

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

First Congregational United Church of Christ, Ocala, Florida
6140 Southwest 78th Avenue Road
Ocala, Florida 34474
352-329-2032

Settled Pastor

Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ
2024

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

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*“God is able to provide you with every blessing, so that
having all sufficiency in all things at all times,
you may abound in every good work.”
(2 Corinthians 9:8)*

INSTRUCTIONS

The new Local Church Profile supports the calling and discernment of United Church of Christ congregations with their current or future pastoral leadership.

For many congregations, the interim time between ministers is an intentional season that is guided in part by the preparation of a Local Church Profile. Using the Profile, the church can discover its data and express its story for the reliable discernment of a search committee and the beginning of a new pastorate. Searching ministers will want to see this document in its entirety.

The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – **WHO ARE WE NOW**, **WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR**, and **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME** – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years. Known together as the "Discovery Document," these three sections can be completed by a visioning group, a governing body, a transition team, or other group – not just the search committee – in order to draw forward the gifts and imaginative possibilities of a congregation. The church's engagement with the "Discovery Document" might not have the same sequence as the completed Local Church Profile that is read by candidates.

Some questions are easy to answer. Some are not so easy. Prompts are provided to stimulate narrative response if needed; these italicized prompts are merely examples from which to choose or to inspire your own. Efforts to answer the questions will prompt conversations and explorations and story-telling and many prayers. As the Spirit moves throughout the process, congregations will shape a collective articulation of Christ's leading (**WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME**). This last question to be answered becomes the first section to be read by searching ministers in the Local Church Profile, and it is boldest and most actionable piece for faithful leadership into the future.

Your conference can provide materials referenced in the Local Church Profile, such as the 11-Year Report containing data as reported by your congregation annually to the UCC Data Hub, and Mission In site reports containing demographic information on your community. More information on types of pastorate in the United Church of Christ can be found in the Call Agreement Workbook. Be sure to use the Call Agreement Workbook's Scope of Work to describe in this Local Church Profile the position being sought.

When it is time for ministerial search, the conference can counsel you on posting the Local Church Profile together with your public listing at UCC Ministry Opportunities (<http://oppsearch.ucc.org>).

The last page of the Local Church Profile contains a statement that parallels the consent statement signed by ministers in the UCC Ministerial Profile. In keeping with the covenantal relationship between a church and those it seeks to call, this statement encourages an open, honest exchange of information. On behalf of the United Church of Christ, and on the basis of the best knowledge available to them, your conference staff will validate your completed Local Church Profile when it is ready to be shared in relationship with prospective new leaders.

1. POSITION POSTING

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

1a. LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: **First Congregational United Church of Christ, Ocala, Florida**

Street address: **6140 Southwest 78th Avenue Road**

Supplemental web links: **firstunitedocala.org**

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

Conference: **Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ**

Association: None

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

Rev. LaTrell Harrison

Associate Conference Minister

Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ

9300 University Blvd.

Orlando FL 32817

404-734-4986

LHarrison@uccfla.org

Summary Ministry Description:

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

First Congregational UCC Ocala celebrates the recently completed construction of its landmark interfaith facility which is the culmination of a multi-year effort, a bold joint project in conjunction with Temple Beth Shalom that has come to fruition. Our 17,000+ square foot, multi-million-dollar facility that houses our two-faith

community, is a state-of-the-art construction that includes two separate worship sanctuaries for the respective congregations, a social hall, courtyards, as well as office spaces and meeting rooms. We join with Temple Beth Shalom, with whom we share a common mission of “Tikkun Olam” or “repairing the world,” committed to God’s message of love, to act as a beacon of light for other faiths, denominations, and our community with regard to diversity, inclusivity, social justice, and human rights, while sharing a joint vision, educational opportunities, joint projects and social activities.

Photographs:.

Church Video

<https://www.youtube.com/live/O7EsQES-s2o?si=CIRItsBh1SOULgdm>

Service Video

<https://www.youtube.com/live/O7EsQES-s2o?si=CIRItsBh1SOULgdm>



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

Ocala, situated in north central Florida, is one of the fastest-growing and thriving cities in the nation. Surrounded by more than 1,200 horse farms, Ocala is known as the “Horse Capital of the World”. Home to the 800-million-dollar World Equestrian Center resort, the largest and most impressive equestrian center in the US, Ocala is blessed by natural beauty, adjacent to the Ocala National Forest and surrounded by an abundance of pristine natural springs, including the renowned Silver Springs and Rainbow Springs. Within a two-hour drive, a multitude of beautiful Atlantic and Gulf Coast beaches can be enjoyed. We are located a 1½ hour drive from the major cities of Tampa and Orlando, with their world-class attractions and international airports, and we are a 45-minute drive from Gainesville, home to 9 colleges including the University of Florida and an international airport.

Additional Area Information

Additional Information About Our Area

Video of Our Church

<https://www.youtube.com/live/O7EsQES-s2o?si=CIRItsBh1SOULgdm>

A Recent Service at our church

<https://www.youtube.com/live/O7EsQES-s2o?si=FWCST0HGW1Nw7313>

Read about our wonderful city and our Metro Profile

<https://ocalacep.com>

Some of our Popular Attractions

[Homepage - World Equestrian Center](#)

[Florida Aquatics Swimming Training \(floridafast.com\)](#)

[Ocala Events Calendar | Ocala / Marion County Florida \(ocalamarion.com\)](#)

Current size of membership: **103 members and 50 friends**

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*):

Position Title: **Settled Pastor**

Position Duration:

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

Compensation Level:

Full Time- based on Florida Conference Guidelines

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

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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

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.)

Excellent judgment

Compassionate

Intellectually skilled with progressive underpinning

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis (*from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance*): \$60,000

Benefits (*choose one*):

Benefits negotiable

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*)?

The incoming Pastor will live in the nearby community and a housing allowance is provided.

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

Our hope is that the Pastor will live in the local community. There are many opportunities available, from pre-owned to newly built, with non-interstate travel to Ocala Tree of Life Sanctuary. The typical home value of homes in Ocala is around \$275,000 and the average rental is around \$1,500.

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

N/A

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

The Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ offers several opportunities for professional and peer support. At the present time, there are no local pastors' groups 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?

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

We envision a Pastor who:

- Is capable of good "heart connection," who will collaborate with our congregation to create a welcoming environment to foster lasting personal relationships and promote spiritual development and who will model warm and friendly interaction and good interpersonal and communication skills with members and visitors

-Has good judgment and follow-through, and is charismatic, sensible, mature, active, and enthusiastic about participating in all aspects of church life

- Is a progressive thinker with a passion for social justice, has compassion, intellectual understanding, and practical skills regarding inclusivity for people of all races, nationalities, ages, sexual orientations, genders and gender identities, ages, marital standings, family structures, socio-economic backgrounds, faith backgrounds, professions, and mental and physical challenges, within the congregation and throughout the community

-Will be intentional and skilled in facilitating congregation membership growth

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

The Pastor will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls by providing support through visitation and consultation for current members and friends of the church in their time of need. This may include but is not limited to, initiating contact and visiting in the home during a time of medical illness, mental health issues, relationship problems, or other personal matters.

We envision a minister who understands and is sensitive to our community's needs and has an interest in helping us reach out to various groups, particularly those that are marginalized and

underserved, and a minister willing to speak publicly representing our congregation within the larger community where there are unmet community needs.

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

The Pastor should have general knowledge, experience, and effective skills in reaching out to those diverse in areas of religious beliefs, race, culture, gender, ages, family structures, sexual orientations, gender identities, nationalities, socio-economic status, and mental and physical challenges. The congregation would welcome a bilingual minister (preferably English/ Spanish). The most recent census data reports on projected ethnic changes in this area indicate the highest increase will be among the Hispanic population. The second highest projected increase is expected to be among the Black/ African American population.

The Pastor should have the collaborative skills to participate in interfaith relationships with our Jewish partners with whom we share our Ocala Tree of Life Sanctuary. The Pastor should have the disposition and skills to work with other religious leaders to form alliances benefiting and promoting unity within our community.

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.

-The four areas of excellence that the Pastor will display are the following:

- Building Transformational Leadership Skills**
- Caring for All Creation**
- Strengthening Inter- and Intra-Personal Assets**
- Working Together for Justice and Mercy**

In displaying these marks of excellence, our Pastor will embody a strong moral character, personal integrity, compassion, and ethical boundaries.



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... You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37, 39 NRSV)

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

As reflected in our Mission Statement, we are an inclusive and caring church that believes God is calling us to strive for peace and justice, to protect and restore God’s creation, to bring hope to others, and to live our lives with compassion and courage.

Our move two years ago to share space with Temple Beth Shalom has provided us with unique opportunities to work closely with another faith community and become a stronger voice in the Ocala area for interfaith understanding, respect, and dialogue. We are called to continue and strengthen the interfaith work we began in January 2022, with the opening of the Ocala Tree of Life Sanctuary. As an Open and Affirming congregation, we have long stood for inclusivity and understanding; we believe that God is also calling us to be of greater service to our community. We believe that with God’s direction, we can extend our outreach and provide more educational, charitable, and social services to ourselves and our neighbors as we continue God’s work of “tikkun olam”—repairing the world.

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

For example, describe two experiments your congregation has initiated or engaged in the past year, what were the results and where do you see your next steps? Has your church had a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement; if so, where do you see that plan/vision taking you?

We moved to a new building, the Ocala Tree of Life Sanctuary, where we share space with the Jewish congregation of Temple Beth Shalom. Ours is one of only a very few examples in the country of two different faith communities that together built and now share a single space to house our respective congregations. The process was a six-year collaboration of planning, building, and relocation and has provided us unique opportunities to engage with another faith community. This has fostered mutual respect and understanding. The decision to share a building with each congregation having their own worship space has not been without difficulties, both logistical and otherwise, and we will continue to face challenges ahead in the day-to-day operations. Nonetheless, we see a better future for both faith communities as we engage in joint activities, discussions, and shared decision-making.

Additionally, while we are located near a number of large 55+ communities from which our membership is largely drawn, our new location has placed us in the immediate environs of a sprawling family community that is now being built. This can potentially provide us with younger

and more diverse congregants. Thus, we face the challenges of meeting the needs of our current, older congregants and attracting younger members with their specific needs.

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.

For example, what beliefs and commitments are stated in your congregation’s purpose statement or membership vows? How is God most often described in worship liturgy? In what ways would you describe the Holy Spirit in your midst?

As we reflected on our identity as a congregation, we realized that very few of us grew up in the UCC. Since we have come to this congregation through a variety of paths, we are what one might call “religious immigrants.” The common element calling us all here is a vision of a church where all are welcome.

Together we seek to be an inclusive, diverse, spiritually-centered community of faith, open and affirming of all God’s children. We are called to walk humbly with God in fairness, kindness, love, peace, and joy. We seek to follow Jesus in worship and music, outreach, in-reach, and fellowship. We welcome all who seek a spiritual home where love prevails.

We have a very active Board of Church Growth that is keenly aware of the importance of welcoming new guests who walk through our doors. There is always someone greeting all who enter for worship. We also reach beyond our doors through various community outreach programs driven by our members and the Outreach Committee. Projects/programs include, but are not limited to: Interfaith Food Pantry, PFLAG, PrideFest (a community-wide event to affirm the LGBTQ+ community), providing a monthly community meal at the Interfaith Shelter, and periodic contributions to agencies and organizations that support the homeless and disadvantaged. Donations from the membership provide gifts and food during seasonal needs for those families.

Our joint Ocala Tree of Life Sanctuary building is a place where both congregations are housed and work together to offer programs, activities, and educational and cultural opportunities.

First Congregational United Church of Christ offered virtual worship services during the pandemic but has been back to in-person worship for over two years. We have cutting-edge technology to offer our worship services and events virtually and have begun to livestream them on *YouTube*. We use *The New Century Hymnal* supplemented by a variety of other music used under a license agreement. We enjoy a variety of music styles and have both an adult choir and a bell choir. Services often are based around the “Revised Common Lectionary” with current topics or themes added. Inclusive language for God and people is a value we have had since our commitment to being an Open and Affirming Church in 2009.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

The congregation is a progressive congregation, both socially and spiritually, that continually refines what it means to live out our calling that everyone is welcome, no matter where you are on life’s journey. Every time we celebrate the Eucharist, we express this in our communion liturgy:

“We come from many places differing in age, race, gender identity and sexual orientation, politics, and religion. As we come together around the table, we discover that our differences are not something we tolerate but that our differences are indeed a blessing, that the more difference we bring, the more fully we experience the presence of the sacred in our midst. So come, people of God, just as you are. Wherever you are on our journey of life, you are welcome here, here in this place, here in this community, here at this table.”

We are open to new opportunities, such as working together to build and share a new building with Temple Beth Shalom. We have realized that sometimes change is accomplished quickly and sometimes it occurs over time, with a period of due discernment. We have a very active core of parishioners who are a mix of members and “friends.”

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

For example, where does worship take place, and what is it based around? What was a recent baptism like? What are some words used to describe good preaching?

Our worship service generally follows the following sequence which allows for a lot of flexibility as needed.

Reflection/Meditation - The congregation is invited to some personal reflection/ meditation using image projection on the screen located in the sanctuary.

Gathering – In the name of Christ, we answer God’s call and assemble as a community of faith. After welcoming visitors and announcements, the congregation is called to worship and to offer a moment of letting go of the past and looking towards a spotless future through prayer.

Hearing the Word – This final portion of the service includes scripture, a message for exploration, the Prayer of our Lord, giving, and a final blessing.

The services follow the seasons of the church year and we celebrate Communion on the first Sunday of each month and at other times as decided by the Worship Committee. Musical responses are woven throughout the year. The order of worship is presented with a paper bulletin that also contains announcements of events and initiatives. Image projection is used to display the bulletin on the screen in the sanctuary.

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

For example, how are young people in leadership? How do people continue to form their faith over a lifetime? Name a topic studied or curriculum used recently; what was the impact of this study on those who attended?

Dialogues and book studies are offered periodically throughout the year. These are led by lay and clergy members. Currently, we are offering a series on “I Rest in God.” There will be a Bible study on “Can the Bible Provide an Antidote to Hate and f=Fear?” We are providing a Lenten Study on “What is the Bible?” After Easter, one of our Interim Co-pastors will be leading a “Street Smarts” class.

At present our church is made up of a mostly senior population with a few folks under 50 years of age. Most of those folks are engaged in boards and committees so their choices and needs are represented.

Though we currently do not have children, our Religious Education Committee has selected the “Seasons of the Spirit” curriculum for potential future Sunday School classes.

Our faith formation program currently focuses on refining our beliefs and helping each person wrestle with the relevance of Christianity in the 21st Century. It provides an opportunity to have major discussions surrounding complex theological questions and perspectives moving members towards spiritual maturity.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

For example, how are decisions communicated in your church? How are teams or committees organized? Where does your church struggle for vision?

- When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?
- Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?
- 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**

The lay leadership, boards, committee members, and ministry volunteers do a lot with “few hands.” Various boards/committees oversee ongoing tasks/projects. Meetings for each are typically held monthly for an hour or two or as needed. Our Pastor is an ex-officio member of each board/committee.

Church Committees and Boards

Church Council/Trustees

Board of Church Growth

Pastoral Visitation Committee

Board of Church Life

Religious Education Committee

Community Outreach Committee

Nominating Committee

Board of Deacons

Board of Stewardship

Worship Committee

Major decisions are brought to the Council for approval. Some situations require congregational approval in which congregational meetings are held and members cast a lot. Our boards /committees are periodically reviewed for relevance and make decisions on their own unless something needs to come before the Council for approval. There is an annual congregational meeting.

The Bylaws of First Congregational United Church of Christ were last updated at the annual meeting of the congregation in 2022. The Council/Trustees are currently reviewing the Bylaws for any needed changes or revisions before a new pastor arrives on the scene.

3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

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

The 11-Year Report developed by the UCC Data Hub and Missioninstie is attached to the Profile.

3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	103	
Number of active non-members:	50	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	153	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	10	X
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	40	X
Less than 5 years:	50	X

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	3	4	2	0	10	20	63	30	X

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	1	
Households with minors:	2	
Single adults age 35-65:	20	X
Joint households with no minors:	53	X
Single adults over 65:	25	X

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	100%	X
College:	85%	X
Graduate School:	15%	X
Specialty Training:	10%	X
Other (please specify):	5%	X

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

Adults who are employed:	5%	X
Adults who are retired:	85%	X
Adults who are not fully employed:	10%	X

Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation: We do not have information on our members that allows an informed answer to this request.

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 primarily a White-Anglo congregation with a limited number of Black/African-American and non-White-Anglo members. We are more diverse along the lines of gender identity and sexual orientation.

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:

At the start of every worship service, we reaffirm that we are an “Open and Affirming” church, welcoming into our life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sites, sacraments, responsibilities, and blessings, people of all races, genders, ages, marital status, family structures, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, socio-economic statuses, professions, faith backgrounds, nationalities, and mental and physical challenges. We know we have made great progress in becoming an “Open and Affirming” congregation, but we still have more work to do in this area.

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	45	Pastor and Religious Education Committee
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	0	
Children’s Groups or Classes	0	
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	190	Pastor and Worship Committee
Church-wide Meals	75	Church Life Committee
Choirs and Music Groups	30	Music Director and Worship Committee
Church-based Bible Study	0	
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	1x per month	
Community Meals	1x per month	
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>	0	

Drama or Dance Program	0	
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	50	Pastor with consultation with family of the deceased
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship	0	
Prayer or Meditation Groups	0	
Public Advocacy Work	25	Community Outreach Committee
Retreats	15	Deacons
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	0	
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	0	
Worship (time slot: 10:00 am____)	105	
Worship (time slot: _____)		
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	
Youth Groups or Classes	0	
Other: Friendship Circles	20	Members of TBS & FCUCC

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 **3 or 4 way** **Retired**

Dana Knapp	No	Yes
Ken Hull	No	Yes
Douglas Hodges	Yes	Yes
Clint Parker	No	Yes
Cindy Livering	No	Yes
Madonna Flanders	No	Yes

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

<u>Staff Position</u>			<u>Supervision</u>	<u>Time</u>
Rev. Dr. Dana Knapp	Co-interim Pastor	Part-time	Pastor-Parish Relations	2 mos.
Rev. Ken Hall	Co-interim Pastor	Part-time	Pastor-Parish Relations	2 mos.
Vanessa Hunter	Office Manager	Full-time	TLS Board of Directors	3 yrs.
Cheryl Richardson	Director of Music	Part-time	Head-Staff / Worship	1 yr.

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$164,000
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>)	\$74,583
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i>)	0
Fundraising Events	\$3,500
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$1,000
Grants	0
Rentals of Church Building	0

Rentals of Church Parsonage	0
Support from Related Organizations (e.g. Women's Group)	\$1000
Transfers from Special Accounts	0
Other (specify):	0
Other (specify):	0
TOTAL	\$244,083

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$224,899

2022 Budget

Income

Pledges to the Operating Fund	\$120,000.00
Estimated Income - Non Pledges	\$ 40,000.00
Fundraisers	\$ 3,500.00
Reserves From Investment Funds	\$ 66,430.50
Total Operating Income	\$229,930.50

Expenses

Church Administration

Postage	\$ 250.00
Office Supplies	\$ 250.00
Telephone	\$ 0.00
Equipment Maintenance & Lease	\$ 5,000.00
Annual Corporation Fee	\$ 62.00
Advertising	\$ 1,500.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 200.00
Kitchen and Bath Supplies	\$ 0
Computer Expenses	\$ 1,500.00
Fl. Conference Annual Meeting	\$ 500.00
Payroll Service Fee	\$ 1,320.00
Total Church Administration	\$ 8,820.00

Salaries

Pastor (salary & housing)	\$ 68,520.00
Church Administrator	\$ 0.00
Music Director & Organist	\$ 14,000.00
Custodian	\$ 0.00
Total Salaries	\$ 82,520.00

Benefits

Tax Allowance Pastor	\$ 0
Workman's Comp	\$ 0
Pension	\$ 0
Health Insurance	\$ 0
Dental Insurance	\$ 0
Life & Disability	\$ 0
Social Security/Medicare	\$ 0
Eye Care	\$ 0
Car Expense & Phone	\$ 0
Fl. Conference & Annual Meeting	\$ 500.00
Pastor Expense Account/Meals	\$ 0
Total Benefits	\$ 500.00

Total Salaries & Benefits **\$ 83,020**

Property Maintenance

Insurance	\$ 4,000.00
Ocala Tree of Life Sanctuary Assessment	\$ 118,933.00
Total Property & Maintenance	\$ 122,933.50

Boards & Committees

Deacons	\$ 2,150.00
Religious Education	\$ 2,500.00
Stewardship	\$ 500.00
Church Growth	\$ 1,500.00
Total Boards & Committees	\$ 8,650.00

Total Expense	\$ 224,599.00
Operating Income	\$ 224,599.00
Operating Profit/Loss	\$ 0.00

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? **42.6%**

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?

What is the church's current indebtedness? **\$0.00**

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.

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

What is the market value of the assets? **\$1,156,860.92**

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

Funds are drawn as needed and only the interest monies can be drawn as needed to support the church operating expenses.

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

In September of 2019, the church property was sold with proceeds totaling 1.3 million dollars. The endowment is currently in an investment account earning about 6% to 7% interest. Distribution of interest gained can be made as needed to supplement church expenses. In the years 2020 to 2023, we used 6% to 7% of the endowment to supplement the church budget.

It is estimated at the current rate of draw at 7% a year, the endowment without any future added income to the endowment would last roughly twelve (12) years.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$

Investments (other than endowment): \$ None

Does your church have a parsonage? No

Fair market rental value of the parsonage:

How is the parsonage used?

Street / City / State / Zip:

Finished square footage:

Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms:

Assessed real estate value:

Available for minister residence: Y/N

Expected minister residence: Y/N

Condition of structure, systems and appliances

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

At this time, we do not own any buildings.

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

We are currently renting the space that is being used by our church and Temple Beth Shalom, a Jewish congregation. We will be renting the space for the next six years after which both congregations will have the option to buy the building.

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

Worship space, fellowship space, classrooms, office, bathrooms

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?

The joining together of Temple Beth Shalom and First Congregational United Church of Christ Ocala is the last time the congregation made a major financial change. The process involved the entire congregation in many meetings, as well as a designated committee representing the congregation. There is currently a governing board for Ocala Tree of Life Sanctuary (OTLS) with representatives from each congregation that makes decisions regarding the building. Each congregation maintains and controls their own budget and contributes equally to the OTLS governing board for building/maintenance expenses, including custodial, bathroom supplies, etc.

3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

There have been two significant happenings in the history of our church that have shaped the identity of the congregation. The first significant happening was when the congregation voted to become an Open and Affirming Church. This decision has allowed us to realize membership of LGBTQ+ members who were seeking a church home where they would be welcomed and their gifts valued. Also, this decision has allowed us to gain members who were seeking a church that was Open and Affirming where all are welcomed.

The second significant happening in the history of our church that has shaped the identity of the congregation and is the most important event in the life of the church in the past ten years was the decision to share a facility with Temple Beth Shalom. The decision of two communities of faith acknowledged the highest tenets of their respective and collective beliefs, coming together in a safe space to put faith into action.

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

The most obvious change has been the decision to move to a new location and to share a facility with Temple Beth Shalom. After many meetings and sharing of information, consensus was reached to make this move. In addition, a process has been put into place to discuss issues between the two congregations such as scheduling time and use of common areas.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. “Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....” Describe your congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict.

For example, what is an example of a recent conflict and something your congregation learned from it? Describe an occasion when your church experienced conflict without being able to resolve it well. Does your church have policies, protocols or structures for dealing with conflict?)

First Congregational United Church of Christ embraces differences in our faith community and are in covenant “to agree to disagree and to keep the dialogue going.” Members are encouraged to take conflict directly to the person or group. If it cannot be resolved, they take it to the pastor and/or the Pastoral Relations Committee for discussion. Hopefully, it is resolved in one of these settings.

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

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev Blair Stewart	1984-2005	Y
Rev. Dr. Harold McSwain	2007-2023	Y

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

We have learned that it is important to have an Interim Pastor when a Pastor leaves.

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

Y/N/Ask us No

No

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Y/N/Ask us No

No

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

Y/N/Ask us NO

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?

*For example, which service activities has your church participated in this past year?
Where has the church participated in global connections of care and justice? What is currently transformational in your church’s engagement with neighbors near or far?*

The congregation participates in a number of community justice activities:

- **the community Martin Luther King Day March**
- **the local LGBTQ+ and P-Flag activities**
- **the Black Lives Matter March**

As one of the founding organizations of the “Bridges Project,” we confront racial justice issues in our area. In our collaboration with Temple Beth Shalom, we strive “to repair the world” – “tikkun olam”. In conjunction with national UCC efforts, we raised money for local and global relief efforts including Ukraine and Hurricanes Ian and Fiona. We also prepare and serve meals for our local Interfaith Homeless Shelter.

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

Members and clergy have attended the General Synod and we support delegates attending The Annual Florida Conference gathering. Our church faithfully supports our wider church with our giving to OCWM and other special UCC offerings. We regularly consult the national and conference websites for resources to assist us in our outreach, stewardship, education, and worship.

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 in 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.

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

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

First Congregational United Church of Christ of Ocala, in partnership with Temple Beth Shalom is dedicated to “tikkun olam” – Hebrew for “repairing the world.” We provide a safe haven for diverse groups including the LGBTQ+ community where they can feel safe to be who they are with total acceptance and without judgment.

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

Our church shares a facility with Temple Beth Shalom, a Reformed Jewish congregation. We have a unique opportunity to share in education and outreach projects together. We host community interfaith services, i.e. a Thanksgiving service,

where Christians, Jews, and Muslims come together for worship and fellowship.

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 congregation is regularly informed of our ongoing outreach activities during the worship service. They are energized and actively engage in our work of providing school supplies for homeless children, meals for the Interfaith Homeless Shelter, collecting food for the local food bank, working with other churches, civic groups, local government and law enforcement on issues of racism in our community, providing support for local LGBTQ+ organizations, and emergency and social justice issues as they arise.

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?

It was the result of a long-term friendship and the collaborative efforts of our former Pastor and the Rabbi who recognized the need and opportunity for both congregations to work together and to go forward into the future as a joint venture of the synagogue and the church. Our Pastor played an integral role in the planning, design, and construction of this joint venture we call *The Ocala Tree of Lif Sanctuary*. Our former Pastor had the flexibility of time and schedule to reach out to our community with a message of inclusion, love, and acceptance for all people.

4b. MISSION InSite

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

The data for the neighborhood in the 5.5 miles surrounding UCC projects an increase in the population of about 10% in the next 5 years. The median age for the area is currently 62, showing a trend of slowly decreasing to 60 in 5 years and to 57 in 10 years.

The largest age group in the area is 65 and older, and is forecast to steadily increase. The second largest age group is 35-54, and the third largest group, 55-64 is also forecast to grow.

Since opening our doors in our new location, we have seen an increase in interest from the immediate surrounding 55+ communities. With the new community, Calesa, surrounding our church location, we have the opportunity to bring in younger families.

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?

FCUCC has mostly drawn from the 55+ communities in southwest Marion County. Most of our internal demographics reflect the 55+ communities in the immediate area, drawing heavily from several large and active adult communities that are experiencing much new construction.

Our new building is in Calesa, a large, growing family community. Calesa has a multi-grade charter school on site, with a high school nearby. With the growth in this neighborhood and surrounding communities, there is an opportunity to grow our congregation and bring in young people and families.

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

As we progress from a more senior congregation, with the increase of younger people moving into our community, we recognize the need for youth programs, a wider variety of music, family events, and more outreach in the community.

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

Over the years, our church has been known as one that promotes social justice, interfaith dialogue/activity and outreach to the LGBTQ+ community. We continue to expand our work in these areas at our new location.

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

New people always mention the warm welcome and friendliness of the congregation. The fact that we are truly Open and Affirming to the LGBTQ+ community and are an interfaith sanctuary, housing a temple and a church, brings people in. The service, the music, and the adult education programs bring people back.



5. REFERENCES

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

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

REFERENCE 1

Name / Position / Setting

Rabbi Erin Boxt
352-329-2031
jewishocala.org

REFERENCE 2

Name / Position / Setting

Karen Bergland
352-867-7967
dbergland5@cox.net

REFERENCE 3

Name / Position / Setting

Lester Whitt
202-656-9439
leswhitt@hotmail.com

6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

6a. CLOSING PRAYER

Include here any prayer or dream for the minister you imagine journeying toward you... a poem, for example, or a Scripture passage or a piece of music that is meaningful to your Search Committee:

Gracious and Loving God, we thank you for the many blessings you provide us each and every day. We continue to pray that you make your spirit known to us as we move into the next phase of this important call you have placed upon this search committee for our church.

We pray you help us to keep our minds and hearts open to the grace of this unfolding process. Guide our thinking and lead our questions and responses as we receive ministerial profiles.

Help us to walk closely with Jesus on this path. May we be guided by the grace of your Holy Spirit in our decision-making for a new Pastor. Keep us hopeful and ever faithful to your will as we journey through this process.

We pray that you will give all those interested an open heart, wisdom, and discernment to see and understand who we are as a church, and who we can become in the future. May you bless all who feel the call to share their ministerial profiles as they seek to respond to your call to our congregation.

Guide us to call a new Pastor who can lead us in the coming years where you would have us go. May he/she inspire us, lead us in meaningful worship, and teach us to grow more like Jesus taught so that we may become your true disciples. Amen.

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.*)

Pastor Search Committee

Gwen Templeton (Chair), Esther Weber (Vice-chair), Rev. Dana Knapp, Alex Grajewski Bill Fader, John Fowler, Pat Keith, Christine Ortega, Joyce Grantham, Gorham Black, Linda Lohr

Pastoral Leadership

Rev. Dr. Dana Knapp (Interim Pastor)

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed: *Reverend Dana Knapp April, 7, 2024*

Gwen Templeton Chairperson April 7, 2024

6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment: Yes

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

Staff Comment: Yes

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

Staff Comment: Yes

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: *S LaTrell Harrison+*
Name / Title: Rev. S. LaTrell Harrison
Email: LHarrison@uccfla.org
Phone: 404-734-4986
Date: 3/7/24

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

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

