

## Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance

# INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH

Who  
is our  
neighbor

Who  
are  
we

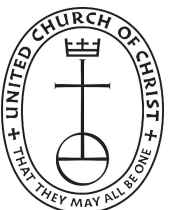
Who is  
God  
calling us  
to become

?

The new Local Church Profile is not just for congregations in search of a pastor. *All* congregations are encouraged to engage in its process of discovery every 3-5 years. The UCC Local Church Profile reflects valuable data, assesses ministry, clarifies change, and helps advance the calling of the congregation. Not just to be completed by a search committee – the more participation, the better!

MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

United Church of Christ Congregational  
Burlington, Massachusetts

Full Time Settled Pastor

Southern New England United Church of Christ (SNEUCC)  
Metropolitan Boston Association

January 24, 2023

### LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- Position Posting
- Who Is God Calling Us To Become?
- Who Are We Now?
- Who Is Our Neighbor?
- References
- Consent and Validation

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



# 1. POSITION POSTING

a. LISTING INFORMATION

b. SCOPE OF WORK

c. COMPENSATION & SUPPORT

d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

## 1a. LISTING INFORMATION

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**Church name:** United Church of Christ Congregational, Burlington

**Street address:** 6 Lexington St, Burlington, MA 01803

**Supplemental web links:** <http://uccburlington.org>

**Additional ecumenical affiliations:** None

**Conference:** Southern New England United Church of Christ (SNEUCC)

**Association:** Metropolitan Boston Association

**UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:**

The Rev. Alex Shea Will, Area Conference Minister for the Northeast Region

**Phone:** 508-244-4769

**Email:** [sheawilla@sneucc.org](mailto:sheawilla@sneucc.org)

**Summary Ministry Description:**

*In a short paragraph, reflect on where your church is going and what it might look like when you get there. What do you need to get there? Who are you seeking to join you on this part of your church's faith journey?*

We are a close knit congregation who, with the help and guidance of God, have worked very hard to keep our church going through Covid, holding Zoom services and keeping in close contact with one another. We are committed to growing our congregation, and although our volunteer pool is smaller than it once was, we have members who are willing to do the work. Our church is at a crossroads where we are struggling to re-define who we are with an aging yet vibrant congregation. The Covid pandemic has also unfortunately led to declining worship

attendance and participation in church activities. We need a pastor who will partner with us as we make efforts to bring new life and enthusiasm into our congregation. We look to make this effort both within our worship services and beyond Sunday mornings into all aspects of our ministry. We hope that this will help bring folks, especially families, into worship and fellowship with us and get excited again about our church! We are searching for someone who is willing to embrace change, try new things, and is not afraid to think outside the box to help us grow and strengthen our congregation.

**Photographs:** *Insert 1 – 3 images of your church, its people, its parsonage or building or gathering space, etc.*

**Picture descriptions:**

1. The inside of our sanctuary at Christmas. Members of the congregation donate poinsettias to line the altar each year. If you are facing the front of the sanctuary as this picture is, the choir sits to the right, and the piano and organ are located to the right as well.
2. Our church building looks quite beautiful in the snow! This couldn't be a job posting for a church in New England without an accurate representation of possible New England winters.
3. A shot of the church steeple after a rainstorm with a beautiful rainbow. This imagery of the church with the rainbow is depicted across many of our advertising materials.





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

Burlington is a suburb about 15 miles north and west of Boston, that gives us many perks of city life but with a small town feel. The southern part of town located close to Route 128 has a number of shops, restaurants, and businesses which are centered around the Burlington Mall and Lahey Hospital. The rest of town is quiet and residential, with tree-lined streets, parks, and great schools.

**Current size of membership:** 210 (taken from the most recent census prior to Covid)

**Languages used in ministry (*other than English*):** None

**Position Title:** Pastor

**Position Duration:** Settled

**Compensation Level:** Full Time



**Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?** The total support package comes in at approximately 80% of current conference compensation guidelines (more info below)

## 1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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*(add here the Scope of Work developed by your church using the Call Agreement Workbook)*

From the UCC Call Agreement Workbook:

### **Scope of work for FULL TIME PASTORAL POSITION**

(40-50 hours weekly / 10-12 units):

- Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship including scripture study, crafting of liturgy and bulletin, sermon preparation, guiding and sometimes finding lay liturgists, planning of music in coordination with musical staff or volunteers, preaching, offering of prayers, etc.
- Faith formation and vitality through prayer, Bible study, service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities and helping lay persons take advantage of them
- Leadership development by working with people in the church to create ministry and programs pastoral care in collaboration with lay people
- Community engagement and leading the way for the church to be an ambassador of God's love
- Reaching out to the community with the goal of increasing church membership with a focus on welcoming families with children
- Weddings and funerals for participants in the worshiping community
- Strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry
- Attend meetings and give leadership as needed to church programs, in collaboration with lay leadership
- Participate in wider church activities such as conference and association meetings
- Faithful financial development and stewardship
- Responsibility for supervision of staff

- Availability to wider community for funerals, weddings, special worship programs, and as a representative of the church to local organizations

**Core Competencies:**

*(List three core competencies that you imagine could be foundational in your next minister's relationship with the church. For example, a church seeking a pastoral care minister might hope to call someone who is caring, sensitive and sociable, while a church seeking an executive minister might want an organized, detail-oriented and time-conscious person.)*

In pulling from the ideas described in the above prompt, we have determined that we are seeking a pastor who is compassionate, enthusiastic, and neighborly.

**COMPASSIONATE**: We are seeking a pastor who is willing and able to care for and support all of God's children along their journey in worshiping Christ, and who makes themselves available to members of our church community. We very much view UCC Burlington as a church family, and thus we are seeking a pastor with a kind heart who cares deeply for the members of our congregation and the success of our church. Pastoral support is something that is quite important to our church community, especially as we have a number of older and aging members of our congregation who have relied on pastoral support throughout the years. Our previous pastor had office hours at the local coffee shop which were very popular with our congregants, and also did visits at Lahey Hospital when members of our congregation fell ill. We hope our next pastor will implement some of these same components (or maybe some new ideas for pastoral outreach!) into their ministry with us.

**ENTHUSIASTIC**: We are seeking a pastor who is excited about our church community! We have *so* many great ideas as to how to grow and strengthen our church, and we are seeking a pastor who shares with us in that enthusiasm and helps our church grow, both internally in membership and externally through community involvement and activities. We hope that this enthusiasm flows into uplifting sermons that leave our members inspired by the word of the Lord and ready to tackle whatever challenges they should face in the upcoming week.

**NEIGHBORLY**: We are seeking a pastor who is welcoming to all and wants to get involved in the wider community, both with the intent of service and with the intent of continuing to grow our congregation. Serving our community really is one of the core foundations of UCC Burlington, and we hope that our next pastor is both excited about our pre-existing relationships that we have within the community and willing to help forge new ones.



## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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

Total Compensation Value: \$95,000-\$102,000 including use of parsonage. If not electing use of our parsonage, then the compensation package would include a housing stipend of approximately \$36,000 annually.

In working with the UCC Conference guidelines for settled pastor and reviewing the data provided via MissionInsite, our church has developed a compensation package for our new settled pastor that is within 80% of their suggested range for a comparable salary in our community. This total compensation value encompasses not only a cash salary, but also a number of benefits including health benefits (which for the purposes of this profile, were calculated based on a household size of 2 persons). Our package includes an equity allowance if our settled pastor is living in the parsonage, a housing allowance (either in the form of living in the parsonage or housing compensation if not), and a retirement contribution. Also included in our package are various miscellaneous compensations for automotive expenses, professional development, and other certain incidentals. Compensation is also calculated dependent upon experience and education.

**Benefits** (*choose one*): Salary includes all optional benefits

**What is the expected living situation for your next minister?**

We have a parsonage, which makes for quite the easy commute! If not living in the parsonage, we expect our next pastor will live within about 25 miles of the church so they can be geographically close to the members of our congregation.

**State any incentives** (*e.g. school debt reduction or retention bonus after a certain number of years in position*):

We offer a stipend for professional expenses, up to a certain amount, which may accrue from year to year. This is supplemented by any funds that the church receives on a pastor's behalf for weddings, funerals, and baptisms.

We as a church encourage and support a pastor's opportunities to participate in clergy in-service and continuing education programs to strengthen their ministry in this church. Continuing education expenses are included as a portion of professional expenses. In addition to the monetary support for continuing education, we as a church will provide up to one week off per six month period specifically for continuing education opportunities.

The church will also offer a sabbatical leave of 3 months after 7 years of full time ministry. During such sabbatical, the church will pay full salary and benefits.

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

The Southern New England Conference is quite large and well-resourced, with a number of opportunities available for support for clergy. There is a Center for Transformation Leadership that offers a number of continuing education opportunities to all clergy in the conference.

More information can be found here: <https://www.sneucc.org/changeagents>

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

This is not applicable to our search.

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

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

We feel it is important to prioritize our ministry goals, being realistic about what is currently possible given our decreased attendance and participation since the Covid pandemic. With this in mind, we are seeking an energetic minister with strong leadership skills to help revitalize our ministry and connect to members of our congregation. We hope our next pastor will be active in reaching out to all members of our church community to promote our belief that “all are welcome”, but with a special focus on connecting with those who may be ill and require pastoral care, as well as families with children. We hope to grow our congregation to invite more families to worship with us and help to get them involved within our church community. In doing this, we wish for our next pastor to possess a liberal theology, to be open-minded and forward thinking, and truly embrace our belief that each member of our community is a child of God regardless of their sexual orientation, race, ability, or socioeconomic status.

In addition, we also believe that our next minister should be a good administrator who works cooperatively and collaboratively with congregants, church committees, and other staff. It is especially important that our next pastor has strong working relationships with the other paid members of our staff, which includes our Administrator, Director of Music Ministries, and Director of Christian Education. Each of these positions is vital to the success of our congregation, and we hope that our next pastor will appreciate each of these staff members and the value they bring to our church.

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

We are hoping to find a pastor who will help us take steps to breathe new life into our congregation so that we can ultimately arrive at a place where more forms of ministry are possible outside of our immediate church community. Our last pastor was great at building relationships with other clergy members in our community (she actually helped to create the Burlington Interfaith Clergy Association!), and we are hopeful that our next minister is excited about continuing with this. We hope that our next pastor will continue to help with ecumenical and interfaith services across town, as well as coordinate outreach programs for those in need. We already have a strong relationship with the Presbyterian Church, and during the summer we do a couple of shared services with them. This is certainly a partnership we wish to maintain and continue to grow. Ultimately, we believe that the more involved our new minister can be in our town, the more likely it is that our church will grow.

UCC Burlington has a long history of serving our community in a variety of ways, and we are proud of all of the work that we do. The local food pantry, People Helping People (<https://peoplehelpingpeopleinc.org>), was founded in our church and is one of our most important partnerships. We host an annual In-Gathering event where we coordinate the collection and distribution of over 100 Thanksgiving meals (this year it was 135!), which are given to Burlington residents in need. This occurs every year on the Sunday before Thanksgiving, and is truly one of the best days in our church as we all come together with other worship groups and organizations in town.

Historically, we have also done a handful of youth mission trips to places such as Pine Ridge, South Dakota and New Orleans, worked on Habitat for Humanity sites, and served at a local women's shelter (Rosie's Place, in Boston). We also support a number of causes within our local community and beyond, such as the Lowell Transitional Living Center (<https://ltlc.org/>), the Boston City Missions Society (<https://citymissionboston.org>), and the Wish Project (<https://www.thewishproject.org/>).

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

There are no specific language or culturally-specific capacities that our congregation needs from our next ministerial leader at this time. We do however have a number of elderly parishioners in our congregation, who at times require transportation to and from church (thankfully, we have volunteers who do this).

**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.**

**CARING FOR ALL CREATION:**

We seek a pastor who will be available to our congregants when they are in need of pastoral care or counseling. We will look to our pastor to be an example of stability when times are turbulent in the world, or in individuals' lives. It is important for this person, who will be so relied upon by others, to practice self-awareness, self care, and life balance to maintain their own health and wellbeing.

**WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE AND MERCY:**

Our mission statement begins by saying "At the UCC Burlington, we cultivate a thriving environment which empowers us to embody the beloved, diverse community that Jesus modeled for us, proclaiming that all are welcome, all are loved". We believe that all people are equal in the sight of God, and it is with that understanding that we commit ourselves to service and ministry within and beyond our walls.

**STRENGTHENING INTER- AND INTRA- PERSONAL ASSETS:**

Our pastor should be able to minister to people of all ages and stages of life, and be able to communicate effectively and respectfully with everyone.

**BUILDING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS:**

We will rely on our pastor to help our congregation to be faithful to God's call. We also need an organized leader who will not only practice self-development through continuing education, but also encouraging others to do the same.

## 2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

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

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

We have statements published on our website describing who we believe God is calling us to become. These statements, which we have included here and are quoted and paraphrased elsewhere in this profile, do a very good job of summing up the mission and purpose our members believe we are being called for.

We strive to continue to be a justice-seeking community that works to bring God’s word to those who worship with us, and help us serve others beyond our walls. Our core belief is that we are meant to be inclusive and welcoming of all people, and that we are to work toward justice for all of God’s creation. This is central to who we believe God is calling us to become.

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

*For example, describe two experiments your congregation has initiated or engaged in the past year, what were the results and where do you see your next steps? Has your church had a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement; if so, where do you see that plan/vision taking you?*

A challenge we are facing at UCC Burlington is diminished membership and participation, particularly since the Covid pandemic. We knew right away when quarantines began that we had to bring our community together despite the challenges. We quickly organized Zoom services that included live music, readings, a sermon, and even coffee hour at the end.

Continuing to broadcast our services via Zoom is one important step in continuing accessibility to anyone who wants to view our services. This also extends to committee meetings which are often held via Zoom, or in a hybrid manner so that all interested members can participate, whether they wish to be present in person or remotely.

If we are to continue to carry out our missions and what we believe God is calling us to become, we will have to aim for healthier growth of membership in the coming months and years. For this to become a reality, we will first need to get the word out into our community, inviting people in. We will need to create an atmosphere which is welcoming to new members, and aim to fulfill their spiritual needs. In part, this will include hosting engaging and meaningful worship

services, and offering faith-based education to congregants of all ages. In the long term, it will involve continuing and expanding upon our outreach and missions in programs that advance advocacy for people and the planet.

To expand upon this idea, it will be imperative that we continue some of the programs that we do well, and perhaps think of ideas to improve them. For example, one of the most meaningful days in the life of our church each year is the Thanksgiving Inn-Gathering, which has been described above as well. For the past 20 years, we have organized and hosted the collection and distribution of 100+ Thanksgiving meals to members of the Burlington community. The Thanksgiving Committee has challenged itself to find ways to increase our outreach, improve the service we provide to the community, and invite these meal recipients to worship with us.

### **3. WHO ARE WE NOW?**

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

- a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS
- b. 11-YEAR REPORT
- c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS
- d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING
- e. CHURCH FINANCES
- f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

#### **3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS**

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##### **Describe your congregation’s life of faith.**

*For example, what beliefs and commitments are stated in your congregation’s purpose statement or membership vows? How is God most often described in worship liturgy? In what ways would you describe the Holy Spirit in your midst?*

Our church’s website does an excellent job at stating who we are and what we stand for:

At the UCC Burlington, we cultivate a thriving environment which empowers us to embody the beloved, diverse community that Jesus modeled for us, proclaiming that all are welcome, all are loved. We celebrate our colonial roots as we change, adapt and grow into who God is calling us

to be. We respect the sanctity of each person's spiritual journey and we are blessed by the gifts that each person brings to the life of the church. We join together in faithful service and advocacy with the ongoing hope that we can make the world a better, more just, and peaceful place for everyone.

We believe that God calls us to love unconditionally, following the example of Jesus Christ. Recognizing that all people are equal in the sight of God, **we seek to be an inclusive and respectful community for persons of every color, age, sexual orientation, gender, ability and economic means.** In our calling to express the love and welcome of Christ, we affirm the dignity and worth of every person, and declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation. We strive to respond to the needs of our town and world with practical deeds of love. We welcome individuals and families of every configuration into the full life and ministry of this church.

We are a justice-seeking, God-loving, peace-making, people-loving community of Jesus-followers. We are incredibly diverse in talents, lifestyles, politics and religious theologies. We gain strength from this variety and welcome all who are followers of Christ or seekers of spiritual fulfillment. We use the Holy Bible as our spiritual guide and we follow Jesus as our spiritual leader. We seek to emulate the way he treated the most marginalized people in society.

We are a congregation who believes in diversity in all of its forms, and we pride ourselves on welcoming persons from all walks of life. We are a congregation who appreciates the ideas and special gifts that each member of our church brings.

Going along with all of the above ideas, God is often described as a figure who fought for the oppressed and the marginalized in our worship liturgy. We strive to articulate that God loves *everyone* regardless of who they are and where they are on their worship journey. We find the Holy Spirit is ever-present, and guides us in our journey of faith toward a better understanding and acceptance of God's words and God's love.

### **Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.**

Our congregation is a close-knit group of parishioners who truly enjoy being in each other's company for worship and fellowship. When asked why members of our congregation continue to come to church, time and time again they say it's because of the community we've built here at UCC Burlington. Many of our members have been here for generations! We genuinely care to know about one another, and we care about the wellbeing of all aspects of our church. The idea that "all are welcomed, all are loved" is something that we take to heart, and we pride ourselves



on being an inclusive and welcoming community wherever someone is in their life and their journey in worshipping Christ.

Additionally, the members of our church are often generous with their time and talents. There are always people to step up when there are things to be done, whether it's for a committee or an event, and those who participate do so because they realize what it takes for our church to not only just operate, but succeed. Those who get involved always put in 110% effort into tasks big or small, for anything from decorating the sanctuary for Advent, to organizing a yard sale or a Faire.

Finally, we would be remiss if we did not mention the wonderful gift to our congregation that is our music ministry and in particular our church choir. Our choir is a talented and dedicated group who loves to serve God through their musical gifts. They are truly one of the best parts of our community and our worship service, and they add so much not only to our regular worship services but also to our special holiday services such as Christmas and Easter. In addition, we are very excited to have a new Director of Music Ministry who plays multiple instruments including the piano, organ, clarinet and saxophone! We are confident that he can help to continue to expand upon and enhance the power of our choir, and bring new music experiences to our services.

**Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.**

*For example, where does worship take place, and what is it based around? What was a recent baptism like? What are some words used to describe good preaching?*

Our worship services are held in our quaint and beautiful sanctuary which seats approximately 200 people. Attendees are welcomed by our greeter at the door, and then enter our peaceful worship space. The first thing they may notice are the huge, vibrantly colored stained glass windows, or perhaps the beautiful pipe organ behind the choir loft. They may also notice the floor-to-ceiling handmade quilt that was created many years ago by families in the congregation. Above the altar, there are hand painted banners, which change based on the season. Each week, fresh flower arrangements decorate the altar, donated by church members or friends, in honor, celebration, or memory of loved ones.

Our services of baptism are meaningful and special for our congregation. The congregation is invited to read responsively and promise to take part in the faith journey of the infant or child being baptized. In infant baptisms, the baby is wrapped in a handmade white blanket, which was lovingly knit or crocheted by our Crafting for a Cause (C4C) group.

Effective preaching is a vital piece of how we view our new minister's role. Our congregants look forward to sermons that have a positive and upbeat message, and that are engaging, relatable, and relevant in their lives. Many congregants describe good preaching as feeling as though the pastor is speaking straight to them, and feeling uplifted, "filled up," and motivated going into their week ahead. Previous pastors at UCC Burlington have also made written copies of their sermons available for congregants who felt particularly moved by a sermon, which is something we hope our next pastor will continue going forward.

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

*For example, how are young people in leadership? How do people continue to form their faith over a lifetime? Name a topic studied or curriculum used recently; what was the impact of this study on those who attended?*

Through Christian Education, we work towards attaining a greater knowledge of our scriptures and our faith tradition while exploring their application in our everyday lives. Gathering together for worship as a family is very important to the life of our church. The youngest members of our church are able to spend time in our nursery if their parents choose. Preschoolers and up attend the opening portion of the service, and then on most Sundays, they leave for Sunday School. Before they leave the service, all children are called to the front of the church for Children's Time, which is a personal conversation between the children of the church and our pastor. The Pastor takes time to present a teachable moment based upon scripture, which is enjoyed by all. You never can tell what the reactions of the children will be, but they are always precious. In addition to this, our youth take part in several services throughout the year, including a Christmas presentation, Sunrise Easter service, and Children's Sunday. Several children also sing in our youth choir.

At the present time, we have a group of teens involved in the "Green Team", which is a group that focuses on our Earth and how it is deeply affected by climate change. This group of adults and teens also focus on recycling and sustainability, and present their ideas to our congregation from time to time. Our population of teens has diminished recently, especially during the Covid pandemic, but we hope to revive a Youth Group with this age bracket soon.

As previously mentioned, we have sent groups of teens, college students and adult leaders on three different Mission Trips in the past decade or so. The first Mission Trip took place in 2010 and was to Pine Ridge, South Dakota to work on the Oglala Lakota Sioux Native American reservation with an organization called Re-Member (<https://www.re-member.org>). We then went to New Orleans to help with continued relief from Hurricane Katrina with the St Bernard Project (<https://sbpusa.org/about-us>) in 2013. Our most recent trip was to the Blue Hills of West

Virginia, where we worked with the Appalachian South Folklife Center (<https://www.folklifecenter.org>) in 2015. These three trips were some of the proudest moments in our congregation's recent history, and were extremely rewarding to all involved. Some of the earliest participants of these trips- who are now in their late 20's and early 30's- have expressed an interest in reviving these for the next generation of church youth.

Adults in our congregation have participated in discussion groups throughout the last several years that have been relevant to current events. One recent example of this is that our Green Team organized a discussion on the Book of Hope. The effect was to make participants more aware of the personal impact their behaviors have on the environment and the hope we could have for the efforts to improve.

In recent times, the participation in all of these activities mentioned above has declined in part due to Covid.

### **Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.**

*How are decisions communicated in your church?*

Our church's Constitution has many detailed descriptions of our Parish Council, Boards, and Committees. Please note, the Constitution does not describe all committees.

Each Board is organized by function, which may have supporting committees that specialize in a specific function or task. For example, the Board of Deacons helps to oversee the Call to Care Committee and the Special Music Committee to operationalize and practice specific tasks that are under the remit and responsibility of the Board. The Called to Care Committee provides outreach to the sick and homebound, and the Special Music Committee supports the Director of Music Ministries.

*How are teams or committees organized?*

Operational and functional decisions are made through each individual Board or Committee, which are then shared with the Parish Council for cross-Board discussion, approval (as necessary), and support. Parish Council is often the first place a Board or Committee decision is communicated. Board leaders serving on Parish Council share decisions with other Board and Committee members through meetings and email correspondence.

Decisions are shared with the Congregation through pulpit announcements, written announcements printed in the weekly bulletin, weekly email blast, and the monthly church

publication, *The HillTop Herald*. Copies of the written documents are posted on the church's website for additional access and dissemination.

Financial matters, including large capital expenses, constitutional changes, and pastor employment decisions are brought by the Parish Council to the entire congregation for discussion and approval at the Annual Meeting and in Special Congregational meetings, when needed.

*Where does your church struggle for vision?*

We don't believe that our church struggles for vision, but rather we struggle in operationalizing our vision due to the low number of available volunteers.

Our church has historically been a beacon in the community and a leader among our spiritual neighbors. The town's food pantry was started in our church basement many years ago. The food pantry today, People Helping People, has grown into a very important and central town-wide resource, which is supported by many local businesses, neighborhood families, and spiritual centers. As previously mentioned, their Thanksgiving drive is one of the most important parts of our church outreach.

UCC Burlington's church Boards and Committees have many novel ideas and a desire to grow, promote change, and support our neighbors to those in our own church community as well as to the wider town and world-wide community. Unfortunately, our church's base membership and available volunteer pool has become smaller, in part due to the impact of Covid and the loss of our permanent pastor. We also have an aging church community and we have lost members through relocation, sickness, and death. Additionally, it has been difficult to attract and retain a younger population that have children, including single and married people between the ages of 20 to 50 years of age. Overall, attraction to new members of every demographic is significantly down since the start of the Covid pandemic.

**When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?**

Typically, each Board and Committee meets monthly, with meetings lasting 1 to 2 hours each. Parish Council meets monthly for approximately 2 hours each month. Additional Board and Committee communication is through email, which may take up another 45 to 60 minutes per month. In summary, approximately 10 to 15 hours per month may be spent on decision making activities.

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

In times of crisis, email and telephone communications are used to communicate the problem to the relevant church leaders (e.g., Trustees, Moderator). Ad hoc meetings, in person or via Zoom, are quickly called, as needed, to include representation from other applicable Board leaders, including the Pastor.

**Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance?**

Yes

# 3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

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



**Church#:** 785626  
**Assoc:** 926      **Schedule:** 0      United Church of Christ Congregational      Burlington      MA      01803

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	236	86	50	6	0	3	4	5	0
2012	195	90	32	7	0	0	48	0	-41
2013	204	90	60	0	0	14	5	0	9
2014	214	90	60	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	212	90	31	0	0	7	9	0	-2
2016	209	85	39	2	0	3	8	0	-3
2017	212	85	31	0	0	6	3	0	3
2018	211	70	28	2	0	2	5	0	-1
2019	219	75	44	0	9	0	1	0	8
2020	214	70	39	0	0	0	5	0	-5
2021	214	70	39	0	0	0	0	0	0

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2011	\$213,518	\$0	\$4,500	\$7,137	\$11,637	\$10,151	\$21,788	2.11	\$235,306	\$140,358
2012	\$202,327	\$0	\$4,500	\$1,609	\$6,109	\$10,454	\$16,563	2.22	\$218,890	\$150,675
2013	\$206,894	\$0	\$4,500	\$7,214	\$11,714	\$9,850	\$21,564	2.18	\$228,458	\$140,127
2014	\$206,894	\$0	\$4,500	\$6,229	\$10,729	\$0	\$10,729	2.18	\$217,623	\$0
2015	\$222,020	\$0	\$4,500	\$7,871	\$12,371	\$13,934	\$26,305	2.03	\$248,325	\$171,215
2016	\$217,750	\$0	\$4,500	\$8,488	\$12,988	\$8,917	\$21,905	2.07	\$239,655	\$183,000
2017	\$208,267	\$0	\$8,500	\$6,888	\$15,388	\$17,568	\$32,956	4.08	\$241,223	\$188,063
2018	\$234,795	\$0	\$9,000	\$2,428	\$11,428	\$23,693	\$35,121	3.83	\$269,916	\$202,806
2019	\$242,621	\$18,863	\$7,477	\$6,765	\$14,242	\$21,057	\$35,299	3.08	\$277,920	\$193,999
2020	\$246,996	\$6,494	\$7,477	\$3,179	\$10,656	\$2,800	\$13,456	3.03	\$260,452	\$187,057
2021	\$246,996	\$0	\$4,500	\$1,800	\$6,300	\$0	\$6,300	1.82	\$253,296	\$0

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2016-2021	2.39	-17.65	0.00	-100.00	-100.00	13.43	-51.49	5.69
2011-2021	-9.32	-18.60	-22.00	-100.00	-100.00	15.68	-45.86	7.65

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.

\* Note: For the years 2011-2012, we were able to take people off of the "Active Member" list who were no longer actually active members. This is why the "Transfer Out" list appears as an aberration.

### 3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

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**Describe those who participate in your church.**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	105	Yes - 210 per annual report
Number of active non-members:	10	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	115	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:	70%	Yes
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	20%	Yes
Less than 5 years:	10%	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>
15	5	7	4	15	8	23	37	33	Yes

**Percentage of adults in various household types:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	8	Yes
Households with minors:	13	Yes



Single adults age 35-65:	8	Yes
Joint households with no minors:	41	Yes
Single adults over 65:	25	Yes

**Education level of adult participants by percentage:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	100%	Yes
College:	80%	Yes
Graduate School:	30%	Yes
Specialty Training:	5%	Yes

**Percentage of adults in various employment types:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	40%	Yes
Adults who are retired:	60%	Yes
Adults who are not fully employed:		Unknown

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

Our congregation is made up of folks in a wide variety of professions including education fields, legal, financial, technology, retail, charity, service industries, and medicine.

**Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. Most UCC congregations tend to describe themselves as “diverse.” Yet, the vast majority of UCC congregations are mono-cultural. What does diversity mean in your context?**

Burlington, Massachusetts is a fairly mono-cultural town, and that is reflected in the makeup of our congregation at UCC Burlington. According to our recent Holy Cow survey which collected demographic data from our congregation, 93% of our congregants identify as White. The rest of our congregation identified as 2% Black/African American, 2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 3% Asian.

**Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one in the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)? Please note the date. Comment after the exercise:**

One important step we took toward welcoming diversity at UCC Burlington was when we voted to become an Open and Affirming congregation in 2007. Prior to and since then, we have continued to stress and embody how important diversity is to us at UCC. You will find printed on our pew brochures and our website, our statement about diversity which reads in part:

“...Recognizing that all people are equal in the sight of God, we seek to be an inclusive and respectful community for persons of every color, age, sexual orientation, gender, ability and economic means.”

You will experience this radical inclusiveness when you walk into our church, as our congregants welcome you with friendliness and genuine delight of your presence. We also proudly display our rainbow flag and our “All are Welcome, All are Loved” banner on the outside of our building.

### 3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i>
Adult Groups or Classes		
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	2	Pastor, Congregants, Deacons

Children's Groups or Classes	16	Director of Christian Education and CE Committee
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	90	Pastor, Director of Music Ministries, Deacons
Church-wide Meals	60	Congregants, Deacons
Choirs and Music Groups	14	Director of Music Ministries
Church-based Bible Study (Green Team Focused)	7	Pastor
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> ) (1st Sunday of the month)	50	Pastor, Congregation, Sunday School children
Community Meals (Presbyterian Community Dinner)	6	Christian Education, Parishioners
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	0	Pastor, Director of Christian Education
Drama or Dance Program	8	Director of Christian Education
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	1	Pastor
Intergenerational Groups	10	Director of Christian Education
Outdoor Worship (Easter Sunrise Service)	15	Pastor, Director of Christian Education
Prayer or Meditation Groups (Walk the Labyrinth)	10	Deacons, Parishioners
Public Advocacy Work		
Retreats		
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	0	Pastor, Deacons
Worship (time slot: 10:30 AM during the school year)	50	Pastor, Director of Music Ministries
Worship (time slot: 10 AM summer)	35	Pastor, Director of Music Ministries

Young Adult Groups or Classes		
Youth Groups or Classes	10	Director of Christian Education, Director of Music Ministries
Other		

**Additional comments:**

These numbers are a rough estimate and are less than they have been in previous years, especially due to the Covid pandemic. We hope to revive our Youth Group and add various opportunities for Bible studies and book discussions in the coming years.

We would also be remiss if we did not mention other church events that didn't quite fit into this table above, and to add some more detail on a couple of the ways of gathering:

- **The Labyrinth:** We have a 24 foot canvas, hand-painted, 7 circuit Chartres labyrinth to use as a contemplative practice during holy times of the year, including Good Friday. This gets placed on the floor of the Education Building in the main gathering space, where we hold coffee hour and other events. There is often peaceful music being played and candles are lit when the Labyrinth is out. The entire experience offers our congregants the opportunity to enter a quiet space of reflection, healing, stillness and union with the Divine.
- **Public Advocacy Work:** Throughout the years we have had many opportunities to participate in events both in our local Burlington community and in the Greater Boston Area.
- **Locally:** In the spring and summer of 2019, just prior to the pandemic, our church community initiated a reading program at a lower-income apartment complex in town. Members of our congregation volunteered to read to students for an hour after school as well as during the early weeks of the summer. We as a congregation found this quite rewarding and are looking forward to reviving this program in the future.
- **Regionally:** We always send a delegation to the Boston Pride Parade and celebration each year. We have also participated in gatherings in our area related to the murder of George Floyd, and for immigration justice at our local DHS ICE field office.
- **Nationally:** We sent a group of congregants to Washington, DC for the Women's March on Washington in 2017. Our mission trips, as previously described above, are also great examples of members of our church community working for change outside our walls.
- **Community Dinners:** Due to the Covid pandemic, many of our normal church events have not happened in the past few years. However, below are a few events that have been greatly successful and fun for the members of our congregation to gather, and we hope to bring back in the near future.
- For the past several decades up until 2020, we have hosted an **Olde Tyme Faire**, usually the first Saturday in November. During the day, the Education Building has handmade crafts

and baked goods available for purchase, raffle baskets, and silent auction items to bid on. There are also children's events during the day. That evening, the church hosts a dinner (with yummy apple crisp for dessert, baked with love!), and the silent auction items are given away. This event usually raises at least \$7,000 annually for our church.

- For many years we have had a **Jazz and Chocolate Night**, usually around Valentine's Day. Members of the church all bring a number of their most special chocolate desserts, and a locally acclaimed singer named Lydia Harrell and her professional pianist serenade our guests with beautiful music. It is often mentioned as one of the favorite events of the year, and there is a large public following for this event.

- We have also held a number of **Murder Mystery Dinners** which also draw in people from the community for an entertaining evening. Dinner is served while the cast, made up of a selection of our talented congregants, acts out the murder mystery. The audience then buys clues to solve the mystery, and the winning table receives a prize. This is always a fun and popular fundraiser that we hope to revive.

- It's no secret that music is a very important aspect in the life of our church. Our previous Director of Music Ministry, Joe Stoddard, was with our church from 2011 until 2022. During his years with us, he helped to grow our music ministry, in part, by initiating the creation of the Deacons Special Music Fund. The fund is used to pay for hired musicians during special services, buy new anthems for the choir, and anything else needed for music ministry. Joe then helped to raise funds by organizing fund raisers for the special music fund. Joe himself offered his own beautiful organ concerts and also invited guest musicians to participate. Additionally, there were other fundraisers for this account over the years including talent shows and holiday concerts, some presented by our talented congregants, and some by guests and friends of the church. These fundraisers were well attended by members of our congregation as well as people from the wider community. While we haven't been able to hold specific fund raisers for this account in recent years, it stays healthy because individuals donate to this specific cause because our music ministry is so important to them.

**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).**

We do not have any members who are ordained, licensed or commissioned ministers.

**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
Administrative Assistant	Bobbie Killilea	Full Time	Pastor	15+ Years
Director of Music Ministries	Brian Gionet	Part Time	Deacons	New 12/2022!
Director of Christian Education	Deb Raymond	Part Time	Christian Education Committee	3 Years
Interim Pastor	Ed Koonz	Full Time	Parish Council	2 Years

## REFLECTION

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

We recognize a clear opportunity to expand upon Christian education for all age groups. As mentioned in other areas of this profile, there is interest among our congregation for book studies, Bible studies, and new forms of fellowship. We are looking forward to our next pastor being a part of bringing new energy into our church and helping us to find new ways to meet our congregants' spiritual needs.

There is also a desire to bring back many of the above-mentioned, much-loved events. They are not only great fundraisers, but are also fun and an enjoyable way to spend time together, and increase our reach into the community. Our church was the original Meeting House in the town of Burlington, and we would like to continue to be a space where people can come together.

## 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount (Numbers taken from year end, 12/2021)
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$202,887

Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	\$0
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”</i> )	\$0
Fundraising Events	\$10,840
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$10,128
Grants	\$13,158
Rentals of Church Building	\$37,146
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$0
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women’s Group</i> )	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$0
Other (specify): Miscellaneous Other Donations	\$1,695
Other (specify): Investment Income	\$11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$275,865</b>

**Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$273,999**

*Attach the 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 reference the attached PDF of our 2022 church operating statement)

**Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 35%**

**Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church?**

Not that we are aware of (although admittedly, we cannot say for certain as our church is over 300 years old!)

**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

We are indeed a 5-for-5 church. In addition to the above causes, we have special offerings for Christmas, Easter and Blanket Sunday.

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

In line with current guidelines, OCWM (Basic Support) is calculated as 10% of annual pledges.

**What is the church's current indebtedness?**

Total amount of loan debt: \$6,492

Reason for debt: Drawn from the endowment

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.**

This is not applicable at this time.

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

We as a church have not had a capital campaign in the past 10 years. It is worth mentioning, though, that we have had large projects or expenditures which have been generously paid for by members of our congregation.

For example, we realized back in 2016 that there were many members of our congregation that were having difficulty hearing the pastor speak during worship. We as a congregation determined that some sort of sound system was needed, either in the form of "Hearing Loops" for those who were hard of hearing, or to upgrade our current sound system. It was determined that a new sound system was more beneficial for our church community. We had some funds available from memorials received, but it wasn't enough to cover the \$14,000 overall expenditure. There were a few generous church members who found the resources to cover the shortfall, and we were able to install a new system that year without having to borrow any additional funds from the endowment.

**If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:**

We do not have a plan for any capital campaigns in the next few years.

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

Our most recent Capital Campaign was conducted in 2006-2007 to replenish the church's endowment fund. The campaign was a success, and we raised over \$200,000!

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

**What is the market value of the assets?** \$379,040 as of 7/31/2022

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

Funds are drawn as needed to cover any budget deficit. These funds may be used for capital expenditures if voted on by the congregation.

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

There is not a percentage rate of draw, as money is drawn down from endowment if needed at year end. Money is paid back in the following year from any surplus of income.

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

Last year, we drew from the endowment to cover capital expenses as opposed to the operating budget. This number was approximately \$6,492 (our "indebtedness" above)

Over the past five years:

- 2021: Surplus of \$21,301 (which was ultimately less than what was needed for capital expenses, eventually leading to the deficit of \$6,492)

- 2020: Deficit of \$12,188
- 2019: Surplus of \$566
- 2018: Surplus of \$13,479
- 2017: Deficit of \$5,556

The above totals to a *net total contribution* of \$17,602

**At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last?** Our church's endowment should last many years to come, as it is only used to offset an operating deficit and is repaid as soon as possible.

**Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:**

All of the info above was drawn from detailed financial reports, which are done both monthly and annually. Generally, we as a church are always concerned about income and expenses, however over the years our congregation has been quite generous and, as shown above, we have had net positive contributions to the church's endowment. There have been certain circumstances during which we have asked the congregation for more money to offset the projected deficits, and they have always come through when we have had projected shortfalls.

Other Assets:

**Reserves (savings):** \$0

**Investments (other than endowment):** \$0

**Does your church have a parsonage?** Yes!

**Fair market rental value of the parsonage:** \$3100/month

**How is the parsonage used?** Historically our parsonage has been used as a residence for a settled pastor. Both of our two previous settled pastors lived in the parsonage. It is currently being rented in the interim period.

**Street / City / State / Zip:** 8 Lexington St., Burlington MA 01803

**Finished square footage:** 2,200

**Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms:** 4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths

**Assessed real estate value:** \$700,000 (estimate)

**Available for minister residence:** Yes

**Expected minister residence:** Yes

**Condition of structure, systems and appliances:** Good

**Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs:** Board of Trustees

**Describe all buildings owned by the church:**

The church owns: the main church/sanctuary building, the Education building (now interconnected with the sanctuary; see below), and the Parsonage.

- The main church building includes the sanctuary, as well as upstairs space where Choir rehearsals are held, and a downstairs space for Sunday School and our nursery.
- The large space upstairs in the Ed Building is called Sewell Hall, and is rented out for various groups on some weeknights, as well as for private events. It is also where we have Coffee Hour on Sundays after worship, and hold any sort of dinner.
- The downstairs area of the Education Building is currently rented to and exclusively used by a Montessori School.

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

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

In the year 2000, we began a large addition to our church which was completed in 2003. This addition is called the “Interconnect” because it literally connects our Education Building with our Sanctuary. When this project was conceived, one of the priorities for the church was that it would allow the church to be accessible to people with limited mobility. When the project was completed in 2003, it was deemed to be handicapped accessible. However, while there is a handicapped ramp, due to there being one step to enter either door to the church, it is questionable whether we can still be considered fully accessible. We have two gender-neutral, handicapped accessible restrooms on the main level.

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

*For example, when was a time the church made a major budget change? How is the budgeting process done? What new ministry initiative has your church financed?*

The Church’s budget is established in January. The Treasurer and Parish Council look at the prior year’s expenses, communicate with the various committees about what they believe their

expected expenses will be, review what we have planned for fundraisers, and estimate what we expect to get for pledges. The budget is voted upon at the Annual Meeting in February. The church's budget and actual expenses often fall quite close to each other, pending any major capital expenses. Borrowing from the endowment for capital expenses requires a special congregational meeting and vote. The most recent capital expense vote was to replace the north roof on the Education building and repair the chimney, both of which were approved at the same meeting.

We have not (in the past several decades anyway) made a major budgeting change mid-year; the budget is what we have set it to be. This always includes 10% of pledges being budgeted to our Missions committee, and they in turn support the 5 for 5 Special Mission offerings through UCC, as well as 20-22 special benevolences. In addition, they designate funds in response to current events such as natural disasters and donate to nonprofits that have a special meaning to members of our congregation. A few examples of these organizations include Planned Parenthood, Special Ops Wounded Warriors, Heifer International, and Science with a Mission.

## HISTORICAL INFORMATION

**Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.**

There have been a number of significant events in the life of our church over the past several years:

- The most significant event in the history of our church was when we became an Open & Affirming congregation in 2007. This greatly enhanced our goal of becoming an even more accepting and diversified congregation.
- In addition to this, our church has also worked hard to become a Level One Green Congregation. This status was attained in 2017, and we are continuing our efforts to become a Level Two Green Congregation in the near future.
- The third change that has impacted our congregation has been the shift in demographics among our core members, as our congregation continues to age. This has had a negative impact on fundraising and declining membership.

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

Like many congregations around the world, things were going well within our church and our community until Covid hit in March of 2020. Because of this, we had to quickly change our

mode of worship from in person to virtual as it was unsafe to worship in our physical church building. Through trial and error we were able to settle on a virtual platform via Zoom, which allowed for parishioner participation during worship. Our Director of Music Ministry was able to pre-record music and send music to specific members of the choir, so they were able to provide live music during worship. Others were able to be part of worship in roles of leading parishioners with the Call to Worship, Prayers and Bible readings. Service rehearsals on Zoom were done prior to worship to make sure the service would run smoothly. We even held “coffee hour” after the Zoom services and many congregants stayed and chatted for up to an hour after the service had ended. Zoom has been so successful for us that we are still broadcasting all of our services for those who are unable or uncomfortable attending in person, and we are committed to continuing this.

**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.** *(For example, what is an example of a recent conflict and something your congregation learned from it? Describe an occasion when your church experienced conflict without being able to resolve it well. Does your church have policies, protocols or structures for dealing with conflict?)*

People within the church believe in the democracy of the people. Not one person decides the resolution to any conflict. Discussion is brought among many people, and then action is voted upon.

At the current time, there are no major active conflicts among the church and its members.

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

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev. Ed Koonz (Interim)	2021 - Present	Yes
Rev. Angela Wells-Bean	2012 - 2021	Yes
Rev. Elizabeth King (Interim)	2010 - 2012	Yes
Rev. Priscilla Derick	1997 - 2012	Yes

Rev. Norman Bendroth (Interim)	1993 - 1996	Yes
Rev. Luther P. Durgin (Interim)	1992 - 1993	Yes
Rev. Janet Mackey	1989 - 1992	Yes

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

Our congregation has had a great relationship with all of our most recent settled pastors. Each of these persons had slightly different styles of ministry, yet each was a great asset to our church community and we are forever grateful for the time they spent with us. Given that each pastor brought different ideas to our congregation and our services, this shows that we are both open to and embrace new ideas and we enjoy challenging “the way it’s always been done”.

**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

#### **4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?**

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

- a. Community Vision
- b. MISSION InSite

#### **4a. COMMUNITY VISION**

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**How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?** *For example, which service activities has your church participated in this past year?*

*Where has the church participated in global connections of care and justice? What is currently transformational in your church's engagement with neighbors near or far?*

We as a congregation pride ourselves on being involved both in our community and on a wider scale. As previously discussed, our largest annual event is the Thanksgiving food drive and In-Gathering in collaboration with People Helping People. This day is one of the best and most rewarding days for members of both our church community and those in the wider town.

Outside of the Thanksgiving project, our church also helps People Helping People in a number of ways: we collect food on the last Sunday of every month for their food pantry, we volunteer with their Wish Tree Christmas project that collects gifts for children in town at the holidays, we volunteer with their annual Pumpkin Patch fundraiser, and many of our members volunteer with food sorting and distribution throughout the week.

As alluded to earlier in this profile, another initiative that we have recently participated in is that we had a group of volunteers read to and tutor children at a local apartment complex. There were 18 members of our church community who participated in this and helped 30 children in grades 1-6 over a period of 26 sessions. This new partnership was a great success and something that we hope to do again.

In addition to this, several members of our congregation are involved in our town's local government and organizations. The current Town Moderator is a longtime member of our church. There are also several members who are Town Meeting members, some members have been on the board of Selectmen, and others are involved in organizations such as the Rotary Club. We as a congregation are proud of our members' involvement in activities and organizations outside of our church's walls.

From a financial perspective, we as a church are proud of the number and variety of benevolences that we support. As part of our 5 for 5 status, we have over 20 different charitable organizations with a wide scope of missions, from social justice (LGBTQ Asylum, Planned Parenthood), to supporting veterans (Disabled American Veterans, Special Ops Wounded Warriors), and making a difference in the lives of those less fortunate than us (City Missions Society, Rosie's Place, the Pine Street Inn). In addition to this, there are many services throughout the year where we have a special collection called the "Love Offering", from which part of the collection helps a local member of our church community and the other helps a cause that is currently relevant, such as providing aid for a recent national disaster.

Recently, our benevolences have even reached an international level. We have a member of our congregation who is from Uganda. We took up a collection for her son, who still lives in Africa, to purchase land to build a school there. We as a congregation were able to send over \$4,000 dollars for this project, and we still receive updates from time to time on how this project is going.



**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.**

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: Level One Green Congregation**

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?**

While we haven't gone through the application process for all of these designations, we have done work in and care about these causes. The variety in the initiatives we have started to take on throughout the life of our church shows that we are a congregation which finds meaning in many facets. Please see our discussion of each area below considering that if members of our church or our clergy feel called to work toward these certifications, they will have the wider congregation's support.

Accessible to All (A2A): As previously mentioned earlier in this profile, when we initially created the Interconnect, which connects the sanctuary to the Education Building, one of our priorities was making sure that our facilities were handicapped accessible. Back at the onset of this project in 2000, our design did meet the guidelines present at that time. The hallways and bathrooms are both wide enough for a full-sized wheelchair, and there is now a ramp that allows folks to not have to use the stairs. However, our facilities are not currently up to standard as there is one step when entering both the main church building as well as the Education Building from the outside. This may be an initiative that we revisit in the future.

Creation Justice: This certification is currently a work in progress. We are currently designated as a Level 1 Green Congregation within the SNEUCC, and are actively working toward becoming a Level 2 Green Congregation. We have a dedicated team of volunteers on the Green Team who are dedicated to climate justice and are working hard to help achieve this goal.

God is Still Speaking (GISS): The GISS initiative was started several years ago, and was one of the overall themes for our congregation in the year 2016.

Global Mission Church: When there is a disaster within the United States or outside its borders, we support relief through special collections, and send funds to Church World Services. Through several of our designated benevolences, we support the following organizations with global reach: Global leadership Community, Heifer International, and The World School.

Open and Affirming (ONA): As stated in other parts of this profile, our proud designation as an ONA church is one of the most significant things that has happened in the life of our church in the past several decades.

WISE Congregation for Mental Health: We became a WISE church in the year 2019.

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

As described above, our previous settled pastor was very involved in the Burlington Interfaith Clergy Association, and thus we have been involved in a number of events that have brought together the various religious organizations in town. The Interfaith Clergy Association puts on a number of ecumenical events throughout the year. This past December, there was a Blue Christmas service that brought those of many Christian faiths together to reflect on the more somber side of the holiday. There have also been services in which we have participated in promoting religious tolerance. In the recent past, members from our church community also participated in an event at the town common with other organizations for racial justice connected to the murder of George Floyd.

Additionally, something new that has started this past year is that the Presbyterian Church in town has started doing monthly community dinners. We as a church have sent volunteers to help with this event, and hope to become more involved in the future as we do have a close relationship with the Presbyterians.

**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.**

Church Vision Statement, adopted February 2017:

At the UCC Burlington, we cultivate a thriving environment, which empowers us to embody the beloved, diverse community that Jesus modeled for us, proclaiming that all are welcome, all are loved. We celebrate our colonial roots as we change, adapt and grow into who God is calling us

to be. We respect the sanctity of each person's spiritual journey and we are blessed by the gifts that each person brings to the life of the church. We join together in faithful service and advocacy with the ongoing hope that we can make the world a better, more just, and peaceful place for everyone.

We believe our church faithfully follows the clear direction of our vision statement. Our efforts and time are spent on “changing, adapting and growing” as evidenced by our meeting the challenges of Covid, becoming Open and Affirming, and by our strong commitment to missions and outreach programs. In addition, we continue to strive to make the world a better place through time spent educating our congregation and implementing positive behaviors to improve our environment and reaching out to our community through examples of our support of the food pantry, reading initiatives and social justice programs.

**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?**

Our most recent settled pastor, Rev. Angela Wells-Bean, was very involved in our local community. She was a member of the Interfaith Clergy Association, served on the board of People Helping People, and was also a Chaplain on call at Lahey Hospital in Burlington. She made herself available to congregants as well as the general public by having regular office hours at a local coffee shop, and being available for a phone call mostly any time. In addition to all of this, she served in public office as an elected representative to the Housing Authority in Burlington, advocating for equity in affordable housing.

We appreciated how involved our pastor was in our local community, but that she was also able to balance being available to the congregation. As stated previously in our discussion of areas of excellence from *The Marks of a Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry*, we would hope and expect our pastor to practice self care and take time to balance their own health and wellbeing by not overextending themselves with commitments.

#### 4b. MISSION InSite

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**Comment on your congregation’s MissionInsite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown?**

When reviewing the MissionInsite analysis, it shows that Community involvement is important in the Burlington area, which is something that we at UCC Burlington pride ourselves on. People are looking for opportunities to serve the community. Many believe that adult social activities, Mission Trips & Global Outreach, volunteering opportunities in the community and involvement in social causes are important to them. These things that folks in our community are looking for tracks right in line with our Holy Cow survey and the goals that we have set for our congregation. People in the (MissionInsite) survey want a place for warm and friendly encounters, and people want to have quality sermons that reflect current social issues.

**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 church congregation's internal demographics are fairly consistent with the neighborhoods adjacent to our church. Our church community has a slightly higher percentage of White congregants as compared to the MissionInsite report for our community (93% at UCCB versus 75%). Our community does have a fairly large percentage of Asian persons, specifically those of Indian heritage, which is estimated to be at about 15% of the total town population. Those who identify as Asian in our church community are 3%. The rest of the demographic are fairly similar: 2% Black as compared to 4%, 2% Native American as compared to 3%.

The demographics for our surrounding communities are overall similar. Lexington and Bedford also have fairly sizable Asian populations. Woburn, a small city just to the south of Burlington, has a larger Hispanic population (particularly those of Brazilian descent) and Black population than most of the other surrounding neighborhoods.

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

When reviewing the MissionInsite data, it showed that 35% of those in our community are either empty nesters or retirees. This is a fairly large group, and, unsurprisingly, makes up a large percentage of our congregation.

It also showed that 35% of our community are younger singles & families with adults under 55. Many folks in this group have left religion due to time constraints, demands of raising families and children's weekend activities, or not finding a place of worship that reflects their faith. We ultimately hope to draw this group into our congregation.

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

Our church is known for being a leader in social justice, in particular because People Helping People was formed here and we are the home base for the Thanksgiving In-Gathering. We are also known for being Open and Affirming, and many in the community have taken notice of our rainbow flag hung on the outside of our building.

In many cases, while folks may not know our church personally, they do know that many of our members are involved at town events. Our church's members can be spotted volunteering at events such as Celebrate Burlington Day on the town common, a veteran's food drive, or a Black Lives Matter gathering. It is also worth mentioning again that many members of our church are involved in local town government.

One business owner recently told a member of our Search Committee: "I hear a lot about members of the UCC church's involvement in Burlington, and I have never heard anything bad said about the church".

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

Folks say that they've come into our church for a variety of reasons.

Some people were raised in the church as children and left for college or for a career. They returned once they had family, looking for a place where their children could learn the teachings of Christ in an environment that had always felt like home. Others were enticed by friends or neighbors in the community, who relayed that our church was welcoming to all. Many folks have come to the church wanting to find a place where they could help serve the community as a source of outreach, realizing how much our church does in our town.

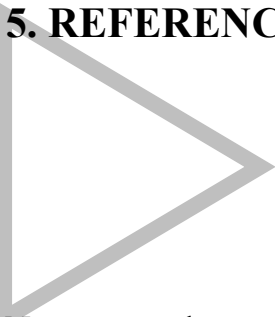
In more recent years, many more came looking for a church that was accepting of all of God's children. Our church was one of the earliest (if not *the* first) in Burlington to put out a statement of acceptance to the LGBTQ+ community when we declared ourselves as Open and Affirming in 2007. From our church's website:

"We believe that God calls us to love unconditionally, following the example of Jesus Christ. Recognizing that all people are equal in the sight of God, we seek to be an inclusive and respectful community for persons of every color, age, sexual orientation, gender, ability and economic means. In our calling to express the love and welcome of Christ, we affirm the dignity and worth of every person, and declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation. We strive to respond to the needs of our town and world with practical deeds of love. We welcome individuals and families of every configuration."

In this, various groups of people found the church as a refuge to worship in quiet contemplation or to join in the full life and ministry of this church.

All of these folks have come to get something different and meaningful to them out of being part of our congregation. They found a place where no one told them what to believe or how to believe. They were allowed to form their own beliefs with assistance from Pastors who would share life experiences and examples of ways to walk in the steps of Jesus.

## 5. REFERENCES



Name up to three people who have agreed to serve as phone and written references. Advise the three references: “The contact information you provide may be shared publicly. Please use contact information that you feel comfortable giving to candidates so they can reach you with their questions.”

Make sure they are not members of your church but are persons who know your church well enough to be helpful to candidates seeking more information. Request a letter from each reference in answer to the four prompts below. Attach the letters (up to three) as desired.

### REFERENCE 1

Janet Sullivan Fitzgerald / Funeral Director / People Helping People Board of Directors  
(781-244-9519 / sullivanfh@comcast.net / Past Thanksgiving In-Gathering Committee Member)

*Letter of Reference from Janet Sullivan Fitzgerald, submitted December 2022:*

My name is Janet Sullivan Fitzgerald, and I am a Funeral Director for the Edward V Sullivan Funeral Home in Burlington. Through my job I have had considerable interaction with the United Church of Christ Congregational. In addition, I have been on the Board of People Helping People for many years and have had a lot of collaboration with the church through the organization.

As a Funeral Director I have worked many funerals with former ministers Peggy Derrick and Angela Wells. With the history of the church, many funerals have been large in nature. The ministers and the staff of this church always made my brother Kevin, and I feel like we were

members of the Church. I am practicing Catholic and a member of St. Veronica's Parish in Burlington, but I have always admired the sense of community spirit that this church has that our catholic church does not. When Peggy Derrick left, the UCC threw her a going away party. Kevin and I went and were welcomed by the congregation, again like we were members.

There is no church in our town that does more for families in need than the United Church of Christ Congregational. They host the in-gathering that provides the fixings for Thanksgiving dinners for families in need. This is a huge project with a lot of work and moving parts that the UCC Captains, but other churches and organizations assist with. The Church helps with the Wish Tree that provides gifts for children in need during the holiday season. The church donated their facility to sort the gifts for the wish tree for many years until the space grew too small. The Church was also key to the organizing and fundraising for an addition to the food pantry many years ago.

Not being a practicing member of the church, I can't really speak to anything that could be changed. Bobbie the office manager, is the heart and soul of the church. I was once comparing the two catholic churches in Burlington St. Margaret's and St. Malachy's to our new pastor. I said that St. Margaret's was all business, but that St. Malachy's had a bit of a sense of community spirit like the United Church of Christ Congregational. That is a huge compliment to the UCC Church.

I would be more than willing to speak to any candidates. My cell phone is 781-244-9519 and my email is [sullivanfh@comcast.net](mailto:sullivanfh@comcast.net)

Janet Sullivan Fitzgerald

## REFERENCE 2

Judy Walsh / President of the Board of Directors / People Helping People  
(617-797-6786 / [judyw621@gmail.com](mailto:judyw621@gmail.com) / Holiday Program Coordinator for People Helping People)

*Letter of Reference from Judy Walsh submitted January 2023:*

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to let you know what a wonderful church community there is at the United Church of Christ in Burlington, MA. I have worked with two of the previous ministers as well as with the current interim minister as members of the People Helping People board. They have been strong members of this non-profit group working on by-law revisions, creating brochures and helping to work on our website update as well as attending our monthly meetings. It was Rev. Peggy Derick who suggested that the UCC would love to coordinate the Thanksgiving

Program and it has continued ever since.

My involvement with the church began when I was invited in the early 2000's to give a children's sermon talking about a group called People Helping People of which I was a board member. PHP support the people who run the Burlington Food Pantry, support the local covenant for Basic Needs and also run a Holiday Program which includes Thanksgiving and a Holiday wish Program for families of the pantry.

As a member of the PHP board I work closely with the UCC members who organize the Thanksgiving Program. This year 130+ meals were distributed. Members of the congregation have volunteers to organize a food drive, and work with the pantry to get fresh vegetables and turkeys. Volunteers help with setup, cleanup and also help the clients shop for their Thanksgiving dinner. They never seem to have a problem getting volunteers to support their outreach programs.

I find members of the UCC always willing to volunteer to sit at the Wish Tree which is at Burlington Mall, supply many gifts for the children in need in the Burlington community, as well as volunteer to sell pumpkins at the Pumpkin Patch held at another church in Burlington. Profits from this event support our Food Pantry.

I have had only a very positive experience working with the UCC community. Feel free to reach out to me with any questions at 617-797-6786.

Sincerely,  
Judy Walsh



## 6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

- a. CLOSING PRAYER
- b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT
- c. CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

### 6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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*Include here any prayer or dream for the minister you imagine journeying toward you... a poem, for example, or a Scripture passage or a piece of music that is meaningful to your Search Committee:*

#### ***An Invitation to the UCC in Burlington***

*All are welcome. All are loved.  
This decree does come from Heaven above.  
Enter our doors and you will know  
Together in Christ we all shall grow.*

*Created in colonial times,  
Our steeple bells continue to chime.  
We reach out to neighbors both local and far  
With deeds and donations wherever they are.*

*As best we can we care for the earth.  
We strive to be green and respect its worth.  
We craft, as well, to keep others warm.  
Prayer shawls knitted to help us stay calm.*

*Sharing and caring is our domain.  
With worship and music we do proclaim  
That kindness and love are treasures we hold.  
Come strive with us. Enter our fold.*

Joan Zink, congregant, UCC Burlington

## 6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending 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.

### **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.)**

This profile was written by the UCC Burlington Settled Pastor Search Committee: Anna Karwan (Co-Chair), Jan Costa (Co-Chair), Carol Downing (Secretary), Julie Lewis, Sam Flecchia, Laura Nowell, and Caitlin Spearson.

In addition, many portions of this profile could not have been completed without the assistance of Mark Flecchia, Church Treasurer. Much of the demographic information was provided by Bobbie Killilea, Administrative Assistant.

### **2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:**

We created this profile with the love and support of our entire church community here at UCC Burlington. We were commissioned by our congregation to do this work, and did it very carefully and thoughtfully, consulting with as many members of our congregation as we could. We have done our best to represent the views, feelings, and opinions of our entire congregation. We hope that prospective ministerial candidates are as excited as we are about this new chapter in our church's journey and mission!

Signed: *Search Committee*  
*January 24, 2023*

## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: 

Name / Title: Rev. Alex Shea Will / Area Conference Minister

Email: SheaWillA@sneucc.org

Phone: 508-244-4769

Date: January 24, 2023

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*