

# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## **LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE**

Seymour Congregational Church

45 Broad Street

Seymour, CT 06483

Minister

New Haven Association

UCC Southern New England Conference

[6/10/2023]

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*“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
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- c. COMPENSATION & SUPPORT
- d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

## **1a. LISTING INFORMATION**

**Church name:** Seymour Congregational Church, UCC

**Street address:** 45 Broad Street, Seymour, CT 06483

**Supplemental web links:**

Website: <https://www.seymourcongregationalchurch.com/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@seymourcongregationalchurc1170>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/seymourcongregational>

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

Along The Road Organization

Seymour - Oxford Ecumenical Clergy

**Conference:**

UCC Southern New England Conference

**Association:**

New Haven

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

Rev. Margret Hofmeister, Area Conference Minister, SW Region SNEUCC

[hofmeistem@sneucc.org](mailto:hofmeistem@sneucc.org) 860-761-7198

Jill Ford, Search & Call Associate, 860-761-7112, [searchcall@sneucc.org](mailto:searchcall@sneucc.org)

## 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?*

*The goals that we seek for our church ministry would be to nourish an environment of openness, understanding, and concern for church members. We endeavor to continue developing an atmosphere of church community participation and outreach within our congregation. We are looking to join with a candidate that would:*

- *work well with people*
- *have a strong commitment to the educational ministry of the church; would encourage the church members to participate in ecumenical activities*
- *would seek to bring new members into the church*
- *would encourage people to relate their faith to their daily lives*
- *would plan, develop and lead worship services that are sensitive to the needs of our church family*



Palm Sunday Service and a Special Service picture of Choir



Memorial Day - Handing Out Hot Dogs after the Parade

### **What we value about living in our area**

Seymour is a small town with a close knit, friendly population that takes pride in its community and schools. Downtown Seymour is home to a burgeoning antique district that attracts people from all over the state. If you prefer a country fair (CT has many wonderful agricultural fairs in the fall) or a night in the city (New Haven is 20 minutes away and NYC is a 70 min drive), we are located in a prime location with many wonderful entertaining, dining, and cultural opportunities. Seymour Congregational is fortunate to be at the heart of an area with so many churches that we can collaborate with in our Ecumenical events.

**Current size of membership:** 100 members

**Languages used in ministry (*other than English*):**

None

**Position Title:** Minister

**Position Duration**

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**

Full Time

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

Yes

## **1b. SCOPE OF WORK**

### **Core Competencies:**

The three core competencies that were reflected in our survey and cottage meetings were counseling/visiting, new members, spiritual development/sermons.

The consensus is that we would like sermons that we can relate to our everyday life that support our growth and understanding of the teachings of Jesus.

Visitation to our home bound membership as well as to members temporarily confined or going through a difficult time is an essential duty of the minister.

Our minister should establish a comfortable relationship with members of the church that encourages supportive, non-judgemental, and confidential conversations.

## **1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT**

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**Compensation Basis:** approximately \$ 80,000 total compensation

Salary includes potential benefits (as negotiated with finance committee)

- Medical
- Housing allowance
- Telephone
- Transportation
- Book allowance
- Self-Employment Tax Reimbursement (equal to 7.65% of salary and housing)
- Retirement contribution to UCC Pension Board annuity at 14% of salary
- UCC Health Insurance Life and Disability Insurance and Benefits
- UCC Dental benefits
- Vacation
- Professional Education and Clergy Wellness Support
- Personal and sick leave

### **What is the expected living/commuting situation for your next minister**

It is expected that the minister will live in Seymour, or a neighboring town where he/she will still have the proximity to remain an active member of the Seymour community.

### **State any incentives**

We are open to negotiating for incentives at the time of hiring based on individualized preference.

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

We are part of the Southern New England Conference (Southwest Region) and a member of the New Haven Association. There are supports that include affinity groups and self-care

resources. The area conference minister is Rev. Margret Hofmeister and the search and call associate is Jill Ford.

## **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.**

Our overall congregation enjoys our current service and values the traditions practiced in our church. However, the congregation is open to exploring new ideas that the minister might suggest. A goal that we would envision is a co-collaboration of the planning and leadership of church programs and events. We have a number of active committees that cover governing (Council), spiritual life (Deacons) budgeting (Finance) community outreach (Community Care) to name a few. These committees are valuable to the continuity and growth of our church. We would hope that a new minister would not only support these committees, but offer new ideas for growth and management.

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

We are currently very active and always looking for creative ways to increase our outreach in the local community. A new minister would be expected to continue our many outreach programs. We also would welcome new ideas from the minister on ways to reach people outside of the church and support fun activities with the community.

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

None

**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.**

According to *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry*, we have identified the following four areas of excellence as qualities that our next minister should display. We feel that our congregation is seeking a minister that will **exhibit a spiritual foundation and ongoing spiritual practice**. This trait showed up often as a desire in our congregation. Our congregation also would like a minister that **cares for all creation**. We are a church that is proud of our involvement in the local community and would like a minister that would continue to guide us with creative opportunities to serve. Our membership also believes that it is important to honor the traditions of the church and keep them a part of the Sunday service. Therefore, we would like a minister that can provide **engaging sacred stories and traditions**. The final mark that our congregation identified as a core value was



**strengthening inter- and intra- personal assets.** There was a strong sentiment that the sermons and teachings would allow members the opportunities to be guided in the word and given the knowledge necessary to go into the world and bring forth God's word through their own actions.

## **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?**

God is calling our congregation to hear his word and be the best Christians as scripture guides with the help of our pastor. We feel strongly that we are on a path that is leading us to be guided to live the message that we hear during the Sunday sermon and support our wider community.

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

One of the main emerging challenges facing our church is both retention and recruitment. Faith formation created "AWE" some services in response to this challenge. An "AWE" some service can be described as an interactive worship that emphasizes collaboration and small group discussion with the opportunity to share with fellow congregants. The congregation feedback was positive and as a result, people are looking forward to doing it again.

One of the opportunities that our congregation is blessed with is the resources and ability to support our local community. This is observed through the many outreach programs that we have in place. One such event was a 50's Sock Hop that was held on a Saturday evening. This family event created an enjoyable environment with dancing, raffles, and a DJ playing music. The event supported the local community with the collection of clothing and toiletry supplies that supported our local homeless and veteran populations.

## **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.**

God is most often described in this church as loving, forgiving, welcoming, and asking the congregation to follow His message. The Holy Spirit is speaking to us and we are learning to listen. Church members are hungry and excited about the different offerings to learn and grow, such as Conversation and Coffee, Thursday Small Study Groups, Lenten services, Prayer Shawl mission, Interfaith services, Choir/Special music, and Sunday School.

#### **Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.**

Seymour Congregational Church offers warm and welcoming fellowship with a family feel that strives for and nurtures our personal relationships with God and supports others during hard times.

#### **Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.**

Worship begins as people arrive and are greeted in the narthex. A casual worship atmosphere where the Bible is brought to everyday life is led by the minister. There is a choir that sings throughout the worship led by our minister of music playing both the organ and the piano. Our director of Faith Formation leads a short children's message prior to the children leaving for Sunday school. The worship concludes with a "joys and concerns" interaction with the congregation and the minister followed by prayer. After worship, congregants and ministers are invited to join in Fellowship Hall for a social coffee hour.

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

The church has adopted the "Feasting On the Word" teaching the revised lectionary curriculum. This curriculum is used by all age groups that are part of the faith formation programming. These groups can be broken down as follows:

**Church School:** Children ages 3 – 10 that meet weekly during the church service.

**Youth Group:** Children ages 11-13 meet monthly. The youth group members are also given the responsibility of participating in the Sunday Live Stream Technical Team.

**Adult Programming:**

Coffee and Conversation meets before worship on Sunday morning and reviews the Lectionary for that day.

Adult Small Group meets Thursday evenings to discuss lectionary and ways that we can strengthen our faith.

Our Faith Formation Director is in communication with the congregation to determine what people are looking for to expand their faith.

**Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.**

The church management is run by the church council. The council consists of a moderator, the committee chairs, and officers.

We have the following church committees:

- Property / Renovations
- Christian Education
- Diaconate
- Community Care
- Nominating
- Finance
- Stewardship
- Music
- Historian

We have the following officers

- Secretary of the church
- Treasurer
- Collector
- Moderator

Our various ways of communication are:

- The “Bridge” newsletter - emailed weekly
- The Sunday bulletin
- Announcements made during the service
- Prayer chain
- Email announcements for as needed information

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

Most committees meet on a monthly basis for approximately 2 hours.

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

The church community has proven that they are capable of reacting quickly to tragic events that have occurred in the recent decades. This includes quality communication with all necessary parties from church leaders, church staff, and local authorities.

**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**

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



Church#: 787341

Assoc: 932

Schedule: 0

Seymour Congregational UCC

Seymour

CT

06483

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	201	67	0	0	0	16	2	0	14
2012	163	72	0	5	0	11	7	47	-38
2013	164	72	66	0	0	6	5	0	1
2014	150	71	10	0	0	2	7	9	-14
2015	153	75	35	0	0	7	4	0	3
2016	153	75	37	0	0	0	0	0	0
2017	147	75	36	0	0	2	1	7	-8
2018	146	57	44	0	0	5	2	4	-1
2019	145	70	33	0	0	4	5	0	-1
2020	145	70	33	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	145	70	33	0	0	0	0	0	0

  

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2011	\$145,922	\$0	\$1,500	\$2,041	\$3,541	\$0	\$3,541	1.03	\$149,463	\$73,350
2012	\$107,490	\$50,000	\$1,500	\$1,867	\$3,367	\$20,311	\$23,678	1.40	\$181,168	\$71,283
2013	\$160,000	\$0	\$1,500	\$2,109	\$3,609	\$25,000	\$28,609	0.94	\$188,609	\$80,000
2014	\$197,673	\$0	\$1,500	\$2,394	\$3,894	\$0	\$3,894	0.76	\$201,567	\$83,011
2015	\$194,644	\$37,342	\$1,500	\$3,415	\$4,915	\$3,703	\$8,618	0.77	\$240,604	\$121,309
2016	\$204,373	\$37,342	\$1,500	\$5,570	\$7,070	\$5,975	\$13,045	0.73	\$254,760	\$102,780
2017	\$188,280	\$59,149	\$1,500	\$4,778	\$6,278	\$43,343	\$49,621	0.80	\$237,901	\$90,581
2018	\$184,566	\$119,944	\$1,500	\$654	\$2,154	\$40,886	\$43,040	0.81	\$227,606	\$86,725
2019	\$197,060	\$0	\$1,500	\$2,716	\$4,216	\$41,239	\$45,455	0.76	\$242,515	\$87,801
2020	\$197,060	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000	1.52	\$200,060	\$0
2021	\$197,060	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00	\$197,060	\$0

  

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2016-2021	-5.23	-6.67	-10.81	0.00	0.00	-3.58	-100.00	-22.65
2011-2021	-27.86	4.48	0.00	-100.00	-100.00	35.04	-100.00	31.85

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.

The survey data is reflective of a member-wide anonymous survey with responses from approximately 27% of the membership.

	#	Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)
Number of active members:	100	Yes

Number of active non-members:	5	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	105	Yes

**Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:		75%
Less than 10, more than 5 years:		15%
Less than 5 years:		10%

**Number of total participants by age:**

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
6	4	2	4	10	10	8	13	8	Yes

**Percentage of adults in various household types:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	0	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey
Households with minors:	2	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey
Single adults age 35-65:	1	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey
Joint households with no minors:	19	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey
Single adults over 65:	5	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey

**Education level of adult participants by percentage:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
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High school:	4	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey
College:	12	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey
Graduate School:	8	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey

Specialty Training:	3	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey
Other (please specify):	1	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey

**Percentage of adults in various employment types:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	9	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey
Adults who are retired:	17	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey
Adults who are not fully employed:	2	These values are from a survey that was collected. 27% of the membership replied to the survey

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

Members of the church have a wide variety of occupations including, service workers, clerical workers, operators and laborers, and sales workers. Approximately 37% of the church memberships identify as a professional technical employee including architects, engineers, and teachers.

**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 congregation is primarily white which is a reflection of the larger Seymour community.



**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:**

We have not had any formal conversations as a congregation about welcoming diversity. This is not to say that the congregation would not be open to an event such as the Welcoming Diversity Inventory.

### **3d. 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	10	Quilters - Various Members Prayer Shawls - Various Members Brian's Bags - Various Members
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	4	Minister

Children's Groups or Classes	10	Sunday School - Director of Faith Formation Youth Group - Director of Faith Formation
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	80	Minister and Diaconate

Church-wide Meals	50	Pot Luck Sunday - Various Committees Church Picnic - Various Committees
Choirs and Music Groups	12	Director of music
Church-based Bible Study	10	Coffee and Conversation (Sunday before church) - Planned by Director of Faith Formation Thursday Night Small Groups (bible discussion) - Planned by Director of Faith Formation
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	first Sunday of the month	Minister and Diaconate
Community Meals	Monthly	Spooner House (local shelter) - Various Committee All in for Seymour (problem solving group community needs) - Minister
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	0	
Drama or Dance Program		
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	2	Minister and Music Director
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship	50	Church Picnic - Minister and Director of Faith Formation

Prayer or Meditation Groups		
Public Advocacy Work		
Retreats		None since Covid - open to restarting
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	0	
Worship time	10:00 - 11:00	

**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)
Rev. David Bell	No		Music	N

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

No

**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
Director of Faith Formation	No	Part Time	Christian Education Committee	3
Director of Music	No	Part Time	Music Committee	4
Office Administrator	No	Part Time	Finance Committee	1

## REFLECTION

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

Our congregation is not racially diverse. We are diverse in the age and backgrounds of our members.

## **3e. CHURCH FINANCES**

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$69,700
Endowment Proceeds <i>(as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)</i>	\$82,596
Endowment Draw <i>(beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal")</i>	\$
Fundraising Events	\$1,405
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$725.00
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$620
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$0
Support from Related Organizations	\$0

<i>(e.g. Women's Group)</i>	
Transfers from Special Accounts	
Other (specify):	\$

Other (specify):	\$
TOTAL	\$154,426

**Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$ 196,848**

[Seymour Congregational Annual Report](#)

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

41%

**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*)**

☒ 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%*)**

.59%

**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.**

None

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2015	Install Lift	\$202,865	\$202,865	Made 3 levels of the church building and restrooms handicap accessible.

**If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:**

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
	None	\$	\$	

**Does your church have an endowment?**

The church has several trusts, the Main Trust (General Fund), Parsonage Trust (used for housing allowance) Noyack Fund and Pittis Fund ( restricted to scholarships), Marshall Trust.

**What is the market value of the assets?**

3,468,063

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

Regularly

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



Not to exceed 7.5% of the value of the endowment, based on a 3-year rolling average. This was increased in 2023 to 9.5 %.

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

Draw was used to fund outreach activities, building maintenance and maintaining the cemetery.

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

Estimated at 30 years.

**Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:**

**Other Assets**

**Reserves (savings):** \$ 160,000

**Investments (other than endowment):** \$ N/A

**Does your church have a parsonage?**

No

**Describe all buildings owned by the church:**

The church building is a three section colonial New England Church. These sections include:

- The Meeting House c. 1847: The first floor has handicapped access ramp, lift, narthex and id-size sanctuary with a balcony that includes live streaming equipment, a split pulpit and center aisle. The basement is a large fellowship hall with a stage.
- The Parish Hall c. 1908: The first floor has an entry, Christian Education office, nursery. The second floor includes the Baker room. The basement includes restrooms, custodial storage, and rear stairwell.
- Middle Section c. 1956: The first floor has vestibule, church office, choir room, large restrooms, and the minister's office. The second floor has a classroom/meeting room. The Basement has a large kitchen and boiler room.

**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.*)**

Everything except third floor

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

In March 2022, the governing body voted to change the total return spending policy to increase the maximum amount of the draw to 7.5% recently approved for 9.5%. The newest ministry initiative financed by the church was the investment in the needed computers, software, cameras and monitors for live streaming. This was paid for by the Marshall Fund.

### **3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

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**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**

Our church was formed on November 3, 1789 by early settlers in the Naugatuck River Valley. We have been occupying our third house of worship since that time, our present Sanctuary having been dedicated in 1847. The facilities have been enlarged and improved many times since then, most notably following the Great Flood of 1955, when a large oak tree lodged in front of the church to divert raging waters as well as massive floating debris, thus saving the building from certain destruction.

On November 5, 1989 our church celebrated our Bicentennial with a celebration to be matched by no other celebrations at Seymour Congregational Church. There were costumes, dinner at a restaurant, contests, an organ recital by our Minister of Music, Miss Cherie E. Weiss and a special Bicentennial Sunday service led by Rev. W. F. Hamel, Sr.

Covid could be described as the most important event in the life of our church in the past ten years. We went to online services on March 22, 2020 and returned to in-church services on April 4, 2021. \$ 15,000 was spent on electronic equipment which is now part of our usual service providing online viewing as well as in-church services. We lost many active members due to covid illness and some members have not returned to our in person church services. It was a difficult time, though our congregation showed we could come together to rise from the pandemic and adjust to the changes Covid introduced.

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

In 2015, The Marshall Family Trust donated a large portion of money so that an accessible lift could be installed. This lift was necessary for the congregational membership to provide access to all areas of the church facility. Prior to the lift, congregants were able to access the sanctuary via an outdoor ramp. Unfortunately, there was no access to Fellowship hall where our weekly coffee hour is held. The new lift allowed all congregants to now be able to take

part in this important weekly communal gathering. Fellowship hall is our main meeting location where many events throughout the year now become accessible to all.

**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.**

Our church does not have a great deal of conflicts. However if there is an issue it is handled at the council and congregation meetings.

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

*Rev. William Hamel, Sr. - 1988 - 1997*

*Rev. Eric Anderson, Interim - 1997 to 2000*

*Rev. Janet St. Cyr, Interim - 2001*

*Rev. Stanley Youngberg - 2001 - 2006*

*Rev. Ron Rising, Interim - 2006 - 2007*

*Rev. Dr. Gregory E. Dawson - Dec. 2007 - Jan. 2013*

*Rev. Edward F. Cornell, III - interim - Feb. 2013 - 2015*

*Rev. Allyson Glass - 2015 - 2022*

*Rev. Tammy Theis-Satterlee - Bridge Pastor - Oct. 2022 to present*

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev. David Bell, Minister of Music	4	Yes
Ashley Adams, Director of Faith Formation	3	No
Kat Bogie, Office Administrator	1	N/A
Rev. Tammy Theis-Satterlee, Bridge Pastor	8 months	No

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

Our congregation has proven to have good relationships with our previous ministers.

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

Yes, but not with recent ministers during the last decade.

**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**

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**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?*

During the past year, our congregation has been very active in both our immediate and greater community. We have provided support in different means to the following organizations and groups.

- Local Food Banks
- Spooner House Meals
- Blessings Pantry
- One Great Hour of Sharing
- Umbrella Group for Domestic Violence

- Citizen's Fire Department
- TEAM inc. Heifer Project
- Cheers (Brian's Bags)
- Veterans
- Local Diaper Bank
- Home for the Brave

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

Past ministers have played an active role in the historic CT conference and now in the SNEUCC. Naugatuck Valley Association and now currently with the New Haven Association. We also participate yearly in the One Great Hour of Sharing.

**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](http://ucc.org).) Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.**

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

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

N/A

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

The highlight of our inter-denominational activities is the "Along the Road" services that occur during lent. This includes a soup dinner and prayer service on a weeknight that takes place at a different church each week.

**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 is to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ through worship, fellowship, and service. We feel strongly that all of the activities that church members participate in are rooted in one of the 3 pillars of our mission.

**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?**

Community ministry is certainly an expectation for a new minister. Over the past few years, the scope of community ministry has been a steadily growing facet of our mission. We would like to see this continue in creative and novel opportunities as we move forward.

#### **4b. MISSION InSite**

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

We have many active members that live in other towns and within Seymour that are not in the 2.5 mile radius that the report is generating data. As we reflect on our congregation membership, one opportunity that we feel revealed itself is to attract more membership from within the immediate vicinity of the church.

**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 membership closely reflects the Mission Insite report. It states that nearly 85% of the surrounding community is white with a population of approximately 10% hispanic/latino and less than 2 percent of the other races.

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

Our ministry is continually shaped by the ever-evolving needs of the community. As an example, there is an ever-increasing population of financially challenged and unhoused individuals and families within our community and our ministry seeks creative opportunities to assist them. For example, we hosted a “50’s Family Fun Night” that collected items such as diapers, socks, t-shirts, underwear, and money that was dispersed to local organizations.

Our ministry is also shaped by our involvement in community events. During the annual Memorial Day parade in town, we provide complimentary hot dogs and water on our lawn. This year we served over 500 hot dogs to the participants. Our back parking lot serves as the location for our weekly farmers market. We also host acapella youth groups for free concerts multiple times a year in the Sanctuary. We also donate facility resources for the Seymour Pink Race for the Cure.

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

People in our community recognize our church as the “pierogie” church. For many years, until the covid shutdown, we made and sold thousands of pierogies during lent. People would come to our church from great distances to buy our pierogies. It was our major fundraiser.

In the 1980s, we began holding a fantastic Snowflake Fair in November. It was attended by many people from the community. When we first started having the fair, all goods were made by the congregation; but, for the last few years, we rented tables to crafters. Our lunch service and tag sale table were favorites. This too stopped due to covid.

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

New people often mention how welcoming the church is. It is often referenced as feeling like a family and it is this feeling that leads them to take a larger part in the involvement of the church.

## **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**

Frederick D. Stanek, Esq , Church’s Attorney



481 Oxford Road, Oxford, CT 06478

203-881-3603

fstanek@tsattorneys.com

May 22, 2023

To Whom It May Concern

RE: Seymour Congregational Church

Dear Sir/Madam

**TELEPHONE: 203-925-3000**

I am a lifelong resident of Seymour living and working with many of the parishioners of the Seymour Congregational Church. I have served as the attorney for the Seymour Congregational Church for at least the last 25 years. I also served on the Seymour Board of Education for 32 years and I am presently a member of the Seymour Board of Selectpersons. The Seymour Congregational Church is an icon in our community as a congregation of caring and involved individuals. The Church reaches out to the community with many functions and activities involving the public and assists people in need. The church building itself is truly a landmark in our community.

While I am not a parishioner of the Seymour Congregational Church, I have attended funeral services and I have found that the same are very moving spiritually and certainly extend the reach of God to those who have lost a loved one. If I were not a member of another religion, I would choose the Seymour Congregational Church as the congregation where I would wish to be a member to worship and to be involved with wonderful, caring people.

I also must state that the prior minister was very helpful to me 3 + years ago after my wife passed away. She had also lost her husband several years earlier. She was able to help me focus on a life without my beloved spouse given her kind and gentle disposition, her ministry and her personal experience. She truly reached me at a time when I did not know how I would go on.

If I may be of any further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,  
Frederick D. Stanek

FDS/ekd

## **REFERENCE 2**

Franklin Hull, Funeral Director

161 W. Church St., Seymour, CT 06483

203-888-2538

Franklynhull@zohomail.com

## **REFERENCE 3**

Carl Miller III, Funeral Director

260 Bank St., Seymour, CT 06483

203-888-2021

[www.millerwardfuneralhome.com](http://www.millerwardfuneralhome.com) funeral director

## **PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES**

**Describe some areas of strength in this church's ministry.**

**Describe some areas for improvement in this church's ministry.**

**Describe a significant experience you have had of this church's ministry.**

**Anything else you wish to share.**

### **Reference # 1**

I am responding to a request from Karen Baker with respect to the Church's Search Committee, and please understand that my remarks are purely my opinion based on personal observations.

Response to question 1:

I feel that the church has many areas of strength in it's ministry in our community. I continually see signage out front for various programs and functions which the church sponsors. Typically I see these signs during many religious holiday events directed toward community outreach which could easily translate to evangelism for the body of the congregation. The church has also been supportive to our Veteran's with what I'll call their Flags of Honor displayed on the front lawn as well during Memorial Day festivities. In my experience as a local funeral director, I find the church to be very open to assisting grieving families in a positive and healing manner. Additionally, during the Pandemic era, they stepped up with online streaming of services to minister to those who were isolated from their church. It would not be difficult to mention the positivity this church exudes to our community, and truly is a beacon for Christian outreach.

Response to question 2:

Honestly, the church always seems to me to be on an accurate path with all they do and provide to the community. I don't believe I can comment on improvements from my perspective.

Response to question 3:

There have been many funerals we have had the honor and privilege to assist celebrate at the church. One funeral in particular, was there was an individual who was a victim of murder in the community. The church stepped up to allow this family to have their loved ones wake in the sanctuary of the church. This is significant because it was not a common event to have a wake in the church proper. The congregation simply embraced the grieving family, and assisted our firm in a non-intrusive way which really made for a very meaningful transition for the family and friends of this individual.

Response to question 4:

I am honored to say that my wife and I have made numerous friends at this church, and continue to embrace and foster the many friendships made. On a professional level I have, what I feel has been an excellent relationship with the various clergy I've had the honor of working with over the past 42 years of my career as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these questions, and I wish you the best in your search. God bless.

Sincerely,

Franklyn E. Hull

Ralph E. Hull Funeral Home

161 West Church Street

Seymour, CT

## **Reference 2**

The church has a strong faith based ministry. The previous ministers of the church always reached out to those in need, especially at times during the loss of a loved one. The presence of the ministry has always been of the utmost importance, a few examples : supportive of the community activities such as the Seymour-Oxford Food Bank, as well as local community events. I see no need for improvement. The experience with the church's ministry has always been a positive and welcoming one. We had in our care the father of a church member's father. The church was so gracious to allow us to use the church for the wake and the funeral service. We were welcomed by church members to assist us as ushers and provide us with anything we might need. Such a warm congregation and that is a reflection of a positive ministry one that should be continued for years to come. In closing, the members of the Seymour Congregational Church are faithful to their religion and church. The congregation is so supportive of the church and so willing financially to keep the church updated and provide other necessities for the daily running of the church, that all stems from a strong based ministry.

Carl J. Miller, III

## **6. CLOSING THOUGHTS**

### **a. CLOSING PRAYER**

## **b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT**

## **c. CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION**

### **6a. CLOSING PRAYER**

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*What we pray for our minister is:*

*Guidance - for the paths you will daily follow*

*Wisdom - for the counsel you are asked to give*

*Compassion - for those you are called upon to help*

*Strength - for what is true, even when there is opposition*

*Courage - to press on, even when things seem routine*

*Perseverance - to follow the desires God has place in your*

*heart, even when you doubt*

*What we will give to our minister is: Support for your leadership*

*Appreciation for your calling and gifts*

*Thanks for the person you are in Christ*

### **6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT**

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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.

## **6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION**

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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:** *The Rev. Margret Hofmeister*

**Name / Title:** Rev. Margret Hofmeister, Area Conference Minister, Southwest Region, SNEUCC

**Email:** hofmeisterm@sneucc.org

**Phone:** 860-761-7198

**Date:** June 27, 2023

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***