

## 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!

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

**Church of the Three Crosses**  
**Chicago, IL**

**Settled Pastor Search and Call**

**Illinois Conference, Chicago Metropolitan Association**

**[January 24, 2024]**

### LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- ❑ Position Posting
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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.

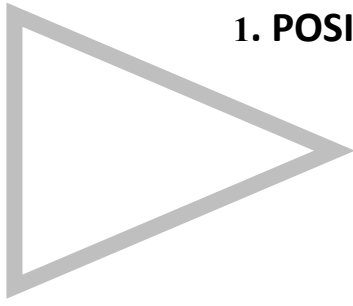
The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – **WHO ARE WE NOW**, **WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR**, and **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME** – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years.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

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Church name: Church of the Three Crosses

Street address: 333 W. Wisconsin St., Chicago, IL 60614

Supplemental web links: <https://www.churchofthethreecrosses.org>

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

Dual Denomination: United Methodist Church and United Church of Christ

United Methodist Church:

Conference: Northern Illinois Conference

UMC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:

Rev. Brittany Isaac, Lake North District Superintendent

(312) 346-9766 ext. 785

[bisaac@umcnic.org](mailto:bisaac@umcnic.org)

United Church of Christ:

Conference: Illinois Conference

Association: Chicago Metropolitan Association

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:

Rev. Shernell Edney Stilley, Associate Conference Minister for Pastoral Transitions

(708) 344-4470

[shernelledneystilley@ilucc.org](mailto:shernelledneystilley@ilucc.org)

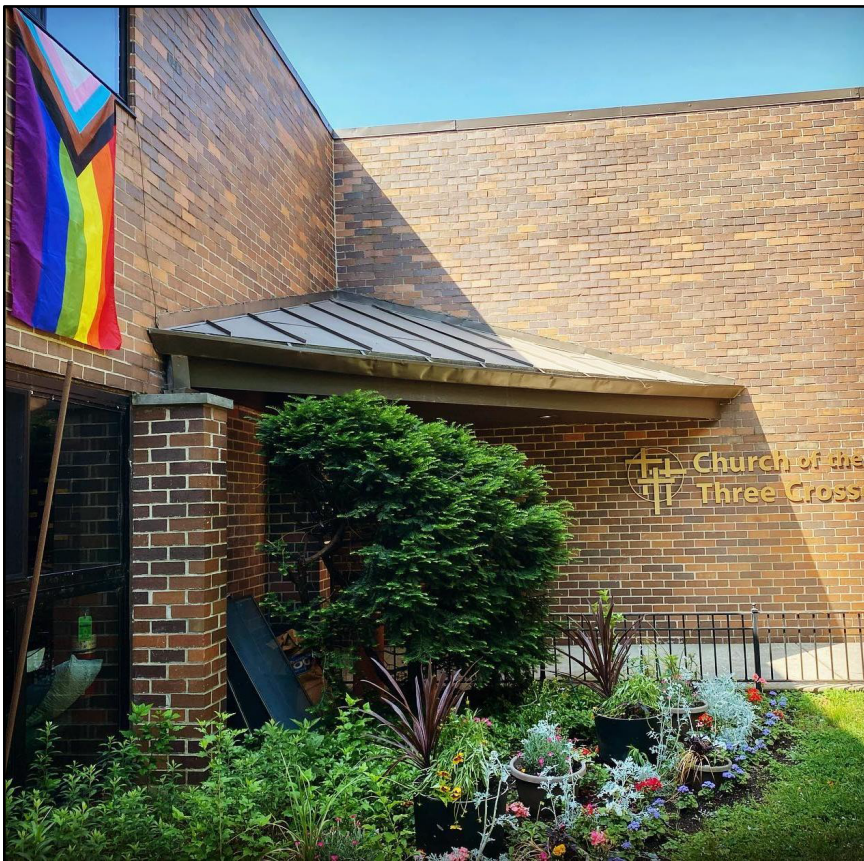
## Summary Ministry Description:

*In a short paragraph, reflect on where your church is going and what it might look like when you get there. What do you need to get there? Who are you seeking to join you on this part of your church's faith journey?*

Our deepest hope is to strengthen and further build our loving, committed, progressive spiritual community to find vibrancy and sustainability. We are looking for an inspiring leader to collaborate with us, stir new ideas and mindsets, and connect with the neighborhood.

## 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 (2 – 3 sentences):

Chicago is a big, beautiful metropolitan center, known for its culture, diversity, progressive nature, and Midwestern friendliness. Our congregants value having access to arts venues, restaurants, parks, cultural institutions, and a diverse urban environment. We particularly value our church's accessibility by public transportation and main thoroughfares.

Current size of membership: 55

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*): N/A

Position Title: Pastor

Position Duration:

Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister moves church membership to the congregation and moves standing to related association

Compensation Level: Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? As a multi-denominational church, the package meets the compensation guidelines for the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church and the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ.

## 1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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### **Scope of work for full time Pastoral Position (40-50 hours weekly / 10-12 units)**

- preparation and leadership of Sunday worship including scripture study, crafting of liturgy and bulletin, sermon preparation, guiding and sometimes finding lay liturgists, planning of music in coordination with musical staff or volunteers, preaching, offering of prayers, etc.
- faith formation and vitality through prayer, spiritual study, service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities and helping lay persons take advantage of them
- leadership development by working with people in the church to create ministry and programs
- pastoral care, which may include counseling, listening and referral, in collaboration with lay people

- community engagement and leading the way for the church to be an ambassador of God's love
- weddings and funerals for participants in the worshiping community
- strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry
- attend meetings and give leadership as needed to church programs, in collaboration with lay leadership
- participate in wider church activities such as conference and association meetings
- administrative responsibilities (unless delegated) such as email newsletters, updates to website content, and church supply purchasing
- faithful financial development and stewardship
- responsibility for supervision of staff in cooperation with Staff-Parish Relations Committee
- availability to wider community for funerals, weddings, special worship programs, and as a representative of the church to local organizations
- study and prayer to increase faith and to improve skills in leadership and teaching
- energizing and deepening the spiritual connections and faith understandings of others in all they do

#### 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.)*

Caring

Organized

Sociable



## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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

Benefits: Salary plus Benefits

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*)?

We provide a housing allowance and the flexibility for our next minister to determine for themselves where in the area they will live.

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

Our next minister is welcome to live where it best suits them, keeping in mind the desirability of a reasonable commute to the church on Sundays and other in-office days or in-person activities. Regardless of where the next minister lives, they will want to build a deep understanding of and relationship with the neighborhood and the city overall.

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

Sabbatical after 5 years of service

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

COTTC is in Cluster 2 of the UCC Chicago Metropolitan Association and the Lake North District of the UMC's Northern Illinois Conference.

The Chicago area offers a rich and diverse resource network for both peer and professional ministerial support. There are many other progressive, mainline congregations, ministers, and resources nearby that provide opportunities for informal connections.

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

## 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.

This question was covered in a congregational survey, and following are the prominent themes that emerged. **We want to:**

**Grow** in spirituality; diversity; nurturing and numbers of families of all formations; closeness and care as a community within the congregation and in the neighborhood; strong leadership; attendance/membership; financial stability

**Offer** ways to heal and recover from COVID and conflict; support and engagement of families; Christian education; space for community use; programming of interest to broad and varied audiences; social activities and events; a helping hand where needed

**Be and be known as** caring; God-seeking; theologically progressive; social-justice oriented; Open and Affirming/Reconciling; spiritual; vibrant; energetic; honoring of different faith journeys and a wide range of beliefs among congregants

**Explore** new ways of being church; shifts in mindset; effective means of outreach and promotion

**Reduce** burn-out; time spent on business instead of the work of God; resistance to change

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

As we become a stronger, closer, more stable congregation, our desire is to honor the call so many of us feel to “make an impact beyond [our] walls.” Presently, we imagine using our gifts to become better neighbors; open our building for community use; offer events that inspire the community; focus on environmental concerns; develop a heart for mission and actions.

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

Services at COTTC are performed entirely in English, and there is not currently a need to offer services in an additional language.

We take language choices seriously in our worship and community expression. We strive to be welcoming and inclusive in our language choices and how we express our understanding of God, e.g., using female or gender-neutral pronouns in addition to male pronouns when referring to God, substituting “kindom” for “kingdom,” and other modifications to hymn lyrics or prayers where necessary to achieve radical hospitality. We are also conscientious of any language choices that could be perceived as shaming or that reveal a sense of privilege not afforded to those among us who are most vulnerable.

Our next pastor needs to be comfortable with and able to minister to people from different backgrounds and of different identities across gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, disability status, and religious/spiritual beliefs. This is important in terms of diversity and inclusion, as well as in the degree of welcome we offer to visitors and our neighborhood. We expect a pastor who can use language effectively to build community and advocate for social justice.

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. Caring for All Creation: In particular, providing care for the congregation and setting a positive example with regard to self-care.
2. Working Together for Justice and Mercy: Helping us exercise and demonstrate our values beyond the walls of the church building.
3. Building Transformational Leadership Skills: Leading by example, whether among the staff, within the congregation or within the wider community.
4. Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice: Guiding a theologically diverse congregation and helping participants to grow in their faith, whatever that looks like.



## 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?

We have been trying to answer this question for a while. It was the task of our previous pastor to help us write a vision statement, a mission statement and a strategic framework. The congregation approved the strategic framework over Zoom meetings in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the plan has not been fully activated because of the departure of our pastor and struggles within the congregation. With the help of our interim pastor, we have been working hard to heal.

Presently, our desires are to become a stable, vibrant congregation that continues to follow Jesus’ loving, healing, uplifting ways. We desire to shore up and maintain the deep sense of community within the congregation through friendships, support of families, spiritual formation, and activities, including social events. We hope to build upon new connections in the neighborhood through increased engagement. To repeat the words of a member:

We want to be a voice of faith, reason, and help in troubled times. We want to be a physical expression of Christ in the world. We want to offer a space where all are welcome and empowered. We want to be an alternative vision to the values of empires and the powerful—a vision that nurtures and affirms every person, stands against injustice and oppression, and helps all of humanity have full, abundant lives. There have been many moments where we’ve seen the possibility of who we can become. We just need the right person to help guide us into making this vision a reality.

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? Please refer to the answer above regarding our multi-year Strategic Framework.*

We proclaim in our vision statement that “As an ever-widening inclusive Christian community, we are called to transform ourselves and our world to embody God’s radical love, healing, and hope.”

Two of the pillars of our strategic framework read, “We are intentional in choosing our justice and mercy programs...” and “We strive for transformation within ourselves and to effect transformation within the broader community.”

God is calling us to be more innovative and bold with how we approach the vision and how we proclaim who we are to the world. We need new outreach to confidently share the values of our community in ways that will invite seekers to stay and join us.

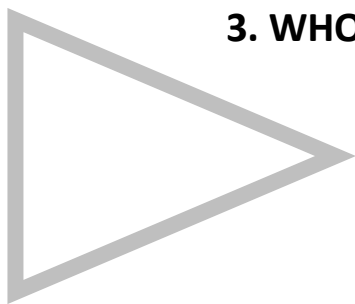
We work toward this vision by being an ecumenical, progressive, welcoming church with a social-justice mindset. We draw individuals from near and far who need solace from injury by religious and other institutions or who are on a faith journey seeking acceptance or new understandings.

With the inspiration we receive through the Sunday service word and music as well as encouragement from one another, each of us goes forth filled with hope and with encouragement that we can make a difference in our work, involvement, and actions in our individual callings.

We work hard together for our annual fundraising event and on ad hoc projects, but we don’t have one congregation-based community project. Instead, each of us has responded to a unique call to work or volunteer in community-nurturing or justice-advocating fields.

Many of our members do not live in the immediate area; therefore, the church’s connection with the neighborhood has not been strong, until recently: With a common interest in revitalizing the adjoining city park—named after a local & national treasure, who is also a lifelong member of our church—we have begun to strengthen our relationships with neighborhood organizations by working side by side and sharing resources to maintain the park. This is leading us to participate in other special events.





### 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.

*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?*

Our congregation practices inclusiveness. We strive to be welcoming and inclusive in our language choices and how we express our understanding of God. For example, in worship, we seldom connect pronouns with God, and if we do, we balance the use of masculine with feminine pronouns. We acknowledge Jesus as not only a teacher and healer, but also a justice seeker and speaker to power.

Our constitution says our congregation shall exist “to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the sacraments; to provide a local expression of the ecumenical church; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within our congregation and the Church Universal; to render loving service toward humankind; and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace.”

At Church of the Three Crosses, we practice radical hospitality in welcoming the stranger as God, we embrace progressive theology and beliefs, and we commit to working toward justice for all people.

As an additional description of our faith, below is the **Litany of Welcome** we use when welcoming new members into our congregation:

**Leader:** Friends, we are here to affirm [new member’s name] as part of this community of faith. We welcome her through the embrace of Christ’s love and see her as a fellow seeker. We are no longer strangers but mutual members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of God’s love and welcome. As the household of God, we affirm who we are and what we are called to do.

**People:** We are the people who are set free to live by the love of God as shown to us in

**the life of Christ, and through the testimony of the saints and witnesses throughout the ages. We recognize our need for study, prayer, affirmation, and guidance. We seek to be responsible for each other, offering care and concern. We covenant together in God's love so that we may become sustainers, encouragers and seekers, one with another. We assume these responsibilities so that we may grow strong in love and thus be able to carry on the work of God in the world.**

Leader: This world is shaped by, and founded in the power and presence of God, but also permeated with injustice, alienation, and suffering. We affirm that God continues to live and create in the midst of today's events. We hope in God's presence in the midst of turmoil and destruction. We search for God's presence wherever hatred is being overcome, wherever people are brought together, wherever individuals are becoming their full and creative selves.

**ALL:** As we welcome [new member's name] to this community, we hold it to be the mission of this Church to be a living witness to the love seen in Christ in our community, nation and world, while embodying the presence of God and striving for truth, justice, and peace everywhere. We strive to be faithful participants in this faith community; to share in the life of this Church; and to seek to show God's love to the world.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

When the congregation was asked what was positive and should stay the same about our church, they named these qualities:

- Welcoming, hospitable, and offering fellowship
- Caring community
- Music
- Open and Affirming (UCC)/Reconciling (UMC) commitment
- Diverse journeys of the members
- Longing to make a difference
- Progressive theology
- Intimate setting and sense of presence

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?*

Worship services take place in our church building's sanctuary on Sunday mornings. The sanctuary space is designed to be intimate and inviting, with chairs arranged in semicircular rows that allow congregants to see one another. The space is filled with natural light from the many windows and skylights. The Lord's Table is front and center, with a lectern on one side

and a grand piano on the other. Behind them are several plants and a set of three crosses alluding to the ones for which our church is named.

We use a somewhat traditional outline for our services, with a call to worship, a unison prayer, at least three hymns, a sermon and the Lord's Prayer. We are intentional in worship to avoid guilting and shaming language. Hymns are one highlight of our usual services; we tend to use more contemporary selections and favor versions that contain inclusive language. Our other focal point is our Prayers of the People, in which we share our joys and concerns with one another. The space lends itself well to this exchange, which fosters interpersonal connections and ultimately guides the service to the Lord's Prayer.

Some of our most recent baptisms have taken place outdoors, especially in the course of relaxing pandemic-related restrictions on in-person services. Those baptisms have tended to be full of color and energy, and the congregation's enthusiasm and support have been palpable.

Good preaching for our congregation makes us think about what we believe and how Christ's example applies to the present day. We regularly have organized short series of sermons around various themes or events, such as Pride celebrations, books we're studying together, and even the music of Dolly Parton.

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?*

We currently have no children in the age groups that would be best suited for programs such as Sunday school and Confirmation; all of our regularly attending children were born in or after 2019. This means there certainly are future opportunities, though.

For adults, the most common model in recent years has been for a group to come together to read a book and discuss it along the way. Sometimes this has been planned around a particular holiday season, such as an Advent study around Anne Lamott's *Almost Everything: Notes on Hope*; other times, it's the foundation for a series of sermons that helps to bring others into the conversation, such as our most recent example, Brian D. McLaren's *Do I Stay Christian? A Guide for the Doubters, the Disappointed, and the Disillusioned*.

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?

In a typical month, the pastor is in meetings for five to six hours.

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

Action was either addressed by the Executive Committee if the full Council could not gather in time, or by a special task group, such as the Wellness Committee addressing the church's needs and practices during the pandemic.

- Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance? Yes

### 3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

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

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ELEVEN YEAR  
CHURCH  
PROFILE BASED  
ON DATA  
REPORTED IN  
UCC  
YEARBOOKS



Church#: 160665

Assoc: 204

Schedule: 0

Church of the Three Crosses UCC/UMC

Chicago

IL

60614

Please note: Zero values ("0" or "\$0") may reflect missing information in some years. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 2007.

### 3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)
Number of active members:	55	Yes

Number of active non-members:	1	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	56	Yes

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	74%	Yes
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	22%	Yes
Less than 5 years:	4%	Yes

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>
5	1	4	7	9	6	6	7	15	Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	13%	Yes
Households with minors:	7%	Yes
Single adults age 35-65:	4%	Yes
Joint households with no minors:	20%	Yes
Single adults over 65:	16%	Yes

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	99%	Yes
College:	90%	Yes



Graduate School:	50%	Yes
Specialty Training:	10%	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:	44%	Yes
Adults who are retired:	36%	Yes
Adults who are not fully employed:	20%	Yes

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

physicians, therapists, attorneys, educators, clergy, administrators, marketing professionals, architects, journalists, nonprofit leaders, retail middle managers

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?

A combined 20 to 30% of our congregation has a racial or ethnic background that is Black, Asian American, Pacific Islander, Latinx or multiracial. The remainder is white with primarily European American ancestry. Additionally, about 15 to 20% of our congregation is LGBTQIA+.

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one in the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)? Please note the date. Comment after the exercise:

The Church of the Three Crosses is an Open & Affirming (UCC)/Reconciling (UMC) congregation. Over the years we have had many discussions about how to be more inclusive during worship and within our community and have taken actions to display our intentions by celebrating Pride month, by prominently display the LGBTQIA+ flag on the front of our building, and by putting signs on our gendered bathrooms indicating users are welcome to use the bathroom of their choice. Prior to and during the pandemic, we had strong participation in study groups or book clubs reading diverse works in order to become better familiar with the needs and concerns of those different from ourselves. Beginning in the fall of 2016, we also

sponsored and mentored a refugee family from the Democratic Republic of Congo through the refugee resettlement agency Refugee One.

### 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	10	The pastor and/or sometimes a lay person helped to lead studies around a book or topic during Lent and Advent on a weeknight. In early 2023, we did a study on the book <i>Do I Stay Christian?</i> Yoga classes are held once weekly on Saturdays by a certified instructor who is a member of the church. There are between three and five participants each week, including both neighbors and congregants.
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	1	One in 2022. Baptisms are included as part of the Sunday worship service planned by the pastor.
Children's Groups or Classes	0	We have not had elementary age children in recent years. We have had Sunday school for this age group prior, led by lay people. As of 2023, we only have babies & preschool children. We have an area to the side of the sanctuary for children to play during worship.
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	27	The pastor plans, invites special musicians, coordinates readers, etc.
Church-wide Meals	25	Our council and pastor decide on dates for potlucks after worship. Notice of dates for potlucks are announced in church and in our newsletter.
Choirs and Music Groups	3-5	Occasionally, members have come forward to coordinate special music for a holiday or another occasion.
Church-based Bible Study		This has fallen under Adult Groups (as listed above). 10+ years ago we had a pastor-led Sunday school at 10 am prior to worship. Sometimes this was lay-led.

Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	15	Once a month on the first Sunday of the month, planned by the pastor as a part of worship
Community Meals	4	Church members facilitate serving a monthly meal to local nonprofit Deborah's Place. They coordinate volunteers to provide food items and prepare the meals.
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	0	We have not had a Confirmation class since 2017. The pastor has taught the class and included Confirmation as part of the worship service when applicable.
Drama or Dance Program	20	Each year there is an "impromptu" Christmas pageant held as part of worship one Sunday in December. It has been organized by the pastor or a few church members, and it incorporates everyone in attendance.
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	1	One memorial service held in 2022
Intergenerational Groups		It has been 6 years since church members have coordinated outings that are intergenerational. In the past, during the summer, we had "patio dining" in which all congregants were invited to meet at a local patio for a meal. The pandemic made it difficult to plan these outings.
Outdoor Worship	25	Our annual Blessing of the Animals service, which draws additional neighborhood participation, is held the last Sunday of August in the adjacent park. The pastor plans this in coordination with members.
Prayer or Meditation Groups	3-6	Yoga class as noted above in adult groups
Public Advocacy Work		The church holds membership in the advocacy groups ONE Northside, Reconciling Ministries, The Night Ministry, and Deborah's Place.
Retreats	12-15	A task group of four, including the pastor, planned a retreat in fall 2016. An outside pastor who specialized in spiritual workshops was hired to provide activities and structure. This past fall, the interim pastor hosted a day-long retreat for members held at St. Pauls UCC, located nearby.
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		Community members are always welcome to our programs, but we have not specifically marketed to the wider community.
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	0	We invite same-sex marriage celebrations in our space, which is unique for a UMC-affiliated congregation.

		We have dual-denomination standing and constitutional decision-making structure. Thoughts in the past have been that we should market this better in the community.
Worship time slot: 11am	14 on average	The pastor leads all worship components on a regular basis. We have a few people that have been liturgists, but not every week. We have in the past had a group of members that would write liturgy with input from the pastor for all the services in that month.
Young Adult Groups or Classes	6 to 8	In the past, we have had student pastors serving our congregation who have coordinated activities with the young adults in the congregation. We have also had lay members organize outings. We have not had an active group in the last few years due to the pandemic. Recently there have been a few young adults holding ad-hoc events.
Youth Groups or Classes		Years ago, we had a junior high/high school group led by a former pastor and a lay person. We do not currently have any members in these age groups.
Other  Church of the Three Crosses Grill on the Green	25	This is our annual church fundraiser. Many years ago, this was lay-led. When former pastor John Hobbs started in 2005, this event became increasingly pastor-led. It was lay-led in 2018 and returned to being pastor-led from 2019 to 2022. Most recently, this event was lay-led. Our interim pastor participated in meetings and was at the event both days, but a few lay people that have been a part of this event for a number of years took on the leadership roles. This event involves food concessions offered in our side yard during the annual Old Town Art Fair that surrounds our building and attracts approximately 30,000 visitors each year.

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a ministry beyond a congregation).

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
T.J. Bigbee	4 Chaplain	Hospice	Counseling	N

Tracy Nolan	4 Chaplain	Hospital	Counseling	N
Eliza Leatherberry Stoddard	4 Chaplain	Hospital	Counseling	N
Edward Goode	N/A	N/A	N/A	Y
Lynn Larson	N/A	N/A	N/A	Y
Deb Pyne	N/A	N/A	N/A	Y
Christopher Elderkin	4 Chaplain	Hospital	Counseling	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:

They often participate in worship and occasionally lead worship as pulpit supply. Some have served on church committees, or Church Council, and task groups, etc. We have had numerous members of our congregation heed the call to ordained ministry over the years.

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
Interim Pastor	Yes	Full time	Staff-Parish	1 year
Office Manager	No	Part time	Pastor/Staff-Parish	18 years
Pianist	No	Part time on Sundays	Pastor/Staff-Parish	A new person started Oct. 1 after the retirement of a long-time (18 years) Pianist

## REFLECTION

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



Church of the Three Crosses is a welcoming church, particularly for the LGBTQIA+ community. We have not done as much social justice work as we would have liked over the last few years due to health restrictions and conflict. Within our congregation of 55, there is a small group of active members (22), who keep the congregation vital under the leadership of the pastor. We have typically had stable membership of a young adult population, which speaks to the ways that the theology and culture of COTTC attracts this demographic. Some of these young adults are now having children; however, we do not currently have a children's program or ministry. There are about ten seniors (over 65) who have been members for 25-35 years; they are some of the most active members.

### 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$91,000
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)*	\$0
Endowment Draw (beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”) **	\$0
Fundraising Events***	\$10,000
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$20,000
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building and Parking Spaces	\$18,820
Rentals of Church Parsonage	NA
Support from Related Organizations (e.g. Women’s Group)	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts**	\$24,000
Other (specify):	\$0
Other (specify):	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$163,820</b>

Notes:

\*We do not have endowment proceeds. We have an investment account.

\*\*We draw from a money market account.

\*\*\*This is designated on the budget as “net proceeds.”

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year 2023): **\$183,699**

*Attach the 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. (Addendum A)*

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? **50%**

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

40 years ago, there were two occasions in February and September 1983, when the church was late on salary payments. These were subsequently covered by a combination of savings, fundraising, facility rentals, and individual donors. The tight financial circumstances at the time were directly tied to a lack of the buyer payments from the parsonage property sale, which were finally resolved in November 1983. It is the church's highest priority to pay all staff on time.

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%)*

As a congregation affiliated with both the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church, we contribute the same amount to both denominations. We calculate 3% of the church's total income from the past year. Each denomination receives half of that amount.

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: **\$0**

Reason for debt: **N/A**

Are capital and other payments current? **N/A**

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. N/A

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

Does your church have an endowment? No. We have an investment account.

What is the market value of the assets? \$191,034 (includes investment and money market accounts)

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

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? In 2022, we drew 7.67% of the money market portion of our investment account. In 2018, we drew 7.73% of the money market portion of our investment account.

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: The following are draws from the money market account:

2018: \$10,000

2019: \$16,904

2020: \$12,500

2021: \$2,000

2022: \$14,000

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

Depending on the stability of the account and the need for funds, the money market account is expected to last seven to eight years, if \$24,000 (the budgeted number) is drawn each year. This calculation is based on the investment account balance as of September 2023. We have, for a number of years, budgeted \$24,000 to be withdrawn from our money market account, though in recent years the actual draw has been lower. The funds in our investment account come from the sale of the parsonage in the 1990s. We have anticipated needing \$2,000 per month to cover the housing allowance, though in some years we have not needed that entire amount.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates: The above numbers are estimates.

## Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$22,868 (money market)

Investments (other than endowment): \$168,166 (investment only)

Does your church have a parsonage? No

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

We own the church building, located in the Lincoln Park/Old Town neighborhoods, on the near north side of Chicago. The facility is a modern-looking structure that might not be immediately recognized as a church. The interior has an open plan, which offers a warm and welcoming atmosphere. The church is a two-story building. The first floor includes the sanctuary, kitchen, restrooms, a meeting room, and a couple gathering spaces for fellowship and dining. The second floor includes office space, a nursery, and a second meeting room that overlooks the sanctuary. At present, one office space and the nursery are not being used and could be transformed for other uses.

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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? (*worship space, pulpit, fellowship space, facilities, etc.*)

The entire first floor is accessible; this includes the sanctuary, restrooms, kitchen, fellowship areas, and a meeting room.

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

With the pandemic and a drop in church membership, the church's income has been in decline. Were it not for "grace gifts," withdrawals from the money market account, and an estate gift, the church would not have the funds to continue its current operating pattern. We are working to better communicate financial needs and establish a pattern of regular reports to the congregation. In 2023, we have provided quarterly reports to the congregation.

### 3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.

The first significant event was the church's formation in 1966 by the merger of two Old Town congregations, both of which were founded by German immigrants in the 1800s. As part of this merger, there was a decade-long effort to construct a modern, open, multi-use building in 1974 to replace the old church buildings.

Another significant event occurred in 1968, when our congregation made the decision to give refuge to protestors from Students for a Democratic Society who were in Chicago for the 1968 Democratic National Convention. When police riots erupted in nearby Lincoln Park, our clergy carried our church's cross outside and through the park as a reconciling symbol amidst the turmoil. A photograph of this moment hangs on the wall in our sanctuary, and many congregants look to this as a pivotal moment in the life of our church for creating a foundation of social justice activism, progressive ideals, and peacemaking.

Another major event in the life of our church was our decision in 2006 to become an Open and Affirming congregation. This decision helped us adopt the values and practices of true inclusivity. It created more welcome and encouragement for the LGBTQIA+ community to participate fully in our faith community.

The most impactful event in the church in the last 10 years has been the onset and repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are positive that almost all churches could say the same. In our community, we experienced both beauty and suffering. Many of us are proud of how the pastor and church as a whole were able to pivot to online worship and support the community through mutual aid. We showed up for each other in the height of lockdown by making grocery runs for the elderly, leaving meals at front doors for the sick or recovering, holding front-stoop birthday parties, and going on long, socially distanced walks. However, spending so much time at home seemed to discourage life in the city. Many of our members and friends moved away to have more space, be closer to family, or enjoy warmer climates. There was also conflict amongst remaining members about when and how to return to in-person activities. We, like many others, are still recovering and discerning how to move forward.



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

As described above, carrying on amidst the COVID-19 pandemic required a lot of shifts in maintaining connection. We managed to hold worship services, gather for study groups, conduct church business, and celebrate the holidays virtually. We managed this with our relatively new pastor, who worked thoughtfully to keep us engaged around group projects, such as assembling and delivering activity bags for each household during Advent and Lent, and figuring out how to get our Christmas cookies baked and delivered safely in order to preserve our annual cookie exchange tradition.

The pastor and the Church Council identified subject matter experts to form and serve on the Wellness Task Group to advise on guidelines to keep us as healthy as possible. The Wellness Task Group continually monitored COVID trends in the city and, with these in mind, proposed ways for us to safely worship outdoors—weather permitting—and gather masked indoors.

As hopes were beginning to rise and a distant light could be seen at the end of the COVID tunnel, our pastor announced that she would be leaving in five months for a new position at another church.

We had many feelings that needed to be addressed, which would require a skilled interim pastor to help ready our hearts and minds for the search and selection of our next settled pastor. God provides, and we have been blessed with Rev. Leslie Ritter-Jenkins, who has led us through Restorative Circles to help us identify and express unmet needs that had left us raw. Once we heard and understood each other's needs, we were able to begin addressing resolutions and moving forward. We are healing, and we are working together to discover where God is leading us.

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?)*

In the past, Church of the Three Crosses has depended on its pastor and members to work out their differences with the skills they have. When conflict arose between the previous pastor and individual members of the congregation, the skill sets were not sufficient to create mutual understanding and strategies for resolution.

In the past interim ministry year, Church of the Three Crosses used a Restorative Circles process and now has a restorative system formally in place. The system moves from using fewer to more human resources. If an individual experiences conflict, they are invited to self-connect and reflect with the guidance of a worksheet to help them clarify their needs/values. If they do not experience resolution, they may choose to request a meeting with the other party/parties involved in the conflict. They may use two worksheets and congregational training to guide this conversation. Should resolution not be satisfactory to either party, they may choose to invite one of three or four people (the pastor and two or three others) trained as Facilitators, to help facilitate the conversation. The six-page Restorative System document shares more details of this process.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev. Leslie Ritter-Jenkins, Interim	1.5	Y
Rev. Britt Cox	5	N (UMC standing)
Rev. John Hobbs	14	Y
Rev. Dawn Chesser	3	N (UMC standing)
Rev. Norma Lee Kerns Barnhart	8	N (UMC standing)

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

Every pastor of COTTC has provided different styles of leadership. All of our pastors have shared the challenge of building and maintaining the numbers of our “flock.” All have worked carefully with the Church Council, committees, and individuals to keep things on track. Each pastor has come with different strengths and weaknesses: Some have been exceptionally strong in providing pastoral care, some have been strong in attracting families, and some have been strong in energizing us to be stronger in faith and in action. Our individual reactions to COTTC pastoral leadership define in the aggregate how strong we are or how challenged we are as a church community.

During each pastor's time at COTTC, there have been personal, congregant, and/or national crises that have affected our church community. Through those challenges and crises, this is what we have learned about ourselves:

- We can and do rise to fill voids in leadership when the pastor is not able, and our congregants are very competent at leading. However, we prefer a pastor with strong leadership skills that can guide us in directions that strengthen and stretch us.
- We need an interim pastor to lead us through an intentional time of transition and emotional preparation for change from one settled pastor to another. Twice, we have changed pastors without an interim, and the congregation's relationship with the next pastor was rocky and did not last long.
- We need pastoral care and concern. It helps us to pull through difficult times. When we receive pastoral care, we are strengthened and inspired to help others, which in turn helps us grow closer.
- We appreciate new interpretations of familiar Bible stories and examination of religious traditions. We appreciate study groups that help us mature spiritually, allow us to exchange ideas, and deepen our commitment to transformational work.
- We love children in church and want to provide a spiritual home for families of all formations. We are responsible for the spiritual grounding of the next generation.
- We want to learn how to make the most of who we are and discern what we have to offer. We have often struggled because of our size, but we are committed to being a blessing.

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

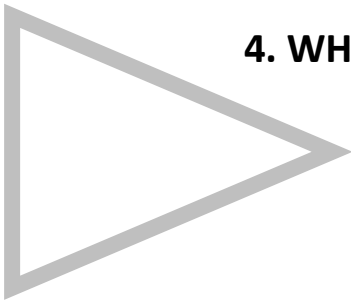
No

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?

*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?*

**As a congregation,** prior to each new year, we designate 12 nonprofits to receive our monthly Communion Offerings. Representatives from these nonprofits are invited to a worship service during their corresponding month to witness to the organization's work, accomplishments, and goals.

One additional nonprofit is selected to receive year-round support via offerings put in our “House of Justice” bank passed on the third Sunday of each month.

**As a small group,** on a monthly basis, COTTC members prepare an evening meal that is delivered warm to Deborah's Place, a nearby women's shelter. Since the onset of the pandemic, we have not been allowed to prepare and serve the meal on-site in the shelter's kitchen, which we had done for at least three decades prior. Also pre-pandemic, we prepared and served a monthly meal at a stop of the Night Ministry health outreach bus.

**As individual members and associates of COTTC,** we are personally engaged in mercy and social justice efforts as vocations, activism, and volunteerism addressing homelessness, local and world hunger, healthcare, mental health, public education, racism, violence, public defense, economic and environmental justice, and LGBTQIA+, civil, and human rights nationally and internationally.

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

One member, Edward Goode, is a former Association Co-Minister.

Church member Kendra Purscell-Jackson is a former board member of Wider Church Ministries, as well as former member of the Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries at the national level of the United Church of Christ. While only active at the congregational level currently, she does still sometimes attend General Synod.

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.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible to All (A2A)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creation Justice                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice                  | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other UCC designations:             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> God Is Still Speaking (GISS)      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designations from other  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Border and Immigrant Justice      | denominations: <a href="#">Reconciling (UMC)</a>             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M) | <input type="checkbox"/> None                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Just Peace                        |  |

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?

Nearly 20 years ago, after study and discernment, the members of Church of the Three Crosses wholeheartedly voted to become designated as an Open and Affirming (UCC) and Reconciling (UMC) congregation. Over the years, many people have sought out our congregation because we joyfully uphold these designations. By publicly displaying them, our congregation is also understood to be inclusive, progressive, and social-justice oriented. These designations have brought people into our church who desire a safe place to bring their questions and doubts, alongside experiencing God's love and gracious welcome.

As a congregation, we have not intentionally pursued any of the other listed UCC social-justice statements; however, collectively and individually, we are attentive to and work for the goals of Accessible to All, Creation Justice, Economic Justice, Inter-cultural/Multi-racial relations, and Border and Immigrant Justice. Our community would be open to further discussion about these statements of witness.

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

Church of the Three Crosses was formed in 1966 by the merger of two Old Town neighborhood congregations dating from the 1800s: the Second Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Saint James United Church of Christ. In keeping with this heritage, to this day, we maintain affiliation in both the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church. Our settled pastors over the decades have been ordained ministers from each of these denominations.

Regularly, we march in Chicago's Pride Parade as part of the Chicago Coalition of Welcoming Churches. Most recently, we have attended faith-based events hosted by Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church appealing for gun control and for religious institutions to house immigrants. We attended a conference of Chicago's Interfaith Roundtable on Homelessness, which was organized to hear each world religion's call and obligation to house the homeless in support of the Bring Chicago Home movement to end homelessness. We have attended events of the Lighthouse Foundation of Chicago to support the rights and safety of Black LGBTQIA+ youth. Each year, our October Communion Offering is designated for the work of both the UCC and the UMC through World Communion Sunday.

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.

### ***Church of the Three Crosses Mission Statement***

*Inspired by our history of activism, hospitality, and service, we are called [by God] to offer connection, time, and space to anyone seeking spiritual nourishment, especially those who have been harmed, rejected, or ignored by other institutions.*

*Leveraging our ever-evolving gifts and experiences,  
we gather*

*to worship using progressive theology,*

*to build caring and authentic friendships,*

*to act in service throughout the community and the world,*

*and to rise up to establish dignity for all creation.*

*We proudly and loudly proclaim:*

*Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.*



**Time spent gathering:** We have always lingered in the interpersonal opportunities our Sunday mornings provide, from our protracted passing of the peace (brought to an end only because the pianist started playing the next hymn), to weekly catching up during hospitality hour, to breaking bread together during potlucks. Now, after the months we were apart during COVID, we treasure our in-person times together even more. We try to balance our welcome to visitors without overwhelming them with our interest. We have always looked forward to our Advent and Lenten group studies. We know how to work hard together, whether for our annual two-day food service fundraiser or for cleanup days for our lawn and garden.

**Time spent in governance:** Our leaders are very conscientious about honoring everyone's time. Therefore, our council and committee meetings are scheduled on an as-needed basis, and the agendas, reports, and discussions are focused.

**Time spent going out:** Ours is a congregation of people who came to Church of the Three Crosses while searching for a spiritual home, a safe place, or a restoring oasis. We came seeking answers to questions, acceptance, solace, and rest. We were met with open hearts and minds: Jesus' radical welcome. Once here, we are inspired to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly.

As one member put it: We come seeking shelter from the storm. We leave with a raincoat, dressed to go back into the storm.

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?

Perhaps 15-20% percent of the pastor's time

## 4b. MISSION InSite

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

Our zip code, 60614, includes the Lincoln Park and Old Town neighborhoods. Over the next 10 years, population in the area is expected to remain stable (decrease <1%), the racial/ethnic makeup is expected to remain homogeneous (over 80% white), and the average age of this area will remain in the late 30s. Our neighborhoods have a significantly greater median household income and higher levels of education compared to the rest of Illinois, and this statistic is not expected to change.

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?

Our church's demographics are similar to the neighborhoods surrounding us, although most church members do not reside in the immediate community. Our church's demographics differ from the agencies in other neighborhoods which we seek to serve through our outreach ministries, i.e., The Night Ministry, Deborah's Place, and ONE Northside.

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

The demographics of the community do not currently shape ministry.

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

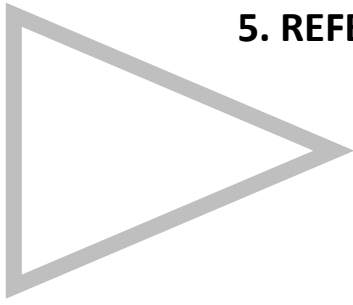
Our community leaders believe that we are great neighbors. In recent years, we have been intentional about cultivating relationships with the neighborhood organizations Old Town Triangle Association and Lincoln Central Association. Notably, we have partnered with these organizations in efforts to maintain and beautify Ella Jenkins Park, which is adjacent to our church building. In August 2023, we and these organizations co-hosted a successful celebration for Ella Jenkins' 99th birthday. Community leaders know of our efforts to serve through The Night Ministry, Deborah's Place, Old Town Art Fair, and our Blessing of the Animals service. Leaders know that we are small and not well known overall; they are

concerned about the future of our church and would like to see us connect more with the neighborhood, grow, and thrive in the community.

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

Many congregants have expressed that they were drawn to COTTC because they felt warmly welcomed during their first visit. They also liked the feeling that things did not have to be perfect and that they did not have to believe certain things in order to participate and connect. Many continue to worship with us because of the friends they have made here. Another significant draw is our Open and Affirming (UCC) / Reconciling (UMC) status and our values around social justice. Hearing bold, progressive messages from the pulpit and the calling out of social injustices that we as Christians must take a stand against is refreshing for those who are not used to hearing these messages at church.

## 5. REFERENCES



Name up to three people who have agreed to serve as phone and written references. Advise the three references: “The contact information you provide may be shared publicly. Please use contact information that you feel comfortable giving to candidates so they can reach you with their questions.”

Make sure they are not members of your church but are persons who know your church well enough to be helpful to candidates seeking more information. Request a letter from each reference in answer to the four prompts below. Attach the letters (up to three) as desired.

### REFERENCE 1 (Addendum B)

Norma Lee Kerns Barnhart / Retired Elder / United Methodist Church  
(815-218-5335 / keelamron@gmail.com / Former Pastor)

### REFERENCE 2 (Addendum C)

Patrick Holland / Retired Pianist  
(773-743-8505 / Former Pianist)

Note: If contact is needed, please leave a voicemail explaining why you are calling, and Patrick will return your call.

### REFERENCE 3 (Addendum D)

Amy Rovell-Rixx / Realtor / Keller Williams  
(352-214-7243 / amyrixx@kw.com / Former Student Pastor)



## 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:*

**A quote was shared in a recent service at Church of the Three Crosses. It resonated so strongly with the community, one could almost see the shimmer in the air and in people's eyes as it was read:**

*The grace of God means something like: Here is your life. You might never have been, but you are, because the party wouldn't have been complete without you.*  
*-Frederick Buechner*

**With this attitude in mind, we offer a prayer written by Search Committee member Kendra Purscell-Jackson:**

Dear God,

Our heartbeats flutter in this time of transition and transformation, but that might not be so terrible. Where we once heard “anxiety,” speak now “excitement.”

Open our minds to not only accept Change but to hug it deeply, look it in the eye, and say earnestly to it, “You are welcome here.”

With each pulse, open our hearts further to the needs of others—in our church, in our community, and in our world. May their needs ring in our ears louder than our own wishes.

Expose our vulnerable palms toward the purpose and the people you have invited to our doorstep. Give us the courage to swing the doors wide open and say, “The party would not be complete—we would not be complete—without you.”

Amen.

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## Addenda

**Addendum A – Year-to-Date Financial for 2022 follows on next page**

01/10/23

Accrual Basis

**Church of the Three Crosses**  
**MONTHLY BUDGET vs. YEAR-TO-DATE (rev.)**  
 January through December 2022

	Jan - Dec 22	Budget	\$ Over
	Budget		
<b>Income</b>			
0100 · Envelope	44,529.84	84,000.00	-39,470.16
0101 · Grace Offering	24,550.00		
0120 · Loose Plate	80.00		
0124 · PayPal Income	8,876.31		
0125 · Miscellaneous Income	3,279.79		
0130 · Mission - Apportionments	0.00	14,822.00	-14,822.00
0131 · Mission - Communion	3,149.11		
0134 · Mission - Miscellaneous			
0134.1 · Mission - Deborah's Place	100.00		
0134.4 · Mission - Night Ministry	861.00		
0134 · Mission - Miscellaneous - Other	300.00		
<b>Total 0134 · Mission - Miscellaneous</b>	<b>1,261.00</b>		
0140 · Parking	17,050.00	16,320.00	730.00
0160 · Building Use	2,421.50	6,000.00	-3,578.50
0502 · Pledges - Automatic			
0502.08 · Pledges - Auto - Communion	2,375.00		
0502.09 · Pledges - Auto - House Offering	575.00		
0502.10 · Pledges - Auto - Investment	1,680.00		
0502 · Pledges - Automatic - Other	46,820.00		
<b>Total 0502 · Pledges - Automatic</b>	<b>51,450.00</b>		
9099 · Money Market Transfer	14,000.00	24,000.00	-10,000.00
9102 · Art Fair	19,708.33	10,000.00	9,708.33
9110 · Memorial	1,243.54		
9116 · Building and Maintenance			
9116.5 · Capital Improvements	5,000.00		
<b>Total 9116 · Building and Maintenance</b>	<b>5,000.00</b>		
9125 · Special Gifts	148.02		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>196,747.44</b>	<b>155,142.00</b>	<b>41,605.44</b>
<b>Expense</b>			
Payroll Expenses	89.25		
1009 · PASTORAL MINISTRY			
1010 · Pastor's Salary	24,138.44	20,682.64	3,455.80
1010.5 · Self-Employment Offset	4,921.71	5,113.52	-191.81
1011 · Pension	11,340.97	11,451.62	-110.65
1012 · Health Insurance	5,943.14	3,957.00	1,986.14
1020 · Housing Allowance	38,464.23	42,204.00	-3,739.77
1030 · Travel Allowance	57.38		
1050 · Other Professional Expense	1,705.77	5,000.00	-3,294.23
<b>Total 1009 · PASTORAL MINISTRY</b>	<b>86,571.64</b>	<b>88,408.78</b>	<b>-1,837.14</b>
2009 · ADMINISTRATION			
2010 · Office Manager Salary	25,813.25	25,709.00	104.25
2012 · Office Manager Health Ins.	2,653.80	2,653.80	0.00
2025 · Unemployment Tax	93.96	100.00	-6.04
2030 · FICA Church Share	1,974.71	2,066.00	-91.29
2045 · Office Supplies	828.49	600.00	228.49
2047 · Office Computer Software	1,201.52	1,200.00	1.52
2050 · Office Equipment	0.00	200.00	-200.00
2055 · Copier Maintenance	1,780.39	1,400.00	380.39
2060 · Postage	11.60	100.00	-88.40
2065 · Promotion			
2065.1 · Tee Shirts	0.00	500.00	-500.00
2065 · Promotion - Other	2,338.40	600.00	1,738.40
<b>Total 2065 · Promotion</b>	<b>2,338.40</b>	<b>1,100.00</b>	<b>1,238.40</b>



	<u>Jan - Dec 22</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>
2070 · Bank Service Charges	548.10		
2075 · Miscellaneous Expenses	3,118.12		
<b>Total 2009 · ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>40,362.34</b>	<b>35,128.80</b>	<b>5,233.54</b>
<b>3004 · PROGRAM MINISTRY - Expenses</b>			
3010 · Worship Pianist	10,123.00	10,314.00	-191.00
3020 · Guest Musicians	200.00	800.00	-600.00
3025 · Music Expense / Piano Tuning	407.00	600.00	-193.00
3028 · Guest Preacher / Speaker	100.00	500.00	-400.00
3035 · Worship Supplies	1,005.20	400.00	605.20
3040 · Congregational Life / All Ages	653.46	200.00	453.46
3045 · Educ. Materials / All Ages	0.00	100.00	-100.00
3058 · Member Care	497.34	200.00	297.34
3060 · Child Care Contract	0.00	100.00	-100.00
3075 · Art Fair Expenses	4,533.78	6,200.00	-1,666.22
<b>Total 3004 · PROGRAM MINISTRY - Expenses</b>	<b>17,519.78</b>	<b>19,414.00</b>	<b>-1,894.22</b>
<b>4009 · MISSION OUTREACH</b>			
4010 · UMC	2,421.46	7,008.00	-4,586.54
4020 · UCC	2,421.46	7,814.00	-5,392.54
4030 · Mission - Communion	4,869.11		
4039 · Mission - Deborah's Place	200.00		
4041 · Mission - LPCS	360.00		
4046 · Mission - Night Ministry	1,488.00		
<b>Total 4009 · MISSION OUTREACH</b>	<b>11,760.03</b>	<b>14,822.00</b>	<b>-3,061.97</b>
<b>5009 · INSURANCES</b>			
5010 · Church Insurance	9,317.50	9,457.00	-139.50
5020 · Workers Compensation	761.00	804.00	-43.00
<b>Total 5009 · INSURANCES</b>	<b>10,078.50</b>	<b>10,261.00</b>	<b>-182.50</b>
<b>6009 · CHURCH BUILDING</b>			
6010 · Church Gas	4,126.00	4,200.00	-74.00
6015 · Church Electricity	2,473.56	2,600.00	-126.44
6020 · Telephone & Internet	2,624.66	2,820.00	-195.34
6025 · Water	89.36	100.00	-10.64
6030 · Extermination	748.00	750.00	-2.00
6035 · Custodial Service	1,340.00	6,000.00	-4,660.00
6040 · Building & Maintenance	144.85	1,200.00	-1,055.15
6045 · Groundskeeping	1,382.50	2,000.00	-617.50
6055 · Custodial Supplies	0.00	300.00	-300.00
6060 · Capital Expenditure	11,700.00		
<b>Total 6009 · CHURCH BUILDING</b>	<b>24,628.93</b>	<b>19,970.00</b>	<b>4,658.93</b>
9025 · Memorial Funds	640.00		
9130 · Money Market Transfer Expense	1,680.00		
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>193,330.47</b>	<b>188,004.58</b>	<b>5,325.89</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>3,416.97</b>	<b>-32,862.58</b>	<b>36,279.55</b>

**Addendum B - Norma Lee Kerns Barnhart / Retired Elder / United Methodist Church  
(815-218-5335 / [keelamron@gmail.com](mailto:keelamron@gmail.com) / Former Pastor)**

Norma Lee Kerns Barnhart

Retired Clergy United Methodist Church/Northern Illinois Conference

Served the Church of the Three Crosses as pastor from March 1993 until July 2001.

Retired in 2014 and currently live in Rockford, IL. I also have a home in the Chicago Loop.

I am a writer working on my first memoir and do pulpit supply for colleagues. I garden and quilt, and just a year ago finished a renovation of the outdoor space of our home.

Phone: 815 218 5335. Email: [Keelamron@gmail.com](mailto:Keelamron@gmail.com)

I connect with Three Cross parishioners from time to time and attend the Christmas Eve service with my family. Our daughter and her husband live in Chicago with two young sons.

**Church of the Three Crosses: Areas of Strength    Tenacity/Faith**

This church has a core of people who have long been faithful members. They come from all over the city and suburbs. They know the church's history and its founding and remain loyal to the denominations represented. (The United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ). They are active in the community, serving the homeless and other marginalized people. The building is open to others for meetings, such as Twelve Step Groups and Artist groups.

Each year, the church does a fundraiser with the Old Town Art Fair. Brats and drinks are sold in the lawn next to the building. Though this is a fundraiser for the church, it is also a chance to meet the neighbors and welcome folks into the space, such as offering restrooms. There is a brief worship on Sunday morning before the workers begin and a welcome to any visitors.

This church came into its own during the civil rights movement in the '60's and proudly continues its ministries to the marginalized.

The Pandemic and subsequent departure of the last pastor led to an Interim Pastor on staff who has been with them for over a year. At the Christmas Eve service last December, I noted that attendance was lower than in past years. The Pandemic took its toll, as it did with many congregations. But this congregation is exploring its future and looking at how to move forward. I remember when I came in 1993 to a small remnant congregation and their enthusiasm for the future. I see this as similar.

**Areas of Improvement**

I haven't been intimately involved in the church's story, but for any church that has been through a difficult time, there is a need to invest in new leadership and a focus on ministry for  
LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE – Church of the Three Crosses

the future. The last pastor was there for a short time. That, along with the Pandemic, probably didn't help the growth of the church. The Interim has worked with them to care for issues around this time. My hunch is that any issues for the church might be addressed by looking at the human condition and how we respond to hurt, loss, and conflict. I sense that the volatile time we are living in might contribute to feelings of inadequacy that could be faithfully addressed by this congregation. Looking at our Biblical ancestors who lived through difficult times, and developing how our faith leads us in times of uncertainty would benefit not only the congregation but those who would visit them. A congregation that heals from losses can have a powerful ministry to its community. Healing from anything is a painstaking and difficult process that takes time, but can be an honest way to get to the other side, feel strong again, and be ready to serve others.

### **A significant experience of sharing this church's ministry..**

When I came to this church, it had worked with an Interim for about a year and was ready to move forward. The congregation was small, about the size it is now. They responded by growing in their giving, reaching out to the community, finding ways to be more welcoming, improving their physical building to make it more usable and attractive inside and out, and expanding their outreach. Eight years later, the congregation filled the space, and worship always had visitors. This church has natural leaders and could do this again by developing new leadership to take it into its future.

I married some of these people, baptized their little ones, and buried their dead. I experienced significant times in the life of this congregation. They also ministered to me when I lost my son in the fall of 1998. They cared for me in many ways while, at the same time, they stepped up their ministry to get the church through those dark days. They hosted a memorial service, preached, visited, and carried on the ministries through Advent and Christmas. When I returned in January, they supported and walked with me in my grief journey until I left two years later to take a sabbatical. These people will always have a special place in my heart.

Some people think churches must be large to be effective. This church will never be large in its number of members, but it is large in its effectiveness to the community, the world, and in the connection it has within. During my time serving this church, five congregation members went into ordained ministry, and one into education ministry. In addition, many others began to see their ministry gifts and engage. We were not free of challenges, but we rose above them. That is who these people are. This has been their history. This church has a new calling to great possibilities. They need a leader who can see that with them.

## **Addendum C - Patrick Holland / Retired Pianist**

(773-743-8505 / Former Pianist)

Note: If contact is needed, please leave a voicemail explaining why you are calling, and Patrick will return your call.

October, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

This missive will be in the form of an observational monograph, from my perspective as worship pianist for the Church of the Three Crosses. As such, my viewpoint centers on an understanding that my position is to underscore the emotional setting of the morning service and gauge the mood of the congregants present in order to make the day's message more accessible.

I appreciate the fact that hymns are selected by the day's celebrant according to his/her message, and that my accompaniment style can be made more flexible than the hymn book's version. (Lastly, I always arrive about an hour ahead of services in order to settle in, and/or respond to any special needs of the celebrant.)

The congregation of Church of the Three Crosses is widely varied, in terms of age, central beliefs, academics, and/or social temperament and commitment to the general community. It is an active group of creative people, but of a fluctuating attendance often being subject to personal/home/job/family commitments .... consistency of attendance varies.

The Church is active in many social and other extracurricular activities, offering participation and support to larger outside events: regular financial support to community projects, the use of the building as a center for Art Fair (a fundraising opportunity featuring a food service wing), support of Deborah's Place Women's Shelter with food and personal attention, support of the Chicago Marathon (which isolates the building one Sunday per year), and church activities like a cookie fair, wreath and holiday skits, animal blessing Sunday, outdoor summer worship, and the leasing of the facilities to groups like Suzuki Strings classes and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.

Lately, however, attendance has waned dramatically due to the retirement of a much beloved pastor/leader, and due to a more youthful replacement minister, also due to the convenience of internet worship resulting from the COVID epidemic, along with other personal issues of members' lives. Some seniors are not as energized because of age, some younger members are handling job assignments or family issues, and thus a regular Sunday congregation of three dozen plus is now about a third of that figure.

It seems that the church was an operation where the former pastor, and partner, engaged this community by fully organizing care of the facilities as well as the services (like a sexton would do), and by drawing outside resources and engagements (as with a "pulpit exchange" done with other neighboring churches). A large void occurred

following their retirement, and the new pastor focused on service messages, while the community went through a collective "grieving" without guidance.

To address the future of continuing as a church, the congregation needs a format which will reignite participation. There is a need to expand membership with younger congregants and imaginative programming, and with less reliance on the convenience of financial support via bank deductions, internet services and zoom activities. Thus, a sense of commitment is needed - to the idea of a church/family/community, and of personal "sacrifice" beyond the feeling of church as a "filling station"/"oasis."

Can Three Crosses meet this challenge? Of course, but only with a concerted effort to rethink what it means to be a church, a community, participation, and personal attendance - otherwise it will continue to atrophy, unfortunately.

Thank you for your interest in leading the Church of the Three Crosses community - it will be challenging, but it will be well worth it. - Patrick Holland

**Addendum D - Amy Rovell-Rixx / Realtor / Keller Williams**  
(352-214-7243 / amyrixx@kw.com / Former Student Pastor)

Dear Candidate,

I began my relationship with COTTC early in my seminary career. I was a young student and both eager and nervous to begin my first student pastor position. I remember keenly the struggle to maintain personal and professional boundaries, how to dress appropriately, and how to preach to a spiritual and intellectual community I'd just met. I also remember that COTTC warmly welcomed me into their community and never let me forget I was one of them. As you navigate through your own discernment on whether to commit to this community, let me provide you with a few of my own insights:

COTTC is first and foremost, a church based on community. Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome at COTTC. This belief is woven into the hearts of its long time members and is the olive branch offered to any stranger or newcomer who walks through the door. COTTC cements this relationship through a variety of ways, but most effectively through the provision of food. COTTC loves to eat, to prepare meals for one another, to eat soup over Lenten studies, and to sit down together over potlucks to chew the fat, discuss Sunday's sermon, and catch up on what's happening in everyone's lives. I would recommend any new minister to continue this steadfast tradition of gathering and breaking bread. (Regardless if it's over a table, a hockey game, or throwing axes)

COTTC delights in pastors who are able to balance intellectual curiosity with the wonders of God's world. They love to laugh, to be surprised, to joke around, passing the peace, and being informal. They respect spiritual traditions from other faiths and are engaged when learning about religious similarities, or when they are able to see familiar text reflected through another tradition's perspective. They appreciate being both comforted, and challenged.

Their pursuit of social justice is perhaps the strongest bond shared by members of COTTC. It is rooted deeply in their hearts, their church, and in their idea of "legacy": will COTTC continue to answer the needs of their neighbors and if so, how? Several of its members work in various professions aimed at uplifting others, at feeding and sheltering and caring for the stranger. In their personal and professional lives, members of COTTC strive to follow the example of Jesus - the prophet, the teacher, the rebel, the grassroots activist - even if imperfectly.

Being able to help balance (or counter-balance) their efforts for social justice with the need for self-care will be delicate work for any new pastor. Balancing the demands of social justice while also identifying as an affluent community in Chicago will be a



challenging and necessary conversation. In my experience, COTTC has struggled with this paradox for as long as I've known them. It is both a strength and an area for improvement. Any new minister will need a proven toolbox for navigating this paradox with grace, ideas, and perseverance. While COTTC is eager, it can be hard for them to feel connected to their direct neighborhood. Establishing connections and relationships with other faiths/churches, organizations, and political activists - that share their values and endeavors for social justice - and literally taking this community outside its own walls, may be a good place to start.

There is much I could say about this church and its community. You will need a green thumb, a new recipe for chili, a love for art fairs and lemonade stands, and confident grace to withstand their kindness.

All the best to you as you consider this church for your own next step.

Rev. Amy Rixx

Former hospice chaplain, bartender, associate minister

Current realtor

Cell: 352-214-7243

[amyrixx@kw.com](mailto:amyrixx@kw.com)

## 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 a 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.)*

The information within the Church Profile has been compiled and written by the seven members of the Search Committee and our interim pastor. In order to best answer certain questions, we surveyed the congregation and utilized their comments to formulate some of our responses.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Susan E. Herzog, Co-chair, Pastoral Search Committee, 11/13/2023

Justin C. Myers, Co-chair, Pastoral Search Committee, 11/13/2023

## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment: YES

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

Staff Comment: YES

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

Staff Comment: YES

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: *Rev. Shernell Edney Stilley*

Name / Title: Rev. Shernell Edney Stilley, Associate Conference Minister for Pastoral  
Transitions

Email: [shernelledneystilley@ilucc.org](mailto:shernelledneystilley@ilucc.org)

Phone: 708-701-4933

Date: January 24, 2024

**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*