

Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE



The new Local Church Profile is not just for congregations in search of a pastor. *All* congregations are encouraged to engage in its process of discovery every 3-5 years. The UCC Local Church Profile reflects valuable data, assesses ministry, clarifies change, and helps advance the calling of the congregation. Not just to be completed by a search committee – the more participation, the better!

MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

**First Congregational United Church of Christ
Waterloo, Iowa**

Full-Time Settled Minister

Iowa Conference of the United Church of Christ

08/14/23

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

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- Who Is God Calling Us To Become?
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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)*

INSTRUCTIONS

The new Local Church Profile supports the calling and discernment of United Church of Christ congregations with their current or future pastoral leadership.

For many congregations, the interim time between ministers is an intentional season that is guided in part by the preparation of a Local Church Profile. Using the Profile, the church can discover its data and express its story for the reliable discernment of a search committee and the beginning of a new pastorate. Searching ministers will want to see this document in its entirety.

The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – WHO ARE WE NOW, WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR, and WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years. Known together as the "Discovery Document," these three sections can be completed by a visioning group, a governing body, a transition team, or other group – not just the search committee – in order to draw forward the gifts and imaginative possibilities of a congregation. The church's engagement with the "Discovery Document" might not have the same sequence as the completed Local Church Profile that is read by candidates.

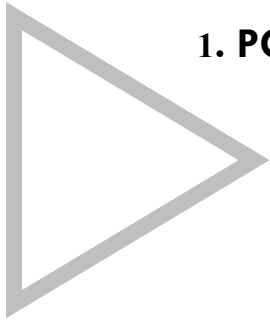
Some questions are easy to answer. Some are not so easy. Prompts are provided to stimulate narrative response if needed; these italicized prompts are merely examples from which to choose or to inspire your own. Efforts to answer the questions will prompt conversations and explorations and story-tellings and many prayers. As the Spirit moves throughout the process, congregations will shape a collective articulation of Christ's leading (WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME). This last question to be answered becomes the first section to be read by searching ministers in the Local Church Profile, and it is boldest and most actionable piece for faithful leadership into the future.

Your conference can provide materials referenced in the Local Church Profile, such as the 11-Year Report containing data as reported by your congregation annually to the UCC Data Hub, and MissionInsite reports containing demographic information on your community. More information on types of pastorate in the United Church of Christ can be found in the Call Agreement Workbook. Be sure to use the Call Agreement Workbook's Scope of Work to describe in this Local Church Profile the position being sought.

When it is time for ministerial search, the conference can counsel you on posting the Local Church Profile together with your public listing at UCC Ministry Opportunities (<http://oppsearch.ucc.org>).

The last page of the Local Church Profile contains a statement that parallels the consent statement signed by ministers in the UCC Ministerial Profile. In keeping with the covenantal relationship between a church and those it seeks to call, this statement encourages an open, honest exchange of information. On behalf of the United Church of Christ, and on the basis of

the best knowledge available to them, your conference staff will validate your completed Local Church Profile when it is ready to be shared in relationship with prospective new leaders.



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: 608 West Fourth Street, Waterloo, Iowa 50702

Supplemental web links: www.firstcongucc.org

<https://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa>

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

Conference: Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota Conferences of the UCC

Association: Northeast Iowa Association

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

Jonna Jensen

Association Conference Minister

563-357-7287

jonna@ucctcm.org

or

Jane Estrada

Administrative Support

Jane@ucctcm.org

605-774-3530

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?

There is a beautiful clay jar in Waterloo, Iowa. It is a venerable old red brick vessel in with towering stained-glass windows, a 52-rank Reuter pipe organ, and a recently remodeled interior. But the beauty of this earthen vessel pales next to the treasure within. This treasure is the faith, love, and inspirational strength of members of the First Congregational United Church of Christ. Enabled by God, this treasure resides in five valuable pieces of our church life.

One piece is a strong music tradition with chancel, youth, and bell choirs, appearances in worship services for local musicians from the University of Northern Iowa and our neighboring community, and a free-to-the-public concerts featuring both local artists and invited guests.

Another piece is a strong and abiding commitment to mission in the neighborhood where the church is located and beyond. Our congregation serves an array of causes including a neighborhood pantry, , volunteering at the Northeast Iowa Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, participation in Love In the Name of Christ (Love INC), and assistance to Grin & Grow Child Care Center (childcare for low-income families). We participate with Habitat for Humanity builds within our neighborhood. We have also sponsored disaster relief close to home and far away both with money and with labor.

A third piece is our promise to our youth to support opportunities for growth spiritually, educationally, and in leadership. We offer scholarships, stipends for leadership opportunities, and church internships.

Yet another piece is a history of fiduciary stability offered by a generous congregation, balanced budgets, and a handsome endowment which buoys us in troubled times and permits us freedom to explore new ventures in others.

And the fifth piece is the broad reach of this congregation with travels to an Abbey in Iona, Scotland, a sister church in Bremen, Germany, a pulpit exchange with Bury, England, and a long-term investment in bettering the lives of 'Children of the Dump' in Nicaragua.

The treasure in this clay jar is searching for a spiritual leader. We would like this leader to help us deepen our faith, strengthen our numbers, and examine greater advocacy. We humbly, but proudly, ask those interested to set aside some quality time for study of our profile.

Photographs:

Insert 1 – 3 images of your church, its people, its parsonage or building or gathering space, etc.



Front of the church facing east on West Fourth Street



Church sanctuary early Easter morning



Grin & Grow Child Care graduation

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

The Cedar Valley is rich in many ways, but most importantly, it is a welcoming, friendly place to live. There is something special about proximity to a good university (<https://www.uni.edu>). We enjoy a continuing stream of world class theatre, fine musicians, and dance troupes in our beautiful performing arts center (<https://www.gbpac.com>). Our cost-of-living index is blessedly low, and our internet access speed is blazingly high. We are a Blue Zones community (<https://www.bluezonesproject.com>), which cherishes wonderful outdoor recreation areas that have miles of beautiful bike trails, lakes and rivers for fishing and boating, and great parks. We are thankful for the four genuine seasons in Iowa and the opportunities each offers us.

Current size of membership:

- 277 confirmed members
- 112 active members
- 750 people we connect with

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

English is the sole oral language of our ministry

Position Title: Settled

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*):

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Our support package closely follows the UCC Iowa Conference guidelines. Health insurance coverage has taken different forms depending on the senior minister's family and spousal situation.

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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

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. A theologically and intellectually strong worship leader who inspires us to deepen our faith, who embraces our tradition of worship, while being inventive and original with sermons, special services, and creative pieces during worship.
2. A discerning person with initiative and vision, who is organized, collaborative, and who is motivated to lead and grow our congregation toward the future.
3. A relatable and compassionate person who connects well with the congregation and wider community, building relationships and a sense of community.

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis *(from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance)*: \$

Salary will be determined according to Iowa UCC guidelines based upon 51-100 average worship attendance and the skills, education, and experience of the pastor. These guidelines are for a senior or solo pastor, our proposed position.

Housing allowance (non-taxable) is included as part of the package and is based upon UCC guidelines and the average of housing cost in Waterloo and Cedar Falls. The proposed salary range of cash salary plus housing allowance is \$67,627 to \$82,140.

Benefits *(choose one)*:

Salary plus Benefits includes annuity, health, dental, and possibly vision insurance, Social Security offset, life and disability insurance, and worker's compensation. Benefits also include paid vacation and days off, business travel expense reimbursement, financial and leave provisions for civic service and continuing education events, and professional expense reimbursement.

What is the expected living situation for your next minister *(e.g. parsonage, living nearby with a housing allowance, living elsewhere to commute as needed)*?

The preference is that the minister live within the Waterloo/Cedar Falls community with a housing allowance.

Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister.

The Waterloo/Cedar Falls area has a wide range of housing options available, all within a twenty-minute commute to the church building. Most hospitals, hospice homes, and assisted living facilities are within this area, which may be places that the minister would be expected to visit regularly. Most church members also live within this 20-minute commute area from the church. There are several neighborhood churches and schools in the area. Many non-profit organizations are housed within the Cedar Valley.

State any incentives (*e.g. school debt reduction or retention bonus after a certain number of years in position*):

Possible incentives for negotiation: phased education debt reduction, retention bonus, Sabbatical leave, costs for spiritual direction, and others.

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

The next minister of First Congregational United Church of Christ will find professional support, accountability, and growth in the Iowa, Nebraska, & South Dakota UCC Conferences. Also, the Northeast Association of the Iowa Conference meets regularly in both onsite and web-based formats. The Conference also provides a robust network of support and intentional mentoring for pastors. Pastors from Waterloo and Cedar Falls also have opportunities to meet regularly for interdenominational connection through neighborhood clergy gatherings.

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

Not applicable. We are searching for a full-time minister.

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.

First Congregational has a strong and active core of members. We care deeply about the church and work to support it and its mission. As we look to our future, we want to continue to do those things we do well. But we also want to adapt to the needs of our current faith body and the outside community, both in our neighborhood and beyond. We are looking for someone who will provide high quality and genuine pastoral care and visitation to those in the congregation who are in need. We want our pastor to help us continue to grow in faith, mission, outreach, advocacy, and numbers. We value someone who is theologically strong and principled, preaches the Word, is attuned to issues of the day, is committed in personal faith, and leads us to grow in our faith. We value young people and want to find ways to better minister to them. A pastor who is warm, enthusiastic, innovative, creative, outgoing,

and enjoys youth and young families can help us broaden our approach and ministry. We have an aging population whom we value and would like to continue to care and minister to them with sensitivity and empathy.

We would like our next minister to be a sound administrator, be fiscally responsible, and be a team leader and team player. We want someone who helps us not just survive the downward trend in organized religion in our society but helps us in our outreach to others. As we grow in faith and numbers, we want to continue to find ways to minister to the outside community, including our immediate neighborhood. Our members are community minded and service oriented, we tend to be generous in our charity to others, and we want to continue in this caring spirit. To do this, we are looking for a leader who can challenge us to “be a light in the darkness” to the world around us.

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

Our new minister will be a leader in our church family. We need someone who understands and shares the general vision we have toward diversity, growth, youth, and mission and can help us focus our vision and define it through action and advocacy. We also need someone who can acknowledge and appreciate changes happening all around us and translate the challenge of these changes into the excitement of opportunity.

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

We are currently primarily an English-speaking congregation but would be open to a candidate who is fluent in other languages. The Cedar Valley has been home to Hispanic, Bosnian, Burmese, and Congolese immigrants. We are open to providing outreach and worship to those of other languages/cultures and welcome leadership in that arena.

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.

- 1) Understanding the power of the Holy Spirit at work through the elements of Christian worship to nurture faith. Worship is the core gathering of our Church Family and central to our life as a congregation. We prefer that a specific message be woven through each worship service, crafted by spoken words, music, silence, lighting, visuals, and ritual to provide a meaningful worship experience for all those attending. We want to be culturally sensitive and accessible to those new to the church as well as those who are lifelong members.
- 2) Exhibiting a commitment to the core values of the UCC: continuing testament, extravagant welcome, and changing lives. The values of the UCC allow us to be a congregation with differing backgrounds, differing political views, differing personal beliefs, and differing lifestyles ... all centered on Jesus Christ and His teachings. Our welcoming spirit is not just to make visitors feel comfortable ... it is a value we treasure.
- 3) Empowering the Church to be faithful to God’s call, reflective of Christ’s mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit. We need a leader in our church family. We need someone to

share our vision and to help us maintain a motivated pursuit of our vision. We need someone with the spirit of discernment to take us there.

- 4) Providing hope and healing to a hurting world (by) Drawing on the ministry of Jesus Christ to confront injustice and oppression. These two go together. The gospel of Jesus Christ IS what provides hope and healing in our hurting world. The teachings of Jesus Christ should be our guide. We need someone who will show us the way to apply those teachings to make the world a better place ... to bring heaven to earth. Understanding community context and navigating change with a community. Our community is changing. Our neighborhood is changing. Our congregation is changing. Change is often difficult, but it is a fact, and it is necessary ... and change is good. Changes around us are an opportunity to make changes within us, to be better at being God's servants and delivering The Word.



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?

“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

We are a congregation that appreciates well-crafted worship services. We value traditional hymnody and classical music but appreciate services with different styles of music—bluegrass, jazz, contemporary praise songs, and music of other traditions such as Taizé. We have appreciated services that are based on the lectionary and those that are based upon a sermon theme. We value participation of congregants in the worship service, not only in leading but also co-creating liturgy for the day.

We are a welcoming and warm congregation. We are in a neighborhood that is in a historical part of Waterloo, with many churches within a few blocks and close to the downtown area. We are a generous church, giving of time, talents, and money to a variety of endeavors and missions, but God may be calling some of us to advocacy, to be more involved in addressing the cause and effects of injustice, and to express a clearer overall mission.

At present, we regularly engage in a substantial list of local missions. For example,

- 1) We rent most of our education wing to Grin & Grow Child Care Center (<https://www.grinandgrowchildcare.org>), which is a nonprofit childcare facility with a mission of providing quality affordable infant and preschool childcare to neighborhood families.
- 2) We have collaborated with Church Row Historic Neighborhood Association (an alliance of churches, businesses, and housing in our neighborhood) to create other ministries for our immediate neighbors such as rehabilitating houses for veterans. Currently, Habitat for Humanity has begun a several-year focus in our Church Row neighborhood which affords us many opportunities. We have

also collaborated with the Waterloo Commission on Human Rights and are exploring ways to extend this.

- 3) Members have been active with cooking and serving community meals, delivering Meals on Wheels, donating to and organizing a church food pantry, and contributing to a Deacon's Fund for those the pastor deems in need.
- 4) We have partnered with a local agency, Love INC, that partners churches together to meet tangible needs in the Cedar Valley.
- 5) We have purchased supplies and filled shoeboxes and tote bags for children and pregnant single mothers in Nicaragua.
- 6) We have provided support for House of Hope (a nonprofit organization that provide a home, a community, and a transformation for homeless, single-mother families and women ages 18-24 who age out of the foster care system).
- 7) We annually participate in Partners in Education by supporting and mentoring students at a local middle school.
- 8) Several of our church members serve as mentors for the Job Foundation, a financial education and mentoring program making a long-term investment in youth growing up in low-income households in Waterloo. The Job Foundation equips students with knowledge, tools, and assets to become financially independent adults. Our church provides space for their educational meetings and use of our church van for transporting students.
- 9) Groups of church volunteers have been assisting monthly at the local food bank.

We are committed to our continued support of the fine arts and quality music, another type of mission to our community—such as hosting a fine arts series each year, as well as workshops about worship, drama, and the creative arts. We have had mission projects in our community and various locations around the country for youth and adults, and believe God is calling us to continue and expand this work. Our youth would like more opportunities for mission as well as time together. We have discussed the possibility of extending our outreach to the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls by collaborating with Threehouse, a faith-based community. Our church has provided programs for youth beyond our church walls and would like to do more in the future. We have hosted a summer youth fine arts camp as an act of hospitality and a way of reaching out to youth with special interests. It was a successful method of promoting connection through a small group experience, based on interests in drama and fine arts.

In addition to hosting classes for the Job Foundation, we host Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Al-Anon, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Black Hawk County, and a Girl Scout troop. We also welcomed a Burmese Christian group to use our chapel for their worship for several months while they were in transition. We will continue opening our doors in hospitality for these and other support and service groups.

There are so many opportunities for mission and service in our community and beyond and we come together in worship to prepare ourselves in our development of faith so that we can reach out to others. God calls us to join in prayer and praise, in hearing the Word, and in service. We need each other. We believe that church is the setting where we learn to live the Christian life with each other so we can share it with others. Although we are a congregation with people of all ages, backgrounds, and socioeconomic levels, the barriers that separate us diminish as we worship and learn together. Our

time together in various forms of worship, teaching, dialogue, small groups, fellowship, eating, playing, and mission will continue to bind us together in love and grace.

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

For example, describe two experiments your congregation has initiated or engaged in the past year, what were the results and where do you see your next steps? Has your church had a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement; if so, where do you see that plan/vision taking you?

A big challenge we have faced and continue to face is dealing with COVID-19 and its lasting effects on the Church. Church attendance has diminished, and many people feel less connected and less involved post-COVID. During the worst of COVID, we had a reopening committee which met weekly to study the current rates of infection in our local area, particularly Black Hawk County, and made recommendations based upon these. Adaptations which allowed us to continue to worship and learn included use of YouTube for our weekly worship services as well as special pre-taped events (e.g., Church talent show, Christmas concert, Thanksgiving concert). Members participated in their own ways and shared their unique talents. We continue to use our church Facebook page currently for livestreams of our church service.

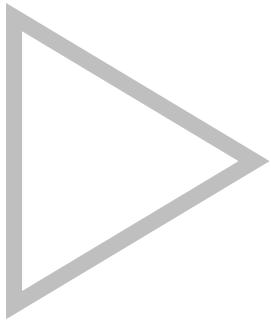
Our church family learned about video calls and became well-versed at Zoom. Over the course of the pandemic, we participated in a weekly Wednesday night social hour, Sunday morning after church virtual coffee, Friday afternoon gatherings with the minister, as well as a Sunday morning book study. Most of our church boards and committees held their meetings on Zoom. Our church-wide annual meetings were also conducted virtually on Zoom.

We also added outdoor worship into our rotation of options to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, but still allowed us to gather. We gathered at the Riverloop Amphitheater in Waterloo several times, as well as a local park and the church parking lot as weather allowed. This allowed for innovative new services, such as the blessing of the pets. We also were able to schedule 'Walk and Talks' with the minister to enjoy the beauty of God's nature and engage in conversation.

During the pandemic, our Board of Spiritual Life and Care provided support to members by sending cards and hand-delivering bags of candy and cookies to all our church members. Many church members made phone calls, zoom calls, and socially distant visits to others when we were unable to meet in person. Individual members offered classes, such as a Mindful Mandala workshop (offered by a church member who is a certified mindful art facilitator and a spiritual director).

We do not have a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement currently in place but would welcome this as an important part of the planning process with our new pastor.

3. WHO ARE WE NOW?



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

- a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS
- b. 11-YEAR REPORT
- c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS
- d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING
- e. CHURCH FINANCES
- f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation’s life of faith.

For example, what beliefs and commitments are stated in your congregation’s purpose statement or membership vows? How is God most often described in worship liturgy? In what ways would you describe the Holy Spirit in your midst?

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

Statement of Faith

We covenant with one another to walk together as partners in the common life of this church. We acknowledge a faith that seeks to know and respond to the Word and Will of God, made known and to be made known. We acknowledge a fellowship that strives to realize acceptance and love, in accordance with the example of Jesus Christ. We acknowledge a mission that aspires to serve the community and world, empowered as in the past by the Spirit of peace and harmony. In support of this covenant, we pledge our fellowship and prayers, our participation, and resources, as we share in the hopes and labors of this family of God’s people.

Our Why Statement

In November 2019, members of the congregation were invited to deliberate “why” the First Congregation United Church of Christ of Waterloo exists today and why church members worship there. The Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center facilitated this activity. Participants shared their most meaningful moments as related to these *why* questions, then generated a single statement that embodied best the sentiments shared. Here is that statement:

*“To embody and share God’s love
so all experience faith, hope, and joy in
community where love is made actual.”*

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

The members of First Congregational UCC are our major strength. We are a competent, committed people who care about each other, have many personal skills, and utilize these for the benefit of the congregation and community. Besides bringing a variety of interests, talents, and gifts to the congregation, we are welcoming to others. Visitors and new members regard our congregants as warm and genuine.

Our church members have varied backgrounds and opinions, and we tend to be cautious regarding topics about which there is controversy. We strive to be respectful and appreciative of our differences. We are supportive of each other, we communicate readily, and approach problems promptly and directly. Many members serve on boards and committees in the church and are active participants in activities throughout the year. As we move forward with new leadership, we hope to continue building on this respect and appreciation of our differences. Using our common trust and faith in God and the desire to serve others in the community and the world, we feel we are stronger together than we are alone. We look forward to sharing the journey with our new minister, the staff, the congregation, and our community.

The congregation is responsive to needs of the church and needs of others. When the call goes out for help of some sort or another (e.g., volunteering for meals-on-wheels, serving community meals, serving food for funerals, assisting needs of other church members with rides, visits, attending when sick, etc.), our church members respond willingly and faithfully.

In addition, the members of the congregation are generous givers. We have had the discipline to operate with a balanced budget for the past eight or nine years. We have had several successful capital campaigns ranging from fixing the roof and re-plastering/painting the interior to restoring stained glass and redoing the sound system.

First Congregational United Church of Christ has a strong commitment to supporting music and the arts as they are such an essential part of worship and the life of the church. There is a handsome budget to care for the maintenance and upkeep of our musical instruments; a 52-rank pipe organ, several pianos, and five octaves of handbells; and for purchasing music. We have a part-time director of music and part-time organist on staff, both of whom are skilled and devoted musicians. The church offers stipends for chancel choir section leaders from the local university, who also assist with ringing bells in the bell choir. We offer free concerts as part of our Fine Arts series. We have sponsored community choir festivals led by well-known composers and directors, organ recitals, classical folk and jazz concerts, speakers, drama, poetry, and a hip-hop literacy group.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

For example, where does worship take place, and what is it based around? What was a recent baptism like? What are some words used to describe good preaching?

Our morning worship begins with greeters and ushers at entryways to the sanctuary, greeting members and guests and handing out bulletins. Congregants tend to greet each other upon arrival and engage in heartfelt conversations until the prelude begins at 10:30. A typical service begins with a welcome, a call to worship, and an invocation offered by a lay worship leader. Announcements remind the congregation of mission opportunities, church and community events, and upcoming meetings. The segment of Joys and Concerns offers an opportunity for members of the congregation to participate personally, sharing celebrations and asking for prayers. This is followed by Prayers for the People and the Lord's Prayer. A children's message or Mini-Message is included, delivered by either our youth leader or a volunteer from the congregation. The scriptures typically follow the lectionary

calendar. The sermon, which is referenced in biblical texts, is delivered by the minister. A typical service also includes two or three hymns, special music, a choral anthem, and postlude. One notable feature of these services is that the theme unites the call to worship, the sermon, the biblical texts, the children's message, and the music. There is a gathering space in the library area outside of the sanctuary where coffee and treats are served following the worship service. Members of the congregation tend to linger and enjoy each other's company during this portion of the morning.

Communion is typically offered on the first Sunday of each month and it features an open invitation. The elements are offered by intinction at the altar with the minister and three members of the Board of Spiritual Life and Care assisting. Communion can also be delivered to an individual in their pew if unable to receive communion at the front of the church.

The service is live streamed on Facebook and is also available for viewing later. Church members can post comments, prayer requests, and greetings online during the service.

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

For example, how are young people in leadership? How do people continue to form their faith over a lifetime? Name a topic studied or curriculum used recently; what was the impact of this study on those who attended?

The current curriculum for our youth programming is "Grow Kids and Grow Students". We have always been blessed by having salaried staff members who have served this function, albeit under a variety of titles, along with many volunteers from the congregation. Youth activities have included Sunday School on Sunday mornings before worship but have also included Sunday or Wednesday night sessions as well. The ebb and flow of our youth presence has had the largest impact on the programming offered. Currently, participation in our youth programs is small and we are hoping to rebuild our program and participation. As noted earlier, we value our youth and are interested in expanding the opportunities we give them. We are open to diverse ways of serving youth in our church and in the community. For several years we offered a Parabola youth group centered on drama to explore and communicate about life events. The Parabola program was successful and brought in many youths from outside our membership rolls. We are currently looking for new and innovative ways to encourage and involve the youth in our congregation and community and look forward to collaborating with the new minister in faith formation.

Our adult education programs have included Adult Sunday School before worship, Bible Study, and various small groups with common interests. The Adult Sunday School has declined in interest over the past decade, although we hope to re-invigorate our adult educational programs and groups. A small core of folks has been gathering once again this fall and currently utilizing a study called "Embracing a Life of Meaning" by Kathleen Norris. Prior to this, we held book discussions of various authors' works such as Marcus Borg, Chris Stedman, Barbara Brown Taylor, John Pavlovitz, and Molly Phinney Baskette. We also used the Adult Sunday School forum to invite many mission-oriented local charities to speak. Bible studies utilizing the Kyrygma program have been popular with members and non-members in the past.

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?

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

The Board of Trustees meets every other month for about 1 ½ hours per meeting. The specialized boards meet the opposite month at a Common Meeting, for about the same time. An endowment committee meets quarterly for about 1 ½ hours each meeting as well. There are other committees that meet from time to time. Business issues may be addressed in other ways than meetings, as necessary.

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

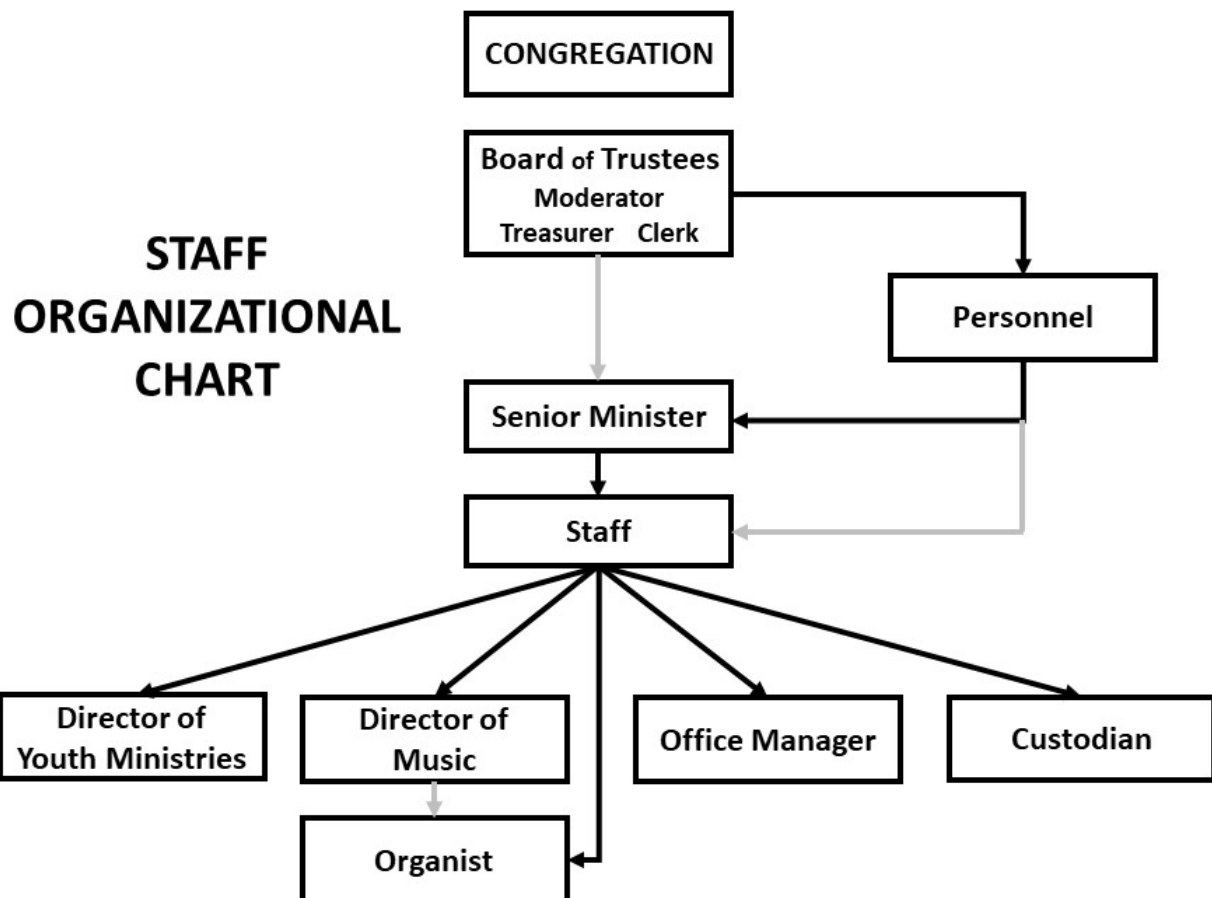
We have been fortunate not to be in this position often. We have had the boiler stop working in winter and had a water main break within the last few years. When this type of crisis occurs, the Board of Physical Resources chairperson typically steps in and takes charge of the situation. We have been blessed with capable staff and lay leaders who know the physical church well and react quickly and responsibly.

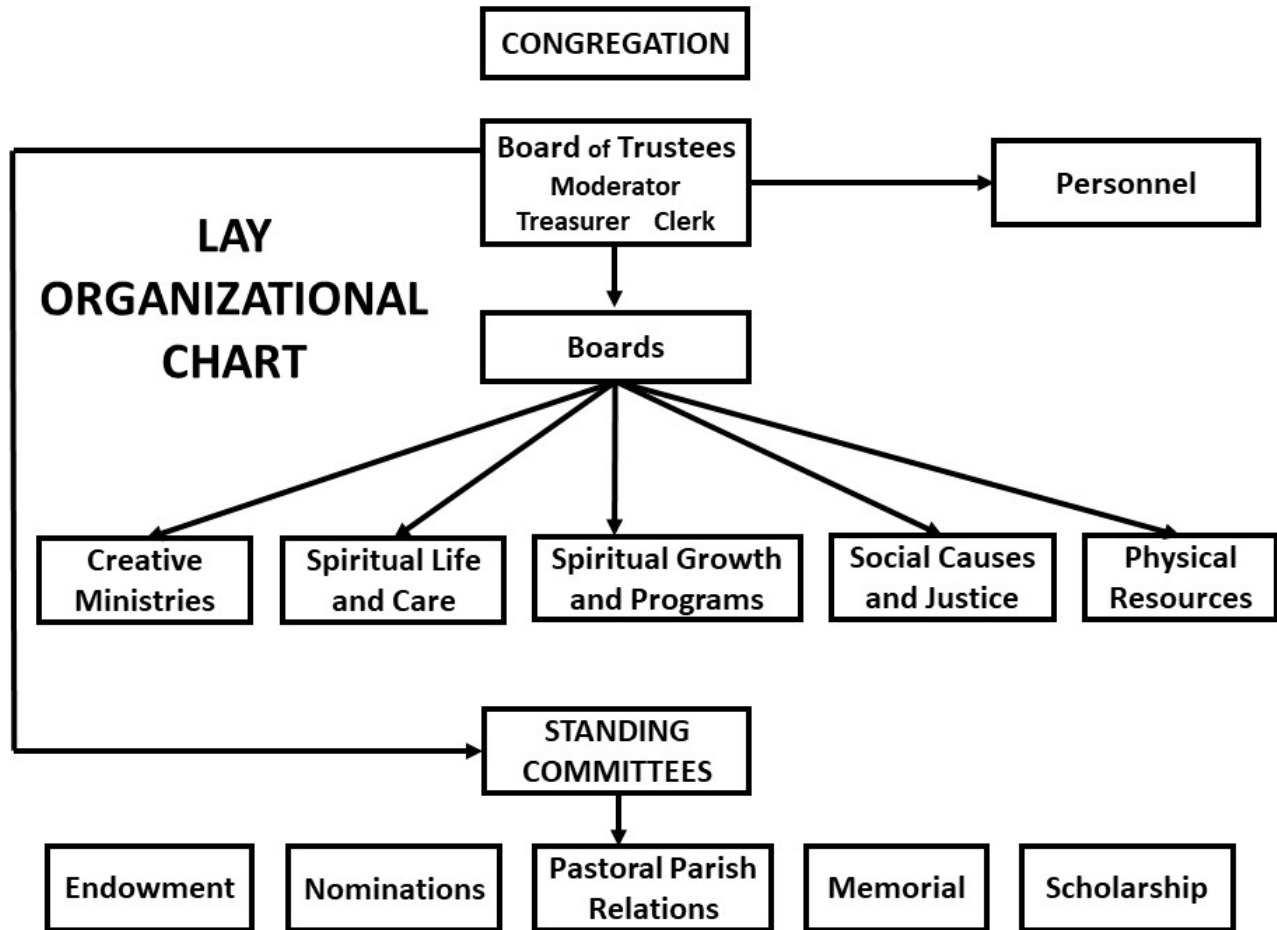
Recently we discovered that Grin & Grow Child Care Center was in severe financial distress. The church marshaled its resources to accomplish several goals in relation to this cause. We permitted them to use space in the church to move from two locations in the city to a single location at FCUCC. And we granted them grace on their rent for several months as we sponsored a concert (a part of our Community Concerts Series) with a free-will offering to offset the rent deficit. We also remodeled their kitchen, which had several shortcomings, as noted by the county health inspector. To continue their financial growth, we encouraged key individuals with valuable grant-writing experience to join their Board of Directors and help them secure critical grant support. We also formed an alliance of local churches to help support the staff of the center with luncheons during their professional training in-services. These steps were critical to assist the nonprofit community in virtually rescuing this 78-year-old-child care center and their mission to provide quality childcare to families, regardless of their ability to pay for it.

Our staff and congregation have also been aware of individuals and families in the neighborhood who have been in crisis and needed our assistance with food, shelter, household needs, etc., and have responded quickly and appropriately to their unique needs in a variety of ways. The Board of Spiritual Life and Care, the staff, or lay leadership are the typical lines of communication to relay needs to the appropriate resources. We have a special fund managed by our endowment committee that is designated for the needs of the elderly in our congregation and is utilized at the discretion of the pastor.

- 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, below we provide a flow chart of our organizational structure. Attached can also be found a copy of our By-Laws, our 2022 budget, and our most recent Annual Report.





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.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	112	
Number of active non-members:	14	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	126	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	78%	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	6%	
Less than 5 years:	16%	

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>
10	7	2	3	8	5	20	51	20	

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	4%	
Households with minors:	14%	
Single adults age 35-65:	8%	
Joint households with no minors:	63%	
Single adults over 65:	11%	

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	14%	Yes
College:	69%	Yes
Graduate School:	11%	Yes
Specialty Training:	6%	Yes
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	32%	Yes
Adults who are retired:	68%	Yes
Adults who are not fully employed:		Yes

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

Today's congregation has a rich workplace diversity: schoolteachers and professors, doctors and nurses, day care providers, food manufacturing industrial workers, construction management, small business owners, clerical support, theatre director, tractor manufacturing management, and librarian are only a sampling from the occupational range.

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?

Our congregation was exclusively Caucasian and mostly conservative, upper middle class for many decades. Today, while our congregation is still 98% white, we are blessed to have African American and Hispanic ethnicities represented. And as the congregation has evolved, we find ourselves more socio-economically diverse. Our open arms, open hearts, and welcoming presence are heart-felt traits we exercise happily.

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:

Our most recent conversation around diversity has been through the development of this document. We offered many different forums for our congregation members to voice their opinions, beliefs, and preferences concerning our church, where we have been, and where we should be going. One of many common themes was the appreciation of the diversity we have begun to experience over the past decade or so and the desire to expand and grow that diversity in our church family, in our mission work, and in the culture of our week-to-week church operation. We, as a congregation, are open to a wide diversity of members. While not racially or ethnically diverse currently, our congregation is quite diverse in other areas, such as family make-up (e.g., two parents, single parent, same-sex parents, intergenerational caregivers, several children, one child, etc.). We are also quite diverse in our religious background prior to membership at First Congregational, our political backgrounds and practices, and our involvement and interests in the community.

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	9	Minister
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	0	Minister/Family
Children's Groups or Classes	5	Director of Youth
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	50	Minister/Dir of Youth/Dir of Music/Organist/Lay leaders
Church-wide Meals	70	Lay leaders/congregation
Choirs and Music Groups	25	Dir of Music/Organist
Church-based Bible Study	5	Minister
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	50 per month	Minister/Deacons
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>	0	Minister/Dir of Youth
Drama or Dance Program	N/A	N/A
Funerals <i>(number last year)</i>	11	Minister/Family
Intergenerational Groups	0	Minister/Dir of Youth
Meals on Wheels	30	Lay leaders and volunteers
Outdoor Worship	45	Minister/Dir of Youth/Congregation
Prayer or Meditation Groups		Lay leaders
Public Advocacy Work	N/A	
Retreats	N/A	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community (Community book study, Interfaith council, Women of Faith)	10	Congregation members
Weddings <i>(number last year)</i>	0	Minister

Worship (time slot: 10:30)	60	Minister/Dir of Youth/Dir of Music/Organist/Lay leaders/Congregation
Worship (time slot: _____)	N/A	N/A
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	Minister/Dir of Youth
Youth Groups or Classes	6	Dir of Youth
Other		

Additional comments:

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).

We currently do not have any ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers in our congregation.

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
--				
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--				

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: N/A

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
Director of Youth	No	Part time	Minister	2 years

Director of Music	No	Part time	Minister	5 years
Office Manager	No	Full time	Minister	7 years
Organist	No	Part time	Minister	4 years
Custodian	No	Full time	Minister	5 years

REFLECTION

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

The ministry of our church is evolving. Those who have been members for decades like to reminisce about the way “it used to be.” These were the days when mainstream churches were full, folding chairs were set up on Easter and Christmas Eve, and the church activities were held often and were always well-attended. Our culture has changed dramatically during these past decades, and COVID fast-forwarded some most recent trends to a secularized society. We are challenged to find new ways to minister to our congregants and the wider community. We need to be relevant to our changing culture as we explore ways to be better advocates. We have always benefited from having a full staff, willing volunteers, and a mission-oriented congregation.

We hold dear the ministry delivered within our walls of our physical church, but also cherish the opportunities to help those outside our walls. We are evolving from simple support to advocacy for those in need. We are becoming more extroverted in our view of the world upon which we can have an impact. While worship will always be the focal point of our gathering, the idea of church ministry is evolving for us. We need a leader to bring our whole congregation along in our evolution.

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$259,308
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>)	\$70,954 (Memorial pledges)
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”</i>)	\$26,958 (Subsidies)
Fundraising Events	\$0
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$0

Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$12,840 Grin & Grow Child Care
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$0
Support from Related Organizations (e.g., Women's Group)	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$0
Other (specify): Parking Lot Rental	\$3,448
Other (specify):	\$0
TOTAL	\$373,508

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$366,200

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?

27% of the budget covers the costs associated with the minister alone 32% of the budget is used to cover senior minister and directors of youth

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

Never

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%*)

The budgeted OCWM support is calculated at 10 percent of the actual income received last year, excluding endowment support.

What is the church’s current indebtedness?

The church carries no debt. First Congregational United Church of Christ, Waterloo, also has a well-earned reputation for regularly paying its bills.

Are capital and other payments current?

Yes

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.

The Church currently has no building projects planned or underway.

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2011-2014	Renovation of library, roof repairs, boiler upgrades, initial stage of stained-glass window repair & cleaning.	\$180,000	\$180,000	Completed through congregational pledges and the endowment fund.
2016-2018	Final stage of stained-glass window repair, upgrade sound system	\$200,000	\$200,000	Completed through congregational pledges and the endowment fund.
2021-2023	Reuter organ maintenance & upgrade	\$345,000	\$325,000 (\$20,000 remain to be paid within two years)	Completed through congregational pledges and two large anonymous donations.

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

The Church has no capital campaigns underway or anticipated.

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

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

Our 52-rank Reuter pipe organ is 43 years old and is recognized as one of the finest organs in our community. Over the years, it has been used for many different local mission activities, including organ concerts, support of vocal concerts, and support of performing arts presentations. It has also been used by a local student mentoring program to give musically talented high school students the opportunity to play a pipe organ.

Does your church have an endowment?

Yes. The endowment is still receiving memorial gifts annually.

What is the market value of the assets?

\$1,696,416 as of 9/30/22. Current values have dropped from the original corpus, but we are hopeful of regaining its value of over \$2MM.

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

All three depending on the situation. The Endowment Committee oversees the management and distribution of funds.

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

2016: 10.5% 2017: 7.6% 2018: 8.7% 2019: 5.6% 2020: 6.2% 2021: 7.3%

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

Each year the endowment provides dollars in four areas of the budget:

- Memorial Pledges
- Capital needs
- Music Ministry
- Youth Ministry

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

It is difficult to determine especially in the current financial market. Our goal is to maintain the corpus so that it will continue to be a useful source of revenue for our congregation. There is an ongoing campaign to encourage endowment contributions.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates: N/A

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$ \$279,427

Outside of the general operating budget:

- Capital \$225,714
- Mission 20,497
- Memorial 18,435

- Deacons 7,211
 - Youth 7,570
- \$279,427

Mission dollars include Sunday School offerings which are kept separate from the Operating Budget and are used for specific projects. The projects are typically selected, promoted, and managed by the Sunday School classes. Past projects have included helping establish after-school programs in the country of Moldova and helping repair the roof on the Hospitality House, a shelter for the homeless in Waterloo, for example.

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 and separate two-stall garage

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.*)

- Office areas (Minister, Office manager, Director of Youth)
- Classrooms in the education wing (two stories)
- Chapel
- Library
- Nursery
- Sanctuary (including altar, pulpit, bell tables, and choir loft)
- Friendship room
- Lower-level lounge area
- Lower-level dining room
- Lower-level restrooms

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?

The church is fiscally responsible. For decades we operated annually with a deficit budget. Several years ago, we committed to operating with more accurate budget projections with the goal of creating balanced annual budgets. We have since been successful in accomplishing this. We also share the physical and fiscal resources we have toward the mission of other organizations.

The congregation has always met arising needs. It stands behind programming needs as well as brick and mortar needs. We understand the privileges and obligations we have.

The church has a long history of promoting and delivering to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) as we strongly support its work and mission.

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.

1. One change that has shaped our identity as a congregation is finding a meaningful way to share our physical space with Grin & Grow Child Care Center. We have been supportive over the years but have stepped up in recent years to help them overcome some significant financial struggles. We believe in their mission and want to support them. We see how their service is so essential to families in our community who are in need.
2. We have continued to shape our identity as a congregation that is community and mission oriented. Our annual Christmas bazaar is a specific example of this. Church members worked collectively to secure high quality silent auction items, sorted donated household goods, and elicited donations of baked goods. The bazaar provided a wonderful community shopping event, while displaying and selling our talented members' arts and crafts. The event brought the congregation together and culminated in an opportunity to raise money for local and worldwide mission projects.
3. Several years ago, our congregation decided to complete an extensive renovation of the church to improve the accessibility in and around the sanctuary, create more flexible use of the altar area, chancel and bell choir areas, organ, sound system, and lighting options. We have seen a significant improvement in the quality of the services and concerts in the sanctuary, and the renovations have allowed our church to use the sanctuary in a variety of ways not possible before, not only for worship but concerts, plays, presentations, weddings, and funerals.

4. The most important event in the life of our church in the past few years has been COVID-19. Being apart has affected so many of the traditions, activities, and programs that were in place prior to the pandemic. We have worked diligently to renew the sense of momentum and energy of our church family. We cared deeply for our church family during these challenging times and appreciate our blessings as we move forward.

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

For a variety of reasons, many of our boards and committees have gone through a period of declining enrollment and participation over the past two years. This, and cultural shifts have created changes for how these boards function. For example, the Board of Spiritual Life and Care now relies more heavily on members of the congregation to help with communion, after-service snacks, and visitations with members of the congregation. The Board of Social Causes and Justice organizes and promotes mission opportunities to the wider congregation rather than relying only on their own board to participate. We continue to explore new ways of serving based upon our members' skills, time, interests, and the community's needs.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. "Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement..." Describe your congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict. *For example, what is an example of a recent conflict and something your congregation learned from it? Describe an occasion when your church experienced conflict without being able to resolve it well. Does your church have policies, protocols or structures for dealing with conflict?*

The Grin & Grow Child Care Center had two sites in Waterloo, one of them located at our church since 2004. In recent years, the Center needed to consolidate their two sites into one. They moved their entire program to our church, transforming classrooms in our educational wing into their preschool rooms. These rooms were occasionally used by other church-related groups prior to Grin & Grow's expansion. This unfortunately meant the displacement of those groups to other areas of the church, leading to frustration and resentment. This has not been an easy issue to resolve since we want to continue to provide space and accommodations to the childcare center and also honor the work being done by our own groups of church members. We have tried managing this by updating the center's contract to clarify some ambiguous issues (such as use of rooms when the center is not in session), by ongoing conversations with church members affected (with various degrees of resolution), communicating with our liaison between the church and Grin & Grow more frequently, and by sharing more information with the congregation about our shared mission through various means. We continue to work toward more complete resolution.

Our church has a structure for dealing with conflict. We value open conversation and active participation between individuals or groups within the congregation who find themselves in difficult situations. If the conflict is between a member or group of the congregation and the minister, then the Pastoral-Parish Relations committee is designed to be a liaison and provides a forum for bringing topics of concern or disagreement to a conversation. The moderator, the executive committee, and the Board of Trustees can also be valuable assets for dealing with conflicts. If necessary, conferences ministers provide counseling for all parties involved and help to mediate and resolve conflicts.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Charles Jacobs	1941-1975	
James P. Kvetko	1976-1993	Y
Timothy Ensworth	1994-2018	Y
Scott Spence	2018-2020	Y
Bret Myers, designated interim	2020-2022	Y

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

We have learned that, as a church family, we can be proud of our history. Certainly, having only had five different people in the senior leadership role in more than three quarters of a century says something special about us. Our congregation and community have changed over those years. The change has been evolutionary, and our ministers have provided direction and support along the way. We have learned to embrace each other with grace and dignity as we navigate changes.

We have also learned how important pastoral care of our congregation is, and how much it strengthens connection, spiritual formation, and engagement within the congregation and community. We thrive under leadership that can balance pastoral care, preaching, and teaching. We have also learned that we need ministerial leadership that is energetic, approachable, authentic, and compassionate. We need a leader than can be a skillful administrator, as well as a spiritual leader. We need a leader that can communicate effectively with staff and members of the congregation in a variety of ways, has innovative ideas while honoring church traditions, has an interest in involving youth and can actively promote church growth. We also need a leader that is interested in creating relationships with other churches in our community.

We recognize we are seeking a variety of skills from one leader, but the important word is "leadership". We have a congregation that has many diverse skills--we are looking for someone to help us reengage and refocus our skills for the work of the church.

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

Ask us

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Yes

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

a. 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?*

Our church contributes generously and faithfully to Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM). The work of OCWM is shared with the congregation. Our Sunday School offering is typically designated for a specific cause, a goal is set, and the growth is tracked throughout the school year. Sometimes the funds are given for clean water for villages without a sustainable well. Sometimes for buying sheep and goats for families trying to make it on their own and feed their children. Whatever the cause, everyone in Sunday School learns about the topic during the year and reports to the congregation during worship. We feel it is important to make the children a part of the mission efforts.

Many in our congregation also support other activities in service and advocacy as part of the church, like serving community meals and delivering Meals on Wheels. Many members are also involved individually with other agencies in the community, such as the Cedar Valley Food bank, Habitat for Humanity, United Way, Boy Scout and Girl Scouts, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Black Hawk County, the Rotary Shoe Box project, The Job Foundation, student mentoring projects and other community service-club endeavors. Thus, members of our congregation tend to be connected to our community by engaging in civic activities that support a variety of community causes, not all directly church related. Recently, we began monthly volunteering as different church groups at the local Food Bank, and also assisted with a Habitat for Humanity build.

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

Our pastors have typically held positions on committees within the state UCC conference or area associations. Many congregation members have also taken part in committees and have also attended the annual state conferences. One of our younger members was awarded the UCC Disability Ministries award at the national UCC national convention in Hartford where he was also asked to speak.

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.

Accessible to All (A2A)

Creation Justice

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming | <input type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> God Is Still Speaking (GISS) | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Border and Immigrant Justice | <input type="checkbox"/> Other UCC designations: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M) | <input type="checkbox"/> Designations from other denominations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Just Peace | <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?

The lack of Xs in the blanks above should not be interpreted as apathy or disinterest in any of the important categories above. We believe and support the essence of everything above. As noted earlier, congregants are respectful of one another and tend to be cautious regarding issues where there are multiple opinions. In this current climate of polarization over political and social issues, we prefer to explore issues and build consensus rather than polarize our congregation.

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

During the past 5 years, our pastor conducted services in our sanctuary according to traditions of a variety of Christian denominations, including Lutheran, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Greek Orthodox faiths. The service representing the Baptist faith was an exchange where their congregation, which is primarily African American, visited our sanctuary "in mass," and they returned the invitation. Participation was high on both accounts.

We belong to the Church Row Historic Neighborhood Association. Church Row is a name given our neighborhood because of the many churches in the immediate geographical area. Church Row comes together for ecumenical services, specifically Good Friday and for other events. Church Row also shares mission work together for the immediate neighborhood and community. The neighborhood around Church Row has become much more diverse, both racially and economically, over the years. There is a high percentage of low-income families in sub-standard housing amongst the 1450 dwellings in the Church Row Neighborhood. We are exploring ways to partner with other agencies, such as Habitat for Humanity to address tangible and intangible needs.

We have shared music events and programs with sister churches in Cedar Valley, the University of Northern Iowa, the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony, and Cedar Valley Chamber Music.

Our church recently partnered with Waterloo Human Rights Commission, Jubilee United Methodist Church, the Freedom Center, Courtyard Marriot Hotel, and Waterloo's East High School to bring Ayanna Gregory to Waterloo. She is the daughter of civil rights activist, Dick Gregory, and she performed her one-woman show "Daughter of the Struggle" to a diverse crowd.

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.

“Drawn together by the Holy Spirit, we are a distinct and diverse community of Christians that come together as one church, joining faith and action. In covenant with the church in all its settings, we serve God in the cocreation of a just and sustainable world as made manifest in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Some of our mission work is weekly and some is done annually, and some is just ongoing. We have a generous congregation who supports our mission work willingly. We are feeling called to more advocacy for issues that affect our immediate community. Our missions are also trending to include more on-going work, in addition to single, specific project-oriented missions. The following list includes both types:

- Appalachian South Folklife Center
- Children of the Dump in Nicaragua
- Community Meals
- Church Row Neighborhood Association
- CROP Walk
- Grin & Grow Child Care Center
- Habitat for Humanity
- House of Hope
- Love INC
- Meals-on-Wheels
- One Great Hour of Sharing
- Partners-in-Education
- The Job Foundation

There are several other philanthropic activities and funds in which the church regularly participates. They include the following:

- Deacon's Fund: The congregation donates twice a year, at Christmas and Easter, to a special offering for the Deacon's Fund. These funds are used for local mission, emergency assistance, supplies for Love INC, and donations to other local service agencies.
- Mr. and Mrs. James H. Goodrich Endowment Fund: This fund, established through a generous bequest from Lucy Whitney Proctor, is used to assist elderly members of our own congregation.
- Neighbors in Need: This fund expresses the UCC's commitment to ministries of justice and compassion in the United States. We speak to those in power and advocate for the voiceless. In the Spirit of Christ, we seek to confront evil in the world and to alleviate suffering through justice, advocacy, and direct service.
- Our endowment has within it several individual funds available for specific causes and activities, such as the Bainter Fund, the Stevens' Fund, and the Youth Empowerment Fund.

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?

That question is difficult to answer without the new minister being a part of the discussion. We would expect our new minister to be engaged outside the church, but the direction of our journey together and the visions we share, as well as the minister's interests and his/her talents will need to play heavily in allocations of time. Working on behalf of the church has been within the minister's work schedule.

4b. MISSION InSite

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

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?

- a) The demographics of our church family are in stark contrast to those of our immediate physical neighbors. We are 98% white and middle class while the adjacent neighborhoods are mostly minority and lower income. Even though there is great disparity between our demographics, we continue to explore ways to serve and minister to our neighbors and to grow a more representative church community. We welcome the diversity of our family and those around us.
- b) The members of our congregation live, go to school, and work in a variety of neighborhoods throughout the Cedar Valley and are active participants in their own neighborhoods. The church, hopefully, provides a welcoming place of connection and rejuvenation for the members as they prepare for their lives.

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

We have made specific, conscientious attempts to draw in our neighbors, to make them feel comfortable crossing our threshold. We have had small, encouraging successes, but we have a long way to go. Most of our current approach is through the Church Row Historic Neighborhood Association group efforts for the neighborhood. National Night Out becomes an annual opportunity for us to share music, food, and activities with the neighbors. Hosting Grin & Grow and the community self-help groups in our facility is a way for us to meet the needs of our neighboring community. We have enjoyed the families of Grin & Grow and the surrounding community joining us for our Fall Festival. For several years, we hosted a food pantry, and now we are collaborating with Love INC to provide resources for families and individuals in need. We also contribute to a Church Row clothing giveaway twice a year. We are exploring ways to partner further with Habitat for Humanity, who has targeted our Church Row Neighborhood for restoration. Along with this, we would like to find ways to minister spiritually to our neighbors.

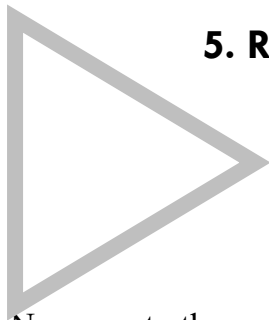
What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

The first comment people typically make references our fine arts program ... the promotion of and appreciation of fine music we offer to the Cedar Valley. The second comment typically centers around the congregation members and how they, individually, are mission-focused and community-oriented.

Whatever community event you are attending, there will likely be others from First Congregational United Church of Christ members there. There is a long-running joke about being able to hold a FCUCC church service at most any community event because there will be enough members present.

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

- The warm, genuine welcome they received when they visited the church
- The quality of the worship music and the support of the fine arts
- The willingness to get them involved in activities, whether a member or not
- The quality and meaningfulness of the worship service



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 Carol Teare / Retired Senior Pastor / First Baptist Church, Waterloo, Iowa
(319) 231-4464 / tnteare2202@msn.com / Former Church Row Assoc church pastor
Name / Position / Setting
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)

REFERENCE 2

Celeste Bembry / Retired / Community
(213) 864-5088 / bemprosinger3n1@gmail.com / Former church member, univ employee, & musician
Name / Position / Setting
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)

REFERENCE 3

Lori Lane / /

(319) 431-2429 / Lanelori92@gmail.com / Former member of FCUCC

Name / Position / Setting

(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)

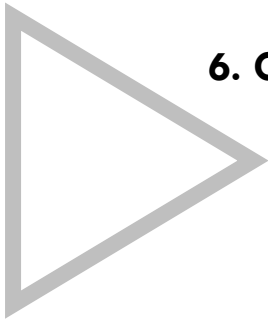
PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES

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.



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:

“Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks will receive, and anyone who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to him who knocks.” (Matthew 7: 7-8)

Dear Lord,

We are Listening ... This is an important time in the Life of our Church - First Congregational United Church of Christ. A time we are selecting a new minister and choosing our future path. We do not yet know the path, but trust You to light the way.

Lord, we are Listening ... We thank you for the gifts, talents, and skills with which you have blessed us. We thank you for the experiences that have brought us to this moment. We pray that our congregation will support and encourage each other during this difficult and exciting time, all at once.

Lord, we are Listening ... Be with us as we prayerfully seek Your will and Your wisdom throughout our time of transition. You know our needs and we have faith You want to guide us to the person You have already prepared for this responsibility.

Lord, we are Listening ... Help us all to wait with patience, to grow in hope, and to be filled with expectation. We seek a leader to strengthen us in our faith and in our discipleship; in Your love, send us your Spirit so that our search may end in joy.

Lord, we are Listening ... Continue to remind us that all that we accomplish, is for the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of You, and for the service of humanity. May Your light enfold us; may Your spirit guide us, and may Your grace abound in us.

Know that none of us are alone. And as John Wesley reminds us, “best of all God is with us.”

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.*)

This Search and Call Committee was commissioned by the Board of Trustees in December 2021 to update a recent local church profile. Three writers were selected from the committee: Kerri Mennenga, Lauren Reisinger, and Rich Thuesen. Diane Highnam (Chair), and Anne Hoekstra (current Moderator) served as consultants. Paul Greene (Board of Trustees Member), Jim Stevenson (Endowment Committee chair), Michelle Wolfe (office manager), and David Allbaugh (Church Treasurer) also provided demographic and financial input. Other members of the current Search and Call Committee offered valuable input and discussion about the contents of the profile and important updates. These members are Craig Holdiman, Craig Mahood, Evie Waack (Chaplain), Hannah Prescott, and Karen Jensen (Secretary).

Prior to this current revision, our profile was updated in 2020 in preparation for our current interim minister search. The original profile was prepared in 2018. The Board of Trustees of First Congregational UCC commissioned the formation of a Transition Committee to gather input, compile information, and author the Local Church Profile. Many thanks for that committee and the entire congregation at the time for contributing their thoughts and insights about the direction of the church. We appreciate their input in preparation of our profile.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

We thank you for your prayerful consideration of our church. Your journey has brought you here to this profile, and our journey has also brought us here. We pray that you are reading this because you are searching for your next step, your next adventure, and your next home. We welcome you inside our church walls, but more importantly, we welcome you into our church family. We are seeking a leader who wants to bring us together. We look forward to sharing our meaningful activities and traditions with you. We want to show you that we care deeply about each other and our community and our world. We want you to be a part of who we are and teach us how to love our God and our

world even more. We want to continue to be the hands and feet of God and do the work that we are all called to do. We ask that you join us as we work side-by-side. We want you to smile and sing along when you hear our beautiful organ and our talented choir. We invite you to baptize our babies, kneel at the manger with our children in the Christmas play, learn to play ukulele with our kids (and adults) for the talent show, make a pot of chili for the Fall Festival, take mission trips with our youth, pray with our college students as they head off to unknown ventures, console our families during difficult days, and assure us that God is with us as we bury our most treasured family members.

We want you to work closely with our other talented and dedicated staff members and collaborate with them. We want you to join us in our work with the neighborhood churches, in local missions, in national and worldwide causes. We want you to open our eyes to new ways that we can help, even as we honor our current efforts to share God's love. We want you to know that we will celebrate with you on your milestones along your path, and we will embrace you on the hard days, too. We will be a part of your path, just as you are a part of ours.

We have much to offer you here in Waterloo and as a part of our church family. We are praying that you have learned a little bit about us by reading this profile. We look forward to reading about you in yours and becoming more acquainted in the future.

Signed:

Diane Highnam / Search and Call Committee chair / March 18, 2022

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:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

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

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