

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
Platteville, Wisconsin

Settled Pastor

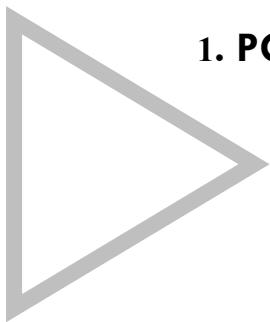
Wisconsin Conference, SW Association

[April 21, 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: **First Congregational United Church of Christ**

Street address: **80 Market Street, Platteville, WI**

Supplemental web links:

<https://www2.uccplatt.org/>

Additional ecumenical affiliations (*e.g. denominations, communions, fellowships*):

Conference: **Wisconsin**

Association: **Southwest Assn & Southeast Assn. (Waukesha & Burlington Districts)**

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

Rachel Bauman

Associate Conference Minister

rbauman@wcucc.org

608-630-2992

Summary Ministry Description:

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

Our church continues to live by its mission statement: "We care for one another by providing an open and affirming environment for all people who seek the love God in community. Strengthened by our differences, we unite to serve God's people and work toward a more just and generous world." Like all churches, we are faced with challenges posed by the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, a shrinking and aging membership, and limited financial resources.

We need a pastoral partner to help with the continued discernment of, and enthusiasm for, our mission in this new and challenging time. This will include helping us identify what is needed (staff, physical assets, volunteers, etc.) to live out that vision, including letting go of what has been deemed essential in the past. In short, we will look to the new pastor to help us discern what God is doing in and through us.

Photographs:



A view of our historic church from the park across the street.



Our sanctuary includes a pipe organ and banners that change with the seasons.



Painting fellowship hall and the kitchen prior to our first post-Covid potluck.



Along one of our many miles of walking/bike paths in the Platteville area.

What we value about living in our area (2 – 3 sentences):

- The stunning natural beauty of the The Driftless Area.
- A small-town atmosphere, with the added cultural value of the UW Platteville campus, and close proximity to Madison, WI, Dubuque IA, and Galena, IL.
- Convenient access to good health care and technology infrastructure.

Current size of membership: **84 active church participants** (See section 3-c)

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*): **There is a large Hispanic population in the area, so Spanish would be helpful, but is not required.**

Position Title: **Settled Pastor**

Position Duration (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister moves church membership to the congregation and moves standing to related association

Compensation Level (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

$\frac{3}{4}$ Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? **Yes**

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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

75% time Pastoral Position

Core Competencies:

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

- 1. Willingness to CARE and Develop Relationships** with our members, leadership team and visitors to our community – those who attend in person and on-line. (i.e. in home visits, phone calls, facetime etc.) Work to have on-line attenders become more active participants in worship.
- 2. Sociable** – Willingness to engage in community activities, ability to interact and converse with people of various ages, sexual identity, race, etc. Be a community/team builder within the church by encouraging fellowship outside

of Sunday morning worship. We desire that on-line and in person attenders feel that they are part of the same family. This would include phone calls and/or visits with people who are unable to attend in person due to physical limitations. Support the congregation in initiating and executing new fellowship and outreach programs.

3. Be **Sensitive** to the needs and desires of an older congregation, and provide enough energy and enthusiasm to inspire younger adults and families to live the Gospel message thru meaningful worship and example. Demonstrate a belief that “God is still speaking” in sermons. Our church likes sermons that give a different perspective on scripture, and provide an inspirational message.

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis (*from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance*): **\$33,600-\$41,625 Depending on the level of experience**

Benefits (*choose one*):

Benefits within conference guidelines

What is the expected living situation for your next minister **We desire the new minister to live within a 30-minute drive of Platteville. We will provide a housing allowance in the compensation package.**

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

- **Platteville Ecumenical Association**
- **The Wisconsin Conference, UCC provides Seminary Debt Reduction Grants which are based on need and may be renewed annually for up to five years. Additionally, The Wisconsin Conference offers support for authorized ministers through a robust Communities of Practice (COP) program. These facilitated peer groups offer both support and professional growth opportunities. The Wisconsin Conference also offers continuing education grants available to authorized ministers. The Damascus Project, an online learning community offered through the Wisconsin and Minnesota Conferences, provides a variety of opportunities for continuing education. The Wisconsin Conference encourages both personal and professional growth of authorized ministers through its Coaching program.**

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

A 75% position would allow for some negotiation that would serve both the church and the pastor's needs, i.e. another day off during the week, or one less Sunday to preach per month.

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.

- **Expand our awareness of what it means to be a people of extravagant welcome; for example, establish a campus presence that embraces LGBTQ+ students as well as other students who have felt let down by "the church".**

- Expand hybrid worship to engage on line attenders in active participation.

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

- Explore using social media or other avenues to reach out to under-served people.
- Attend events in, engage with, and welcome the outside community on a regular basis.

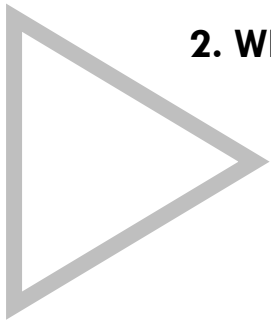
Specify language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling.

There is a large Hispanic population in the area, so Spanish would be helpful, but is not required.

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.

Although our team felt all 8 of the *Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers* are important, we chose the following four that we desire our next minister to display to move our congregation forward in our ministries.

- Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions
- Caring for All of Creation
- Working Together for Justice and Mercy
- Strengthening Inter- and Intra- Personal Assets



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?

- People of radical hospitality and welcome; to see Christ in everyone and everywhere.
- People who encourage others to live from their Christ-self through example.
- People who support others who are in need through various means: understanding, financial, service etc. Educating ourselves on issues that promote injustice and oppression, and how we can assist in changing the narrative and practices.

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

Our church is still in the process of an evolution that was spurred by the Covid Pandemic. From one Sunday to the next in March of 2020, we transitioned from a traditional, in-person service, to a service that was entirely on line via live streams to Zoom and Facebook. The Zoom link included a fellowship time before the service started. During the spring of 2021, after vaccinations became available, we began holding in-person services again, but continued the live internet feed as well. We found that some people were more comfortable attending on-line, while others needed in-person interactions. We now see the transition to being a hybrid church as a way to reach more people, many of whom might not feel comfortable trying a new church, especially if they have had previous negative experiences. (Some of our current members began attending on line during the pandemic.) Currently our services are offered live on Zoom and on YouTube. A link to the YouTube service is uploaded to Facebook at the end of service. The You Tube link usually gets 20-30 views each week,

One drawback to a hybrid format is the lack of fellowship opportunities for our on-line attenders. Fellowship has always been a hugely important aspect of our church's life.

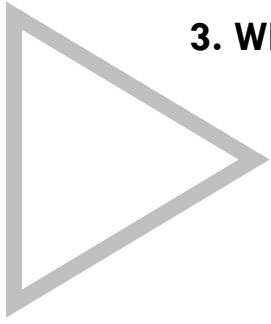
Unfortunately, the church was slow to regain many of the fellowship opportunities that were lost during the pandemic. It was October of 2022 when church leadership finally felt comfortable making masks optional while in our buildings. This masking requirement was a hindrance to our campus outreach in the fall of 2022.

One of the hallmarks of our service was a post-worship “coffee hour”, with treats provided by volunteers from the congregation. This was very valuable in getting to know new people that were “church shopping”, and it provided an unrecognized opportunity for important communication within the congregation, and between the congregation and church leadership. We began to hold a “coffee hour” again in the fall of 2022.

Potlucks also were a regular feature of our fellowship schedule pre-Covid. We held a potluck after service once a month, with a different “theme”. Volunteers coordinated dishes, set-up and clean-up. These potlucks drew in people who did not usually come to church on a regular basis. Potlucks have returned in 2023.

Our church has become more active in the LGBTQ+ community during the past four years. Our church helped start the “Southwest Rainbow Alliance”, a non-profit support group, in 2019. We would like to continue to support this organization’s mission in the coming years. We have had a booth at the Pride Celebration in Platteville since it started in 2021. The church hosted a “Friendsgiving” dinner in late November, 2022 at The Cunningham House in partnership with the Southwest Rainbow Alliance.

During 2019, just prior to the pandemic our church went through a year-long program of growth and outreach training led by Paul Nickerson (Nickerson Coaching). Campus outreach and interaction with the various public service entities in town, such as the police and fire departments, and the schools were planned. Christmas caroling on Platteville’s Main Street business district was a success. We look forward to discerning which activities we can continue to support and carry out.



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.

Our Purpose: (who we are)

Rooted in a deep love of God and Neighbor, the community of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Platteville is a spiritual home for people seeking to follow Jesus.

Our Mission: (what we do)

We care for one another by providing an open and affirming environment for all people who seek the love God in community. Strengthened by our differences, we unite to serve God's people and work toward a more just and generous world.

Values: (how we do it)

We are a community of **extravagant welcome**. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. We say it every Sunday, and we mean it.

We are a community of **progress**. We believe that God is Still Speaking and strive to be a people who are still listening, so that we might come to further know and extend Christ's realm of justice, peace, and love.

We are a community that embraces **transformation**. We hold space for everyone's hopes, passions, ideas, questions, doubts, and fears. We believe it is here that the Spirit leads us into growth.

Our concept of God

We have adopted gender neutral or gender-fluid concepts of God. God can be referred to as “he”, “she”, or “they” in the scriptures we use, and during prayers and sermons.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

- Our congregation is extremely welcoming; no one comes to our church for the first time without someone coming up to greet them and find out about them.
- There is a true sense of community.
- We encourage questioning as a part of our growth in our faith; we do not follow a dogma.
- We have a strong music tradition. Music has a major role in our worship service.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

- Worship usually takes place in the sanctuary. We worship outside, in the park across the street from the church, several times a year when weather permits.
- Our services follow the liturgical calendar of seasons and scripture. We have added the season of “creation” during the month of September. Our banners and alter decor change with the liturgical seasons.
- The service includes a children’s sermon related to the gospel message of that day.
- The congregation is given the opportunity to write out prayer requests during the service. The pastor weaves the requests into our communal prayer time. This has helped to strengthen our sense of community.
- The congregation was asked to describe what they like in a sermon. Responses included:
 - o Story-telling – relating the readings to our current lives
 - o Concise
 - o Interesting, inspirational
 - o Creative
 - o Relevance to today’s issues – social justice, care of all people and creation

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

- We currently have a very small number of children, and thus have no formal education program; however, we do have monetary resources that are designated for youth activities within the church finances.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

For example, how are decisions communicated in your church? How are teams or committees organized? Where does your church struggle for vision?

- The Servant Leadership Team (SaLT) decisions are communicated through the weekly e-mail and the monthly newsletter.
- Our church has the following standing committees: Planned Giving, Property, Caring Ministry, and the Pasty Committee. Other committees are formed as they are needed and disbanded once the project is complete.
- Our church struggles with how to attract younger members. (We had made good progress in this area prior to the pandemic.)

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

- SaLT meets on the second Tuesday of every month. Meetings have been held on Zoom since the start of the pandemic. The goal is for the meeting to last no more than two hours. In between the monthly meetings, SaLT will sometimes deal with follow-up decisions through a series of e-mails. Motions can be made and seconded, with the vote taken by e-mail. If the issue requires more than minimal additional discussion, there will be a short Zoom meeting scheduled.

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

During 2020 and Covid, when our previous minister was on parental leave, we had an incident that involved a newly formed community organization. We were holding their money, similar to the manner in which we had with another organization in its early days. There was a misunderstanding about how the funds could be allocated, which then turned into a public discussion on the front page of the local paper. Our minister, moderator and a couple of people on the leadership team had to make some quick decisions on how to handle this within a couple of hours of the article being printed. The decision was made for the church to take full responsibility for the misunderstanding to avoid a public fight.

The congregation wasn't informed before the article came out in the paper and to make matters worse, because we weren't meeting in person for worship due to Covid, many parishioners knew nothing about our involvement with the group. This upset some members in the church. Changes were made for more transparency, and increased communication between leadership and congregation, but there remains some residual distrust of leadership that still continues to come up on occasion.

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

3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

(add here the 11-Year Report developed with the help of your conference staff, UCC Data Hub, and MissionInsite)

3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

We defined active participation by first defining active households. An active household required the following participation: someone in the household has a) provided financial support to the church in 2022; **OR** b) attended worship in-person or virtually during 2022; **OR** participated in a church activity in 2022. We have 43 active households. We defined active participants as all in those households. Our numbers regarding members are estimates; however, we have no more than 84 active participants in our congregation.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	56	yes

Number of active non-members:	28	yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	84	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

****Since we approached our church participation numbers based on number of active households, it is possible that a household may have a member or have not been active participants. The percentages below are based on 78 participants, since we have 6 household members who have not been a participant in the church, per se.**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	63%	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	19%	
Less than 5 years:	18%	

Number of total participants by age:

***These numbers are also based on 78 participants as noted above.**

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>
4	3	3	5	3	1	8	27	24	

Percentage of adults in various household types:

***These numbers are also based on 78 participants as noted above.**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	0	
Joint household with minors:	7	
Single adults age 35-65:	2	
Joint household with no minors:	47	

Single adults over 65:	9	
------------------------	---	--

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

*These numbers neither include non-participatory members nor members still in K-12 or younger; young members in college are noted as high school graduates. This would be 71 participants

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	18%	
College:	35%	
Graduate School:	47%	
Specialty Training:		
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

*These numbers neither include non-participatory members nor members college-age or younger; this would be 68 participants. Note the adjustment regarding full-time employment.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed: (full-time)	22%	
Adults who are retired:	71%	
Adults who are not fully employed:	7%	

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

The majority of the 20 working adults (part and full-time) in the congregation are educators (in K-12 or university) or other city/state public servants. (There is a 4-year state undergraduate university in Platteville.) Others work in the private sector as massage therapists, construction, call center and factory workers.

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?

The majority of our congregation has European heritage, and we have a 98% white congregation. First Congregational UCC is located in Grant County, Wisconsin which is 96% white, according to latest census results.

We consider diversity to also include LGBTQ+ community members and our congregation is open and affirming and we have a number of church participants who are part of the LGBTQ+ community.

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

We have not had any formal conversations about welcoming diversity; however, congregants frequently discuss ways that we continue to embrace our open and affirming welcoming attitude.

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i>
Adult Groups or Classes		
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	3	Planned as part of worship service
Children’s Groups or Classes		
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	30	
Church-wide Meals	25	Servant Leadership Team
Choirs and Music Groups	4	In last year, once or twice, small choir participated in worship

Church-based Bible Study	5	Led by church member on Sunday morning before service (both online and more recently in person)
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	20	Monthly for in-person and hybrid worship (average joint attendance)
Community Meals		
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	0	
Drama or Dance Program		
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	4	
Intergenerational Groups	6-8	September and October 2022 – Messy Church on weekday evening
Outdoor Worship	35	3 Summer Sunday worship services held in City Park next to church
Prayer or Meditation Groups	17	Active caring ministry
Public Advocacy Work	10 –20	Family Promise (support for homeless women/families); Southwest Wisconsin Rainbow Alliance (Pride in the Park)
Retreats	6	Servant Leadership Team 1-day retreat
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	0	
Worship (10:30 AM in-person	12	
Worship (10:30 AM Zoom/Youtube)	15	
Young Adult Groups or Classes		

Youth Groups or Classes		
Other: Fundraising Events	6	Fruitcake prep and sale

Additional comments: Congregation provides financial support to the Southwest Wisconsin Rainbow Alliance, Family Advocates, Black Platteville Community Network, Family Promise, Thrift Shop, Senior Center, people of Ukraine, Pastor's fund for walk-up needs (grocery, gas, utilities, rent deposits)

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)
John Webster	n/a	n/a	none	Y
Marilyn Brewer	n/a	n/a	none	Y
Sue Strickler	n/a	n/a	Communion at a small country church	Y
Beryl Melcher	n/a	n/a	none	Y
Michael Bausch	n/a	n/a	none	Y
Catherine Carlson	n/a	n/a	none	Y

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: With the exception of a one-off emergency pulpit sermon shortly after losing our previous minister, Sue Strickler has no role in our church other than faithful attendee. She is respectful of UCC boundary guidelines and attends service on-line at present.

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staffperson 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 Administrator	Staff	Part-time	Moderator	<1 yr
Custodian	Staff	Part-time	Moderator	<1 yr
Moderator	Head	Volunteer	n/a	<1 yr
Organist	Staff	Part-time	Moderator	<1 yr
Music Coordinator	Staff	Part-time	Moderator	<1 yr

REFLECTION

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

For being a small congregation, we are very active, and care for one another in our community.

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$80,551
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>)	\$8,000
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i>)	\$39,800
Fundraising Events	\$
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$5,608
Grants	\$
Rentals of Church Building	\$30

Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$
Support from Related Organizations (e.g. <i>Women's Group</i>)	\$
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$1,400
Other (specify): Mt. Zion UCC	\$624
Other (specify): Misc. Income	\$4,803
TOTAL	\$140,586

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): **\$153,651**

Attach most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer's report as shared publicly with the congregation, or – if your church does not pass an annual budget – list current budgeted expenses here.

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

In 2022, we spent 29% of our budget to support the minister. This is lower than normal due to our former called minister resigning, and our interim minister leaving earlier than planned for another permanent call. We relied on supply ministers for nearly 6 months of coverage.

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

We have not failed to pay our financial obligations in the last 40 years. We do not know about the 143 years prior to 1980.

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

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

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

We allocate 10% of our anticipated pledges and giving for OCWM

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: **None**

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.

We currently have no building programs underway.

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

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

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

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

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

Does your church have an endowment?

- **The church has a "Planned Giving Account" rather than an endowment. This means we are able to draw on the principle as well as spending the returns on investment.**

What is the market value of the assets?

- **Planned Giving was valued at \$242,900 as of December 31st, 2022**
- **The church also has two Youth Funds with a combined value of \$30,000.**

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

- The church has a policy of drawing \$8,000 per year to help cover operating costs. (This has been about equal to the of return on investment over the years.) Drawing additional funds requires a vote at a congregational meeting with a quorum of members.
- Draws from the youth funds have typically been limited to the value of the returns on investment.

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

-The percentage rate of draw has bounced around quite a bit over the years. During 2022, we drew 20% of the value of the fund, while drawing only 3% during 2020. During 2017, the draw was just under 30%.

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

-The church typically drew \$8,000 a year to cover operating expenses until the pandemic; additional draws were taken to cover repairs and maintenance/improvements to our buildings. Since the pandemic, the church has needed to draw an additional \$30,000 a year to cover increased operating expenses, primarily ministerial and staff salaries.

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

-The endowment would run out of money after 8 years assuming normal returns, and no new bequests or market appreciation.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

-The value of our investments has been depressed by the volatility in the markets during 2022.

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$0

Investments (other than endowment): \$0

Does your church have a parsonage? No

Fair market rental value of the parsonage:
How is the parsonage used?
Street / City / State / Zip:
Finished square footage:
Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms:
Assessed real estate value:
Available for minister residence: Y/N
Expected minister residence: Y/N
Condition of structure, systems and appliances
Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

- Church building
- Cunningham House (church office, meeting space, and pastor's office)

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

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

- The church is handicap accessible for the first floor and the basement. The upper levels are not accessible.
- The Cunningham House is handicap accessible to the first floor.

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

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

Although our finances often appear tenuous, our congregation is phenomenal in stepping up to fund special projects.

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 2008, the congregation voted to become an Open and Affirming Congregation, making explicit our welcome of all people, and especially affirming the LGBTQ+ community.
- The most significant event in the life of our church was COVID-19 pandemic, which forced us to be more creative in our approach to ministry.

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

- Our church embraced the necessary changes and technical innovations that allowed us to pivot quickly to on-line services through the COVID pandemic on zoom and YouTube. Also included were Bible studies and fellowship time before and after 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.

- Like many other churches, we do have some conflicts. In our listening sessions as we prepared to write our profile, there was a small, but vocal, group that was concerned that our leadership was becoming more “pastor led” rather than “congregation led”. A new constitution was adopted a few years ago that tried to compensate for the reduction in church membership over the years, that consolidated church committees and leadership into a smaller group. The new constitution also allowed the pastor to be a voting member of the leadership team. While the pastor never actually voted, there was the perception that the pastor had an overly large influence on decision making.
- Our new settled pastor will need to understand the various viewpoints and help the congregation decide how it wants to be governed, with all the necessary changes to the constitution that that decision would require.

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

	<u>UCC?</u>
- Rev Joan Sulzer – Aug 1990 – July 1995	yes
- Rev Dorothy Palmer – Aug 1995 – April 1996 - Interim	yes
- Rev Milton Staskal – June 1996 – Dec1996 - Interim	yes
- Rev Susan S. Strickler – Jan 1997 – June 2005	yes
- Rev Larry Collins – July 2005 – Aug 2006 - Interim	no
- Rev Catherine Ann Carlson – Aug 2006 – June 2012	yes
- Rev William Wineke – Sept 2012 – Sept 2013 - Interim	yes
- Rev Zayna Thomley – Oct 2013 – Feb 2022	yes
- Rev Sonja Ingebritsen – May 2022 – Oct 2022 - Interim	yes
- Rev Peter Morris – Jan 8, 2023 – current Interim	licensed

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

- Our recent experience with a long term settled pastor, followed by a period of pulpit supply, and two interim ministers in the setting of a pandemic has shown us of the need to be creative, flexible and to make congregational decisions quickly. The importance of a good working relationship between a minister and the lay leadership team also became obvious.
- We learned the value of having a minister who provides meaningful worship services, but also views our ministry to include activities outside of the four walls of the sanctuary.
- We also learned the importance of nurturing our pastor by encouraging continuing education, and joining a collaborative support network.
- We learned the value of a minister who has a participative leadership style, that is, the willingness to seek varied opinions, to help with consensus building and the art of delegation. These lessons will be invaluable as we seek our next settled pastor.

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

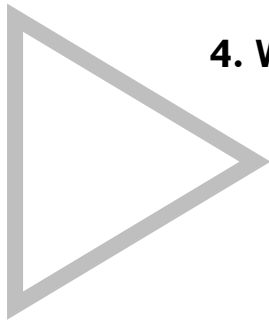
No

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

No

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

No



4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

a. COMMUNITY VISION

b. MISSION InSite

4a. COMMUNITY VISION

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?

The First Congregational United Church of Christ has a long history of people extending hospitality and outward service and support to those in need.

*In October 1972, five women (including our very own Jean Sanders) heard from Grant County Social Services about a need in this area to provide clothing to families at a reasonable price. Plans were made and the first shop opened in April of 1973. 50 years later the Platteville Thrift Shop is still going strong and self-sustaining. It started with all volunteers and now has 11 paid employees and 45 volunteers. They not only provide clothing to those in need, but also provide grants to area non-profits.

*Bill Sanders spearheaded a project (1974 – 1975) with interested community members to develop the Jenor Towers Apartment complex to provide safe and sustainable housing for those in need.

*Sister City Project with Mateara, Nicaragua

*Peace Pole dedication at the entrance of our church and United Nations Flag raising ceremony held in the City Park each year.

*Fresh Air Project – youth from Milwaukee and Mississippi came to Platteville to experience the rural area, college and formed relationships with community members.

*Adopt Families from South Chicago – exchange visits and provided Christmas gifts.

*Southwest Rainbow Alliance – Local LGBTQ+ support organization.

*Family Promise of Grant County – a national program to provide food, shelter, and resources for families experiencing homelessness to gain independence. Our church provides financial support, volunteers to provide meals, office help and staying overnight at our hosting church shelter.

*Black Community Network support.

*Family Advocates – Safe shelter that provides for women and children. Betty Burgett and Liz Mohr researched similar shelters in Madison and brought the concept to Platteville.

*Weekly A-Anon meetings held on our premises.

*Platteville Project Coats for Kids program. This program collects lightly used winter coats, which the local dry cleaner cleans for free. The coats are then distributed to children in need in our area.

*Leaders of our church involved in community as School Board members, Scouts, Recycling initiatives, New Inclusive Play Ground, Theatre, Stone Cottage Museum Board, Teachers, University Faculty and Staff,

*Sanders/Trine Pickleball Courts(built 2022) – for the local community and surrounding communities to enjoy.

*The congregation has participated in the “Homes Incorporated” mission program, which involved week long trips to poor, rural communities to build and repair houses.

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

The Platteville UCC Church has supported the Wisconsin conference and the National conference through its contribution to OCWM and many disaster relief programs. We strive to be a “5 for 5 church” in giving.

Members of this church consistently attend the Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Conference and report back to the local church. When the General Synod was in Milwaukee, we organized a bus to pick up other UCC folks in different communities and sent several members of our own church. We have utilized ideas gleaned from the annual meeting like "messy church" and various study groups. Our property committee

has used the conference to attend Zoom meetings on grant writing for building repair and update.

We have encouraged our settled pastors to be involved in the conference by paying mileage for travel to meetings and time away from church to attend those meetings. We also highly encourage our pastors to be a part of a Community of Practice group in our area.

We have had members involved in the Lay Academy program (now the Damascus Project), and they share their experiences and knowledge gained from that program.

We currently have a church member who is on the Division of Church and Ministry and the Fitness Review Committee.

We have invited our ACM to preach at our church and regularly use her expertise when faced with difficulties.

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

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?

Our church's reputation as a place of welcome to everyone has been very important to us. We try to be tolerant and open minded about diverse opinions within our congregation.

Our community is open to new interpretation of scriptures, particularly as it relates to acceptance of our diversity and equality as a community.

We have been an ONA since 2008.

Some of our members have expressed an interest in becoming a WISE congregation.

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

- Live Nativity
- Participation in the Community Pastor's Fund within the Platteville Association of Churches
- Family Promise

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.

Our Mission: (what we do)

"We care for one another by providing an open and affirming environment for all people who seek the love God in community. Strengthened by our differences, we unite to serve God's people and work toward a more just and generous world."

We live this mission throughout all our activities. Our worship services always start with a statement welcoming all, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey. This welcome is also extended via social media, our weekly communications and monthly newsletters. Our pastors and leadership team frequently use gender neutral references to God and the Holy. Use of preferred pronouns is encouraged in all communications.

Despite interruptions in pastors over the last year, church members have remained committed to, and participated in, community organizations that value individual differences and work toward justice for all.

The church council, which we call the Servant Leadership Team (SaLT) and the entire congregation keep this mission in mind when planning all facets of the church's governance, including management of finances, participation in community programs and the like.

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?

In the last year, we lost our settled pastor to a new call, and have had two interim pastors augmented by pulpit supply. Therefore, our outreach activities to those in the wider community who may be seeking a church home has admittedly been limited. Our pastor has "public office hours" at a local coffee shop. We also support our pastor's participation in both regional and national conference activities.

4b. MISSION InSite

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

We are an older congregation, however, the university and our connections with other community groups, provide opportunities to draw in younger people.

How do your congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects?

Our church demographics are substantially older than our community. Our church culture is much more "liberal" than our surrounding communities outside of Platteville.

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

We have a number of LGBTQ members, as well as members with a connection to the university, which are helping to focus our ministry towards those areas.

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

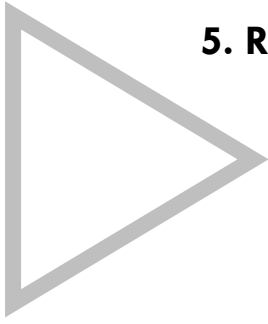
- We are known for generosity towards the community. While we are one of the smaller congregations in the area, we lead the community in monetary help with gas/food/rent via our "Pastor's Fund".
- We are also known for our social justice banners, and rainbow flags that hang on our church office porch that faces a public park.

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

Here is a list of comments from newer members:

- A personal connection with the prior settled pastor
- Seeing the good works and camaraderie modeled by members, ie mission work

- An authentic sense of acceptance from the faith community
- A feeling of welcome despite circumstances that were not acceptable to previous denominations
- Personal invitation



5. REFERENCES

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

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

REFERENCE 1

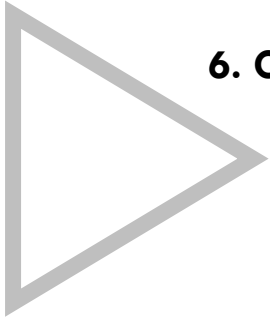
Rev. Jasmine Tesdahl/ Pastor/ Lutheran Church of Peace in Platteville
(608) 642-2490/ pastor@lutheranchurchofpeace.org / Has worked with our church on a variety of ecumenical projects like Family Promise and Alone for Christmas.

REFERENCE 2

Lynn Parrott/ Member at Large Platteville Common Council/
(608) 642-2281/ lynnepproductions@gmail.com / Worked in the church office while we were involved with a multi-church cooperative project.

REFERENCE 3

Royal Palmer/Owner of Driftless Market in Platteville
952-457-3518/ royal@driftlessmarket.com / Has worked with the church on LGBTQ+ issues as President of the Southwest Rainbow Alliance.



6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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

We pray that our new pastor will love our Driftless Area.
We pray that our new pastor will love our town and our surrounding communities.
We pray that our new pastor will love our beautiful historic church building.
We pray that our new pastor will love our congregation as much as we love each other.
We pray that our new pastor will LOVE being our pastor.
Amen!

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? *(for example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.)*
Search/Call Committee
Leadership team moderator
Congregation via interviews
2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Name / Title / Date:

6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.



Signature:

Name / Title:

Rev. Rachel Bauman/Associate Conference Minister

Email:

rbauman@wcucc.org

Phone:

608-630-2992

Date:

April 21, 2023



Lutheran Church of Peace

1345 North Water Street Platteville, WI 53818

(608) 348-3166 www.lutheranchurchofpeace.org

April 10, 2023

Dear Candidate for Call to First Congregational United Church of Christ,

First Congregational UCC is a generous congregation made up of active members of the Platteville community. I have been a Lutheran pastor in Platteville, Wisconsin, off-and-on, since 2016, and I have had many opportunities to interact with the church.

First Congregational is a congregation that cares about people and seeks to be a welcoming presence in the community. With their location next to City Park, they are always a visible reminder of holy welcome for the entire town. People have often commented to me about how much they love the church's welcoming banners and their presence at community events.

The congregation was also instrumental in founding Family Promise, a non-profit organization seeking to address homelessness in Grant County. They have a history of relationships with other UCC churches in the area, having been in partnership with the church in Cornelia and the church in Potosi. Along with their partnerships, this is a church community that likes to try new things. In the last five years I can remember them hosting lots of fun events and trying many unique worship-styles.

As they are a congregation full of teachers, business owners, school board and city council members, First Congregational expects and appreciates a pastor who is active in the community. As a pastor at one of the larger protestant congregations in Platteville, you would really have a chance to make a difference here – both in the lives of your parishioners, as well as in the city itself.

If this sounds like the way that the Holy Spirit is guiding you, I pray that you will accept the call to Platteville, Wisconsin. I think you will find a warm and welcoming congregation that is ready to start a new page, post-pandemic, with you.

Please feel free to contact me with any further questions that you might have. I'll do my best to answer them.

In Christ,

The Reverend Jasmine L. Tesdahl
cell: 608-642-2490

"To Know Christ and Make Christ Known"

From: royal@driftlessmarket.com

Sent: Monday, April 10, 2023 12:34 PM

To: kss0156@outlook.com

Subject: First Congregational United Church of Christ

To whom it may concern,

I write this letter to highlight a few of the many contributions First Congregational United Church of Christ has made in my life and our community in Platteville.

The FCUCC has been a loud and proud supporter of the Southwest Wisconsin Rainbow Alliance over the last few years. The church set up their own booth at the Pride in the Park event where they had activities and fun take-aways. Seeing a church at an LGBTQ event is very reassuring for the community. It really shows God's love rather than demonize humans, like other churches.

In the past, special sermons focused on LGBTQ Pride were given during the month of June. I think it's important to recognize the history behind Pride month. Educating the congregation and public is vital, if we want to open minds.

During the pandemic, FCUCC transitioned to web-based sermons, which made it possible to still communicate every Sunday, while being safe. Continuation of live broadcasts would be great, as folks continue to integrate technology into their lives.

There is a significant black community in Platteville that is currently being under-served. It would be great if the FCUCC made a hearted attempt to bring in more people of color to the church. The FCUCC seems to be struggling a bit with memberships.

My own sister had the privilege of getting married at the FCUCC, so thus church has had a special place in my heart for many years. I hope the FCUCC remains in Platteville for many years to come.

Sincerely,
Royal Palmer

Owner - Driftless Market & Deli

President - Southwest Wisconsin Rainbow Alliance

Member of Platteville TIDE (Taskforce for Inclusion Diversity and Equality)

**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