huge community festival – Greenfest.

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

The warm, welcoming spirit of the members of the church helps them feel the presence of God.

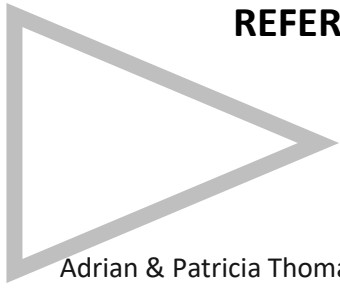








## REFERENCES



Adrian & Patricia Thomas

[Patricia.thomas@me.com](mailto:Patricia.thomas@me.com)

734-546-5662

Relationship to COTI : We live in Indian Rocks Beach and attend regularly between November - May. We live in Michigan in the summer months.

### **Areas of strength in the church's ministry.**

Welcoming to visitors and sincere engagement during and after church. Also, in our tenure, we have had two very inspiring preachers who touched us each service we attended. Both connected the word of God to what is happening in today's world in a meaningful way.

The new choir is also a strength of the ministry.

### **Areas of for improvement in church ministry.**

1) We haven't been involved lately (up north for the summer and limited involvement over the past couple years due to Covid), so this may be an area which has improved but in general, "Planning" is an area that could be improved. Long term planning of events and detailed planning of the events themselves, including what the objective is and the budget (if applicable).

I have been involved in some events where I wasn't sure why we were doing it. Also, there have been events that were primarily for fundraising when I wasn't sure there was a clear budget process and income target in place.

We have also attended meetings where it wasn't clear what the objective of the meeting was.

2) It would be nice to have more interaction and activities at COTI which are social, informative or inspirational in nature.

3) When there are opportunities to engage with the wider community, such as the IRB Tea or Greenfest- I'm not sure anything happens there that potentially motivates a person to come back on Sunday morning or reconnect with COTI in any way. I'm not sure what should happen, but it would be nice if anyone who comes to one of these events leaves knowing that COTI is an open and welcoming place to them and that they are welcome to pop in any Sunday am at 10am or join the volunteers.

### **A significant experience we have had.**

Simply the fact that we felt welcome as soon as we first attended the church. We found volunteer opportunities easy to jump into (and plentiful!). Everyone was very welcoming to us and to my sister who began joining with us when she moved to the area.

I did attend a mid-week beach meditation process with Pastor Shelly, which I really enjoyed. I believe it was cut short due to Covid unfortunately.

### **Anything else to share**

I'd also like to offer that, due to the small congregation and the big job of keeping up the church, volunteers and members can get burned out. A small number of people are called upon to do a lot. I am grateful for the efforts of everyone and don't know the solution, just mentioning it as what I see as a reality and risk.

Also, it is a very big facility for such a small group of folks, a perpetual problem I know but I often wonder if the resources used to keep up the building couldn't be put to better use in the community. I realize I'm not offering anything new, just sharing my thoughts.

**Agnes P. Green, M.D.  
15460 1<sup>st</sup> Street E  
Madeira Beach, Florida 33708  
(404) 310-4717**

Reference for Church of the Isles Pastor Search

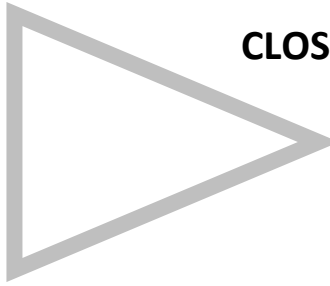
I am happy to write a reference on behalf of Church of the Isles in Indian Rocks Beach, Florida. I first attended Church of the Isles approximately four years ago when I discovered that a longtime friend of mine was the Interim Pastor. One of the first things that I noticed was the warmth of the congregation. People in the church were truly welcoming and extended a sincere invitation for all to return. As I continued to visit the church, members were gracious and thoughtful, always acknowledging whether they had missed seeing you in recent Sundays. Since then, I still attend, enjoying the worship services, fellowship hour after church and other special events. Even today, the warmth and welcoming spirit of the church is still its calling card.

There are several strengths of Church of the Isles in addition to its people. First, the church's facilities are expansive and provide a wonderful environment for religious and community events. Second, the church's commitment to service is admirable and is woven throughout the life of the church. Additionally, Church of the Isles' standing in Indian Rocks Beach is a model for collaboration among community partners. Suggestions for improved church functioning include more technology for efficient operations, classes for members, and better community use of the facilities. There are several ideas currently being developed to enhance congregational life. I am looking forward to these ideas coming to fruition.

In closing, there are many strengths, resources, and ideas that the next pastor of Church of the Isles can build on. The congregation is ready for vision and leadership that will move us forward.

Sincerely,

*Agnes P. Green, M.D.*



## **CLOSING THOUGHTS**

CLOSING PRAYER

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

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#### **Closing Prayer**

Father God, your word says that if anyone lacks wisdom, they should ask, and wisdom will be provided. We come to you today to ask you for wisdom. Lead us in the decisions we have before us. Remove anything in us that may cause us to make unwise choices and let our choices align with your word. We are truly grateful for your loving guidance and direction in helping Church of the Isles to assure that our Church Profile not only gives voice to the needs of our members but also those in our surrounding community. We thank you for the faith we have that a new settled pastor will help us further identify and respond to these needs. And we thank you, as always, for encouraging patience when we needed it and moving us through gentle reminders of our responsibilities to accurately and faithfully develop this material for UCC Area Council, Church of the Isles and potential settled pastor applicants. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

## STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

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

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile? (*for example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.*)

**Pastoral Search Committee, Congregation Members, Church Council**

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

*Jan Kreuger*

Moderator, Church of the Isles

January 10, 2023

## VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment: True

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

Staff Comment: True

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

Staff Comment: True

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: *Rev. LaTrell Harrison*

Name / Title: Rev. LaTrell Harrison, Associate Conference Minister

Email: LHarrison@uccfla.org

Phone: 404-734-4986

Date: 1/19/2023

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



This document is created through support to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and is only possible through the covenantal relationships of all settings of the United Church of Christ.

*"Jesus answered them, 'Have faith in God!'" – Mark 11:22*