

## Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

# INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Who  
are  
we

Who  
is our  
neighbor

Who is  
God  
calling us  
to become

?

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

Hermosa United Church of Christ  
105 North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, PO Box 265  
Hermosa SD 57744

Minister

[South Dakota Conference Black Hills Association]

[3-6-23]

### LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- Position Posting
- Who Is God Calling Us To Become?
- Who Are We Now?
- Who Is Our Neighbor?
- References
- Consent and Validation

*“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.

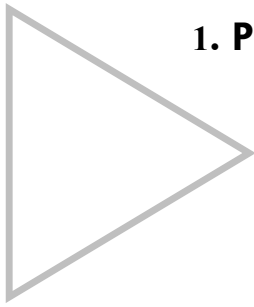
The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – **WHO ARE WE NOW**, **WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR**, and **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME** – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years. 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

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Church name: Hermosa United Church of Christ

Street address: 105 North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, PO Box 265, Hermosa SD 57744

Supplemental web links: Facebook – Hermosa United Church of Christ

Additional ecumenical affiliations

Community Lenten services with Our Savior's Lutheran; Easter morning services with Keystone Congregational at Mt. Rushmore; Community Thanksgiving services with the Catholic church

Conference: TCM

Association: Black Hills Association

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

Jonna Jensen

jonna@ucctcm.org

Summary Ministry Description:

As we reflect upon how our church family has long been an important cornerstone of our community, we take heart in knowing that our hope is to grow and expand our mission to love and serve our Lord Jesus Christ. It is our desire to provide a strong base for current membership and broaden our service and worship opportunities to an expanding and diverse group of new members of our community. Our vision forward is to find a minister willing to inspire and guide us as we grow together on our journey of faith and service.

Photographs:

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







What we value about living in our area

Our area has many qualities that make it a wonderful place to live. Some of those qualities include the great, hardworking, generous people and rugged scenic beauty of the Black Hills. Hermosa is the perfect balance of rural peace and quiet, and urban amenities being mere minutes from Rapid City.

Current size of membership: 86

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*): None

Position Title: Minister

Position Duration Settled

Compensation Level **Three-Quarter time Pastoral Position**

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? yes

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

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

**Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship** including scripture study, crafting of liturgy and printing of the bulletin, sermon preparation, guiding music, deacons and lay leaders with their participation during the worship service. Other duties would include pastoral care in collaboration with lay people (at least to those who are sick, elderly, or grieving) and weddings and funerals for participants in the worshipping community.

**As part of the ministry, faithful financial development** and stewardship should be included in the message.

**Community engagement** and leading the way for the church to be an ambassador of God's love in our Hermosa greater community. **Strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry and leadership development** by working with people in the church to create ministry and programs are a continuing building of the church's presence.

**Personal faith formation and vitality** through prayer along with participate in wider church activities such as conference and association meetings as time permits are encouraged for one's well being.

Core Competencies:

The three core competencies that we are looking for include: 1.) the ability to build relationships 2.) be involved in our community, and 3.) able to share Biblical teachings in a relatable manner to today's world.

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

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Salary Basis \$ 42,000

Benefits *(choose one)*:

Salary includes Optional Benefits

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

Currently we expect them to live nearby with a housing allowance (available for ordained clergy), we would like him/her to be involved in the greater Hermosa community. Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister.

This is a growing community, with a lot of upside potential. It's also a very close proximity to the second largest city in the state. We have developed salary/incentive packages depending on the individuals needs and goals. We are open to discussion and look forward to experience the evolution of both parties. .

State any incentives

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

Our association is made up of 10-11 churches. Although it is rather large geographically, they meet occasionally in a central location and have even met weekly for shared lectionary study.

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

We have worked with bi-vocational employment with the last two ministers over a twenty-year span. We are open to discussion and look forward to maximizing the possibilities of both parties.

## 1d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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Describe the ministry goals you envision your next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve.

We envision our ministry goals to include collaborative action to grow our faith studies, build our youth programs, support our service, and continue the strong monthly mission giving projects.

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

Our vision of the person answering our call would be that of a genuine, caring person that can build strong relationships based on Christian love. We are looking for someone to lead us by inspiring our congregation, community, and wider church.



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

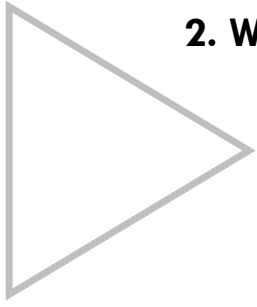
Our community is predominantly English speaking with some Spanish and Lakota dialects spoken as well.

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.

*Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions*--Being the oldest Church in the community and have the prestige of having a US president attend during the summer of 1927. We feel that many seeds have been sown that can be harvested now. But we also know that we need to continue to sow the seeds of faith for future generations to come.

*Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice*--Our hope is to have a minister that not only exhibits but inspires spiritual growth and an ongoing spiritual practice by living a life of discipleship. Our church has had a long-standing presence in our community and is searching for one to nurture our spiritual growth. As our community grows, we will need someone who can discern the changing needs and develop stewardship with a lifelong commitment to building faith, hope, and Christian love.

*Working Together for Justice and Mercy*—This is an area that presents our church with tremendous opportunity. The openness of our members to find ways to reach out and assist all members of our community is well established. This commitment is demonstrated by our commitment to the Hermosa UCC's backpack program which sends nutritious food home on weekends with every student in need at our local K-8 school. There also is an understanding that there is more that we can do to identify and engage in ways that expand our circle and fulfill more of the Christian promises and obligations to our growing and more diverse community.



## **2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?**

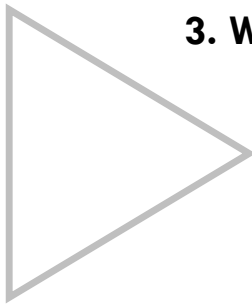
“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

God is calling us to be good witnesses to God’s love and the service of others, bringing hope to our community.

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

Our church is actively involved in our community. This past year, we chose a mission donating school supplies in January. It went very well and will continue into the foreseeable future. After several years of not having the Easter Sunrise Service at Mt. Rushmore, we worked together to resume this decades long tradition.



### 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

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*Describe your congregation's life of faith.*

Most often the sermons have reflected the lectionary scriptures. God is one with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and we remember that we are claimed as God's own and by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ we are redeemed and forgiven. We desire greater understanding of God's presence in this world and what it means for our lives, so we gather around the scriptures and seek to listen to and encourage one another in life and in faith.

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

The congregation is a welcoming, friendly family encompassing group of individuals. Visitors and newcomers are encouraged to join in after services for fellowship. Birthdays and anniversaries are recognized, as are personal concerns and other joys.

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

Worship currently follows a traditional style. In the past, we've had adult and children's choirs, but currently our musical worship includes congregational hymns with special music on occasion. Children's time encourages participation of the youngest of our church family. The congregation comes from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

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

When describing our church's life of faith, we think of its strong foundation of caring love that is visible in the twelve-monthly missions and the interactions of members during fellowship time and at large in our community. We, as the body of Christ, demonstrate our faith in so many ways. Whether it is providing a major part of our local school's backpack program or participating in the wider Christmas Child Giving Mission, or contributing to our Community Vacation Bible School Program, we do our best to serve.

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

We are a small congregation so that almost every family is represented by those involved with the administration or the programs of the church.

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

One -two hours, problems can be averted with clear and open communication.

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

A call for help is made and the church or even the community responds.

- 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?

Most definitely

### **3b. 11-YEAR REPORT**

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*(add here the 11-Year Report developed with the help of your conference staff, UCC Data Hub, and MissionInsite)*

### **3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS**

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Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	85	
Number of active non-members:	4	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	89	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	70	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	20	
Less than 5 years:	10	

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
11	0	0	3	5	2	10	40	15	yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	0	yes
Households with minors:	12	
Single adults age 35-65:	4	
Joint households with no minors:	80	
Single adults over 65:	4	

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	10	yes
College:	60	
Graduate School:	10	
Specialty Training:	10	
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>

Adults who are employed:	40	yes
Adults who are retired:	60	
Adults who are not fully employed:		

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

Teachers, Accountants, Healthcare providers, Attorneys, Laborers, and Agriculturist

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?

We are not ethnically diverse only because the community isn’t very diverse, not because we are exclusive. We are a friendly community of faith but also ask that you join us for fellowship so that we all can know each other better.

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:

We haven’t felt that our attention needs to be diverted in that direction at this time. We know we have members at pendulum ends of many of the cultural conversations of our time. We are not avoiding the conversation; we are striving to be respectful of one another when the topics arise in conversation.

### 3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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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	None	
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	None	
Children’s Groups or Classes	9-11 children	2 teachers
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	75	



Church-wide Meals	30-40	Weekly fellowship
Choirs and Music Groups	solo	Occasional special music
Church-based Bible Study		
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	12	Once a month
Community Meals		
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	0	
Drama or Dance Program		
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	1	
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship		
Prayer or Meditation Groups		
Public Advocacy Work		
Retreats		
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )		
Worship (time slot: __ 9:30 __)	30-45	
Worship (time slot: _____)		
Young Adult Groups or Classes		
Youth Groups or Classes		
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

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

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

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff.

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Board Pres/V Pres/Secretary/ Treasurer	President	Volunteer positions	Board	2
Deacons/Educational Coordinators		Volunteer positions	Board	
Music Coordinator		Volunteer	Board	15

## REFLECTION

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

The members of our congregation are dedicated and devoted to serving their church family and community.

## 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
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Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$66,475.00
Endowment Proceeds <i>(as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)</i>	\$
Endowment Draw <i>(beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”)</i>	\$
Fundraising Events	\$
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$ 7,490.00
Grants	\$
Rentals of Church Building	\$
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$
Support from Related Organizations <i>(e.g. Women’s Group)</i>	\$
Transfers from Special Accounts Building Fund	\$20,000.00
Other (specify):	\$
Other (specify):	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$ 66,475.00

*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? 66%

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

No

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? *(indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year)*

☒ Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)

☒ One Great Hour of Sharing

☒ Strengthen the Church

☒ Neighbors in Need

X   Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? *Budget item of \$600*

This church has an extensive missions program that just flows through the church treasury but is not part of the budgeting process. Last years giving was over \$10,000.

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: 0

Reason for debt:

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.

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2017	Elevator	\$10,000.00	\$	Allows for participation of all members
2013	Organ	\$ 6,000.00	\$	Improve music for worship

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

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

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

Does your church have an endowment? no

What is the market value of the assets?

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

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

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

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

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

### Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$60,750.00

Investments (other than endowment): \$

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:

none

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:

none

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

*Currently the pulpit area isn't accessible, but all others are accessible.*

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

This is a very generous congregation that is also conservative and prudent with the resources they have been entrusted with.

### 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.

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

We have navigated the chaos and anxiety of covid with minimal damage.  
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.

We try to find the person in our congregation who has been given the gift of peacemaker, and come together under their guidance to resolve the problem. Sometimes the Lord will use someone outside our church but inside our larger community of faith so that we may have a chance to grow. Sometimes He leads us to help them.

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

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Diane Janssen-Hemmen	2007-2022 (15)	Yes
Mitch and Jeri Berhinger	2003-2007 (4)	Yes
Barbara Gammeter	1990-2003 (13)	Yes

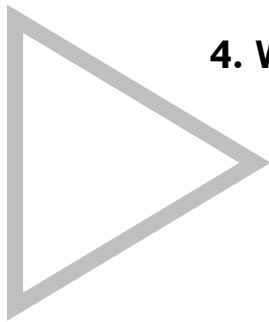
Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

We have become a more mission driven church,  
Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?  
No  
Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?  
No



Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

No



#### 4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

a. COMMUNITY VISION

b. MISSION InSite

#### 4a. COMMUNITY VISION

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*How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?*

We administer the back-pack food program for the Hermosa elementary school. We also help with the community vacation bible school, church services at the county fair and community food and relief fund drives.

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

We have sent delegates to the association and state conference meeting, have had members serve on committees and as moderator.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).)

Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

☐ Accessible to All (A2A)

☐ Creation Justice

☐ Economic Justice

☐ Faithful and Welcoming

☒ God Is Still Speaking (GISS)

☐ Border and Immigrant Justice

☐ Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)

☐ Just Peace

☐ Global Mission Church

☐ Open and Affirming (ONA)

☐ WISE Congregation for Mental Health

☐ Other UCC designations:

☐ Designations from other denominations

☒ None

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

Not currently

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

Over the years, we have actively joined our neighboring community churches in sharing Thanksgiving and Lenten services, having community Christmas and Easter cantata performances, providing for the ecumenical service held at the Custer County Fairgrounds, and working together to provide students with food through the backpack program.

If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Our Mission Statement: *"It is our mission to seek the Lord through his word, walk in the pathway of his commandments, preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and spread the good news of salvation and hope through meaningful worship services, small group activities, and Christian fellowship in our community and world."*

Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.

We spend most of our time in worship and services with very little in governance, but I'd like to see the total time spent in both worship and service increase without adding time to govern. There is room to grow in both these areas.

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?

I see their involvement in these areas only taking a fourth to a fifth of their work schedule and maybe less if they are working part time in the school or other community involved areas (substitute teacher, coach, or bus driver) as their part-time job.

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

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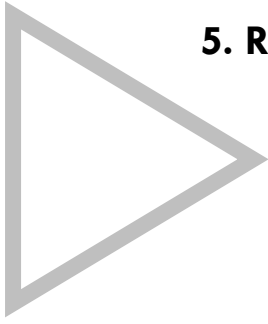
Comment on your congregation's MissionInSite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. *What trends and opportunities are shown?*

*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?*

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

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

*What do new people in the church say when asked what got them involved?* New members recently shared that the welcoming and accepting atmosphere and friendly interaction were contributing factors to their attendance.



## 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

Name / Position / Setting  
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)  
Melinda Williams (lay minister-pulpit supply)

### REFERENCE 2

Name / Position / Setting  
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)  
Cindy Esposti (member of neighboring congregation)

### REFERENCE 3

Name / Position / Setting  
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)  
Diane Hemmen (former minister)

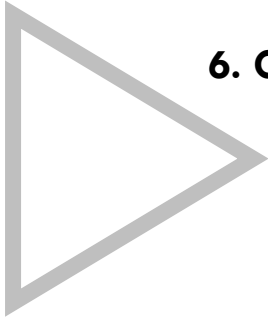
### PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES

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

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*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:*

God of prophets and apostles, you have chosen leaders to train your people in the way of Jesus Christ. We thank you that in our day you are still claiming men and women for special work within the church. We pray that you would be at work to prepare and present to us our next settled partner in ministry even as we pledge ourselves to that person so that, surrounded by affection and hope, he or she may grow in wisdom, mature in love, and become, with us all, even more faithful to you, in love and in service, approved by Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## 6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

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.*)  
Dave Dillon, Alan Bishop, Kerry Bishop, Tonya Stoterau, and Deb Smith
2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Name / Title / Date:



## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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The congregation is currently in good standing with the association / conference named.

Staff Comment:

To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete.

Staff Comment:

To the best of my knowledge, available church financial information is presented thoroughly.

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:

Name / Title:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



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*

To: Hermosa United Church of Christ

RE: Submitted in support of your Pastor Search process

A parish is group identifying with each other as a cohesive, internal-focused worship community. However, beyond its formal worship services and internal religious functions, the parish has a broader commitment to a less cohesive, external group of the Hermosa community. Any parish should have the goal of "Living the faith" as seen by others outside the parish, who observe and interact with the people of the parish during its community- or ecumenical-activities. A Colorado rancher expresses this simple goal as "Don't go to church; be the church."

As a member of St. Michael's Catholic Church, also in Hermosa, I see the Hermosa UCC parish as an active part of the living community. The UCC Church both sponsors and helps organize a variety of activities, some that have an obvious religious flavor and others that can be viewed as strictly for fun or community improvement. Activities that come to mind include:

- Mt. Rushmore sunrise Easter services with its open-to-all choir
- Rubber Duck race as a fund-raiser for community backpack program, with an open invitation for other parishes to help
- Soup-and-sweets dinner and craft sale in November
- Assisted with designing and setting the Hermosa Churches' sign announcing time of service
- Providing an easily accessible polling place for county- and city-run elections
- Monthly announcement of Hermosa Senior Citizens' lunch menus
- Providing facilities for the Hermosa Backpack program which sends food home weekly to needy families as a weekend complement to school-provided weekday lunches
- Co-sponsor of ecumenical Lenten services
- Co-sponsor of Hermosa community's Christmas cantata

This list includes only those activities that I consider "open-to-the-community" or activities beyond the confines of being just a parish activity. Some of these activities have long histories (they were happening when Deb and I moved here 45 years ago); others are recently started showing a vibrancy for doing new things and involving new people. A parish can survive only if young people are willing to accept the reins handed them by the parish's old timers – certain parish activities must be retained, recycled, and renewed to retain the parish's identity; other activities need to be discovered or introduced to invigorate the parish so it's identity does not stagnate or become stale.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leo L Van Sambeek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Leo L Van Sambeek  
Hermosa-area Citizen

## Hermosa UCC Letter of Reference - The Rev. Dr. Diane Janssen Hemmen

Congratulations on your opportunity to engage in discernment about partnering in ministry with one of the best congregations I have ever served! Hermosa UCC remains atop my list of congregations because of their ability to work together while thinking diversely and their intentional efforts to let faith impact all parts of their lives.

Throughout my 14-year call with them, the congregation attentively watched for emerging opportunities to serve their community, state, conference, nation, and world. HUCC is ready for anything! We built Church World Service disaster kits of various sorts; we found and provided furniture for a new family in the area; we committed to denominational support of the Five for Five offerings. We sent pill bottles to Doctors Without Borders; we started a community backpack program; we partnered with community congregations for programming, occasional worship, and outreach.

Yet they sustained and adapted fondly-held traditions as well. Their ongoing participation in the Easter Sunrise service at Mount Rushmore took great effort each year (especially if shoveling was needed), but they still rose to the challenge. The Soup and Pie Supper evolved over time to add efficiency but was met with great anticipation and celebration annually. The decorating of the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas is not just a chore but a chance for extended fellowship and maybe even an excuse for a potluck!

They take their Bible studies to the truck stop and let the four-year-olds lead worship at the microphone... This is a congregation that will listen to your ideas and welcome your insights. This is a place that will grow with you in faith and service. You don't have to be perfect because they know they are not perfect either! This is not a job but a calling and you will be blessed by your time with them as together you each and all search for ever-deepening avenues of study and service, of praise and practice, of creative engagement with and compassionate care for one another.

May God bless you and may God richly bless HUCC!

June 26,  
2022 104  
Wren Court  
Box Elder, SD 57719

## Hermosa United Church of Christ

If you are reading this, then you are likely looking at the possibility of answering a call to ministry at the United Church of Christ in Hermosa, South Dakota. I would like to share some insight into and observations about this remarkable congregation.

I have been connected with the Hermosa UCC church in the role of pulpit supply for about a decade. Some years, I was called upon once or twice; other years a bit more regularly, depending on the need. It did not matter how much time passed between my visits with them; it always felt like family and a "home" church when I was there. The congregation in Hermosa is warm and welcoming to whomever comes through their doors. Just last Sunday I visited with a couple who were new in town and had only attended a few Sundays; they remarked, "As soon as we came here, we felt like we belonged, like it was home." If you are looking for a congregation that offers the extravagant hospitality of Jesus, you will find that in Hermosa.

While Hermosa is a small town in Custer County in southwestern South Dakota, it is a community that is vibrant and active. Although Rapid City is 20 minutes away, Hermosa does not feel like a suburb of Rapid; it has its own identity and continues to grow. It hosts the Custer County Fair, has a thriving school district that just completed some new building projects, and works together to provide numerous activities for all ages. The UCC church in Hermosa is a vital part of that community both as individual members and as a whole congregation. Through my connection with this church, I have been introduced to activities at the fair, special meals at the American Legion, craft fairs, duck races, community worship and much more.

As a congregation, the Hermosa UCC church hosts a soup and pie supper every year, provides backpack meals for local youth, fills and sends shoe boxes to children needing a gift for Christmas, participates in a community Christmas choir, steps up to help in community fundraising, as well as numerous other projects as they are needed.

One of the biggest undertakings this congregation is involved with is the Easter Sunrise Service at Mt. Rushmore, which they plan and implement with the Keystone Congregational Church. It is an event that the entire area as well as tourists look forward to every spring.

In many organizations, churches included, it is normal for about 10% of the members to do 90% of the work. This congregation does NOT fit into that norm. I have noticed that almost everyone I see on any given Sunday is actively involved in and engaged in the ministry of the church, from Sunday School to spearheading projects to contributing time and talent wherever and whenever it is needed and working as God's hands and feet in whatever ways they can. Nearly everyone attending church on Sunday remains for fellowship (and food) afterwards, and the cliques that plague so many congregations are not evident here. The prayer list is active and strong in this congregation, and it is inspiring to see how they support each other with their faithful concern and compassion.

Representative members of the UCC church in Hermosa have been active in the Black Hills Association as well as serving on committees for the SD Conference of the United Church of Christ. Their support for the wider church has been faithful. I have worked with several of the members in both the association and the conference, and they have represented their congregation well.

Western South Dakota is an amazing place to live and grow and minister; a church like the Hermosa United Church of Christ is a reminder of how we can be when we live into the gifts God has so abundantly provided. If you are being called to minister in a vibrant, active, engaged congregation with a long tradition of ministry who are also open to how God is still speaking to them today, Hermosa's United Church of Christ may be exactly where you need to be.

If you have any questions or would like further information, feel free to contact me. (And if you find yourself called to serve the Hermosa church, know that I would still be available for pulpit supply!)

Melinda Williams

605-380-3607

[melinda.williams@k12.sd.us](mailto:melinda.williams@k12.sd.us)

## Hermosa UCC letter of Reference

My name is Cindy Pullen-Esposti. My husband John and I live in an area between the small towns of Keystone and Hermosa, South Dakota. We attend Church in Keystone (it is the town that I grew up in) but have been very involved with the community of Hermosa and the Hermosa UCC.

For many years our two Churches made up the "Hills Parish" and shared a minister along with a Parish Board and several annual events such as picnics, fundraising auctions, potlucks and celebrations. We continue to work together to put on the Easter Sunrise Service at Mount Rushmore, a 75-year tradition. I was personally on the Parish Board for several years.

As parents we sent all three of our children to Hermosa Elementary School. I spent many years volunteering in the classroom there and we both helped with school events along with members of the Hermosa community. John and I treasure our continuing friendships within the Hermosa community. Several members of the Hermosa UCC taught our children and many more were classmates, baby sitters, and some worked for our family tourism business.

The community of Hermosa is a stable ranch community with several Churches and a newly updated school (kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade). The town hosts many family-oriented activities throughout the year at the school and fairgrounds.

I personally can't think of a nicer environment for a new pastor and his/her family to move into.

Sincerely,

Cindy Pullen-Esposti