

# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

West Newbury Congregational Church  
West Newbury, VT

Settled Minister

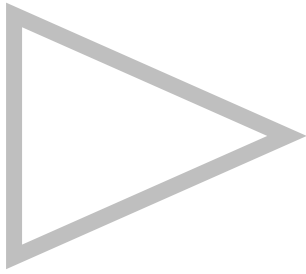
Grafton Orange Sullivan

December 21, 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

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Church name: [West Newbury Congregational Church](#)

Street address: [207 Tyler Farm Rd, West Newbury, VT 05085](#)

Supplemental web links:

<https://www.westnewburychurch.org/>

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

Conference: [Vermont UCC](#)

Association: [Grafton Orange Sullivan](#)

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

[Paul Sangree](#)

[Associate Conference Minister](#)

[802-728-4999 ext. 5#](#)

[sangreepucc@gmail.com](mailto:sangreepucc@gmail.com)

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 church has proven its strength and resiliency in recent years but faces challenges that include an aging population, fewer workers willing to accept committee responsibilities, and the absence of young families. We hope that our current energy will sustain us, but we hope that with the help of a new minister we can engage the community in ways that will make our church more vital and inviting to those who so far have not become part of us. We recognize that the church is its people and want to extend our fellowship and faith to keep the church relevant to the wider community](#)

Photographs:

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

<https://www.westnewburychurch.org/>

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

Newbury, West Newbury, and the surrounding area is more than a place - it's a way of living, of enjoying life fully. Our mountain views are as enchanting as they come, and there's many natural wonders, lakes, rivers, varied forests, and scenic country roads to be enjoyed. We love our community with its mix of long-time locals and more recent transplants and are all connected by our strong sense of place. Larger, more bustling towns are within a reasonable distance in all directions offering many cultural and culinary opportunities. Whether a native or a transplant, our own stories begin with a love of the places we live, and a passion for sharing that dream and our intimate knowledge with others.

<https://westnewburyhall.org>

<https://tuckertownforest.org/>

Current size of membership: 62

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

Position Title: [Pastor \(West Newbury Congregational Church and First Congregational Church of Newbury\)](#)

Position Duration (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

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

Compensation Level (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

[Full Time if part of a cooperative arrangement with FCCN](#)

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

[Yes](#)

## 1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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

The West Newbury Congregational Church is an inclusive community. It is one that takes God's love for the world seriously, that fosters a living faith, that sincerely cares for one another, and the larger community we serve beyond our walls. Love and kindness are the hallmarks of our common life. We're also a community that welcomes newcomers and seekers of all kinds on life's journey. We need a pastor who is eager to work alongside us as we strive to be the community that Jesus Christ calls us to be. We need and respond to sermons which speak to our daily lives, as well as lifting us in the knowledge of God's presence in all things and in all people. We need a pastor who will teach us the truth of Holy Scripture while welcoming our doubts and questions, thus providing an environment for exploration and growth in our faith. We are seeking one who will be available and open to the pastoral needs of our congregation, especially making visitations and being available for spiritual counseling as well. We seek a thoughtful teacher who will restore our Christian Education program so that, together, we may know Christ better and be empowered to serve those who are vulnerable, rejected, overlooked, or marginalized in both our local community, and the wider world.

It is the mutual hope of the First Congregational Church of Newbury (FCCN) and the West Newbury Congregational Church (WNCC) to share a minister. While these are different churches and communities, they share important motivations, needs, and goals as can be seen in their respective profiles. This arrangement is entirely new to both churches but represents an opportunity to preserve and strengthen them both. Both churches are committed to overcoming wherever possible any logistical or practical obstacles such as times of service. We will explore efficiencies that simplify the work of the shared minister such as combining bible study. Interested candidates should come with these things in mind.

### 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.)*

Cheerful (Friendly, Good sense of humor), Thoughtful (aware of local and wider contemporary issues), a good speaker but who listens well (people person).

## 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 (*choose one*):

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*)?

Our parsonage can be available.

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

Living in the community will be ideal, but we will certainly consider the needs of a minister applying for this position along with all other factors in this selection.

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

None at this time

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

This support is available

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.

- Support those in the congregation and community that are aging.
- Work to attract youth and young families
- Maintain and even grow both local and world-wide ministries in which we already engage.
- Help support our ONA process

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

Our church has always had a vision of helping others. We have ministries within our community (veterans, food shelf, what we call the "Back Room", and an emergency community support network). We also donate material items and funds to worthy initiatives like Help Kids India, and Wisdom Stoves (Africa). We would expect the minister to support these and potentially other initiatives.

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

N/A

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.

In addition to the points made in the Manual on Ministry we wish to emphasize the following points as well:

#### 1. WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE AND MERCY

- Open to sharing pulpit, collaborating
- Open to all cultures
- Support the churches Open and Affirming journey

#### 2. STRENGTHENING INTER- AND INTRA- PERSONAL ASSETS

- Kind, compassionate, open and affirming
- Practice Humility
- A person that can be flexible to deal with the unexpected things that might come up, is able to communicate with technology and personally
- Loves this building, this location – understands this gift

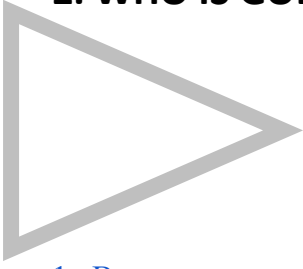
#### 3. CARING FOR ALL CREATION

- Caring for the greater world and the environment
- Loves nature

#### 4. EXHIBITING A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION AND ONGOING SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

- Adept at Bible studies.
- Prioritizes music, engages it
- Dedicated to the church community

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



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

### 1. Become a more community-oriented place

- No strings attached programs, projects, events, meals, game night
- Partner with Oxbow/Rivendell/BMU school systems to engage students in community service projects.
- Expand leadership opportunities within the church and the community
- Find more ways to partner with the community, eg. West Newbury Hall.
- Explore meals for all
- Expand our outreach through media

### 2. Become a beacon of hope

- Find out what people need/want and offer that
- Expand visitations by pastor and lay people, set up system so nobody is forgotten
- Reach out in times of need: financially, meals, visits eg. Back Room
- A strong presence and support for people in crisis
- Become Open and affirming, “just peace”, stewards of our earth and find acceptance.

### 3. Become a spiritually growing place

- Offer Bible Study, grow in prayer
- Expand our ministries – more active, increase communication in and outside of our church
- Offer online worship
- Local and global missions
- Promote a safe place for all to have a relationship with God

Two experiments over the past year and results:

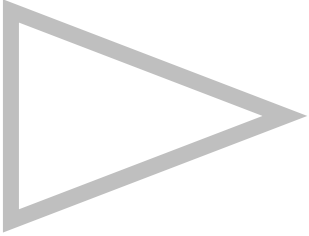
#### 1. Morning humor/trivia

- Brings people together, laughing and relaxing them
- Gives people something to say to others about our church that’s fun and easy to talk about
- Makes people think, stimulates the brain
- Offers opportunities for people to contribute

## 2. Music ministry

- Encouraged community members that liked to sing to join the choir resulted in multiple new active memberships
- Invite musicians in the community to perform during worship
- Adds to the joy and charm of the church

## 3. WHO ARE WE NOW?



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

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

### 3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

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We are a globally minded community that strives to make the world a kinder, more peaceful, and environmentally sustainable place, while keeping the needs of our own community at the forefront. We believe that God is love and that God happens between us. God is described in the Hebrew Scriptures, New Testament, and contemporary examples. The Holy Spirit comes to us through the fellowship of our congregation.

Our congregation warmly welcomes all who walk through our door. We are community oriented, trying to attend to not only spiritual growth but needs and crises within our community. We have empathy and compassion for those in need and when circumstances require, we are quick to galvanize into action. A strong core of individuals come together for this work. We are thoughtful and excited to learn and grow. Being blessed with many musicians in our midst, we provide musical events that tap into the multitude of talents of our community. We love to laugh, and we enjoy being together. Communication is encouraged through a church email group, printed community and business directories, and, at times, video recordings of Sunday services. Historically we have also focused on topics of interest in a forum environment; COVID ended that, but we see it beginning again.



Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

- Worship takes place in the West Newbury Church, and at times we are joined by other congregations and visitors. Worship is based around interpretations of God's word in scripture, and the relationships of those lessons to relevant events in the larger world, and the environment. Much time is spent learning about each other and the challenges we face.
- Good preaching can be described as; welcoming, friendly and non-judgmental but challenging congregants to examine themselves, open minded, engaging and thought provoking, spiritual, caring, compassionate, celebratory and inclusive.
- Recent celebrations including baptisms, weddings, and funerals have been requested by community members that were not actively engaged with the church and have been graciously welcomed.

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

- We currently have no youth (1-18) except those who visit with relatives. We do have examples of youth that have grown up in this church that have continued their journey of faith.
- We have had a bible study group but it ended with COVID. It was well attended and helped members grow spiritually. There is interest in having it again.
- Young people participate in our choir, church reading and are serving on our Open and Affirming core team.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

- WNCC- Cabinet meetings on average once or twice per year. Individual committees meet as needed. We sense the need for leadership of the committees.
- When immediate action is required we utilize our internal communication systems to respond.
- COVID brought us the need to create a community-wide support network. This mostly centered around getting and distributing food, but also included community awareness of disease risk and response. More recently the unexpected death of a new member brought us together around his family.

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, annual reports and bylaws are available on request.

### 3b. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

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Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	30	Yes (62 total membership)
Number of active non-members:	4	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	34	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:	77%	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	1%	
Less than 5 years:	22%	

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>
0	0	0	3	3	2	12	28	22	Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	5	

Households with minors:	1	
Single adults age 35-65:	4	
Joint households with no minors:	22	
Single adults over 65:	15	

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	14%	Yes
College:	44%	Yes
Graduate School:	34%	
Specialty Training:		
Other (please specify):	8%	unknown/children

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	24%	yes
Adults who are retired:	59%	yes
Adults who are not fully employed:		

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

Working adults: administration, retail, professional services including trades, architect, ministerial, IT consultants, nurseryman, culinary, lister, teacher, financial planner, veterinarian, professor.

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?

Caucasian, European origin, one Asian-American.

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:

In spring of 2023 we celebrated an unprecedented event of welcoming 13 new members to our congregation. The new members are a diverse group that have lived in the community for a while. What caused them to consider coming to our church after living here for some time was being individually invited by an existing member. These new members have brought a life and vitality to our church that was greatly needed. They are a blessing.

The realization that there could be other people in our community that might not feel that they would be welcome in our church has led us to begin the journey to become an Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation as recognized by the UCC ONA national coalition.

In late October 2023, a core 6 person ONA team was formed from the congregation. The team consists of 3 men and 3 women, 4 of which identify as LGBTQ. The age range of the group is 23 – 75. The first thing the team did was complete the UCC ONA Coalition ONA 101 webinar/training. Since then, the team has gotten resources from the National ONA Coalition, been meeting regularly and engaged a UCC ONA consultant, Jeffry Tuber-Giles, to help us with our journey. The team currently is having one on one conversations with everyone in our congregation to gather questions and feedback about the ONA process. Additionally, each member of the team has been sharing why becoming ONA is important to them during our Sunday services.

In 2024 the team will create programming to address the congregation’s questions and to educate us all on what it means to be a UCC ONA church. The team is honored to lead this work that is helping us to recommit our congregation to follow Christ’s teaching to love one another as he loves us.

### 3c. 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	25, 8-12	PPR, Women's Fellowship
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	40	pastor
Children's Groups or Classes		
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	70	pastor, music committee
Church-wide Meals		
Choirs and Music Groups	10 - 60	music committee, lay leaders, members, guest musicians.
Church-based Bible Study	3-12	Pastor
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	Monthly 30	Pastor and the deacons
Community Meals		
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>		
Drama or Dance Program		
Funerals <i>(number last year)</i>	1	Pastor and family
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship		
Prayer or Meditation Groups		
Public Advocacy Work		
Retreats		
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		

Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	1	Justice of the Peace and family
Worship (time slot: 10:45 -12:00)	25	Pastor, music committee, worship program coordinator, and deacons.
Young Adult Groups or Classes		
Youth Groups or Classes		
Other		

Additional comments:

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (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)
David Pruitt	3	WNCC	½ minister	N
Jenni Lund	3 licensed	WNCC	pulpit supply	N
David Carlson	3 ordained Episcopal Priest	WNCC	Pulpit Supply	Y

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
Head of the Music Committee		part time	Judy Vaughan	many years

## REFLECTION

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

The existing committees are active and they and the congregation are preparing for a new minister.

## 3d. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$42,800
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	\$0
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i> )	\$0
Fundraising Events	\$0
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$0
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$0
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$13,500
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$0
Other (specify): Memorial donations	\$3,275
Other (specify): Dividend from outside account	\$2,599
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$62,174</b>

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

*Attach most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer's report as shared publicly with the congregation, or – if your church does not pass an annual budget – list current budgeted expenses here.*

## Treasurer's Report for 2022 - With Notes on 2023 Budget

The financial report contains the church's budget and actual income and expenses for 2022 as well as the proposed budget for 2023 that was prepared by the Prudential Committee.

Our income remained strong in 2022. Our church continues to attract new people on Sunday mornings. The generosity of people who come to church on a regular basis as well as those who come occasionally contribute to the health of the church. We are very fortunate. Income to the church this year also came from memorial donations. We lost a number of our long-time members who were very devoted to our church and we miss them tremendously. Contributions to the church were given in memory of the following people:

- Doug Haldane
- Cynthia Burroughs
- Louise Marsh
- Richard Burroughs

We also received income from renting the parsonage as well as income from the dividends paid to the Tyler Fund at Fidelity. We did not need to take any money from our Endowment Fund.

In addition to regular contributions to the church, the congregation contributed to the following:

- Wisdom Stoves (Can money) - \$235.55
- Veterans' Meal Program - \$2,004.47
- The Back Room - \$599.00 from our Christmas Eve offering
- The Newbury Food Shelf - \$599.00 from our Christmas Eve offering
- The Back Room - \$400.00 in honor of Al Gallant for all of his work for the church
- The church has taken over the annual contributions that the Women's Fellowship has made in the past. These include \$50.00 to The West Newbury Fire Department, Atkinson Residence, and Orange East Senior Center. \$150.00 was donated to the The Back Room.
- Help Kids India received \$100 from the church as well as \$165 from other church member donations.

Other items to note:

- The Prudential Committee recommends increasing the organist pay from \$90/week to \$100/week.
- The Prudential Committee recommends an increase to the music line item in the budget. This extra money could be used to hire special musicians to come in at various times. Our church's music program is strong and vibrant and we want this to continue.
- The trustees have authorized painting the parsonage in 2023. The estimate is about \$14,000. \$2,000 of this will come from the remainder of the Women's Fellowship funds. The balance will come from US Trust or the Capital Campaign. The Capital Campaign has about \$35,000 to be spent on providing solar power to our three buildings. If there is money left over from that project, it will go to the parsonage painting.
- The capital campaign ended at the end of 2021. It was very successful and we raised over \$76,000.

The balance in the Organ Fund checking account is \$815.13

I am very grateful for the work that Barbara Martin and Chris Wilson do every Sunday. Without their dedication to counting and documenting the income for the church, I could not do my job. Please join me in thanking them for their service to the church.

Thank you to all who continue to support this church. West Newbury is a very special place and we are fortunate to have our beautiful buildings and a strong community.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Goodell, Treasurer



Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? *Pastor's salary is about 46% of our budget*

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church? *No*

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

- Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
- One Great Hour of Sharing
- Strengthen the Church
- Neighbors in Need
- Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? *(recommended 10%)*

*It is a set dollar amount (\$1,000) We did not participate in Neighbors in Need or One Great Hour of Sharing in 2022, but often do participate. We also support many local organizations and contribute over \$2,000 to meals for a local homeless Veterans' organization.*

What is the church's current indebtedness? *\$0*

Total amount of loan debt:

Reason for debt:

Are capital and other payments current?

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:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2019-2021	Solar power for church building, replace church and parsonage roof, weatherize parsonage, increase endowment	\$150K	\$76,500	Although we did not reach our goal we knew it was lofty. We accomplished everything we wanted to except adding to our endowment. We were very pleased with the outcome.

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

Does your church have an endowment? **Yes**

What is the market value of the assets? **350,000**

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? **Currently, funds are taken as needed.**

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? **We take nothing out now. Five years ago we were taking 4% - 10% per year.**

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: **Nothing in 2022. We have taken some money out in the past five years. Some of the money has gone to meet operating expenses, but most of it has gone to building maintenance.**

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

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

#### Other Assets

Reserves (savings): **\$ 90,000 (Some of which is designated for upkeep of our organ)**

Investments (other than endowment): **\$ None**

Does your church have a parsonage? **Yes**

Fair market rental value of the parsonage: **\$1,200-1400/month, not including utilities**

How is the parsonage used? **Currently it is rented**

Street / City / State / Zip: **Tyler Farm Road, West Newbury, VT 05085**

Finished square footage: **3068**

Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms: **4 BR with another on the first floor that can be used as an office. 1 Bathroom on the first floor**

Assessed real estate value: **\$134,200**

Available for minister residence: **Yes**

Expected minister residence: **TBD**

Condition of structure, systems and appliances-**Excellent with recent renovations and upgrades**

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs- **Trustees**

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

Church (see website)

Parsonage

West Newbury Hall- owned by the church and available for church functions, but managed by a committee

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 interior of the church is accessible; a ramp leads to the narthex and the 2 isles will permit wheelchairs in the worship space, but the choir space and the pulpit will not. The parsonage also has a ramp for access, though some spaces may be restricted, including the bathroom and all of the second floor. The Hall is not, except its first floor.

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

*For example, when was a time the church made a major budget change? How is the budgeting process done? What new ministry initiative has your church financed?*

In 2017 our church finances were precarious. We made changes to our staffing and initiated a capital campaign. One of the features of the capital campaign was to strengthen our endowment so we could support a minister.

### 3e. 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.

- In 2017 our 15-year pastor left
- Survived COVID without discontinuing services.
- In 2023 we gained 13 new members

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

See above

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.

Our church has a forum where committee heads and officers (cabinet) can engage to resolve conflict. This has been a largely successful process.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Alden Launer	1987-1994	Y
Deborah Jeter	1994(interim)	Y
Tom Kinder	1994-1996	Y
Steven Seminario	1996-1998 (interim)	N
Donald Towle	1998-2004	Y
Cynthia Batten	2004-2019	Y
David Pruitt	5-1-2019-present	N

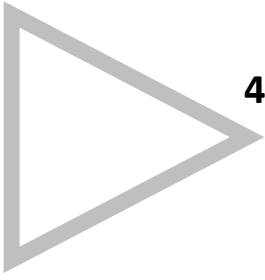
Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

We learned that some ministers may not be able to provide some of the things that the congregation needs. When that occurs, it is a catalyst for conversation and change. This has prompted committees within the church to be more engaged and communicative with the minister and the congregation.

Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination? [Ask us](#)

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? [Ask us](#)



## 4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

### a. COMMUNITY VISION

#### 4a. COMMUNITY VISION

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

Our church has always had a vision of helping others. We have ministries within our community (veterans, food shelf, what we call the “Back Room”, and an emergency community support network). We also donate material items and funds to worthy initiatives like Help Kids India, and Wisdom Stoves (Africa). We would expect the minister to support these and potentially other initiatives.

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

Historically we have sent two delegates to the conference annual meeting.

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"/> Just Peace                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creation Justice                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice                  | <input checked="" 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?

[Open and Affirming](#)

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

### Occasional celebrations with the Mennonite Congregation

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.

Compares well.

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 anticipate that 20% of the minister's time will be spent on community relationships including visitations.

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?

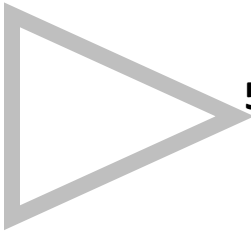
We are an older demographic than much of the area that surrounds us.

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

What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for? It is a beacon of hope in our community whether they attend or not. Community would feel a loss if our church were to shut down.

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

People often come because they were invited by a church member.



## 5. REFERENCES

### REFERENCE 1

Stephen Ellis/Physical Therapists/Goffstown, NH  
Phone: (603)345-5889/email: [docnlisa@comcast.net](mailto:docnlisa@comcast.net)/  
Summer resident and parents were members

To Whom It May Concern:

My wife Lisa and I have attended worship services at the West Newbury Congregational Church for many years. We have a family camp on Halls Lake and consider this our summer church. My parents lived in West Newbury for the last 1/3 of their life and were members of the church.

During this time, we have grown to appreciate many attributes of this church. We feel the music ministry is extraordinary. We attend a much bigger church at home and are always amazed at the quality of the music in spite of the small congregation size. There is so much talent and it always has a powerful impact on us. Another attribute is that this faithful congregation is very generous with their time and resources. So many programs with so few people. Many hard workers doing work in Jesus' name. They are also very committed to the church and it's mission. It seems no one ever leaves unless they literally go home to Jesus.

One thing we would like to hear more of is preaching of the gospels and about salvation. We have heard it preached from a retired Pastor and twice from guests providing the sermon, but it hasn't been consistent.

We have had many special experiences in this church. In particular, when my mom died we called a member of the Diaconate, as the Pastor was out of town, to come to my mom's bedside to pray with us as she passed away. This community outreach helped us with this challenging time. Even though we aren't members, we were treated as family. Also, being summer people, the church always welcomes us home, remembering our names and making us feel welcome each summer.

It's a great community of believers and we look forward to this new leadership of the West Newbury Congregational Church.

Please feel free to contact us if we can be of further assistance with the Pastoral search.

Sincerely,

Stephen and Lisa Ellis

## REFERENCE 2

Don Saliers/ Cannon Professor of Theology and Worship, Emeritus, Emory University, Church Music, served as national chaplain of the American Guild of Organists

Phone: (404)493-2370/email: [dsalier@emory.edu](mailto:dsalier@emory.edu)

Long time substitute organists/ choir director at West Newbury Church

I have been associated with West Newbury Congregational Church for nearly fifty years, both as a part-time organist and choir director, and as a participant in some of the ministries. This is a remarkably resilient congregation of truly caring people. One of its great strengths is its significant role in the larger community of West Newbury and its environs. Even in difficult times, such as during COVID this congregation reaches out to its neighbors—members and non-members alike. The festivals, the church-related events at the Hall, and especially the annual Turkey Supper are truly all-community events. This is symbolized by the church phone/email directory which is really a directory of the larger community.

Even though the pastoral care has been hampered by illness of the pastor, members are especially good at looking after neighbors and maintaining a sense of identity for the community. Many members are engaged in larger ministries—for example the Tucker Mountain project, “Help Kids India”, local musicians, and a progressive sense of responsibility beyond West Newbury. More recently I have been quite impressed with new members—their talents, wide ranging experiences, and their dedication to the role of this church. Above all, the current active members are, simply put, very interesting human beings who care. I have been delighted to work with many who are deeply committed to the worship and to outreach possibilities.

An area for further exploration is to re-instate broadcasting the services (and other events where possible) to the larger community—especially to those who are physically unable to attend. The resources of the membership's interests in relating the church to issues that affect West Newbury and beyond can be cultivated more intentionally, especially now in this pastoral transition, I hope that attention can be given to making contact with younger families. This could lead to an educational role of the church (both a potential Sunday school and or adult study/fellowship innovations. The new pastor should have pastoral skills and strong interest in cultivating these possibilities.

There is something strong about the history of this congregation's fellowship. I and my family and I have been the beneficiaries of deep friendships and common concerns here over many years. The future pastor will want to learn about that remarkable history – with its international ties as well and seek to find ways to reinforce and to grow in spiritual depth. Substantive Preaching and teaching will be desired here and appreciated.



### REFERENCE 3

Bradford Johnston/Retired Contractor/Bradford

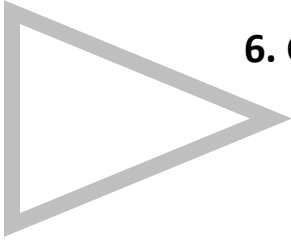
email: [bgjcc13@gmail.com](mailto:bgjcc13@gmail.com)/ frequent attendee over more than 30 years

I have attended the West Newbury Church occasionally for all of my 77 years of life. For the first 33 years, I was a summer resident with my family, and we attended regularly. My father was a Unitarian Universalist Minister in his career and religious congregations were important to him and to our family. I remember feeling very welcomed and enjoyed meeting the people of the town who came there. I saw quite a few Ministers come and go with John Marsh standing out in my memory. He was a very welcoming person. Recently Dave Pruitt stands high in my estimation. At town functions he was pleasant and cheerful. I enjoyed his Sunday services due to his relaxed and familiar presence. He often started with a joke, he would speak to attendees directly whether new or regular. He spoke of members of the community in a caring way to inform us of important events. His sermons that I heard, being there only occasionally, were focused, clear and inciteful. I am a member of a UU church in a neighboring town and have attended there more.

To me, ministry is about community, inclusion, and compassion. People are often shy and insular. A person who might gently encourage participation is good. The religious spectrum in our country is going through lots of change. Social media, films, novels, sports, schools, science, etc.; encourage people to use various ways to express their religious ideas. For me, the bottom line is personal connection and appreciation of the deeper needs of being alive. A minister's job is a challenging one these days.

The most significant experience was the two separate memorial services held after my Parents died. We had officiants of our choosing, which seemed accepted, and the members of the church attended and held a tea in the hall afterward with beverages and things to eat. The generosity and caring I felt then was overwhelming and deeply appreciated.

Bradford Johnston  
186 Rogers Hill Rd.  
Bradford, VT



## 6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

### 6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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Ephesians 3:20-21 (NRSV)

Now to God who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.

Amen

### 6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

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

Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?

The ministerial search committee is made up of Jeff Goodell, Walt Cottrell, Carolyn Marsh, and Caroline Nininger. The entire congregation contributed to the information found in this profile.

Signed: *Walt Cottrell*

Name / Title / Date: Walt Cottrell, West Newbury Chair, 2/13/2024

## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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The congregation is currently in good standing with the Grafton-Orange-Sullivan Association of the Vermont Conference.

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

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

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: 

Name / Title: Rev. Paul Sangree, Associate Conference Minister

Email: sangreepucc@gmail.com

Phone: 802-728-4999 ext. 5#

Date: 2/13/2024

**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*