



Local Church Profile for Churches Seeking an Interim Pastor

Church Information

Full Name: Pilgrim Congregational UCC
Address: 6315 Central Avenue, St. Pete, FL, 33710
Phone: 727-347-1227
Email: pilgrimcucc@gmail.com
Website: pilgrimuccstpete.org

Additional Denominational Affiliations: none

UCC Conference: Florida
Association: No Association
Area Conference Minister Name: Rev. S. LaTrell Harrison
ACM cell phone: (404) 734-4986
ACM email: LHarrison@uccfla.org

Position Details

In a paragraph or two for each item, please answer the following prompts.

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

Pilgrim is a diminishing, yet warm and welcoming, aging community (50+), traditional in their values yet open to new ideas. Friends and members alike are generous in spirit and strive to be good stewards of their finances and personal gifts. Our recently refurbished campus has the potential to become a thriving center for retreat and renewal. Seeking candidates with good communication skills, approachable demeanor, and positive attitude. Part-time pastoral duties would include Sunday worship and seasonal services; pastoral care and visitation; liaison with administrative/office duties such as calendar, bulletin, budget, newsletters; help congregation partner with UCC and other churches in meaningful ways; facilitate membership to redefine their vision and mission to a changing 21st century in order to reach millennials. Also see our attached letter.

2. Name 3 core competencies that you feel you will need in your Interim Pastor. Biblically sound preaching; minister to all people; realign our vision and mission within the community.
3. What aspects of the 5 tasks of interim ministry (*listed in separate document titled: "types of transitional ministers"*) do you anticipate being the focus of your interim time? Explore cooperative ministry with other local diminishing UCC churches; help the congregation redefine and realign our purpose and vision; share skills of better communication and conflict resolution; assist congregation in reconnecting with membership lost after pandemic and leadership changes; assist the congregation in finding new ways of looking at future challenges; partner with the congregation to open new avenues of introduction into the larger community.
4. Position Scope: _____ Fulltime _____ 3/4 time ___x___ 1/2 time _____ 1/4 time
5. Position Duration: _____ 12 months ___x___ 18 months other _____

Who We Are

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

1. Church's Mission Statement (*or name that one needs to be developed*): (This needs to be clearer and more defined or developed) We are on a spiritual journey; diversity is our strength and love is our bond.
2. Brief Church History: Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ was formed in March of 1955 by the board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Church in the U.S.A., the Florida Congregational Christian Conference, and the First Congregational Church of St. Petersburg Florida. An advance of \$50,000.00 was made to buy the property on Central Ave. The first service was held in the Higgins house on March 20, 1955, with the Rev. Walter Whitney as pastor and gave his first sermon. The Sanctuary was built in 1960; Heritage Hall was built in 1965; the library was added on to the original Higgins House, which has been the home of our Child Development Center for 39 years. Leap of Faith Preschool is now a separate entity from Pilgrim Church renting space on our campus. We have had over 9 full time ministers and most recently our first part-time minister.
3. 2-3 Significant Events: 1. Loss of two pastors in 5year span - Full time Pastor Rev. Wayne Robinson - became hostile and alienated membership and brought church to near bankruptcy and part-time DP Rev. Larry Shutske - left abruptly when he got an offer from another church willing to offer more salary. 2. Refurbishment of Pilgrim Campus 2020-2022. 3. 65th church anniversary canceled due to church closure/pandemic. 4. Movie series, retreat, bible study, seder meal events all open to all and advertised.

4. Church Strengths: Congregation faithful to the gospel; no mortgage debt and church freehold property; members are good servants of their stewardship gifts despite fixed incomes and age.
 5. Church Challenges: Aging congregation; diminishing membership; community surrounding church has become more transient and many businesses. Some members want to live in the church's past so they are wary of new ventures or change. Need security system and video cameras - two break-ins within the last year. Homeless and mentally ill persons increasing presence.
 6. Experience of Conflict: Membership leaving because of disagreements with pastors; pastor leaving abruptly because we wouldn't meet financial offer given by another church. Leap of Faith (LOF) Preschool used to be Pilgrim cooperative but they broke away, sought autonomy, and they now rent space from us. LOF can be demanding and difficult renters.
1. Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. On a scale of 1-5, where would you rank your church's level of conflict? 1. and 2.
(Based on this work by Speed Leas 1. Problem to solve 2. Disagreement 3. Contest 4. Fight or Flight 5. Intractable)

Please explain why you chose this level.

Level 1 - Problem to solve because many did not return to church after pandemic. Despite materials, classroom, and facilitator families with children were too busy with secular activities to attend Sunday school so the teacher quit. How do we meet the needs of our congregation and the community to grow in membership when church is no longer a priority in people's lives? Are these problems insurmountable? Perhaps if we had pastoral relations and clear expectations/boundaries.

Level 2. Disagreement because membership was affected during changes in ministry staff. Some left because of change in music or preaching style or wanted Pilgrim to be more proactive with the homeless visiting campus. Some felt we had lost our vision, they gave up or quit. Some said there wasn't enough visitation to the shut ins or follow up to those who didn't return after the pandemic. Lots of questions, some blaming, some resigning to the status quo. DP Rev. Shutske left. Again, our church conflict stems from not being honest about managing our expectations. The 'neighborhood gossip' mentality is rather pervasive.

2. Describe your congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict. Most often discussions regarding conflict were brought to the church council. Of course, there was the inevitable phone call canvassing. Most issues were discussed head on but often solutions were less than satisfactory; other issues were promised resolution but not delivered. It either resulted in members resigning from council or leaving church if they didn't get their way. Perhaps that is more fight or flight. Most of the time the congregation does really try to work together on most issues where we can respect and support staff adequately. We are low on physical manpower but big on prayer warriors. We do try to listen and respect one another but there is quite a 'gossip' undertone. Possibly that comes with a congregation that is so small and have known each other for a long time,

Basic Church Statistics

Yearly average

	Church Membership	Weekly Worship Attendance	Children & Youth Participation	Adult Ed Participation
Pre-pandemic	46	40	4	12
Current year	34	20	0	12

	Income	Overall Budget	Mission Giving	Reserves & Endowment Principals
Pre-pandemic	163,033	162,475	?	?
Current year	154,434	178,467	?	108,466

Compensation

Total Compensation Package Amount or Range: \$30,000

Package offered: Total Package, no additional monetary benefits offered
 (choose only one) Total Package includes optional benefits to be negotiated (if you wish, list here what those optional benefits may be)

Housing:

- Housing allowance only
 Parsonage only
 Either Parsonage or Housing Allowance Provided

Please explain briefly your process in discerning your compensation.

This figure is based on the part-time salary of previous DP as well as congregation size and giving. Should membership increase there is also the possibility of increase in compensation.

Church body responsible for hiring the Interim Pastor is: Pastoral Search and Call Committee

Ministry Description

In 2,000 characters or less, describe your church and the type of minister you need. Think of this section as your “sales pitch.” It is the first thing the candidate will see about you.

St. Petersburg is “The Sunshine City” and Pilgrim wishes to be that sunny beacon in the neighborhood. Pilgrim UCC was established in 1955. Pilgrim has no debt, we own the buildings on our campus, taking up almost an entire city block. Pilgrim has undergone considerable renovations to her buildings and grounds. Our Endowment Fund is valued at over \$100,000 and Bellora Scholarship fund is valued at over \$1 million. We are suffering a decrease in membership due to an aging population and pandemic; however, our pledges are strong. We currently receive income from four tenants; Risen City Church; Leap of Faith Preschool; and two weekly AA groups. We believe that Pilgrim offers a unique opportunity for growth and enrichment. We honor our traditions, and wish to embrace new ideas to better meet the needs of all people, especially millennials, with St. Pete College just 4 blocks away. We seek a part-time minister who can offer traditional pastoral care as well as infuse new life, new vision, and diversity to our congregation, to revitalize our community and membership. We have a Facebook page and a church website. We hope to install the means to host live streaming events and record sermons for those who cannot attend worship. Pastoral candidates having knowledge of media skills would be great, as well as clear administrative skills to communicate worship needs to the various offices and personnel. Women’s Fellowship meet regularly; they are a powerhouse for charitable outreach. We are monthly contributors to St. Pete Free Clinic and Food Pantry. Our seasonal gifts for the community are generous considering the size of our congregation. Most all our scheduled events have been advertised and open to the public. We are traditional yet wish to be visionary. We are minutes away from beaches, parks, sports, schools, restaurants, museums and more. Our city is vibrant and diverse and we wish to be also. We are proud to call St. Petersburg our home and Pilgrim our church.

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Statement of Consent

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

We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

Bruce Ellwood

2-15-2023

Signature of Search Committee Chairperson
(typed or Jpeg is sufficient)

Date