



Local Church Profile for Churches Seeking a  
**Part-Time Designated Term Pastor**



**New Vision Congregational Church**  
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# The Position

## The Opportunity

Are you founded on faith, rooted in justice and focused on community? We need leadership that can grow these ideals at New Vision. We are looking for a Part-Time Designated Term Pastor who can help us grow spiritually with progressive theology, intellectually stimulating sermons, and community engagement. This position duration will fill the void until we find or you become our next part-time settled pastor. Our prior pastors have filled this role with about twenty hours per week.

We are a small church with fourteen years of ministry and community support. We serve Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia communities. Our growing locale includes safe and welcoming coastal communities with numerous parks, beaches and water recreation opportunities. Local schools and healthcare are above average. The area is historically rich, has exceptional weather, exciting cultural events as well as good shopping and restaurants.

## Core Competencies

- Outgoing leader with a friendly, engaging and welcoming personality
- Able to lead a growth initiative focused on younger members
- Embrace progressive theology with intellectually stimulating, good sermons (fluent in biblical history – connecting to daily living)
- Open and Affirming (ONA) and social justice oriented
- Able to inspire participation from the congregation in services and activities
- Able to connect us with the needs of the community, local churches and the national and regional UCC

## Compensation

- We are open to compensation packages for this position in the range of \$38,000 annually.
- We can offer flexibility to include a housing allowance and/or insurance within this budgeted range. New Vision does not have a parsonage. Our current pastor is paid as housing reimbursement and travel.
- We can offer vacation flexibility by calling upon lay leadership and other local pastors as we have in the past.

## The Position

### Ministry Goals

- We have created a pastor search team consisting of 14 of our most engaged congregants to assist this process. We have discerned that a Designated Term Pastor is necessary because our current pastor is retiring for family health reasons. We will follow the UCC process of profiles, discernment and covenant to find both a Designated Term and a Settled Pastor.
- We hope to revitalize and grow our congregation through progressive theology, intellectually stimulating sermons, and community engagement. We have a volunteer team of congregants focused on growth and revitalization. We will have achieved our goal when we double the size of our church, emphasizing a younger congregation.

# Who We Are

## New Vision Mission Statement

### Founded on Faith, Rooted in Justice, Focused on Community



#### Founded on Faith

- We are a United Church of Christ congregation with a commitment to progressive Christian thinking.
- We don't claim to hold the answers to the mystery we call God. We are comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty as we seek to follow the way of Jesus.
- We read the Bible both metaphorically and historically. As a progressive Christian congregation, we are not based on creeds.
- We respect those with no or other faith traditions.
- We have a great concern for the way people treat each other.
- We are interested in communal justice.
- We strive to use inclusive language.

#### Rooted in Justice

- We reach across lines of faith, race, age, ability, gender, orientation, and identity. We are an inclusive, Open and Affirming congregation.
- We are actively committed to eliminating injustice, bigotry and racism.
- We work toward human rights and equality for all people.
- Our faith leads us to a strong emphasis on social justice, care for poor and oppressed people and environmental stewardship of the earth.

#### Focused on Community

- As a congregation in the United Church of Christ, we practice extravagant welcome. We welcome all who come through our doors to explore the many ways God is still speaking and acting in our world.
- We are called – as followers of Jesus – to serve those in our community.
- Our church is committed to using our financial resources to support our neighbors in need
- Many of our members volunteer in our community, lending their talents and resources to support social justice initiatives.

# Who We Are

## New Vision History

New Vision started in 2008 when a small group broke from their Presbyterian church to establish New Vision, wanting social justice, equality and progressive theology as their core beliefs. They found the UCC denomination to be most closely aligned with these beliefs and started New Vision as a UCC Florida Conference church. Bob and Jane Lindberg were founding members and offered cost-free church space within their Springer Controls industry complex. Over our fourteen years, we have enjoyed and learned from each of our three pastors; Rev. Mary Moore – 7 years, Rev. Bob Kyte – 2 years, Rev. Kathy Burton – 6 years. Our current pastor is retiring for family health reasons, which leads us to search for our next settled pastor.

## Demographics

- Most of our congregation lives in Nassau County with a population of 94,000 and a ten-year growth rate of 31%. A new community in construction will add more than 50,000 people.
- The average household income for Nassau County is \$ 75,000.
- The cost of living varies greatly, from 5% less to 17% more than the national average.
- 8% of the Nassau County population is below the poverty level.
- Blue collar jobs are 40% of the workforce, white collar jobs are 60%.
- Population diversity: White 87%, Black 6%, Hispanic 4%
- 70% of current population are married couples with children living at home.

## Membership & Attendance

- About a fourth of our membership are “snow birds”. Our winter attendance is much stronger than summer attendance.
- New Vision membership lacks formality. However, this doesn’t consistently satisfy members or lead to their commitment.
- The combinational impacts of Covid and Jane Lindberg’s passing have roughly halved our congregation and attendance.
  - Membership                                      Pre-Pandemic: 100 (est.)      Current Year: 45
  - Worship Attendance                              Pre-Pandemic: 49                      Current Year: 24

# Who We Are

## Significant Events

- The 2020 – 2021 Covid pandemic forced us to on-line-only services and the post-Covid loss of about half of our congregation.
- Jane Lindberg's Death in 2022. Jane was a dynamic founding member and professional musician who provided our gratis music worship program. Many of our congregation came for Jane's music and have now left us.

## Our Gatherings

- Our meeting space within the Springer Controls complex is simple and comfortable, but not a traditional church structure.
- We provide an exuberant welcome and strong fellowship
- Our services are participative, including lay readers, music, and open dialog & sharing.
- We offer good preaching from a wide variety of sources that is actionable, intellectually stimulating, enthusiastic and engaging.



## Organization & Operation

- New Vision is a small church whose only salaried position is our pastor. We also pay our music leader, musicians, and cleaning staff per event. We do not have a formal organization structure or bylaws.
- There are two standing teams of volunteers to manage church life and finances. Others volunteer for projects including communications, attendance, Sunday service participation and church growth initiatives.
- The church body responsible for hiring a Designated Term Pastor and a Settled Pastor is our New Vision Search Team, comprised of fourteen of our most engaged congregants.
- Church membership status is casual and undocumented.

## Who We Are

### Our Strengths

- The gift of a cost-free church space within the Lindberg's Springer Controls complex has allowed New Vision to support the local community missions with generous financial support.
- We are a progressive church in a predominantly fundamentalist and conservative area.
- We operate with no debt and a reserve of more than a year of expenses.
- New Vision is welcoming to all, friendly, casual and we enjoy humor.
- We express our neighborly love with generosity of our time and financial resources in support of our community in need.
- We are open to new ideas, willing to both challenge and defend. We have had successful experiments with blessing of the animals and beach services, congregation performance of a social justice play, a variety of music, and hosting Baha'i and UU congregations.
- We are fortunate to have a strong and accepted mission statement that has allowed us to manage virtually conflict-free.
- Our website and Facebook are strong. Most folks find us via our social media or our presence in social justice parades and marches.



### Our Challenges

- We have mostly a retirement age congregation.
- We currently lack depth and structure in our church leadership and need to develop more volunteer participation in church operations.
- Our local population is growing and we need leadership to grow our congregation by attracting younger members. Families with children don't stay because we have no youth Christian education program



## Who We Are

### Financial Health

- Our finances are managed by a volunteer team led by our treasurer. This team develops our annual budget and manages and reports on financial performance.
- For the last 10 years, our budget performance has controlled expenditures to match income. Pre and post pandemic income and expense has been relatively stable, running between \$52,000 & \$59,000. We have maintained a reserve greater than our budgeted annual expenses. Our current reserve is \$84,000 with 2023 budgeted expenses of \$63,500.
- Beyond our reserves, New Vision owns no assets and has no endowments. Our church operates within a cost-free building as a gift of the Lindberg's within their Springer Control complex.
- We give generously to UCC and community missions. We provide "5 for 5" UCC support and last year gave over \$24,000 to local missions.

### Supporting Our Neighbors

- We provide generous hands-on and financial support to our local community, including: monthly donation to CREED (local health initiative), homeless meal preparation and funding, MLK and Pride marches, various food pantry work and donations, books & musical instruments for children, homeless children schooling support and animal humane shelters.
- Our financial support to global needs includes; generators for Ukraine, AIDS orphanage in South Africa, abused women's shelter in Ecuador and Afghan refugee housing support.

## Who We Are



2023 FB Pride Parade



June 2023 Beach Service

## References

**Rev. Mary Moore**

**First Pastor**

**2008 – 2015**

Dear Colleagues in Ministry:

I write with the hope that my words will provide you with additional insight as you seek your next call. I had the privilege of being the founding pastor of New Vision Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ for its first seven years. The church's beginnings were grounded in a deep desire to create an open and affirming church community that is accepting of all people. Its ten founding members were dedicated to this vision and the church remains dedicated to being a progressive voice of faith.

The number of members is small but the work of the church is creative. They have hosted concerts and produced plays. They have engaged in numerous creative forms of worship from jazz services to the blessing of animals. They don't seek a rigid worship style and enjoy a very broad range of music styles including jazz, modern theatrical, classical, Appalachian, folk, and both traditional and contemporary hymns.

And the ministry of the church is expansive. They have helped with the community homeless shelter, provide consistent support for preparing lunches for the homeless, stuff backpacks for children in the community, and have taken countless wagons full of food to the local food pantry. They also make their voice and presence known in the community – doing book studies on the banned books in Florida, participating in the community Pride parade, and encouraging public health.

New Vision, like almost every church, experienced challenges during the pandemic. Following the pandemic, they have grieved the loss of several members, including the death of their beloved musician. I continue to watch them from a distance as they heal from these transitions, reading their newsletters and occasionally providing pulpit supply. I believe they are now poised to reinvigorate their vision once again. The community around them is poised for additional growth and there is significant potential. Nassau County needs New Vision. While saying that, I want to emphasize that they have found meaning and purpose in being a church where people can experience faith beyond the painful church structures that have often left people abandoned. Through their history, the stories of those that found New Vision and the power of the acceptance they found there became much more important than numbers of people.



## References

I deeply loved the years I spent at New Vision and can truly say they are a community of people who are compassionate and loving, and people experience that when they walk in the door. They are visionary and creative and persistent. They are open to challenging questions of life and faith and don't require pat answers. Their open-mindedness is invigorating. During our early years, the church chose the UCC because "God is still speaking." They believe that.

Wishing you God's blessings on your journey of discernment.

**Rev. Bob Kyte**

**Prior Pastor**

**2015 – 2016**

My wife and I moved from New Hampshire to Florida when I retired from active ministry in 2013. After forty years of budgets and buildings, sinking numbers and rising despair, more fundraising than fun, I was done. Yet, it seems, God was not done with me. New Vision Church needed a supply preacher while they searched for a new pastor. What began as a few months became two years (2015-2016) and a job turned into a wonderful joy.

New Vision Church is simple by design. Minimal structure.

No committees. No building to maintain. No rules for membership.

No required beliefs. No wall between regulars and newcomers.

A small budget with a large slice supporting community non-profits.

Time and energy are used for welcome, worship and hospitality.

New Vision, by choice, is open minded about belief, open hearted to all sorts of people, adventurous in worship. Sunday mornings are more party than piety. When I was there, musician Jane Lindberg, one week played a piece by Bach, a mix of old and new hymns and a Broadway tune and ended with Hank Williams' "I Saw the Light".

New Vision is maintained by committed regulars who share worship and hospitality needs. Visitors are noticed and welcomed with conversations from start to finish. When needed, decisions are made at short all community meetings after worship, visitors included. New Vision is both a church home for some and an oasis for rest and hope for those on a journey. It succeeds at both.

In an area full of conservative and fundamentalist churches,  
New Vision UCC is a spiritual community for the rest of us.

## References

**Diane Pasieka**

**Founding Member**

**2008 - 2021**

I am one of the ten founding members of New Vision. Our “new vision” was to start a church that encouraged theological inquiry and accepted everyone wherever they were on their life journey. We really mean it (unlike many churches) when we say we welcome all. Our church is a breath of fresh air in a conservative part of Northeast Florida.

Our outreach to the community has been generous with our funds as well as our physical presence and support. I led our congregation thru the process of being an open and affirming congregation because that is who we are.

A major issue that can be improved is pastoral care of our own church family. We do so much for the greater community while neglecting to care for our own members who are in need.

**Zen & John Carver**

**Community Activist, Friend of New Vision**

Greetings and Salutations,

We have been asked to write a letter of support for New Vision as a non-member. My husband John, and I are members of the Historic Macedonia AME Church of Fernandina Beach.

We have partnered with New Vision for community events and always look forward to their members visiting our pews. We also visit New Vision as they offer inspiring sermons and programs. We recently attended an adapted radio show “Thunder on the Mountain” and have also attended various musical performances.

New Vision is a vibrant and committed community member; they participate in local events and are well known. Our community loves New Vision because they give back and support many outreach initiatives.

Love grows where love flows.

## 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 pastor for both the interim and longer term of 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.

*Tom Woodbridge, Treasurer & Search Team Chairperson*

