

1. POSITION POSTING

- a. LISTING INFORMATION
- b. SCOPE OF WORK
- c. COMPENSATION & SUPPORT
- d. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

1a. LISTING INFORMATION

Church Name: Grace United Church

Church Address: 1631 Janesville Ave, Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

Church Contact Person & Contact Information:

Marilyn Raymond Hinrichs

(920) 563-5160

graceunitedfort@gmail.com

Position Available: Interim Pastor _____, Full-time _____, Part-time X

Date Position Is Available: Open now.

Church Information

Current Membership: 63

Membership 5 years ago: 67

Average weekly worship attendance: 32

List regular/periodic faith formation opportunities at your church:

During Covid: Zoom study on understanding and addressing racism using “Dialogues” video series + other articles, videos, and discussion and a “21-Day Challenge” racism study (self-guided on Facebook), as well as outdoor and Zoom gatherings for fellowship and prayer.

Pre-Covid: Periodic Sunday Faith Forums with guest speakers; centering prayer group (every other week); “World’s Shortest Bible Study” (monthly lectionary-based), which replaced an earlier weekly lectionary study.

Special Studies: Creation care book study on *Soul and Sacrament* + guest speakers on water stewardship and other readings; forgiveness book and video study; Lisa Sharon

Harper, *The Very Good Gospel*, reading and discussion; discussion on understanding and addressing homophobia and study using the book *Unclobber*; hunger and poverty study and activities using resources from “Bread for Hunger” + other videos “A Place at the Table” and “Foodstamped”; Nadia Bolz-Weber book study *Pastrix*; Philip Gulley book study; Advent and Lenten studies using video and materials based on the art of John August Swanson.

Additional ecumenical affiliations: We are a Union Church with the Milwaukee Presbytery and the United Church of Christ.

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

Compared to many of its sister churches in the UCC, Grace United is a fairly young church. Grace was formed in 2010 as the union of Friedens UCC and Shalom Presbyterian Church. In that time, we have found our ministry in the wider community of Fort Atkinson by building on existing ministries that we are involved in like the Fort Atkinson Food Pantry and Meals on Wheels. We use the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations as a model for our church’s mission and programming. We strive to serve the community, internally and externally, by following an expanded mandate of Matthew 25. Over the years, we have added “Meal Train” – food delivery for members of the congregation, Heifer Project, Denominational Disaster Relief, and the pastor’s discretionary fund to meet individual local needs. Additionally, we have adopted a local school and provided much needed school supplies and support. To feed the spirit, we have centering prayer, adult forums, and camp scholarships. Through Loads of Love, we provide money and detergent at a local laundromat, we have helped parishioners move, were part of Jefferson County Family Promise, and are currently involved with the Homeless Coalition of Fort Atkinson. We raised funds for RIP Medical Debt. We have adopted families as part of the Jefferson County Christmas Neighbors Program. All of this can best be summed up by our church motto, “Putting Arms and Legs on God’s Love”. We are looking for someone to help us continue and expand this journey of faith and ministry to the community as we move forward in response to God’s call.

Core Competencies:

Important competencies required for the next minister of Grace United Church include someone who proves strong worship leadership and challenging/meaningful messages. A thoughtful and caring person who excels at making pastoral calls to individuals in hospitals, nursing homes, at home, etc. is another very important trait required by the next minister at Grace United.

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary: \$26,895 (50% position)

Total Package: \$31,539 Salary, life & disability insurance, social security allowances, continuing education funds, books and resources, and mileage.

Is a parsonage available: No

Benefits:

Denominational pension contribution:

Life and Disability Insurance: \$340

Social Security Allowance: \$1404

Vacation: 4 weeks

Continuing Education Funds: \$2000

Books and Resources: \$500

Mileage: \$400, budgeted at federal rate of \$.555/mile

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.

We would like Grace United Church to continue on the open and welcoming path we have forged. In putting “arms and legs on God’s Love”, we want to show our community that we are a small and mighty church. We are capable of many good works inside and outside our church walls. We would like a minister who shares our passion for reaching out and helping others.

Given this vision, we are seeking a minister who is open and welcoming to everyone. Our church is looking for a minister who is an effective speaker and leader in worship, delivering thoughtful and inspiring sermons.

Grace United Church would like a minister who is compassionate and encourages people to live their faith in their daily lives. To that end, Pastoral calls would be a part of her/his minister position.

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

We envision a minister who is confident in their own faith; someone who works well with all people in a collaborative way. Someone who is willing to step into the community, to work in conjunction with other Grace United Church members, and to help grow our congregation.

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

English speaking and works well with a mature congregation.

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.

Building Transformation Leadership Skills

1. We would like a minister who will empower the church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.
2. Strategically create the future of God's church through new membership.
3. Perform necessary and appropriate ministerial tasks, including making pastoral calls on members in hospital, care facilities, and homes.
4. Work collaboratively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity.
5. Encourage leadership of self and others.

Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions

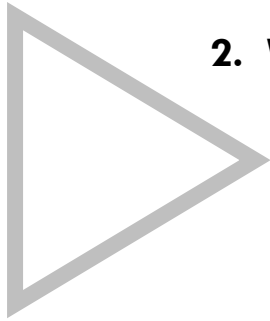
It is important to have an effective preacher/speaker; one who will exhibit knowledge, understanding, and continuing study of the Holy Bible. He or she will bring life to sacred stories and traditions in worship.

Working Together for Justice and Mercy

Practicing the radical hospitality of God is work we will continue. A new minister will build relationships of mutual trust and interdependence through engaging in mission and outreach.

Strengthening Inter and Intra Personal Assets

1. We would like a minister who develops and maintains a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life experiences.
2. Exhibits strong moral character and personal integrity.
3. Respects the dignity of all God's people.
4. Demonstrates excellent communication skills.



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?

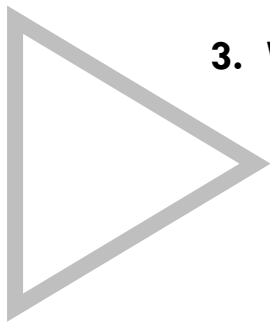
Arms and legs on God's love (boots on ground)

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?

Our church's stated goal is to continue to put arms and legs on God's love. In 2021, our church participated in the Matthew 25 Project inspired by the \$2000 gift from the Milwaukee Presbytery. Members contributed crafts and baked goods and grew the \$2000 seed money into \$5864. We held sales after church and during two community farmers' markets. The money raised was divided and donated to the Homeless Coalition of Fort Atkinson and the RIP Medical Debt. We are currently ending our second Homeless Coalition of Fort Atkinson fund raisers via three farmers' markets and church craft and bake sales. Grace United Church initially became involved in the Adopt a Family Program through Christmas Neighbors of Jefferson County in 2021. In 2022, the program was expanded to two families. The families involved have expressed how grateful they were to receive their special Christmas gifts and meals.

Our church has not recently had a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement developed. It is our intention to develop a multi-year strategic plan in the near future. We will draw inspiration from the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations.



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

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?

The mission of Grace United Church is to serve God; to provide spiritual growth for all members; and to be an open, accepting and caring congregation. We incorporate the Five Practices of a Fruitful Congregation: Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith Development, Risk Taking Mission and Service, and Extravagant Generosity to fulfill the mission of Grace United Church.

Our congregation is grounded in “putting arms and legs on God’s love,” our metaphor for the Holy Spirit being alive in our midst. This permeates everything we do, from worship to how we conduct our daily lives. It drives the way we welcome everyone into our community with open arms, how we engage with local community initiatives to lift up others, and how we experience/embody the Holy Spirit.

Within worship liturgy, God is described as a God of love, calling on us to love and care for others. Worship is designed to challenge us to bring scripture to life by carrying out the messages of love and grace, providing hope and strength to all in our midst. It is because of this that our congregation is called to “be an oasis for those who are marginalized in society,” to use the scripture and worship as a foundation to better understand how we can carry out God’s work throughout our lives.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

Descriptors used by members in reflecting on Grace United include: feeling of love and belonging and sharing; open and accepting; everyone welcome, welcoming; always willing to lend a hand; and we extend our love into the community. It is clear that having a church that is inclusive, caring, and nurturing toward others both within the church and within the wider community is core to how our church functions.

In the survey of the church, members of the congregation identified three statements as the ones that were most true about our church (with a rating of 1 being very true and 5 being not at all true):

In terms of fellowship, I see my church as **Warm and Personal** (1.14)

In terms of service to others in the community, I see my church as **Active and Concerned** (1.19)

In terms of its commitment to Christ, I see my church as **Very Dedicated** (1.24)

We believe it is this deep connection to each other and the community that keeps our membership strong. Our membership is steady with consistent attendance and regular opportunities for fellowship. Our giving reaches well beyond our church walls and exceeds our annual budget, meeting needs throughout our community on a variety of projects. Most importantly, God's love is joyfully expressed through our interactions with each other and in our caring for others. The members of Grace United have made church a place of joy and love, not a duty or obligation reserved for Sunday morning.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Weekly worship services at Grace United Church are joyful occasions where members of the congregation share their love of God and each other.

In the recently completed All Church Survey, members agreed with the statement: "In terms of worship, I see my church as Alive and Compelling." Services at Grace United genuinely feel like a weekly family gathering.

At the outset of the service, announcements relative to the life of the church and the wider community are shared. These announcements are an open invitation to talk about church-related activities or significant concerns/joys in their lives. Anyone attending our church is also invited to name someone who they feel could benefit from being lifted up in prayer.

The formal worship service is centered around bringing the scripture readings to life and inspires people to live their faith on a daily basis. Everyone is welcomed into active participation in worship, from prayers to singing. Communion is practiced as an open table and the entire congregation is invited to view baptism as a community process of welcoming and supporting each other as Christians.

As stated by different members of the congregation, descriptions of good preaching include “A good sermon that sticks with you throughout the week.” Reflections provided by members in the church survey that describe good preaching include:

Relevant messages that relate to our lives.

Engaging stories and stories from the Bible, involving the congregation, and making the message relevant.

Messages that challenge us as well as affirm us.

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

The Governing Board and members of Grace United, in coordination with the pastor, strive to provide regular opportunities for faith formation. While these don't occur on a scheduled, regular basis, studies are organized as need and interest arises around a wide variety of topics. Leadership of these faith formation opportunities is provided by tapping into the diverse expertise and interests of members of our congregation. Studies that have been organized over a period of time include a centering prayer group, “World's Shortest Bible Study,” and Advent and Lenten studies. Theme-centered topics include a series on understanding and addressing racism accompanied by a “21-Day Challenge” self-study on Facebook, and special studies on homophobia, hunger, and environmental issues.

3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

* The number of members reported reflect half the actual number of members. We are a "union" church, so half are reported as Presbyterian and half are reported as UCC. These numbers are confusing; please ask us for further clarification. In 2010 we changed our reporting so half our members report to the Presbyterian and half to UCC.



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

Church#: 860925	Schedule: 0	Grace United Church	Fort Atkinson	WI	53538					
Assoc: 836										
* 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	63	35	0	0	0	2	6	0	-4	
2012	30	35	0	0	0	2	5	0	-3	
2013	34	35	10	0	4	0	0	0	4	
2014	38	35	12	1	0	4	1	0	4	
2015	33	30	12	0	0	0	0	5	-5	
2016	35	30	13	3	0	1	2	0	2	
2017	34	30	13	0	0	1	2	0	-1	
2018	31	30	7	0	1	0	4	0	-3	
2019	32	32	10	2	0	6	1	6	1	
2020	31	32	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2021	32	24	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	
YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPPLY% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2011	\$61,681	\$65,607	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00	\$127,288	\$55,994
2012	\$51,797	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00	\$51,797	\$65,885
2013	\$51,797	\$0	\$0	\$192	\$192	\$24,602	\$24,794	0.00	\$76,591	\$69,200
2014	\$52,598	\$0	\$750	\$0	\$750	\$19,585	\$20,335	1.43	\$72,933	\$50,273
2015	\$52,222	\$13,008	\$750	\$93	\$843	\$0	\$843	1.44	\$66,073	\$77,401
2016	\$58,404	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12,712	\$12,712	0.00	\$71,116	\$65,050
2017	\$54,630	\$0	\$400	\$0	\$400	\$22,520	\$22,920	0.73	\$77,550	\$58,718
2018	\$47,594	\$0	\$600	\$0	\$600	\$18,128	\$18,728	1.26	\$86,322	\$54,012
2019	\$61,663	\$0	\$600	\$0	\$600	\$0	\$600	0.97	\$62,263	\$62,218
2020	\$65,305	\$7,572	\$600	\$600	\$1,200	\$14,415	\$15,615	0.92	\$80,920	\$55,811
2021	\$60,052	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00	\$60,052	\$63,495
* % CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	TOTAL	
2016-2021	-8.57	-20.00	-100.00	-50.00	0.00	2.82	0.00	-15.56		
2011-2021	-49.21	-31.43	0.00	0.00	-66.67	-2.64	0.00	-52.82		

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.

3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	38	X
Number of active non-members:	5	X
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	43	X

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	73%	X
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	10%	X
Less than 5 years:	17%	X

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)
		1	1	1	6	9	24	24	X

Percentage of adults in various household types:

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High School:	25%	X
College:	18%	X
Graduate School:	21%	X
Specialty Training:	4%	X
Other (please specify): Some college or vocational training	32%	X

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	32.6%	X
Adults who are retired:	62.7%	X
Adults who are not fully employed:	4.7%	X

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

The vast majority of our population is retired. Prior occupations varied greatly.

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?

We come from a variety of faith backgrounds i.e., Roman Catholic, Baptist, Lutheran, Quaker, etc. Most of our members identify from a variety of European heritages.

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:

While Grace United has not formalized the Open and Affirming process within the UCC denomination, the congregation considers itself to be actively open and affirming, including placing a banner out in front of the church depicting this belief. In addition, Grace United has formally joined More Light Presbyterians, a coalition of congregations committed to increasing the involvement of people in the church, regardless of sexuality.

Discussions are occurring about moving forward in completing the Open and Affirming process within the UCC denomination.

3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? (list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)
Adult Groups or Classes	0	
Baptisms (number last year)	0	
Children's Groups or Classes	0	
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	35	Pastor and musicians
Church-wide Meals	20	Shared congregational responsibility
Choirs and Music Groups	0	
Church-based Bible Study	0	
Communion (served how often?) Monthly	30	Pastor and stewards
Community Meals	0	
Confirmation (number confirmed last year)	0	
Drama or Dance Program	0	
Funerals (number last year)	60 (2 funerals)	Pastor, musicians, and lay leaders
Intergenerational Groups	0	
Outdoor Worship	0	
Prayer or Meditation Groups	4	Lay leader
Public Advocacy Work	15	Congregation
Retreats	2	Lay people
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	0	
Weddings (number last year)	0	
Worship (time slot: 10:00 am)	25	Pastor, musicians, lay people
Worship time slot:)	N/A	
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	
Youth Groups or Classes	0	
Other		

Additional comments: These numbers reflect years 2021 and 2022 after the covid shutdown.

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

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired (Y or N)
Harriett Rowland	3	Grace United	Pulpit Supply	Y
Alan Timm	3	Dane Immanuel	Pulpit Supply	N

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
Office Manager	No	Part time	Governing Board	12 years
Custodian	No	Part time	Governing Board	2 years

REFLECTION

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

A number of people share in church leadership. We have various professional resources to draw from. Even though our congregation is largely retired, they are still very active participants in the life of our church.

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$80,306
Endowment Proceeds	---
Endowment Draw	---
Fundraising Events	\$5864 (Matthew 25)
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$44,245 (Capital Campaign)
Grants	
Rentals of Church Building (La Hermosa – had been suspended during pandemic, resumed 2022)	
Rentals of Church Parsonage – no parsonage	
Support from Related Organizations	
Transfers from Special Accounts	
Other (specify) Scrip Fund	\$2500
Total	\$132,915

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$74,448.00

See Pages 15-17

2022 Church Budget

2022 INCOME	PLEDGES 2022	ACTUAL RECEIPTS 12-30-22	PLEDGES 2023		
Envelope Offerings (Pledges)	\$40,640.00	\$78,816.00	\$38,880.00		\$
Plate Offerings	\$	\$417.85	\$-0-		
Luminaries		\$1,370.00	\$-0-		
Building use (La Hermosa etc.)	\$	\$540.00	\$1,500.00		
GENERAL FUND INCOME	\$	\$81,143.85	\$40,380.00		
OTHER INCOME (not budget)					
Fund Raising (Disaster Relief)	Ukraine Hurricane	\$1,025.00	-0-		
Missions (.Smith)	\$	\$7,225.00	\$		
Misc. (non-budget collections)	\$	\$	\$		
Matthew 25 Project	\$	\$1,555.00	\$		
	\$		-0-		
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	\$.	\$4,836.00	\$		
Missions	\$	\$	\$		
(Angel Fund School)	\$		\$		
EFT SCRIP Sav.to Gen.		\$1,000.00			
	\$	\$			
Building Maint. Fund (capital.Camp)	\$	\$20,150.00	\$		
Noisy Offering		\$651.13	\$		
School Supplies		\$610.00	\$		
Heifer Program		\$	\$		
Humane Society Jeff. Co.		\$	\$		
		\$			
Other Income	\$	\$	\$		
Memorial Fund		\$250.00			
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	\$	\$37,302.13	\$		
	\$	\$	-0-		
	\$	\$	\$-0-		\$

EXPENSE		BUDGET 2022	ACTUAL 12-31-22	BUDGET 2023	
<u>PASTOR'S SALARY</u>	500				
Base Salary	501	\$28,028.00	\$18,334.33	\$28,028.00	
FICA Tax	502	\$	\$1,518.78	-0-\$2,144.00	
Housing Allowance	504		-0-	-0-	
Pension	505	\$	-0-	-0-	
Expense Account	506	\$	-0-	-0-	
Insurance Health/Dental	507	\$	\$	-0-	
Ordination Expense		\$	\$	\$	
<u>OTHER SALARIES</u>	525				
Secretary	526	\$8,792.00	\$8,792.00	\$9,407.00	
Organist	527	\$2,888.00	\$2,677.50	\$3,120.00	
FICA Tax	529	\$1,200.00	\$1,053.50	\$1,105.00	
Custodial Service	530	\$3,781.00	\$1,559.56	\$1,920.00	
<u>UTILITIES CHURCH</u>	550				
Gas and Electric	561	\$3,800.00	\$3,499.91	\$4,000.00	
Water	562	\$600.00	\$795.52	\$1,450.00	
Telephone	563	\$775.00	\$723.96	\$960.00	
Internet	564	\$1,550.00	\$1,374.47	\$1,550.00	
			\$-0-		
		\$	\$	-0-	
		\$	\$	-0-	
		\$		-0-	
<u>CHRISTIAN EDUCATION</u>	650				
Conferences/Meetings	651	\$200.00	\$100.00	\$200.00	
Sunday School	652	\$125.00	\$	\$125.00	
Miscellaneous	653	\$250.00	\$	\$50.00	
Adult Education	654	\$250.00	\$	\$250.00	
<u>ADMINISTRATION</u>	700				
Postage	701	\$700.00	\$242.24	\$250.00	
Office Supplies	704	\$300.00	\$26.50	\$300.00	
Computer Expense	706	\$150.00	\$	\$250.00	
	707	\$	\$		
Copyright License	708	\$137.00	\$142.00	\$350.00	
		\$	\$		

EXPENSES Cont'd	Acct #	Budget 2022	ACTUAL 12-31-22	BUDGET 2023	
Copier Maint/Lease	710	\$1,500.00	\$1,596.11	\$1,700.00	
Bank Charges & Checks	719	\$100.00	\$115.88	\$100.00	
Miscellaneous Charges	720	\$100.00	\$	\$100.00	
Chamber Membership		\$162.00	\$162.00	\$175.00	
Auto Mileage	722	\$400.00	\$238.10	\$400.00	
Computer Programming Website		\$200.00	\$257.14	\$Moved to #706	
INSURANCE	750				
General Liability	751	\$6,728.00	\$6,896.25	\$7,401.00	
Worker's Compensation	752	\$1,008.00	\$995.00	\$982.00	
BENEVOLENCE	800				
Per Capita(UCC Assoc& Presbyterian)	801	\$1,440.00	\$1,426.00	\$1,440.00 Presb. & SW Assoc.	,44
Per Capita Health Share	805		\$	\$ -0-	
One Great Hour of Sharing	802				
Neighbors in Need	803				
Our Church's Wider Mission UCC	804	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$800.00	
Discretionary Fund Non-budget	806	\$.00 Non-budget item	(Non-budget item (\$7,711.77))	Not Budget item \$-0-	
MAINTENANCE	850				
Fire Extinguishers	852	\$87.00	\$	\$87.00	
Piano Tuning	854	\$250.00	\$140.00	\$175.00	
	855	\$		-0-	
General Maint/upkeep	856	\$2,200.00	\$1,202.49	\$2,000.00	
	857	\$	\$	\$	
			\$	\$.00	
	859	\$	\$	\$	
		\$			
WORSHIP EXPENSES	900				
Supplies	912	\$227.00	\$55.96	\$450.00	
Candles	901	\$200.00	\$	\$Moved to #912	
Visiting Ministers	902	\$3,600.00	\$3,150.00	\$3,000.00	
Special Musician	904	\$2,500.00	\$2,560.00	\$3,120.00	
Miscellaneous	905	\$350.00	\$15.75	\$100.00	
Fellowship/Hospitality	909	\$120.00	\$96.82	\$250.00	
MISC.	950				
TOTALS		\$75,448.00	\$60,497.77	\$77,739.00	

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 42.3%

\$31,539 Salary, life & disability insurance, social security allowances, continuing education funds, books and resources, and mileage.

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

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? *(indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year)* No

- ☒ Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support) * 2021 was an anomaly
- ☐ One Great Hour of Sharing
- ☐ Strengthen the Church
- ☐ Neighbors in Need
- ☐ Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage *(recommended 10%)*

Roughly 1% of the total budget is taken out of general funds.

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt? 0

Reason for debt:

Are capital and other payments current?

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.

Just completed capital campaign for building repairs in 2021.

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

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2019-2022	Building Repairs	\$94,000	\$98,000	We have paid our repair expenses and replaced the funds in our emergency account

Describe the prominent mission component(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign. The 2020-2022 Capital Campaign was to repair and maintain our church building.

Does your church have an endowment? No

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$94,000

Investments (other than endowment): None

Does your church have a parsonage? No

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

The church building includes the following: Sanctuary, lobby, fellowship hall, four classrooms, kitchen, office, and multiple bathrooms.

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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? All

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

In 2011, Grace United shifted to a part-time minister due to budgetary issues and shortly thereafter, moved to a faith-based budget. The budget fluctuates and is not based on formal pledges. To date, this system has provided well for us.

3f. 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.

In 1970, a portion of the congregation chose to break away from the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Fort Atkinson. This occurred in response to a congregational vote to dismiss their pastor. The newly created church was named United Brotherhood of Christ (U.B.C.) and met in the homes of parishioners and then an area lumber company. A member and local architect designed an unorthodox modern new church which members built together.

After several years, hoping to attract new members, U.B.C. became a mission church for the Milwaukee Presbytery. The open representative governing style was a good fit. The new name became Shalom Presbyterian Church. The Milwaukee Presbytery was extremely supportive of the fledgling church.

Several years later the pastors from Shalom and Friedens United Church of Christ in Fort Atkinson began talks about merging their two struggling congregations. Both churches had extremely loyal members. A pastoral consultant was engaged to facilitate the process and a committee was formed to carry out this task.

Grace United is the story of two churches, Friedens UCC and Shalom Presbyterian, who were both struggling about twelve years ago. Meetings initiated by the two pastors to explore a shared future led to the formation of Grace United on Easter Sunday, 2010. The beginnings were difficult with the same financial problems the two churches had faced continuing to be present and dominating our processes. In 2012 Grace organized a fund raiser for a member with long term health problems. The fund raiser grew to include the whole community. Compared to medical debt, the amount raised was modest but it awakened the Grace congregation to get involved in new ministries outside our walls. We began to look outward for the next thing to get involved in. Around this time someone coined the phrase, "Putting Arms and Legs on God's Love," which has become a guiding principle for us. Since then, we have deepened our commitment in the wider community. We have done the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations to help discern the way forward to expand our faithfulness to God's call. At this time, we are continuing with the ministries we have been involved with and we are prepared to take on the next thing, even as we undertake a pastoral search.

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

Adaptation to pandemic, move to online worship. Online worship continues, as well as in-person services.

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?)

In recent years, no major conflict has occurred in the life of Grace United Church. We follow the Conference policies and protocols for conflict resolution.

Ministerial History (include all previous ministerial staff since the formation of Grace United)

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Terese Leonhard	1	Y
Dan Yeazel	1.5	Y
Delisa Buckingham-Taylor	10	Y

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

We have taken on some of the personality traits of the individual ministers and have been encouraged to do more than we knew we were capable of doing.

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

Y/N/Ask us

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Y/N/Ask us

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

Y/N/Ask us

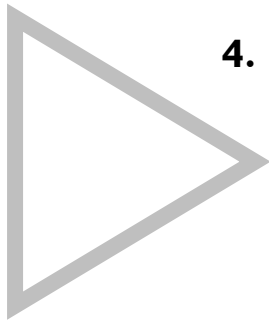
DESCRIPTION OF CHURCH LIFE

Mission/Purpose of Our Church

The mission of Grace United Church is to serve God; to provide spiritual growth for all members; and to be an open, accepting, and caring congregation. A sense of community shall permeate church activities and programs as we reach out to one another. We recognize the importance of growing as a congregation while providing a larger presence in the community. We will be welcoming and invite new people to participate in church activities. Our mission in the community will focus on serving and making others feel important as we will fulfill our motto of putting arms and legs on God's Love. We incorporate the Five Practices of a Fruitful Congregation: Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith Development, Risk Taking Mission and Service, and Extravagant Generosity to fulfill the mission of Grace United Church. Putting arms and legs on God's love is our motto which reminds us to keep our boots on the ground.

Describe program and outreach ministries of your church.

Our programs and outreach strive to serve the community, internally and externally, by following an expanded mandate of Matthew 25. **We feed the hungry:** in body through Meal Train for members of the congregation, Meals on Wheels, Food Pantry, collecting crock pots for the Food Pantry, Heifer Project, Denominational Disaster Relief, and pastor's discretionary fund; and in feed the soul through centering prayer, adult forums, and camp scholarships. **We clothe the naked:** Loads of Love (provide money and detergent at laundromat), Denominational Disaster Relief, and pastor's discretionary fund. **We house the homeless:** moved parishioners, Family Promise, Fort Atkinson Homeless Coalition, and pastor's discretionary fund. **We visit the sick and imprisoned:** Love for Lori, RIP Medical Debt. **We welcome the stranger:** LGBTQ+ and racism studies, outside rainbow banner, and share worship space with the congregation of La Hermosa. **We care for the environment:** in our butterfly garden. A new addition is our Peace and Memory Garden lovingly developed by a member as a focus for his healing. **And all that we do, we do with joy.**



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?

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?

With our slogan, “We Put Arms and Legs on God’s Love,” our church is very active in service to the community.

1. The Fort Atkinson Food Pantry is staffed by local churches, and our church covers two months each year, with four to six people volunteering on Mondays and Thursdays when the pantry is open. In addition, one member is president of the Fort Atkinson Food Pantry.
2. The Meals on Wheels program in Fort Atkinson is also staffed by local churches' volunteers. Our members deliver meals to about 40-50 elderly residents for two two-week periods in the year.
3. Our Loads of Love Ministry reaches people who might need a friendly face and an act of kindness. This once-a month ministry takes place at a laundromat where we hand out quarters and detergent and visit with the people.
4. The Homeless Coalition of Fort Atkinson, which finds affordable transitional housing for homeless families and operates an emergency shelter, is another local cause we support through fund raising and two church members who are on the board of directors.
5. Each year we purchase school supplies for a public school with a large low-income population.
6. And each Christmas, through the Jefferson County Christmas Neighbors Program, we adopt a family, purchase gifts for each person in the family, and provide food for their holiday meals.

7. Through the Presbyterian church, in 2020-21 we took part in the Matthew 25 Project. With \$2,000 in seed money from the Presbytery, members made and sold a variety of goods. With additional cash contributions, we raised \$5,864 which was split equally between RIP Medical Debt and the Homeless Coalition of Fort Atkinson. A second Matthew 25 effort was started in 2022 but has not yet concluded.
8. There is another congregation in the area that has expressed interest in possibly entering into a shared ministry with Grace United Church.

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

In 2022, three church members attended the Wisconsin Conference meeting. One member is a graduate of the Wisconsin Conference Lay Academy. One member sings with the Wisconsin Gospellers choir. We still maintain contact with the executive of the Milwaukee Presbytery for guidance and support.

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.) Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

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

- A. We have not officially participated in A2A, but our building is totally accessible. And we welcome people of all abilities.
- B. We have not completed the UCC's ONA process, but this is a goal for the near future. We are a More Light Church in the Presbytery and we have a rainbow banner in front of our church saying all are welcome.
- C. We first learned about this at the 2022 Wisconsin Conference and are beginning to educate ourselves on the process of becoming a WISE church.
- D. We participated in the Matthew 25 Project that was initiated by a member of the Milwaukee Presbytery.

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?

From our listening sessions, it is clear that we put a high value on being a welcoming church. We have members and visitors from many walks of life and are true to the UCC statement, “No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.” That is why, at present, we are most interested in the Open and Affirming and WISE initiatives.

In addition, our church has many elderly members and Fort Atkinson has a large retired population. For this reason, a lot of our efforts go toward regularly helping each other and the elderly with their various physical and spiritual needs. For example, members provide rides to church for other members who no longer drive.

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

As mentioned earlier, both the Food Pantry and Meals on Wheels are run by members of six churches in Fort Atkinson, including Grace United. We also provide worship space for La Hermosa, a Hispanic congregation in the community. Prior to the pandemic, we participated in weekly Lenten services. These ecumenical services were hosted at noon and lunch was provided.

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.

The mission of Grace United Church is to serve God; to provide spiritual growth for all members; and to be an open, accepting and caring congregation. We spend a lot of time and effort in serving God by serving His people through our mission projects as outlined in this section. This work is probably our number one priority in terms of actions and deeds. It's more difficult to measure the time and effort put into being an open, accepting and caring congregation, but we firmly believe we do this. The spiritual growth is provided through sermons, prayer, and both pastors and lay people who organize and provide educational and service opportunities.

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?

When we had a called pastor, she was very involved in community ministry by her own choice. During our transitional time with pulpit supply and an interim pastor, the church members have kept all the ministries running. When a new called pastor is found, we hope that she or he would be involved in our outreach because it is such an excellent way to build community; but it is not expected that this person would be in charge of organizing projects.

4b. MISSION InSite

Comment on your congregation's Mission Insite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown?

The neighborhood for the church is mainly the city of Fort Atkinson, with some activity in surrounding communities. The population of Fort Atkinson has been static in recent years: 12,368 in the 2010 U.S. Census and 12,579 in the 2020 Census. The lack of growth is partly due to a housing shortage. To address this, the city recently acquired land to create a mixed housing neighborhood.

According to the 2020 Census, Fort Atkinson demographics are pretty similar to the State of Wisconsin. Our population has a larger percentage of white people (91.7 percent versus 86.6 percent; a smaller, but significant Hispanic or Latino percentage (5.6 percent versus 7.5 percent); and a smaller Black or African American percentage (1.4 versus 6.8 percent). Fort Atkinson has a slightly older population, with 18.7 percent at 65 or older (17.9 for Wisconsin) and 4.5 percent under 5 years (5.4 percent for Wisconsin). And Fort Atkinson has fewer households with language other than English spoken at the home (5.4 version 8.7 percent).

There are 2.40 people per household in Fort Atkinson (same as state). Median household income is slightly higher in Fort Atkinson (\$63,535 versus \$63,293). But the per capita income is lower in the city (\$31,493 versus \$34,450).

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?

The biggest difference between our church demographics and those of Fort Atkinson is that 70 percent of our members are 65 or older (compared to 18.7 percent for the city). In terms of education, our members have a higher percentage of college degrees than the city (38 versus 23 percent). We do not keep income demographics for the church, but we know there is a wide range with low, average, and high-income members.

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

Our areas of ministry definitely favor activities that help those with low income, although the U.S. Census shows that Fort Atkinson has a 9.6 percent "persons in poverty" rate versus 10.8 for the state.

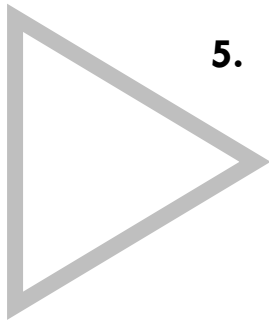
What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

Community leaders greatly appreciate all the efforts from the members of our church. Others in the community recognize all that is done by Grace United.

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

From our all-church listening sessions, it is clear that most of the newer members were attracted by, and became involved because of, our previous called pastor. She had a gift for making all people feel included and loved. Fortunately, this feeling has rubbed off on the congregation as a whole. When asked "What attracts you to the church and keeps you coming back?" the most frequent responses are related to the members and the work we do. Some comments from the people:

- The people in the congregation are my family.
- We extend our love into the community.
- We put arms and legs on God's love.
- A social justice orientation is core to why and how we "do" church.
- Grace is not only my church on Sunday morning. It is my family where I can interact with anyone at any time for any reason.
- People are always welcoming and open to where I'm at.



5. REFERENCES

- a. REFERENCES
- b. ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

5a. REFERENCES

Reference 1

Ann Engleman/Retired PBS Director/Active community member
920-563-0416/annengelman@gmail.com/"Friend" of Grace United Church

Reference 2

Kim Cash, Realtor
920-723-8056 (Kim/bkhhcash@gmail.com/attendee + "Friend" of Grace United Church

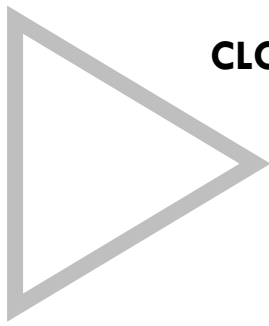
Reference 3

Jude Hartwig/Founder of Homeless Coalition of Fort Atkinson/Active community member
920-568-0626/judehartwig@gmail.com

5b. ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

Rev. Delisa Buckingham-Taylor/Former Minister at Grace United Church
920-650-0781/delisabt@sbcglobal.net

Rev. Robert Koepke/Current Interim Minister at Grace United Church
608-640-6088/ae70x7@yahoo.com



CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

6a. CLOSING PRAYER

Lord make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, pardon.
Where there is doubt, faith.
Where there is despair, hope.
Where there is darkness, light.
Where there is sadness, joy.

~ St. Francis of Assisi

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 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? The entire congregation participated in a series of Faith Development Sharing Sessions at the beginning of the search process. These discussions, together with written surveys completed by individual members and families, were compiled by the Search Committee to complete the Local Church Profile.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile: As noted throughout the Local Church Profile, Grace United Church is a unique church, the result of the merging of Friedens UCC Church and Shalom Presbyterian Church. Our congregation is small, but carries great weight through the work we do in serving the community. Small but mighty, we are a small church that does big things.

Signed:

Name/Title/Date:

6c. CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

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. Rachel Bauman
Email: rbauman@wcucc.org
Phone: 608-630-2992
Date: April 14, 2023

From: Ann Engelman
Fort Atkinson, WI

Strengths in this church's ministry.

- * I attended this lovely church when it was Shalom Presbyterian.

It was a welcoming church inclusive and inviting to everyone. At the time it was one of the first three More Light Presbyterian Churches in Wisconsin supporting the LGBTQ communities. Women were largely responsible for its leadership.

- * The church has had a steady presence in this community for a long time. That consistency, I feel, is important in our relatively small community. Long time members are leaders in our community and well respected. They continue to invite participation.

- * Grace United's sister congregation is Iglesia La Hermosa. This ministry lends visibility to a largely invisible community of color in Fort Atkinson.

- * Grace United has space available to expand a children's ministry.

- * The location of the church is on a busy street which is easy to locate.

- * The church's building is architecturally unique and the grounds are beautiful.

- * Grace United is connected and cooperates with programs supported by many churches collectively in Fort Atkinson.

Areas for improvement

- * Church attendance in many congregations is declining. It is more difficult to engage younger people. A greater social media presence would be helpful. (i.e. The website is currently unavailable.)

- * Regular annual gatherings, at least a couple, for the Hispanic and English congregations to come together.

Significant experiences I have had with this church's ministry

- * I was supportive of the designation of this church as a "More Light" church. Two of our lesbian members were married in the church and became significant supporters.

- * Pastor Bonnie arranged for there to be an exhibit of the "Shawl Ministry" which was a group of clerical shawls. The artistry of embroidery and textile creativity was remarkable. An article was pitched to the local paper giving visibility to the project and to the church's inclusive ministry. This was during the very early stages of churches in this ministry. It was very courageous.

Other

Any minister looking to serve, single or married, will find a supportive congregation and a vibrant community. Grace United is a jewel.

To Whom It Concerns,

I have been asked to write a reference letter for Grace United Church in Fort Atkinson, WI. My husband and I started to look for a different church after we decided to leave the Catholic church. We visited several in the area and just didn't feel like they were a good fit. During our search process my husband's father passed away (2015) and was a resident of Fairhaven Senior Services where the minister of Grace United was the Chaplain. She did his memorial service and we were very impressed and decided to visit this church. From the moment we stepped through the doors we felt at home and accepted.

I think the strengths of Grace United are how welcoming they are to all, their involvement in the community and their commitment to God.

As for areas for improvements, and this is just me, the music. I have no musical talent whatsoever but I wish I did. So for me, I listen to Christian music every time I am in the car and that is where I fulfill this piece/peace in my life.

I can't really say either my husband or I have had a significant experience at Grace United besides the feeling of total acceptance. Our lives may be changing in the next year because of retirement, so at this point to be honest, we have become more hit and miss in our attendance since the Interim. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any further questions.

Love In Christ,

Kim

Kim Cash
Fort Real Estate Company
407 Robert Street
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538
Cell: 920-723-8056
Office 920-568-8700
Email: kimcash96@gmail.com
License # 79390-94

March 9th, 2023

Grace United Church
1631 Janesville Ave.
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

Re: Letter of Reference

It is with great pleasure that I write a letter in support of Grace United Church. I have been very active in the community of Fort Atkinson as a citizen, City Councilperson, and member/leader of many boards. One of the pillars of our community of Fort Atkinson is its churches, Grace is an integral part of that leadership. Though I am not a traditional religious church goer, I consider myself a very spiritual and religious person. I believe in service to others, as a way to better our community. Grace follows this same principle, but has the true Christian faith and religious doctrines as well. I'm jealous.

Grace United is very involved in service to those who are less fortunate. Some of the causes that I know of that they are very involved in are: The Fort Atkinson Food Pantry and The Homeless Coalition of Fort Atkinson. I know there are many more. Many churches and institutions just provide financial support, Grace does that, but much more. They perform and participate in fundraising and in efforts to eliminate need. Their volunteerism exceeds most social organizations and churches. They do so regularly; it is not just when the yearly theme presents itself, yet they honor their beliefs throughout the year through volunteer servitude.

To give a few examples, many of their members, including their former Pastor, would serve on the Food Pantry and Homeless Coalition Boards. When we had our Emergency Shelter for individuals to sleep on cold nights, the church was offered up as a place to shelter, but it was rejected as not having a sprinkler system. They then collaborated with other churches to meet this need (also an unusual trait), as well as sought remedies to solve their own issues of plumbing as a

shelter. Sleeping overnight at a shelter is not a pleasant experience. Strangely, it's exhausting. Some of their members participated willingly and regularly. Many help out at the food pantry or leading projects within the community to raise funds. When I visited the church, it was interesting to see how vibrant it was (and is). There is a large mission to fill needs, having a hispanic outreach via a spanish service. Youth and young at heart would enjoy their musical services. The efforts to connect were wonderful.

I hope Grace United is able to continue in these efforts. Ministry goes beyond just rhetoric, Grace practices their faith in the community on a daily basis.

Sincerely and respectfully,

Jude Hartwick

920-568-0626

judehartwick@gmail.com