

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







**St. Paul's UCC Birdsboro
Birdsboro, Pennsylvania 19508**

Pastor

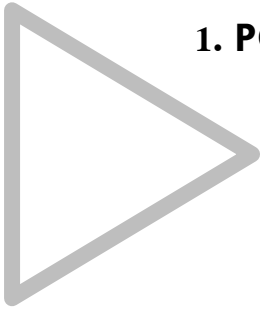
**Pennsylvania Southeast Conference
Covenant Association**

12-14-2023

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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)*



1. POSITION POSTING

- a. LISTING INFORMATION
- b. SCOPE OF WORK
- c. COMPENSATION & SUPPORT
- d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

1a. LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: **St. Paul's UCC Birdsboro**

Street address: **Church Building -300 W 1st Street, Birdsboro, PA 19508**

Christian Education and church Office-235 W 2nd Street, Birdsboro, PA 19508

Supplemental web links: [ST. PAUL'S UCC - St. Paul's UCC Website \(stpaulsbirdsboro.org\)](http://stpaulsbirdsboro.org)

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

Conference: **Pennsylvania Southeast Conference (PSEC)** [Home - PSEC](#)

Association: **Covenant** [Covenant - PSEC](#)

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

Rev. Kevin J. McLemore

Associate Conference Minister for Search & Call

PA Southeast Conference, United Church of Christ

1441 Laura Lane, Pottstown, PA 19464, Suite 100

Cell: 773-717-0029 mclemore@psec.org

Summary Ministry Description:

Today, we are a smaller, warm, and welcoming church. There is a great heart and enthusiasm among our members as we strive to grow and spread Christ's teachings through our work. We believe being the church must go beyond serving its members within the walls of the sanctuary. Over the last year, we have spent time formulating our North Star vision Statement:

St. Paul's creates experiences of joyful fellowship where children, youth, adults, and the elderly build open and honest relationships of mutual support. In welcoming the ongoing transformative power of the Holy Spirit, we find freedom from social stigmas and shame. This in turn empowers us to address isolation and marginalization in ourselves and in our wider community.

We are working on identifying the conditions in our community that are at the root of isolation and marginalization so that we can strive to serve our community, to love our neighbors and share the love and grace of God as taught by Christ. Through meetings with members of our wider Birdsboro community, we have adopted the idea of forming a mutual aid network and are in the process of learning about and envisioning how this might come to fruition through our work in the community. We are looking for a pastor to join us in the work of deepening our own faith and community building in order for us to live out our faith beyond our walls.

Photographs:



Exterior Church Building



Our front lawn-a stop on the community cross walk during holy week



General View of Sanctuary at Christmas





Our Corsi-Rosenthal Box Demo during Worship and a picture from a baptism.



Preparing Community Meal in our church basement kitchen and fellowship area



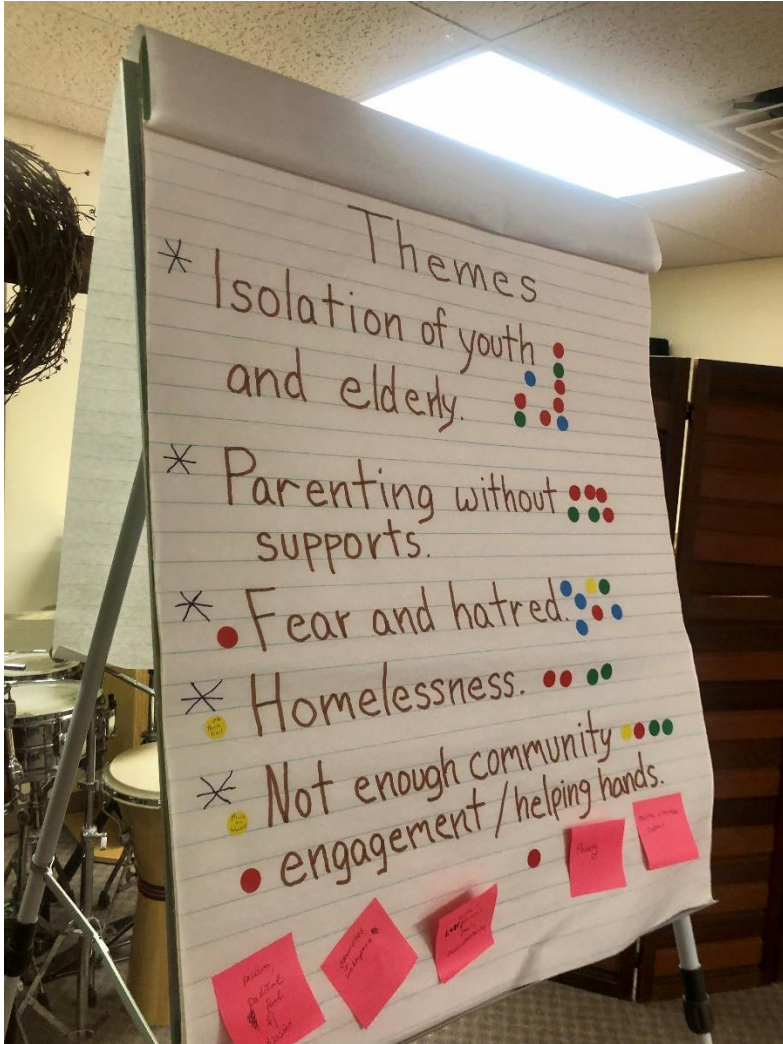
Preparing Community Meal in our church basement kitchen and fellowship area



Christian Education Building



Community Meeting held in Christian Ed Building



Notes Generated at the Community Meeting



Showing off our puppets at Christmas in Birdsboro





Views from our summer picnic



What we value about living in our area:

St. Paul's UCC is located in Birdsboro, Pennsylvania, a very walkable town with Boyer's grocery store, Dollar General, Birdsboro Beverage, the State Store, several restaurants, a public library and four public parks and playgrounds, two baseball fields, and public tennis courts. The borough is located along the Schuylkill River in southeastern Berks County between two larger cities; Pottstown is about 8-miles east, and Reading, about 8-miles northwest of Birdsboro. While situated in a rural area, Birdsboro is within easy driving distance of major urban centers. There is currently a plan to have train service provided from Philadelphia to Reading giving access and transportation to and from Philadelphia and beyond. Birdsboro is about 50 miles northwest of Philadelphia, about 100 miles from New York City and 150 miles from Washington DC. At the same time Birdsboro is situated adjacent to Hopewell Big Woods, the largest contiguous forest in southeastern Pennsylvania. Hopewell Big Woods is approximately 73,000 acres or 114 square miles. Hay Creek is a class A nationally recognized trout fishing stream that runs through the center of the borough. Birdsboro's good highway connections provide quick access to various cities, yet the borough has hundreds of hiking and biking trails close-by. The Thun Trail section of the 120-mile Schuylkill River trail passes through town and the 140-mile equestrian/hiking horseshoe trail crosses through the Birdsboro Preserve. In addition to hiking trails, the Birdsboro Preserve has highly regarded advanced mountain biking trails as well as rock climbing in the abandoned quarry which serves as one of the borough's reservoirs. Birdsboro is a haven for outdoor activities but also an area rich in history. Many state and national historic sites are in the region. This is an area where one can have the best of both urban and rural living.

Current size of membership: **127**

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

Position Title: **Pastor**

Position Duration: **Ideally, we would like to find a settled pastor but would be open to creating a contract for a designated term depending on candidate's needs/request.**

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: $\frac{1}{2}$ **Time**

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? **Yes**

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

- ✓ **Worship Service Leader and Preaching (One Sunday off per month-all others provided by pastor, must serve on Easter and Christmas Eve unless Consistory agrees to alternative plan)**
 - Participate in worship team meetings held as needed throughout the year
 - Work with the worship team leader to plan annual worship calendar
 - Work with worship team to plan themes, experiences and needs for worship services to deepen and energize, the spiritual development, connections and faith understandings of worship participants
 - Prepare and lead Sunday worship for Sundays noted above including crafting of liturgy and bulletin
 - Prepare sermons for three Sundays as noted above
 - Guide and find lay and supply liturgists
 - Plan music with organist
 - Offer prayers-our liturgy has a “prayers of the people” weekly
- ✓ **Pastoral Care**
 - Work in collaboration with lay people to minister to those who are sick, elderly or grieving
 - Work with laity to provide communion and home visits to home congregants
 - Provide for weddings and funerals of those in the worshipping community
 - Provide for pastoral office hours of 8 hours per week preferably on at least two different days of the week. We are open to making arrangements for hours between selecting days of the week and the times of the day. Ideally, some hours would be correlate to hours in which the church administrative assistant is also in the office.
- ✓ **Wider Church Activities**
 - Participate in wider church activities such as conference and association meetings as time permits
- ✓ **Community Engagement**
 - Support the congregation’s work to expand its creation and implementation of a new community ministry by working with the team to continue progress on this initiative. We are working on formulating a mutual aid network in the community.
- ✓ **Administrative**
 - Participate in monthly Consistory meetings (Currently held on Zoom).
 - Provide information to church administrative assistant for posting on website and other social media to promote worship
- ✓ **Personal Development and Interpersonal Skills**
 - Study and pray to increase faith and to improve leadership, teaching and preaching skills

Core Competencies:

As we aim our focus to envision and build our new outward community engagement ministry, we are looking for compassionate, creative leadership with a passion for social and environmental justice issues and a boldness for putting ideas into action.

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis (*from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance*): **\$46,500 for total package (salary including benefits) which is negotiable. We are open to assembling a package to fit circumstances as we understand that a ½ time pastor is likely bi-vocational with each person having different circumstances. We are willing to adjust the package to accommodate a healthcare benefit.**

Benefits (*choose one*):

Salary including Benefits. One benefit we will include is vacation time. We are offering two weeks of vacation. Vacation is defined as exemption from Sunday preaching and office hours for the week either before or after the Sunday off.

What is the expected living situation for your next minister: *living elsewhere to commute as needed.*

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

Ideally, a candidate would live within relatively close proximity (ie- 10 miles) of the church but this is not a requirement for the position.

State any incentives (*e.g. school debt reduction or retention bonus after a certain number of years in position*): **No special incentives at this time.**

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference: **PSEC, SE Berks Ministerium, Covenant Association, and UCC Communities of Practice are available to provide support.**

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

We will work with the pastor to achieve the best outcome to support the bi-vocational work including adjusting office hours during the week, supporting pastoral care as much as possible and being flexible on which Sunday in the month the pastor is off. It is the pastor's responsibility to provide for the blessing of the elements in advance or an ordained supply minister for communion Sundays.

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

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

- ✓ **Infuse energy and help to create momentum around our newly envisioned ministry and support the congregation in continuous movement forward. Help to facilitate community and internal conversations around the formation of this ministry. Coach congregants in taking leadership roles to develop our ministry.**
- ✓ **Continue to create learning opportunities related to social and environmental justice, particularly as it relates to conditions which create isolation and marginalization in ourselves and our community. These learning opportunities may be by inviting speakers or supply clergy to speak during worship, creating sermon series on topics or other ideas that help us expand our understanding of each other's experience.**
- ✓ **Deepen our congregation's spiritual development through preaching and worship activities and coaching of our worship team to keep the best of our past while creating new experiences for worship.**
- ✓ **Encourage experimentation and action as we work to find new ways to bring our North Star vision to life and to engage and team with others outside our congregation to create a spiritually deep, supportive ministry that changes lives.**

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

Our new minister will enrich our spiritual lives so that we can “be the church” in Birdsboro. By showing the way, helping us to shift our way of being, we will be moved to act from our hearts.

Specify language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling: **None.**

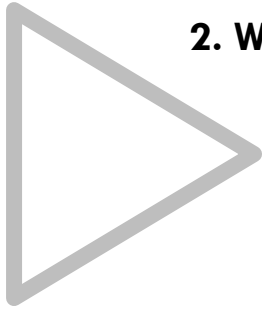
Based on what you have learned about who your church is, who your church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, describe four areas of excellence from *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry* that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

Building Transformational Leadership skills-Based on the overarching cultural trends and the decline of the church in general, we see a need for strong creative leadership. We will be making up the future, trying experiments, continuing to learn and having to overcome adversity.

Caring for All Creation-In our vision to address isolation and marginalization, we are looking to be caring for all, providing hope for others and expanding spiritual development.

Working Together for Justice and Mercy-Our work to address isolation and marginalization cannot move forward without understanding the experience of all people and working for justice. We don't want to just address the needs of isolated and marginalized individuals, we want to learn and understand the root causes for these situations and take action to also address that cause.

Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice-Our being and our work are called by God and we want to remain faithful in our listening and spiritual practice in order to make faithful decisions for action.



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?

St. Paul’s UCC is a loving, caring church. We are a small congregation that believe God is calling us to grow our ministry inside and outside our church. We continue to be called to be a loving, welcoming body of simple people who gather to worship God. Although God created everyone with different political views, sexual orientation, gender and race, we do not allow these differences to divide us or guide us in our love for each other as Christians. We see God calling us to be the light that boldly steps outside our own walls and creates an extended community in which we can create connections with others in our community and with them invent and act in new ways to address the isolation and marginalization we have heard from our Birdsboro community members and have experienced for ourselves.

Our church has historically participated in many functions such as our Christmas Bazaar, cake, pie and hoagie sales, yard sales, Christmas in Birdsboro, and our annual church picnic. Our very well attended community Halloween Light the Night event with free food and games was discontinued during the pandemic but recently has restarted as a smaller church front lawn event to coincide with the Birdsboro Community Halloween parade. As St. Paul’s membership has gotten smaller, we have cut back on some activities such as bake and hoagie sales and have kept our efforts focused on community outreach. One of our greatest successes has been Mission Trip Birdsboro. Starting as an “experimental” ministry founded by St. Paul’s UCC Birdsboro in 2014, the church volunteers worked on four homes and at three community projects. Encouraged by that first year’s positive response and success, Mission Trip Birdsboro doubled the number of projects the next year. More churches were invited to partner in the ministry, and it continued to grow. From a handful of volunteer workers at the start, the number of volunteers grew to 49 by 2018, followed by 113 the next year. Even during the pandemic Mission Trip Birdsboro had 108 volunteers. In its 10 years of existence Mission Trip Birdsboro had grown more than 10 fold. As a result of the mission’s great success and rapid growth, St. Paul’s reorganized the Mission to become its own multi-denominational ministry. The new not-for-profit Mission Trip Birdsboro & Beyond was established in January 2021 to continue the works of St. Paul’s original ministry. This year Mission Trip Birdsboro & Beyond had 151 volunteers. Crews did work at 48 homes and on two community projects.

We still participate in the new Mission Trip Birdsboro & Beyond, but it is now operated independently from our church. Other current activities include holding our annual church picnic at the Rustic Picnic Park in Birdsboro next to Hay Creek. We've also recently held yard sales, super bowl pizza party sales, we are involved with both the local Halloween parade and Christmas in Birdsboro.

Unfortunately, St. Paul's suffered the "perfect storm." The congregation was struggling with financial burdens and the stress of selling our parsonage to improve our finances. At about the same time our full-time pastor resigned. Shortly after losing our full-time pastor everything ground to a close due to the Covid pandemic. During COVID we conducted worship online out of safety concerns. Consistory chose to have the church strictly adhere to CDC guidelines. Many members preferred in person service rather than our Zoom services and moved on to other churches that had in person worship during the pandemic. Our attendance declined. However, we are trying to build back up by sharing and outreach within our community and beyond.

Last year, we worked on building upon our church's mission statement by developing a vision statement. The process of finding our North Star—a purposeful direction to inspire and lead us into action. The first two stages of finding our North Star vision were spent within St. Paul's own community of Christ, asking soulful questions about ourselves, about healing, and about our dreams for our future. During the third phase we compiled what we learned and crafted a vision that aligned with who we are as a church, what touches our hearts and how are these feelings expressed in actions?

We invited local Birdsboro area community members to help us identify needs within our community as the first step in living out our North Star vision statement in the wider community.

St. Paul's Mission Statement:

We are a welcoming, Christ-centered community called to embody, nurture, and share God's Loving Light both within St. Paul's and our wider community.

North Star Vision Statement:

St. Paul's creates experiences of joyful fellowship where children, youth, adults, and the elderly build open and honest relationships of mutual support. In welcoming the ongoing transformative power of the Holy Spirit, we find freedom from social stigmas and shame. This in turn empowers us to address isolation and marginalization in ourselves and in our wider community.

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

We are working on identifying the things in our community that are at the root of isolation and marginalization so that we can strive to serve our community, to love our neighbors and share the love and grace of God as taught by Christ. Christ taught us to serve those in need regardless of who they are, to love and to forgive others and to have faith. Our vision statement expresses our desire to live Christ's teaching to love and serve one another. During these trying times there are plenty who need love, need kindness and whose spirit may be shaken. We seek to offer the comfort of non-

judgmental support, of sincere fellowship and of faith. But to be able to do that effectively we need to ask and to listen to members of our community. So, we have asked individuals from the wider community to share what underserved needs they see in our community so that we also become aware (see image on next page for one of our community engagement sessions). From these we are working on identifying what we are moved to help with and how to proceed.

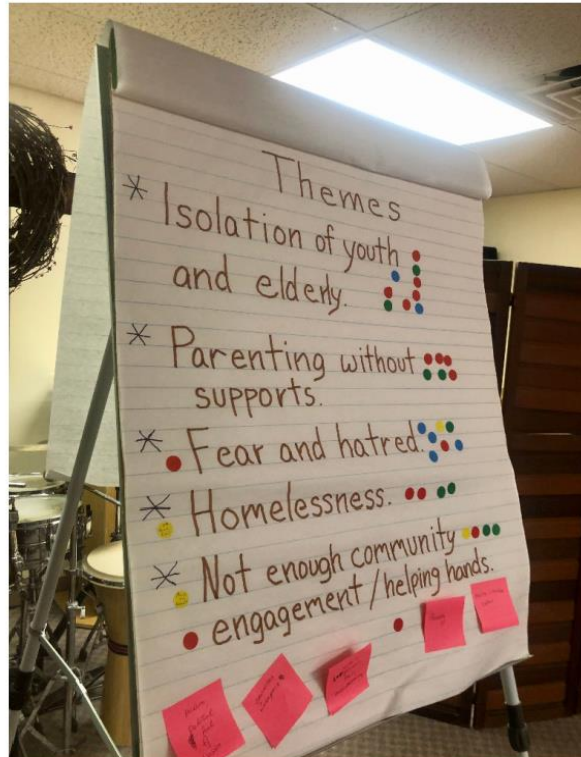
We are a smaller church right now but have a great heart and enthusiasm among our members as we strive to grow and spread Christ's teachings through our work. We believe being the church must go beyond serving its members within the walls of the sanctuary. James 2:18 expresses the need to act. ¹⁸ But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith apart from works, and I by my works will show you faith." If one truly wants to "love your neighbor as yourself" then you must be among your neighbors as Christ taught. This is the direction we are now pursuing through our North Star vision statement.

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION:

What breaks your heart about living in Birdsboro? What brings you joy?

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE & FELLOWSHIP

Join us as we continue dialogue regarding isolation and marginalization within the Birdsboro community & beyond. Join us as we seek ways in which we can address these issues.



THEMES FOR DISCUSSION:

- *Isolation of Youth & Elderly
- *Parenting Without Support
- *Fear & Hatred
- *Homelessness
- *Not Enough Helping Hands

WHEN & WHERE:

**Wednesday, October 18, 2023
6-8PM**

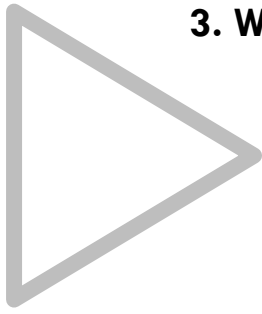
St Pauls UCC Christian Ed Building
235 W 2nd St, Birdsboro, PA19508

RSVP: October 16, 2023

Email: office@stpaulsbirdsboro.org

**Food will be provided*

ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS who live, work, or lead in this community are **WELCOME!** You do not need to be Christian or a member of a church to attend.



3. WHO ARE WE NOW?

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

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

3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation’s life of faith.

We are a congregation that works to help in many small ways where there is need in our community to fulfill the call to be God’s Love in the world. Sharing leadership, our congregants participate in many ways either with the operational needs of the church or to lead and/or contribute to some type of ministry needs within our community. We have three members who care for and maintain our buildings. Outside our doors, for example, we support the local community closet to help kids in our school district, we provide a meal or two a year for Hopewell Love community meals, we host a “Light in the night” during the community Halloween parade on our front lawn, we have participation in the local Crop Walk, and we prepare care packages for our home congregants at Easter and Christmas. This past Christmas, we hosted a community prayer tree where community members could write a blessing, a wish, or a prayer of remembrance on a wooden star ornament. We kept the ornaments on a Jesse tree in our sanctuary throughout the Christmas season.

Our congregation has a collection of large puppets that have been utilized over time for ministry. Most recently, we have used them during Christmas in Birdsboro to entertain passersby while we offered cookies and the opportunity for the Community Prayer tree as described above.

Over the last several years, we have moved away from using patriarchal, male language for God to using neutral language such as Creator in our liturgies. We see the Holy Spirit in our midst as we complete each of these loving and giving ministries all while facing many common struggles of an aging congregation with shrinking membership. We believe there is more ministry to be done. We acknowledge as described in other areas of this profile that it is imperative for us to be the leaders of a community-wide ministry that is focused outside of our community in order to demonstrate and spread God’s Love and message while making an impact in our local community.

Over the last several years, we have also worked to strengthen our website information and also have a larger presence through our Facebook page and sharing on a community Facebook page, Birdsboro Today.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

We see ourselves as a friendly, easy going, and humble congregation that has diverse talents and deeply cares about our community. We are not formal. For example, breakdowns or “mistakes” that happen during worship are not seen as problems but simply as us being human. We share the work among us.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Worship at St. Paul’s Birdsboro is held at 9:30am on Sunday mornings in our Sanctuary. Our congregants chat with each other before the service with some lively energy filling the space many times. Our worship service follows a more traditional liturgy which is prepared by the worship leader. Our worship is led by our Pastor or guest/supply or lay members when Pastor is not there. We look for thoughtful, reflective, “sticks to the ribs” preaching that ties God’s word (the readings) with the world outside to help us center and prepare for our coming week so that we can be what we want to see in the world. We use traditional hymns and have an organist. We are open to changes to the liturgy and to other experiences for worship. For example, we have had a drum circle during worship.

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

We host an adult bible study program before worship service on Sunday mornings. It is attended by 5-8 adults and is led by a lay member of our congregation. At this program, readings from the Bible are discussed. We currently do not have any special children or young adult educational programs but have the ambition to create something in the future. Faith formation is part of worship and on occasion have had themes for a series of Sundays. For example, this past fall, we had a sermon series on the Bible that included discussion and learning on what is the Bible, how to interpret the Bible, and what does the Bible say about LGBTQ+. We also had a series on the Beatitudes.

In addition, we have conducted a faith formation series using the book *50 Ways to Pray: Practices from Many Traditions and Times* by Theresa Blyth. Janeen Adil, Minister of Christian Spirituality, facilitated the study and hosted learning and sharing during several worship services. Over the last 5 years, we have hosted spiritual formation and contemplative group experiences for congregants and offered them to the wider community. We have learned about prayer jars, journaling, vision boards, and other spiritual practices.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

We have a 5-person Consistory that leads our congregation in collaboration with our Pastor. We have a formal worship team that currently consists of Pastor, our minister of Christian Spirituality, and 4 lay members. A lay member is the chairperson of the worship committee. We currently have a transition team that consists of 6 lay members. We also have an informal vision/community engagement team leading the community dinner and new ministry formation which Pastor has highly supported. Decisions are communicated either during announcements in worship or during the our once a month meet and greet. We have congregational meetings twice per year. We also utilize an eblast/Enews to share announcements and areas of giving.

- ✓ When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?
 - **Consistory meets 1/month. Meetings are 1 ½-2 hours. Consistory members spend many hours per week completing the work of the “business” of church including addressing building issues and maintenance, check signing, other items as needed.**
 - **Worship team meets quarterly to bi-monthly (2023). Meetings are 1 ½ to 2 hours.**
 - **Transition team has met sporadically as we have felt makes sense to complete this form.**
 - **Community team. Meeting schedule vary.**
- ✓ Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?

Immediate action was required after the breakout of the Covid pandemic. Consistory called an emergency meeting to discuss and implement an action plan. State and Federal recommendations were reviewed, and consistory drafted a church policy for wearing masks and restricting singing in church. Ultimately, the church developed a Zoom service and the bricks-and-mortar church was closed throughout the worst part of 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



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC
YEARBOOKS

| Church#: | 600140 | Schedule: | 0 | Saint Paul's UCC | | Birdsboro | | PA | 19508 | |
|-----------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Assoc: | 642 | | | | | | | | | |
| YEAR | MEMBERS | AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE | CHR ED/ FAITH FORM | CONFIRMATION | CONFESSION | TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM | DEATHS OR TRANS OUT | OTHER LOSSES | NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED | |
| 2012 | 205 | 68 | 61 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 8 | 36 | -40 | |
| 2013 | 192 | 62 | 54 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 14 | -14 | |
| 2014 | 190 | 57 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | -2 | |
| 2015 | 171 | 55 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 15 | -19 | |
| 2016 | 165 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 6 | -6 | |
| 2017 | 146 | 50 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 16 | -19 | |
| 2018 | 147 | 49 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | |
| 2019 | 143 | 47 | 18 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | -4 | |
| 2020 | 139 | 35 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | -4 | |
| 2021 | 132 | 14 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 | -7 | |
| 2022 | 130 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 7 | 0 | -2 | |
| YEAR | CURRENT EXPENSES | CAPITAL PAYMENTS | BASIC SUPPORT | TOT OTHER UCC GIVING | TOTAL OTCWM | OTHER GIFTS | WIDER MISSION | BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL | TOTAL EXPEND | PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS |
| 2012 | \$137,072 | \$0 | \$9,500 | \$1,809 | \$11,309 | \$2,939 | \$14,248 | 6.93 | \$151,320 | \$138,747 |
| 2013 | \$139,157 | \$2,131 | \$5,781 | \$713 | \$6,494 | \$1,091 | \$7,585 | 4.15 | \$148,873 | \$140,054 |
| 2014 | \$148,220 | \$0 | \$10,170 | \$8,020 | \$18,190 | \$1,314 | \$19,504 | 6.86 | \$167,724 | \$100,441 |
| 2015 | \$158,066 | \$0 | \$7,693 | \$8,083 | \$15,776 | \$121 | \$15,897 | 4.87 | \$173,963 | \$124,252 |
| 2016 | \$159,087 | \$0 | \$5,519 | \$373 | \$5,892 | \$0 | \$5,892 | 3.47 | \$164,979 | \$133,103 |
| 2017 | \$170,864 | \$2,752 | \$4,504 | \$1,407 | \$5,911 | \$0 | \$5,911 | 2.64 | \$176,775 | \$116,979 |
| 2018 | \$179,212 | \$0 | \$4,320 | \$6,104 | \$10,424 | \$2,784 | \$13,208 | 2.41 | \$192,420 | \$104,708 |
| 2019 | \$176,595 | \$2,546 | \$4,896 | \$1,817 | \$6,713 | \$9,664 | \$16,377 | 2.77 | \$192,972 | \$102,376 |
| 2020 | \$127,993 | \$0 | \$4,626 | \$5,907 | \$10,533 | \$0 | \$10,533 | 3.61 | \$138,526 | \$85,513 |
| 2021 | \$101,415 | \$0 | \$4,250 | \$6,287 | \$10,537 | \$0 | \$10,537 | 4.19 | \$111,952 | \$74,741 |
| 2022 | \$121,707 | \$0 | \$3,500 | \$4,159 | \$7,659 | \$0 | \$7,659 | 2.88 | \$129,366 | \$85,071 |
| % CHANGE | MEMBERS | AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE | CHR ED/ FAITH FORM | TOTAL ADDITIONS | TOTAL REMOVALS | CURR LOCAL EXPENSES | TOTAL OTCWM | TOTAL EXPENDITURE | | |
| 2017-2022 | -10.96 | -58.00 | -100.00 | 400.00 | -65.00 | -28.77 | 29.57 | -26.82 | | |
| 2012-2022 | -36.59 | -69.12 | -100.00 | 25.00 | -84.09 | -11.21 | -32.28 | -14.51 | | |

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.

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

3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

| | | <i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i> |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------|
| Number of active members: | 28 | |
| Number of active non-members: | 4-5 | X |
| Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above): | 33 | |

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

| | | <i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i> |
|----------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------|
| More than 10 years: | 94% | |
| Less than 10, more than 5 years: | 3% | |
| Less than 5 years: | 1% | |

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> |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 25 | 10 | x |

Percentage of adults in various household types:

| | | <i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i> |
|----------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------|
| Single adults under 35: | 5% | x |
| Households with minors: | 20% | x |
| Single adults age 35-65: | 15% | x |
| Joint households with no minors: | 20% | x |
| Single adults over 65: | 40% | x |

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

| | | <i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i> |
|-------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------|
| High school: | 25% | x |
| College: | 55% | x |
| Graduate School: | 8% | x |
| Specialty Training: | 10% | x |
| Other (please specify): | 2% | military |

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

| | | <i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i> |
|------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------|
| Adults who are employed: | 35% | x |
| Adults who are retired: | 50% | x |
| Adults who are not fully employed: | 15% | x |

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

Nurse, truck driver, spiritual director, writer, contractor, and business owners.

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 mono-cultural and would like to expand and are welcoming to diversity meaning people of color, gender diversity and sexual orientation.

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 have not formally had conversations on welcoming diversity or completing a Welcoming Diversity Inventory. We have however, through the development of our North Star vision have engaged speakers to talk about experiences with isolation and marginalization. Topics have included alcoholism and LGBTQ+ issues.

3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.

| Ways of Gathering | Estimated number of people involved in attendance | Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i> |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adult Groups or Classes | | |
| Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i> | 2 | Pastor |
| Children's Groups or Classes | | |
| Christmas Eve and Easter Worship | 30 | Worship Team with Pastor |
| Church-wide Meals | 15-20 | Lay leaders |
| Choirs and Music Groups | | |
| Church-based Bible Study | 7 | Bible Study lay leader |
| Communion <i>(served how often?)</i> <i>1/month</i> | 30 | Pastor and 1 volunteer. 1 congregant provides bread. |
| Community Meals | | |
| Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i> | | |
| Drama or Dance Program | | |
| Funerals <i>(number last year)</i> -2 | Not known | These were held off site, Pastor |
| Intergenerational Groups | | We want to create this |
| Outdoor Worship-1/year | 30 | Lay volunteers |
| Prayer or Meditation Groups | | |
| Public Advocacy Work | | |
| Retreats | 6 | Consistory has 1 retreat/year |
| Theology or Bible Programs in the Community | | |
| Weddings <i>(number last year)</i> | | |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----|---------------------------|
| Worship (time slot: 9:30am) | 35 | Pastor and Worship Team |
| Worship (time slot: _____) | | |
| Young Adult Groups or Classes | | |
| Youth Groups or Classes | | |
| Other | 40 | Annual picnic -volunteers |

Additional comments:

We hold informal “Meet and Greets” gatherings 1/month after worship. Consistory updates and other discussions are held with those gathered as well as general fellowship and light snacks.

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) |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Tom Adil | | | Ordained and has served as interim pastor in other churches and most recently as hospital chaplain and chaplain team leader | N |
| Janeen Adil | Three Way Covenant | Special programs | Commissioned Minister of Christian Spirituality | 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 |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Administrative Assistant | No | Part Time | Consistory | 15 yrs+ |
| Bookkeeper | No | Part Time | Consistory | 5-7yrs |
| Sexton | No | Part Time | Consistory | 15yrs + |
| Organist | No | volunteer | | |

REFLECTION

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

Our congregation strives to be open to engaging with the local community. We strive to be non-judgmental and inclusive in our actions to love our neighbor and to serve others as Christ has taught.

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

| Source | Amount |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving (2024 Budget) | \$88,320 |
| Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>) | \$ N/A |
| Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”</i>) | \$N/A |
| Fundraising Events | \$2,600 |
| Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose | \$3,500 |
| Grants | \$ N/A |
| Rentals of Church and CE Building | \$9,850 |
| Rentals of Church Parsonage | \$N/A |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Support from Related Organizations (rental of space accounted for in above number (e.g. Women's Group) | \$N/A |
| Transfers from Special Accounts | \$N/A |
| Other (specify): | \$ |
| Other (specify): | \$ |
| TOTAL | \$104,270 |

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$ 119,250

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? **39%**

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church? **No, we have investments that we intend to use to cover finances until we can generate additional income.**

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)-**No**

- 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%) **Through giving envelopes. Annual \$3,000 which is less than 10%**

What is the church's current indebtedness? **We have no debt.**

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**

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): **N/A**

Investments (other than endowment): **\$110,000 (Harvey Hafer and Cornerstone)**

Does your church have a parsonage? **No-sold 2021 or 2022**

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

- 1. Church building: 1st floor-sanctuary, meeting room with auxillary space, 2nd floor-used to be a nursery space in rear, storage including attic, Basement-fellowship room with full kitchen, restrooms (could use upgrading), mechanical room**
- 2. Christian Education Building-Main Level-church office, restrooms (Men and Women's), 1 large meeting space with kitchenette, 2 small meeting/classroom space, Lower level-rental space of 2 offices, 4 additional meeting/classroom spaces with one being used for church storage space, restrooms (Men and Women's)**
- 3. Small outdoor shed for storage including lawn mower and tools**

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church: **NONE**

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

The church building is not accessible. Each floor of the Christian Education Building is accessible from exterior but no elevator provided between the two floors, restrooms 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?

We, like many churches, have challenges with our finances. We, however, believe there is more ministry to be done and have seen success in the past of doing God's work in our community through Mission Trip Birdsboro. We also see that we must partner and become creative to bring together a design that achieves both ministry and financial sustainment. We are looking for a pastoral leader to partner with us to help us find ways to partner with others in our community to achieve this goal.

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.

Creating our ministry Mission Trip Birdsboro (previously described) in response to living our mission statement: "We are a welcoming, Christ-centered community called to embody, nurture, and share God's Loving Light both within St. Paul's and our wider community." Recently, we have expanded and refined our mission statement by creating our vision statement. "St. Paul's creates spaces of joyful fellowship where children, youth, adults, and the elderly build open and honest relationships of mutual support. In welcoming the ongoing transformative power of the

Holy Spirit, we find freedom from social stigmas and shame. This in turn allows us to address isolation and marginalization in ourselves and in our wider community.” The vision statement is currently driving our community outreach and our current efforts to develop a community mutual aid network. As for the most important event in the life of our church, we believe that the church is the community of Christ and as such the “church” cannot rightfully claim a “most important event” as that is a personal experience of each member’s spiritual journey.

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

Our church has managed many changes in the recent past ranging from the sale of our parsonage, to Covid, to our long-time pastor’s resignation, to adopting a less formal church service. Through each of these challenges the church’s consistory in conjunction with the congregation has worked together to move together as the “body of Christ.”

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.

Church leadership strives to find consensus, but naturally, a congregation will frequently not all be of one mind. We are a small congregation and church leaders listen to all voices sincerely and respectfully. Through congregational meetings we are able to find common ground to move forward. An example of not finding resolution was when Consistory wanted to hire a coach for our church. Many congregants had difficulty justifying the expense or value for our church. In the end, we had a brief trial period but then did not hire a coach. Ultimately, we developed our new vision statement “in house” with our own visioning team and with the help of our new part-time pastor. As for policies and protocols for conflict, it is believed that we do have them somewhere but haven’t had a need for them for so long we would have to have our office administrator search.

Leadership instead has preferred to work through conflict with open dialog rather than with rigid policies.

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

| Staff member’s name | Years of service | UCC Standing (Y/N) |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| James Yenser | 10 | Y |
| Elvin Groff | 2 | Y |
| Stanley Knavel | 4 | Y |
| Joseph Motz | 15 | Y |
| Margaret Ernst | 2 1/2 | Y |

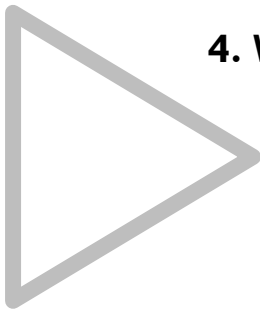
Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

For more than a decade St. Paul’s has been committed to seeing that our ministerial leadership is supported and treated in a fair and kindly manner. Ministerial leadership and the congregation strive to work together and mutually care for each other.

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

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

We have participated in the Hopewell Love community meal program by providing two community meals in 2023 and have planned our first one for February of 2024. We also have actively collected donations for our school district program, Caring Closet, which provides students in need with snacks and personal care products. We have participants by members in Mission Trip Birdsboro. We participated in the Birdsboro community event, Christmas in Birdsboro, by hosting a community prayer tree and sharing our puppet resources for fun during the event. Until 2022, we were participants in supporting Compassion International. We sponsored 3 children who have now aged out of the program. We received a small grant to build and share the construction of Corsi-Rosenthal boxes ([Corsi-Rosenthal Box - Wikipedia](#))

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

We have two members who serve on the Covenant Association Committee on Ministry. One on the formation side of the group and the other on the standing side. One member serves as the ministry chair for the Covenant Executive Committee. We have several members who have attended General Synod in the past. We have members who attend and have attended conference and association meetings over time.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at ucc.org.) Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

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

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

***We have not formally delved into these statements of faith. Our church is interested in learning more about these and considering formally working toward statements of witness.**

Regarding ONA, it is important to note that we have embraced and support a LGBTQ+ pastor and have hosted LGBTQ+ guest speakers and sermons on the topic.

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

Our pastor participates in the local ministerium. We have hosted guest speakers and pastors from outside of our denomination. See our webpage: <https://stpaulsbirdsboro.org/community-speaker--guest-preachers.html>

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.

Our Mission: "We are a welcoming, Christ-centered community called to embody, nurture, and share God's Loving Light both within St. Paul's and our wider community."

We believe we embody our mission through all our work as it is lived through how we are rather than what we do. We are looking to spend more time outside our walls to meet our mission as currently, we spend most of our time gathering (worship and meet and greets) and running the church.

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?

We are looking for our pastor to spend focused time on supporting the development of our new community ministry. We intend to explore partnering with other local churches to support the development of our ministry and to also provide support to our pastor as we recognize that the diversity of activities and needs to "run" the church can be overwhelming and challenging. We are looking to creatively find ways to align our pastor's strengths with our work and church and then find ways to fill in other areas in order to give focus to the pastor's work.

4a. MISSION Insite

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

Our community is moving away from a Caucasian mono-culture to represent other groups.

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?

We see that we represent the aging population and not families with young children.

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

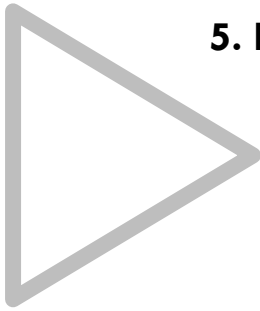
Due to our demographics, we are spending time on home congregations and giving for school age children.

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

We hear that we are known for our past food sales such as hoagies, shoefly pies and pizzas. Most importantly, we are known for starting Mission Trip Birdsboro.

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

People have commented on our friendliness, we have a diversity of opportunities for giving and ministry, and that we don't have cliques.



5. REFERENCES

Letters have been requested from the following references and will be attached once received.

REFERENCE 1

**Paul and Debbie Rahn / Attends Worship Regularly (not a member)
(610-301-8787 / Friend)**

We feel that the church does a wonderful job with the community (serving the community).

We like the message from the sermons and how it is appropriate to world situations (Pastor Margaret does a wonderful job with sermons which was a huge reason we became a "regular" visitor.)

We appreciate the open and inclusive mission of the church.

We like the prayer responses (when congregation can lift up prayers during the service).

We have felt very welcomed by the members of the church.

We like the hymns (we are partial to older/traditional hymns, but also enjoy learning new music too)

As far as improving the ministry, we think maybe some of the guest speakers should be vetted more (some gave incorrect Biblical references etc.) And we are also partial to saying the Creeds and occasionally the Statement of Faith.

Concerning a significant experience, we enjoyed meeting Pastor Margaret and learning about her.

REFERENCE 2

**Natalie Aaron / Former President and Board Member of Mission Trip Birdsboro and Beyond
(610-662-1524 / nataliecaaron@gmail.com / Friend)**

Describe some areas of strength in this church's ministry. St. Paul's sits right in the heart of Birdsboro PA and is well known in the community as a grassroots and active church. They started Mission Trip Birdsboro in 2013 with a small group of parishioners that has grown to a huge success, helping 100's of homeowners in Birdsboro. The church has also ministered to the community by being involved in community events, such as Christmas in Birdsboro, the Halloween Parade, and the Birdsboro Street Fair.

There is a recent effort to reach out to the community to build something new and something needed. The church invited community members and community leaders for dinner to discuss what the community needs.

St. Paul's and the people of this church are committed to serving their community through actions of

Christ's love.

This church is also one of the few where all people are welcomed. Churches say that all are welcomed, but this church is actively welcoming. How are they welcoming? They are intentional about having speakers of many different races, genders, age, and cultures that have been invited to speak and minister in various ways. The material and resources used are from a diverse group of people around the globe.

Another area St. Paul's shows strength in is the care of their own members. Members who are unable to join in person are still very much involved and spoken of. They are not forgotten. The prayers and praises from the members who are unable to be there physically are shared with the members in attendance. Both in person and those on Zoom are acknowledged and feel a part of the service.

Describe some areas for improvement in this church's ministry. One area of improvement would be an online presence. This church does so well at being present in community and I think they could do well with an online community as well. The website currently lists resources available in the area and I would love to see this expanded on as a "hub" for people that have physical and spiritual needs.

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church's ministry. I have had the opportunity to work with many of the people at St Paul's for the last 5 years at Mission Trip Birdsboro and other community events. I had grown close to several of the members. During the last few years, I had grown distant from my own church and distant from Christianity. I was no longer sure what Christianity meant to me and my faith in God's people was suffering. After one long day of work at Mission Trip Birdsboro, Pastor Margaret came over to chat with me. Out of the 100 + people I had met that day, she was the only one to see that I was not present. My mind was someplace else. I confessed to her how I was hurt by the church, how I felt unseen and out of place. She listened and we later had lunch together to discuss more.

Weeks later, I was invited to the church to sing worship songs with my son and his family. I was worried about how the church would accept my son, a Black man with dreadlocks and tattoos. Pastor Margaret shared that I should not worry, that my son would be accepted. She was right. I came into the church, a Black woman, with my Black son, into a nearly all white congregation, and we could feel something was different. There were no judging glances, only warm, welcome faces. The congregation was so kind to us and welcomed us back several times. While we were there, we listened to the speakers. I was a bit nervous to get involved with church again so soon. My fears were resolved quickly when I heard the sermons about peace, about forgiveness, and even suffering. The church of St. Paul's welcomed my family as if we were family, we were welcomed. I did find a church in an urban area that I feel comfortable at, and my family at St. Paul's were happy for me. St. Paul's was a place where I found rest. I found peace and I was seen. The church was so kind to me, and I will always be grateful.

Anything else you wish to share. Since that time a few years ago, I have since been back to St. Paul's. I was invited to come to the community dinner as a valued member of the community. There is no doubt there is something happening at St Paul's Birdsboro. Something is being stirred in the hearts of the congregation. They are hungry to share and show God's love to all people, those who may be new to the faith or those that need a place to rest and heal.

REFERENCE 3

Susan Shelly McGovern / Attends Worship Occasionally (not a member)

(susanshelly19@comcast.net / Friend)

Although not a member, I have attended St. Paul's United Church of Christ numerous times over a period of about the last six months and have found the experience to be both meaningful and enjoyable.

While the congregation is small, members project a great feeling of warmth, something I noticed from the first time I attended.

Thinking about some areas of strength in the church's ministry, I would mention a variety of preaching from both St. Paul's pastor and guest pastors, and the congregation's apparent embrace of preaching styles and topics dealt with in the sermons presented. Those preaching have not shied away from discussing tough issues, and those listening appear willing to consider the topics broached and appreciative of the pastors' knowledge and presentation.

I also have been impressed with congregants' commitment to serving the community in which the church is located and their interest in environmental issues. There seems to be no shortage of people willing to work in those areas.

One area I wish could be improved upon is increasing the diversity of the congregation, which appears to be generally homogeneous in terms of age and ethnicity. As we know, however, this is an issue with many UCC and other churches as congregants age and fewer young people attend.

I am not qualified to judge the strength and health of a congregation, but St. Paul's seems to operate smoothly, and people appear to appreciate the church and each other and enjoy the time they spend together. I believe the worship is sincere and relevant, and I feel that I have benefited spiritually from the times I've attended.

REFERENCE 4

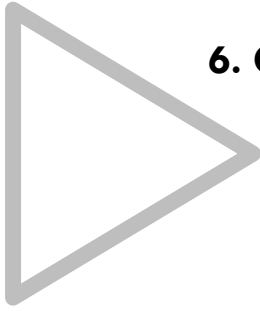
Betsy Johnson / Attends Worship Occasionally (not a member) / Supply Organist

(610-404-1598 / betsbel919@gmail.com / Friend)

I believe St. Paul's UCC in Birdsboro has a very welcoming congregation. It is a warm and friendly group of people.

St. Paul's is in need to attract more and younger people to share their time and talents to help with the church ministries.

As a supply organist, I have always been welcome with open arms. On Christmas Eve service, after playing my flute, the congregants applauded. I was overjoyed with their response.



6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

- a. CLOSING PRAYER
- b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT
- c. CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

6a. CLOSING PRAYER

Adapting Thomas Merton’s prayer, we can say for our church: Our Lord God, we have no idea where we are going. We do not see the road ahead of us. And in the next breath we also acknowledge this truth: God’s word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

By trying to be prayerfully attentive to the Spirit’s work among us, we continue to receive just enough guidance to take one or two steps ahead. We walk in trust, in faith, and with the assurance that if we continue to listen and act in love—for God, for others, for self, and for creation—we will be following as disciples in the Way of Jesus.

6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

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

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile? *(for example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.)*

The 6 person transition team worked collaboratively on the church profile. Some of the content was written by one member. Much of the content was discussed and then written by a member of the team and then reviewed by the team. All content was given to the congregation for their review and comment.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Doug Johnson / Consistory President / date:

6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:



Name / Title:

Rev. Kevin J. McLemore

Email:

mclomore@psec.org

Phone:

773-717-0029

Date:

February 8, 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