

Second Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ

P.O. Box 216

Hyde Park, VT 05655

The Second Congregational church of Hyde Park, Vermont is at a crossroads, with a unique opportunity to redefine who we are and how we can better serve our God and our community. We are searching for a half-time transitional pastor, with the possibility of three-quarters time, who has the skills and the drive to help us take a big step forward in finding how we can be more relevant in today's increasingly secular world. We seek someone to guide us through an exciting period of transition as we explore how we can connect more meaningfully with God, with each other, and with our community.

What is Our Church Like?

Our church family cares deeply about our spiritual health, about each other, and about our community. We have been an essential part of life in our rural town since 1900. Our mission is to share Christ's love. We believe in God's Grace, Love, and Redemption. We believe in social justice and work diligently to put our beliefs into action.



We are a dedicated, active congregation of 58 members and numerous friends who range in age from 4 to 104. Our worshipers come from Hyde Park and neighboring towns. We typically have 30 to 35 congregants who worship with us in person each Sunday and an additional dozen or so who watch our service online. At Christmas Eve and Easter services, our attendance swells to over 75.

Our Sunday School is composed of a small number of children who are brought to church by their grandparents. They are energetic and engaged

and bring the wonderful gift of spontaneity to our services. Over the past several years, our adult education has consisted of Sunday evening “talk-backs” and book discussion groups, usually based on a book that pertains to a liturgical season.

We have been blessed with strong lay leadership that takes an active and vital role in our spiritual life and community outreach. We are comfortable stepping up when needed to lead worship and tackle unforeseen situations. We make every effort to make newcomers feel welcome and to hold events that touch the community at large, and in this respect, our greatest asset is our Mission Committee, which is responsible for both inward and outward outreach. We support various UCC drives, such as Neighbors in Need, as well as raising funds for local causes, such as the recent flood relief fund of the United Way of Lamoille County, support for the homeless, and those recovering from substance abuse and addiction. Nationally, we have made donations to organizations such as World Central Kitchen. We host a monthly community breakfast, music programs, movies for the community, and a fabulous Halloween event that draws in over 250 people. Each year, we sponsor a crafts fair to raise money to give over 25 large Christmas food baskets for local people in need. Our church is available for use by other community organizations such as AA, the Lanpher Memorial Library, the area Retired Teachers Association, and Lamoille Neighbors.



Second Congregational Church of Hyde
Park Vermont

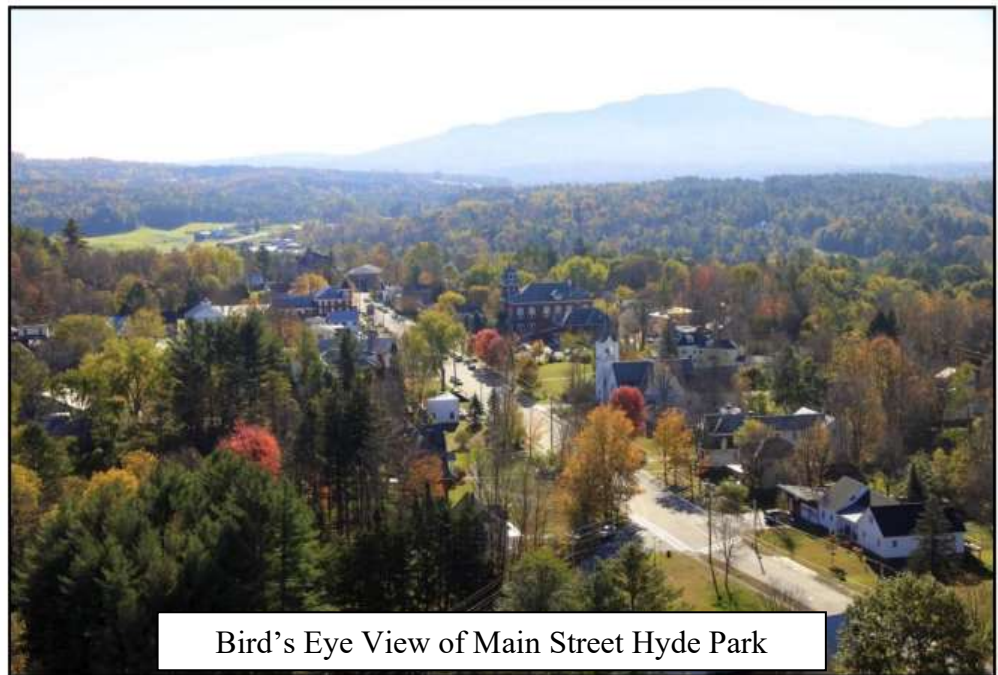
We are blessed to have a network of support for our ministers. They have taken advantage of programs and help from the Vermont UCC and the Lamoille Area Interfaith Clergy Group. We also send lay delegates to the Annual Vermont UCC convention.

What we have not done is to plan systematically and in an organized fashion for the future. We believe that God has provided us an opportunity to do just that while we are between settled pastors.

What is Our Community Like?

The town of Hyde Park is a quaint New England town. It sits nestled in the Lamoille River Valley beneath the Green Mountains at the heart of Lamoille County (population 26,126). Our town is family-oriented, and has a rich history; many families that have lived here for several generations. The town's population is 3,020, according to the 2020 census. Hyde Park has become increasingly popular as a second home location, especially because of easy access to many four-season outdoor activities.

Like most of Vermont, our community has an aging population, but recently, there has been an influx of younger people who have brought new life to community affairs. We have financially successful inhabitants, those who are homeless,



Bird's Eye View of Main Street Hyde Park

and others who are struggling to get by. And like most communities in this country, we have individuals suffering from addiction. But we have a good social services network working hard to address these issues.

Hyde Park's economy was primarily agriculturally based until the 1960s. The town has been in transition since then. There are still a few working farms, but the majority of residents work elsewhere, run small businesses, or work for one of the several government agencies and non-profits in the town. Because it is the shire town of Lamoille County and the county court sits here, several agencies are connected with various aspects of judicial and court services in the Village of Hyde Park.

We are proud of our community and make a concerted effort to strengthen the inhabitants' ties with the town. The Hyde Park Community Circle puts on four celebrations a year designed to bring residents together: in spring, it's a puppet show and plant give-away. In summer, we have an Ice Cream Social. We welcome fall by celebrating Hyde Park Home Day, complete with a parade, music, games for children, a hayride, cider-pressing, and a tea tent. Local vendors sell their wares, and non-profits provide information tables.



Hyde Park Elementary School serves children in Pre-K through 6th grade and has approximately 250 students. The school was renovated in 2017/2018. Second Congregational is an evacuation site for this school. Children in grades 7-12 attend Lamoille Union Middle and High School, which is also in Hyde Park. The middle and high school offers numerous sports, dance, and theater activities. Lamoille

Union incorporates students from six towns that comprise the Lamoille North Supervisory Union, and the campus includes the Green Mountain Technical Career Center. Some students from the community also attend All Saints Academy, a Catholic elementary and middle school in the neighboring town of Morrisville (about four miles east of Hyde Park). Vermont State University - Johnson Campus and the Community College of Vermont are nearby.



Lamoille County Courthouse built 1911

Hyde Park Village is home to the Lamoille County Courthouse and Sheriff's Department, the Lanpher Memorial Library, the Governor's House (now a bed and breakfast), the Lamoille Restorative Center, and the Hyde Park Opera House (home of the Lamoille County Players). A homeless shelter serving the Lamoille Valley is located in the village. Two Sons Bakery and Restaurant is within walking distance of the church, as are all the places mentioned above. The village of Hyde Park is quiet, with mainly local traffic. Many services, shopping, and restaurants are located in nearby Morristown and the resort town of Stowe.

What Are We Looking For in a Transitional Pastor?

We are ultimately looking for a settled pastor. In working with the Vermont UCC search consultants, it has become evident that there are some very focused things that we need to have in place in order to attract the best candidate possible. We have three main areas that we need to address:



Second Congregational Church at Night

- Developing a vision of what we would like to be in 7 years and a strategic plan to realize that vision. Help implement any changes that come from this plan.
- Becoming an Open and Affirming church
- Improve communications both within the church and with the broader community.

We have begun thinking about these three issues. We are being more proactive in our communication to the community. We have a committee reviewing our constitution.

We know that in addition to the prayer, dialogue, study, and discernment that will be needed to complete the ONA process, there are physical things we lack (e.g., a truly handicapped bathroom) that we will have to rectify. We are struggling to imagine what our church could be in 7 or 10 years and how we move from a very traditional approach that seems stagnant to one that is more dynamic and relevant to tomorrow's society. We recognize that our communication, both internally and externally, needs help.

We need someone with experience in and a passion for organizational analysis and strategic planning, a minister who can motivate us to not just think about but envision the future and help us map a path that will take us there. This person must have strong relationship skills, be comfortable working with various personalities, and have experience as a facilitator.

We are looking for a transitional pastor who is capable in the pulpit and has the leadership skills to lead the church staff and lay leaders in the direction they should go to be ready for the arrival of the new pastor.

How will we compensate our minister?

We follow the salary and housing compensation guidelines provided by the Vermont UCC. Benefits are negotiated as each person has individual needs and circumstances.