

Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Who
are
we

Who
is our
neighbor

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,
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Church of the Savior
Cedar Park, Texas – Austin area

Senior Pastor Search

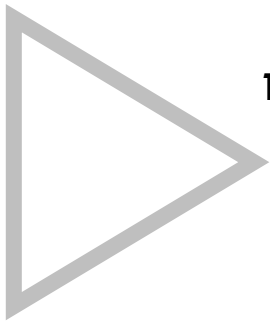
South Central Conference
Heart of Texas Association

March 22, 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

Church name: Church of the Savior

Street address: 3402 Little Elm Trail, Cedar Park, Texas 78613

Supplemental web links: www.cotsaustin.org

Ecumenical affiliations:

Church of the Savior is a United Church of Christ (UCC) congregation and is a congregational partner of the Alliance of Baptists. It is also a member church of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists (AWAB) and is affiliated with the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

Conference: South Central

Association: [Heart of Texas](#)

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person (Name, Title, Phone, Email):

[Rev. Phil Hodson, Conference Minister](#)

Telephone: (830) 625-2212, Email: sccm@sccucc.org

Summary Ministry Description:

Church of the Savior of Cedar Park Texas is a small – but mighty! – progressive Christian church, welcoming to all. At our core, we have a deep mission and passion for social justice and making a difference in the world by focusing on change in our community and beyond. We are a community filled with love for one another and we put a strong focus on embracing those who have been ostracized, excluded or shamed by other Christian churches and/or society.

COTS has been a church on the front lines of social change, building a progressive community, seeking justice for the homelessness, immigrants and minorities who are marginalized, and those stigmatized with gender identity or sexual orientation challenges. We welcome leaders in the nonprofit community and ministry professionals who come to recharge, connect, and serve alongside people off the street and fellow travelers entering our doors.

What we value about living in our area:

Austin and Cedar Park are both fast-growing cities. Our location is a good area to bridge between a more conservative/rural Cedar Park/Leander and a more liberal central downtown Austin.

Current size of membership: 79

Position Title: Pastor

Position Duration:

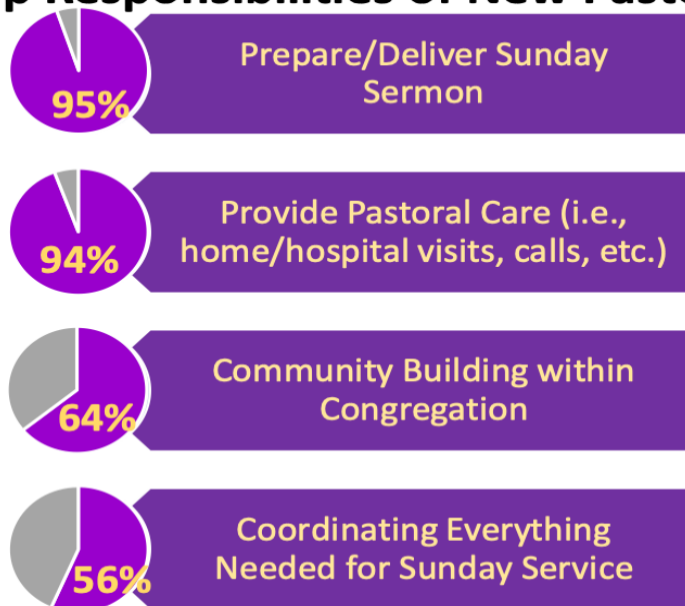
Settled

Compensation Level:

1/2 time

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

Top Responsibilities of New Pastor



Core Competencies:

- Passion for Social Justice
- Inquisitive mind
- Ability to translate real life/relatability in sermons and to mix seriousness with levity/relatable/meaningful/informal message delivery
- Pastoral Care and Support

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis: \$35,000

Benefits: N/A

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

We expect our next settled Pastor to live within driving distance of the congregation.

State any incentives:

N/A

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

We understand a 1/2 time call may require a bi-vocational situation for our next Pastor and will work together with them to share commitments for creating a successful situation.

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

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

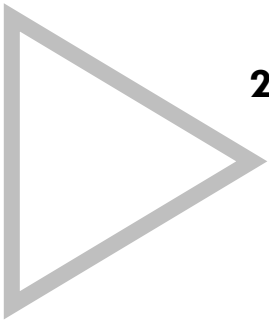
Grow active participation and mature disciples that share our values of social justice, compassion, and collaboration.

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

Bring hope to those hurt by other churches or their community.
Ability to work well with outreach groups.

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

Openness to other groups using our facility like other faiths/beliefs and groups like Alcoholics Anonymous.



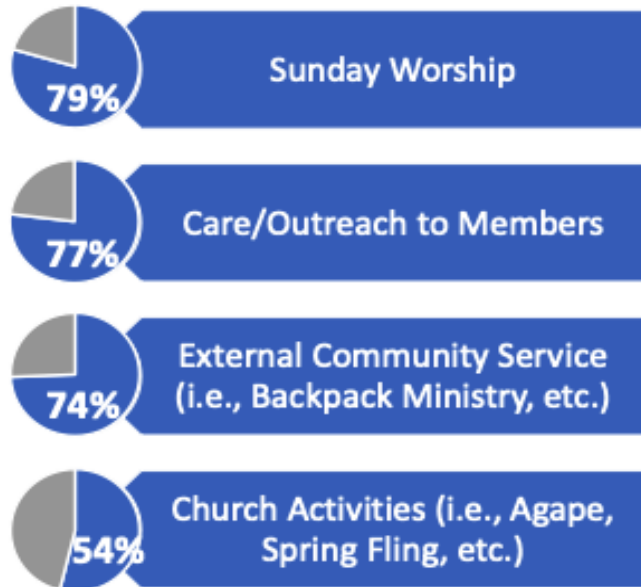
2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

“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 are a hidden gem but would like to increase awareness in our community of how unique and wonderful we are. We want to attract more people who share our passion and vision.

Most Critical Mission of Church



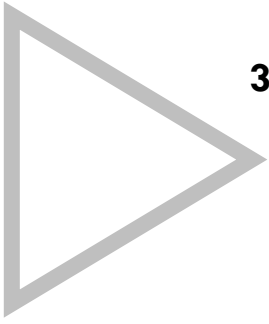
Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.

1. Congregational Needs

- a. Spiritual Growth
- b. Fellowship
- c. Connection and Healing

2. Community Needs

- a. Hunger, homelessness, oppression
- b. Inter religious and Interdenominational Relationships



3. WHO ARE WE NOW?

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

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

3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation’s life of faith.

Our Mission Statement: We are a community of believers seeking reconciliation for a broken-hearted world, working to bring health and wholeness to all God's creation, and actively sharing the good news that God is with us.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

- Inclusive
- Embracing
- Flexible
- Caring
- Hard-working
- Involved
- Open-minded
- Supportive
- Friendly

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Despite challenges of the pandemic, our church has maintained the core of who we were, are, and choose to become a community of believers who seek reconciliation for the broken hearted, work to bring health and wholeness to all God's creation, and actively share the good news that God is with us.

Our fellowship is informal, friendly, and fulfilling. Dress is casual and comfortable. We begin with announcements, sing hymns, share concerns/celebrations, and interact with everyone as we "Pass the Peace," and read Scripture. We have communion the first Sunday of each month. We follow the Revised Common Lectionary in planning worship services, changing colors of paramagnets to follow the liturgical seasons of the year.

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

Our facility has, over the years, allowed for vibrant children and youth programming. Youth were led by a long-time member, Dale Kohler, who helped to nurture their faith formation through energetic Sunday School lessons and Bible studies on a variety of topics. We have a children's building, named in honor of a former pastor, where the youngest among us gathered each week to sing, study, have fun, and learn how to be caring individuals. We look forward to leveraging our resources to build a new program, drawing on these fundamental successes of our past and open to the Spirit's prompting for our future, to meet the needs of children and youth today and tomorrow.

We value our time spent together in study and exploration of the Christian faith. Learning is a passion among our membership; by studying together we make tangible the knowledge that God is with us in community, where we accomplish more together than we ever could alone.

We are blessed by the presence of a retired UCC minister who in our membership who leads a Sunday School gathering that explores interesting topics that thread our pst history into our present-day reality as we strive to create learning opportunities for all ages in our midst.

In 1987, at the dedication of our building, Ken Medema, a blind Christian musician/singer/songwriter, performed in a concert for the public at Church of the Savior. Ken was so impressed with our passion and uniqueness as a young congregation he composed reflecting his experience of our fellowship of dreamers.

Here is Ken's song:



Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

While we do not spend da lot of time in meetings, we do have monthly Council meetings, quarterly business meetings where the whole congregation gathers, and planning meetings twice each year. You can read our Bylaws [here](#).

3b. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	77	
Number of active non-members:	2	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	79	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	36	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	21	
Less than 5 years:	22	

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>
11	7	1	11	3	14	20	8	4	Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	2	

Households with minors:	15	
Single adults age 35-65:	3	
Joint households with no minors:	38	
Single adults over 65:	3	

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	8	Yes
College:	38	Yes
Graduate School:	13	Yes
Specialty Training:	2	Yes

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	37	
Adults who are retired:	19	
Adults who are not fully employed:	5	

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

We are a diverse group, with folks involved in the tech-sector, and others among us in professional fields such as law, education, 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?

While at present we are a majority-white congregation, we are deeply committed to diversity. For us, this means becoming the congregation whose commitment to diversity in sexual orientation, gender identity, race, family makeup, varied previous religious upbringings and more is lived out in actually embodying these commitments as we grow forward.

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

Our congregation continues to focus on racial diversity and sexual orientation and have been successful in doing this. We are recognized in the community as welcoming all faith histories.

3c. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings?
Adult Groups or Classes	10	Christian Education Committee, Pastor
Baptisms (<i>number last year</i>)	2	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	3	Christian Education Committee, Pastor
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	65 and 80	Pastor, Instrumentalist
Church-wide Meals	Spring Fling, Souper Bowl Sunday, Potlucks at Quarterly Business Meetings	Fellowship Committee
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	monthly	Pastor, Fellowship Committee
Community Meals	Agape	Fellowship Committee
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	2	Pastor, Fellowship Committee
Outdoor Worship	Spring Fling	Pastor, Fellowship Committee

Public Advocacy Work	Backpack Ministry, Foster Kindness, Angel House Soup Kitchen, RESULTS, CROP Walk	Missions Committee
Retreats	Children's and Youth Camps	Pastor, Associate Pastor
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	1	Pastor
Worship (time slot: <u>10:30am</u>)	39	Pastor, Instrumentalist
Youth Groups or Classes	4	Associate Pastor, Christian Education Committee, Pastor

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers.

Name	Retired? (<i>Y or N</i>)
Will Nelson	N
Sharon Temple	Y
Sarah Shannon- Wildt	N

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

List all current staff, including ministers.

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Sarah Shannon- Wildt, Associate Pastor/Youth Leader	Staff	Part Time	Sr. Pastor	2 years

Amy Dark, Administrative Assistant	Staff	Part Time	Sr. Pastor	3 years
Kathy Parker, Youth Education Director	Staff	Part Time	Sr. Pastor	2 years
Darlene Hello, Instrumentalist	Staff	Volunteer	Sr. Pastor	Over 30 years

3d. CHURCH FINANCES

Current annual income (2019 Actuals)

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$89,410
Rentals of Church Building	\$8,634
TOTAL	\$98,044

Current annual expenses (2019 Actuals): \$94,310

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 54%

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

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? Yes

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

What is the church's current indebtedness? None.

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$38,248

Does your church have a parsonage? No.

Describe all buildings owned by the church: Main sanctuary building includes a kitchen, bathrooms, office, and classrooms. Second building is used for childcare and additional classrooms/storage which includes bathrooms. There is a section that could be utilized as temporary/emergency housing.

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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? *Both buildings including a bathroom.*

3e. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Ministerial History

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Mary Wilson, Sr. Pastor	17+ years (Nov 2002 – Mar 2020)	Yes
Mary Zimmer, Sr. Pastor	3 years (Aug 1998 - Aug 2001)	Unknown
Joe Phelps, Founding Pastor	12 years (Mar 1985 - Mar 1997)	Unknown, Retired

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

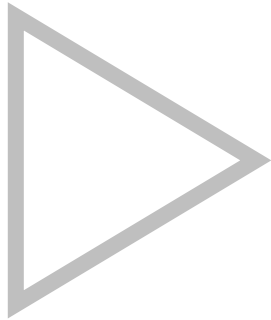
We seek a Pastor who is inclusive, dedicated to social justice, positive and sees the good in everyone. We seek a Pastor who will build bridges and create strong relationships – who cares deeply for the people of our congregation and the community beyond.

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

Yes. More than 15 years ago.

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

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

Service activities your church participated in this past year? Friday Backpack Food Program, Angel House Soup Kitchen, Foster Kindness, Collecting items needed for refugee/immigrant assistance at South TX/Mexico missions.

Where has the church participated in global connections of care and justice? Results, CROP Walk, Bread for the World, Heifer Project, Souper Bowl of Caring, Immigrant/Refugee issues, Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries, donations to Save the Children, California Wildfire relief, UCC Disaster Relief Ministries for Puerto Rico.

What is currently transformational in your church's engagement with neighbors near or far? Our long (9th year) sponsorship & coordination of the all-volunteer Friday Backpack Food Program at Anderson Mill Elementary School which sends home food each Friday for children facing food insecurity. But, in addition to these, our relationship with communities of other faiths - the ATX Muslim Space Group, and the Jewish community that uses our space.

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

Our Pastor and Associate Pastor have participated in various UCC meetings. Our church has also hosted some association meetings.

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.

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

Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?

We are interested in several of the above areas. We do engage in issues related to the border and immigration. We do have special funds for Mental Health care. We've also had numerous classes about racial issues.

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

We are very engaged in interfaith relationships, as mentioned above we have a relationship with ATX Muslim Space. We have participated in Community First and Habitat Humanity Builds.

We hosted an Open and Affirming Conference. Our former Pastors regularly participated in meetings of the Association, the Conference, and national meetings.

We joined other local churches in the previous National Youth Event and attended a yearly youth mission trip with other local UCC and DOC churches.

In summary, we have a strong history of participation in our local, regional, and national bodies and aspire to do so even more as we grow.

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.

Mission Statement: “We are a community of believers seeking reconciliation for a broken-hearted world, working to bring health and wholeness to all God’s creation, and actively sharing the good news that God is with us.” COTS does a well-balanced job of holding true to the Mission Statement. Especially when following the Mission Statement is a listing of Core Beliefs (“Open Minds, Faithful Hearts, Working Hands”). Also the Church Covenant, adopted by the organizing group on March 27, 1985. All together, they show a faithful commitment to our Mission Statement.

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?

Well balanced, giving flexibility to our Pastors and respecting their setting of priorities to respond to urgent situations and needs, in consultation with Church Council and in called congregational meetings, when necessary.

4b. MISSION InSite

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?

From an external perspective, Church of the Savior identifies as Northern European Ancestry.

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

- Caring
- Generous with our talents/gifts/time.



5. REFERENCES

References available upon request.



6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

6a. CLOSING PRAYER

Welcome to our Home
It's where:
Love resides,
Memories are created,
Friends always belong,
laughter never ends.

“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.” *Jeremiah 3:15*

“Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father” *1 Thessalonians 1:3*

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” *Matthew 25:35-36*

“And thus you shall greet him: ‘Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have.’” *1 Samuel 25:6*

Dear God, love has brought us here today. Love has shaped our relationships. Love has brought us both joy and tears. Love has opened doors of our hearts, allowing us to be vulnerable to one another, but also to serve as each other's steady rocks.

We know our world today needs a steady diet of love. Help us to take the love shared in this place today into our homes and communities, spreading love in order to make our world a better place. In Christ's name we pray. Amen (Assurance of Blessing, Rev. Mary Wilson)

6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

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

The Pastor Search Committee – Elected by the congregation,
The Church Council – Elected by the congregation,
Current Pastor,
Administrative Assistant

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

We are an open, welcoming, loving congregation. If you have questions, please ask.

Signed:

Pastor Search Committee:

Darlene Hello
Jan Kohler
Mark Coats
Bob Comer
Helen Coffman
Judy Roberts

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:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



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

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