

ST. LUKE UCC PROFILE 2023

St. Luke United Church of Christ is a welcoming, faithful, and mission-oriented congregation that is seeking a half-time designated term pastor who will share our joys and sorrows and share Christ's love and compassion with our church family as well as others in our community, nation, and world. We are also seeking a pastor who will help us grow in our faith and encourage us to continue to be faithful witnesses to the Gospel in today's world. Under our new pastor's leadership, and with the help of God, we hope to grow our community of faith.

St. Luke UCC is located in Burlington, a community on the Mississippi River in southeast Iowa. Burlington is within four hours of major cities such as St. Louis MO, Des Moines, IA, and Chicago, IL, and is only an hour south of the Quad Cities. Burlington is home to a regional medical center, and in addition, there are opportunities to participate in sports and attend concerts and other civic activities.

St. Luke was founded in 1877 to minister to German immigrants who had moved to the south side of Burlington and lacked a place of worship. Over the years, we have sent seven St. Luke sons into the ordained ministry. Although we have never been a large congregation, we have been a mission-oriented church. We participate in many mission projects and activities. On the local level, our church supports the Burlington area Paint-A-Thon and rings bells for the Salvation Army during the Christmas season. We have special mission collections during all 5 Sunday months. We donate to the community food pantry, give school supplies, hats, mittens, and gloves to the local school district, and donate to the local animal shelter. In addition, we have given money to hospice, the homeless shelter, the Transitions program that assists homeless people in Southeast Iowa and Hope Haven, which is a community resource for disability services and advocacy. We also have a children's fund for students in the Burlington and West Burlington school districts. This fund provides medical supplies, medical care, clothing, and shoes to low-income students.

Nationally and globally, we have helped people when natural disasters occur. We set up an endowment to a leprosarium in India which feeds people with leprosy and their children once a year. We are also a 5 for 5 congregation, and in 1987 became a Just Peace church.

However, we are currently struggling with maintaining attendance and membership. We currently have no members under the age of forty, which is a serious concern. We are open to exploring options for attracting younger people and families to our church. Currently, we have a membership of approximately fifty, which includes our homebound and out of town members.

Because we are seeking a half-time pastor, we are very cognizant of the time constraints and the need for boundaries that benefit both the church and pastor. We are seeking a pastor who is caring, empathetic, and accepting of diverse people. We are also looking for a pastor who possesses effective communication skills and has the ability to work well with others, a pastor who prepares and leads Sunday worship including scripture, crafting of liturgy and bulletins, and sermon preparation. We also need our pastor to conduct weddings, funerals, and other special services. We seek a pastor who will provide pastoral care and visit members who are homebound, in the hospital, or in care centers in collaboration with lay people, and who will participate in wider church activities such as conference and association meetings as time permits. Our new pastor needs to be aware of our community needs and be supportive of our current mission outreach. We also welcome new opportunities to widen our missions to other

needs of our community, nation, and world.

Because of the time constraints that half-time pastors have, the congregation understands that we will have to assist the pastor in the operation of the church. We are willing to assist in providing pastoral care to our members and are also willing to assist the pastor with planning the worship service when needed. In the absence of a pastor, the congregation has experimented with other options in lieu of a traditional sermon. We have had interactive Bible commentary on select scripture, watched short videos that expand on our Scripture readings, and hope to incorporate more technology such as You Tube clips in our worship services. In addition, in the absence of a pastor, our lay members have taken the initiative in planning and executing worship services. In cases of inclement weather, the church has operated a phone tree that informs members of a cancellation.

In regard to compensation, we will observe the 2023 Compensation Guidelines of the Iowa Conference UCC as it pertains to ministerial salaries and benefits. Our church is currently self-supporting, and we do have an endowment fund which we have used for church improvements as well as covering any shortfalls to the budget. The church council will negotiate the appropriate pay package in regard to salary and benefits that will benefit our new pastor as well as our congregation.

In conclusion, we believe that God is calling us to continue to be a faithful and caring congregation proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. We also believe that God is calling us to grow our spiritual life through Bible study and collaborating with various communities locally, nationally and globally.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Our Heavenly Father,

Lead us on the journey to find the pastor You have chosen to lead us. Open all of our hearts to discern and accept Your will for our church in order for us to continue to be faithful witnesses to You. May our new pastor help us to renew our church and enable us to seek new possibilities while continuing the work begun by our forefathers and foremothers.

In Jesus' name we pray,

AMEN!

After church on Easter Sunday

Current church building

REFERENCES

REFERENCE 1

Rev. Craig U. Blaufuss/Pastor/First Congregational UCC
(515) 297-4316
revcraigblaufuss@wmtel.net
Son of the congregation

REFERENCE 2

Rev. Kurt Schaller Blaufuss/Senior Pastor/ St. Peter UCC, Washington, MO
(440) 668-0210
ksblaufuss@hotmail.com
Son of the congregation

REFERENCE 3

Robert Green/Retired Teacher/Galesburg, IL
(309) 337-6773
rbgreen8181@gmail.com
Past member