

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
**LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE**

**United Community Church, UCC**



**Saint Johnsbury, Vermont**

**Settled Pastor**

- Vermont Conference, UCC; Northeast Association

[Validation Date]

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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:* United Community Church, UCC

*Street address:* 1325 Main Street,  
Saint Johnsbury, VT 05819

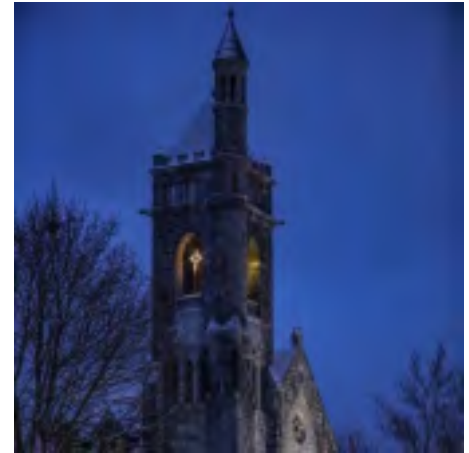
*Supplemental web links:* [www.uccstj.com](http://www.uccstj.com);  
<https://www.facebook.com/UnitedCommunityChurchUCC>

*Conference:* Vermont Conference, UCC

*Association:* Northeast Association

*UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:*

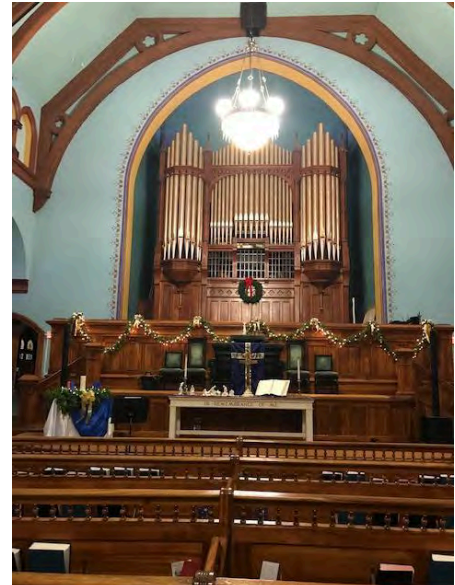
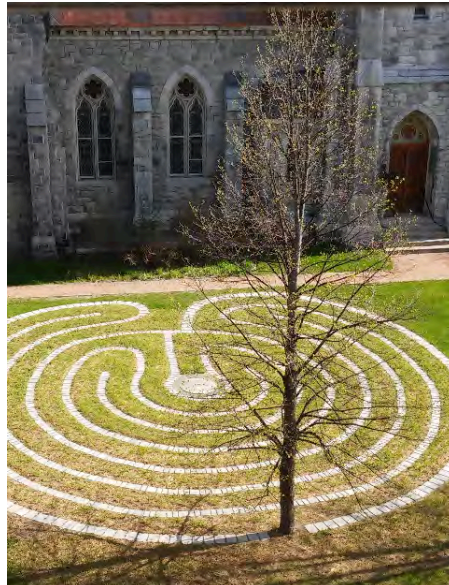
Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak, Conference Minister  
36 North Main St.  
Randolph, VT 05060  
802-728-4999 ext. 4#  
llbvtc@gmail.com



*Summary Ministry Description:*

A fairly young church carrying the inheritance of two long-standing local congregations, United Community Church seeks to build a beloved community in the heart of St. Johnsbury where all are valued and nurtured. We have an ongoing commitment to being an Open and Affirming, accessible, and inclusive congregation and hope to deepen that commitment as we unify our vision and grow our mission. We have an ongoing history of ministering to the community and are looking for an engaged pastor to help guide our members as we work to best make use of our resources to be a beacon of God's love. We are also committed to spiritual nurturing and development, and are looking for compassionate, engaged pastoral leadership that will help us to make the worship experience vibrant and help us to knit our congregational community together in love.

*Photographs:*



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

Benefiting from a Gilded Age legacy (prepare to hear a lot about the Fairbanks Scales company here!), one piece of which is our church building itself, St. Johnsbury has far more going on in terms of cultural, artistic, civic, and local economic life than most towns its size and in its rural location. A short walk from our church and parsonage are the Fairbanks Museum, the Athenaeum, Catamount Arts, St. Johnsbury Academy, a movie theater, a bowling alley, the start of the 93 mile Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, and many other downtown businesses - where a diverse group of entrepreneurs are continuing to define and redefine our local economy and culture. A short drive brings you to New England's best hiking and mountain biking trails, cross country and downhill skiing opportunities, stunning lakes, the Canadian border, and miles of pastoral back roads and small town communities. This is a place where people living in grand homes and those struggling with rural poverty live and find community together and a place where a committed individual can make a real difference.

*Current size of membership:*

100

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

None

*Position Title:*

Pastor

*Position Duration:*

Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry.

*Compensation Level:*

Full Time

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

Our goal is to achieve conference compensation guidelines.

## 1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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**Full Time Pastoral Position** (40-45 hours weekly / 10-11 units)

- **Preparation and leadership** of Sunday worship including Scripture study, crafting of liturgy and bulletin, sermon preparation, guiding lay liturgists, coordinating with music staff or volunteers for effective inclusion of music in worship, preaching, offering of prayers, etc.
- **Faith formation and vitality** through prayer, bible study, service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities and helping lay persons take advantage of them
- **Leadership development** by working with people in the congregation to create ministry and programs and guiding elected leadership in effective management of church resources
- **Pastoral care** in collaboration with laity, counseling, listening and referral
- **Community engagement** and leading the way for the church to be an ambassador of inclusion, open and affirming love, and based in spiritual values and Jesus' teachings.
- **Strategic planning** for current and new directions in ministry and mission
- **Attend meetings** and provide leadership (as needed) to church programs, in collaboration with lay leadership
- **Participate in wider church** activities such as Conference and Association meetings as well as local Interfaith Partners meetings/programs
- **Administrative responsibilities** (that cannot be delegated) such as email, phone calls and other communications
- **Faithful financial development** and stewardship
- **Supervision** of staff and volunteers

- **Availability to the wider community** for funerals, weddings, special worship programs, and as a representative of the church to local organizations
- **Study and prayer** to increase faith and to develop skills so as to lead, teach and preach more effectively
- **Energizing and deepening** the spiritual connections and faith understandings of others in all they do

*Core Competencies:*

Empathetic, Approachable, Inspiring

## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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*Salary Basis:*

We are committed to working to achieve Vermont Conference compensation guidelines

*Benefits:*

Salary plus Benefits as per Vermont Conference compensation guidelines

*What is the expected living situation for your next minister?*



Large parsonage is available.  
 Location at 161 Fairbanks Drive is ideal, particularly for a family.  
 Upstairs: 4 BR, 1 full bath, multiple closets  
 Downstairs: Living room with fireplace, office/den/bedroom with ¾ bath, formal dining room, kitchen, laundry/coat room  
 Kitchen and baths recently remodeled  
 New appliances  
 Unfinished attic and basement, “mud” room,  
 1 car attached garage

- ½ mile to church building
- ¼ mile to post office, fire and police dept., library and courthouse
- 100 yards to elementary school and St. Johnsbury Academy. Also Kiwanis pool and tennis courts.
- ¾ mile to downtown: Town offices, shopping, restaurants, farmers’ market, Catamount Arts, Star Theater, LVRT trailhead
- Easy access to I-91 and I-93.

*Residential/commuting expectations for your next minister:*

Our preference is for our pastor to reside in Saint Johnsbury. If the pastor chooses a housing allowance instead of the parsonage, it is important to note that housing is limited and expensive. Vermont, like many other places around the country, is experiencing a crisis in affordable rental and home availability.

*State Pastor incentives:*

- Sabbatical: Three months at full compensation, every five years
- School Choice for High School: tuition paid by Saint Johnsbury School District for residents with options for St. Johnsbury Academy or other secondary school
- Free pass to Fairbanks Museum
- Strong performing and visual arts community with opportunities for participation
- Catamount Arts which sponsors performing art venues in various St. Johnsbury facilities - including United Community Church building. In its own building Catamount offers two film theaters with daily movies and simulcast presentations from Met Opera, Bolshoi Ballet, and National Theater of London, galleries featuring local and regional artisans, programs for young people and adults to improve their artistic and musical skills.
- Wide array of recreational activities, including swimming pool, tennis court, gyms, bowling, sports leagues, and four season individual outdoor sports activities
- Traditional box stores within a 20 minute drive
- Local discount shopping and high end niche shopping
- Two grocery stores and a local Farmers' Market with produce, crafts, music — a fun place to see everybody on Saturday mornings, with a local Co-op in the works.

*Peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference:*

St. Johnsbury InterFaith Partners  
Northeast Association and VT Conference Clergy Cluster/Support Groups

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

*Ministry goals we envision our next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve.*

We have the vision of creating a beloved community, working together to care for each other within the congregation and wider region. We envision our next minister working



with us in our outreach and service ministry efforts and helping to lead in the creation of vibrant and meaningful worship experiences for the congregation.

*Our vision of the minister we are seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond the church walls.*

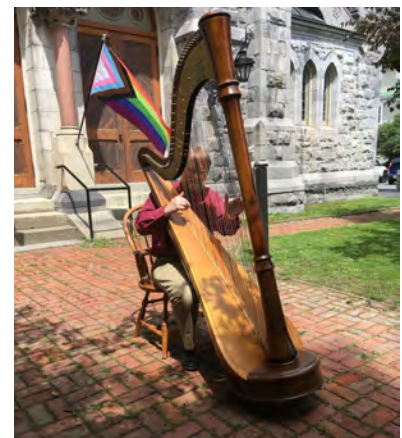
We expect that our pastor will communicate and engage with the wider community to help open channels through which the congregation can share our love and resources.

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

- LGBTQIA sensitivity: there are several members of our congregation who self-identify in these categories, and many who care deeply about being good allies. United Community Church affirmed at its founding that it wants to continue as an Open and Affirming congregation.



- Expansive language for God: We use *Hymns of Truth and Light* (First Congregational Church of Houston, 1998) and *New Century Hymnal* (Pilgrim Press, 1995) as our primary sources for congregational song. Both hymnals are known for their focus on inclusive and expansive language. We maintain OneLicense and CCLI licenses which allow for inclusion of newer hymns. While our pew bibles are NRSV and there are some congregants who appreciate the poetry of the King James Bible, modern translations, including *The Message* are often used in worship. Hymns, poetry and liturgy by contemporary writers that emphasize expansive language are frequently included in worship.
- Musical appreciation: We have people of all ages in our congregation who are accomplished musicians and singers; we have a dedicated voice choir and handbell ensemble. A thriving music ministry is very important to the musicians among us as well as those who would call themselves non-musical. Music Director/organist and handbell director both have



many years of service to United Community Church and the predecessor congregations. They are prepared to work cooperatively with our pastor to select and prepare music that enhances worship and supports Scriptural themes. In addition to the regular organ, choral and handbell musical offerings, the congregation welcomes other musical offerings from members and guests including Dixieland worship, bluegrass worship, jazz worship, musical offerings from local choral ensembles, and violin, harp, guitar, bass and flute offerings from members of the congregation. In addition, the United Community Church building is often used as a performance venue by local ensembles and by world-class musicians sponsored by Catamount Arts.

- Anti-racism awareness and action – Anti-racism programs have been offered in recent years. Northern Vermont is one of the least racially diverse areas of the country. It’s easy for us to think that we’re not racist because we have limited opportunity for interactions with BIPOC peoples. We recognize the need to be intentional about recognizing our inherited privilege and actively speaking and standing up to address systemic racism.

*The four areas of excellence from [The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry](#) that our next minister will display to further equip the congregation’s ministry in these areas.*

- Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice
  - Understand the power of the Holy Spirit working through silence, language, art, music, ritual, and symbols across generations and contexts
- Engaging Sacred Stories and Tradition
  - Exhibiting knowledge, understanding, and continuing study of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament
- Caring for Others
  - Nurturing Care and Compassion for of all God’s creation
  - Providing hope and healing to a hurting world
- Encountering the Other with Justice and Mercy
  - Practicing the Radical Hospitality of God
  - Engaging in mission and outreach



## 2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME

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

*Who is God calling us to become as a congregation?*

Here are some quotes gathered from our congregational Listening Sessions and questionnaires: “the beating heart of St. Johnsbury, working towards the beloved community, God is calling us to be welcoming and caring, known for supporting equity and justice for all, and for reaching out to others in times of need; continually striving to live out the teachings of Jesus through outreach and involvement in the greater St. Johnsbury community, be so vibrant have such great programs, worship and fellowship that our joy and inclusion naturally draws people in, reach out to other congregations to work together for community, take care of members to all feel loved, beacon of good in the community.”

We are a new church formed from two congregations and now also include members who belonged to neither of the former congregations. This alone requires continuing work to understand each other and our histories, and to continue to forge a new, shared identity as United Community Church. And, of course, there is always the ongoing need to fulfill our mission within our church congregation. This is multifold. It includes supporting parishioners in times of personal need, educating the young, teaching the gospel with understanding of the timeless lessons and their meaning for us today.

*Describe how God is calling us to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of our community and congregation.*

Building on the quote, “the beating heart of St. Johnsbury”, there is a strong drive in our congregation to provide meaningful and necessary support for members of our community. We offer several free meals a week and provide spaces for meetings, a food shelf, and are a go-to stop for people struggling in our community. In the future our efforts could become more focused and more strategic. Ideally, we would work with other organizations and together provide the most appropriate and helpful assistance.

We are fortunate to be endowed with a large, beautiful, and unique building. Our location is fortuitous also, being in the heart of town. As well, the sanctuary houses a renowned organ. This largess can be both a benefit and a challenge. The church also owns five buildings around the church, several of which were donated to the church many decades ago. The buildings are

primarily used for housing. One is the home of the local food shelf, and one building has a commercial space. For a number of years there has been a debate about whether to sell or continue to own these buildings. Historically, the church has aspired to provide housing at affordable prices and thereby support our mission of assisting our community.

Currently we also have a substantial endowment, which the church currently draws down to support church operations. But it will not continue to be substantial enough if we need to draw from it at too high a rate. How do we fulfill our mission, all the good work of being the church, and also maintain our financial wellbeing?

An ad hoc committee is looking into both of these assets and our current use of them and the ways they could fit into our mission. We are acutely focused on developing a sustainable program that serves both our needs and those of the community. We are expanding our support of the community to pre-Covid levels, inviting diverse groups and activities to once again use our space, and have developed new activities to nurture the congregation, including dance and dessert nights, communal breakfasts, holiday activities, etc.

And finally, in our first eight years, we have weathered several challenges. These include working with three interim or bridge pastors and two ‘settled’ pastors. Our experience with our most recent settled pastor is detailed in other sections of this document. As well, along with our experience with pastors, we managed Covid, and the flooding of our basement, resulting in the loss of our kitchen. Through all these challenges, we have persevered, even thrived. After refurbishing our kitchen in 2022, the church embarked on providing two free meals per week for our community. At this time, we serve about 150 people twice a week.

There is a sense of joy and positive energy in our congregation. We have had some extraordinary lay leadership during this time. How do we support this spirit so that it continues and infuses our congregation going forward?

### **3. WHO ARE WE NOW?**

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

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

### 3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

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*Describe our congregation's life of faith.*

Mahatma Gandhi said, “You must be the change you want to see in the world”

United Community Church intends to meet both religious and spiritual needs in our community, and to demonstrate the change that needs to happen to heal the world through word and deed. We intend to be a place that nurtures spiritual community, drawing on but not limited to the early teachings of Jesus. A recent Order of Service quoted Barbara Lunblad, Emeritus Professor of preaching at Union Theological Seminary: “We must therefore, be suspicious of religious authority which moves toward exclusion, whose aim is to keep certain people out by written rule or daily practice. We must judge ourselves and our churches by Jesus’ move toward inclusion.”

In this intentional space, the UCC community uses broad terms for referencing and describing the divine in our midst. God is often called Mother/Father, Creator God, Divine, Merciful (and other expansive language identifiers) in our liturgy. The Holy Spirit is experienced in many ways in our services. Poetry and visual arts conjure images of God in nature and Spirit and in various ways. There are no religious emblems or imagery in the windows, woodwork, or on the edifice. The window colors, leaves carved in the woodwork, and other details are designed to evoke the beauty of God's creation in our region. Many feel the Spirit in the music that fills our church through a grand pipe organ, the grandest instrument in New England north of Boston, piano, choir, handbell ensemble and guest musicians. We have several very talented musicians of all ages in the congregation. Others feel the Spirit in the quiet grandeur of our sanctuary, or in quiet contemplation walking our stone paver labyrinth. The labyrinth, located on our south lawn, is a wonderful outreach and hospitality tool that communicates the warm, open spirit of a church. Having a labyrinth that is available to the larger community is a visible way of welcoming the public onto the church property. Sharing this sacred tool communicates the congregation’s interest in the spiritual health of its members and neighborhood.

For others, Scripture, prayers, and a meaningful sermon are key to a Spirit-filled worship service. We experience the Spirit when we greet each other and catch up with each others’ lives before and after worship. We have a very involved group of volunteers participating in services regularly.

*Several strengths or positive qualities of our congregation.*

- The congregation is generally progressive; there is a very wide spectrum of beliefs, faith backgrounds, and attitudes represented.
- Many members of the congregation are active in mission within the community.
- Our congregation includes youth and young families along with mid-career adults and retirees.
- There is a long tradition and appreciation of music ministry with strong musical and worship leadership on staff and within the congregation.



*Worship when our congregation gathers:*

In our current synchronous hybrid model of worship, the congregation appreciates creative liturgy within traditional worship frameworks with meaningful preaching enveloped with prayer, hymns and music in various styles. At the same time, we are receptive and ready to experiment with different (relative to our historical practice) styles of worship service and music.

We believe good preaching opens hearts and minds to deeper understandings of God at work in the world and in our lives. A thoughtful sermon educates, leads us to more deeply engage with one another, increasing our understanding of ourselves as agents of change in the community and world. During worship we seek to learn new things and be spiritually fed for the week ahead. The congregation expects a sermon to meet us where we are, to learn how Jesus would want us to be, and to guide us toward a fuller realization of God’s will for all creation.

*Educational program/faith formation vision of our church:*

Our faith formation ministry is working to make our sanctuary and worship service more inclusive to children and move away from the model of separating families by age during worship. Children are regularly included in the worship service with a children’s message and as readers and acolytes. Every other week, the children meet separately after the anthem for spiritual formation. They are using “Illustrated Ministries” as a

guide. Currently they are studying the Beatitudes and doing a study of the Lord's Prayer. They also had a focused study during the Lenten season.

We currently have 2 youth and 1 adult student working toward confirmation. They are studying our United Church of Christ and Christian church history and UCC structure, customs, beliefs, and the statement of faith.

Bible study has been available for adults during the Advent and Lenten seasons. The writings of William Willmon have been used as a base for these discussions. There are also plans to have future adult studies based on our Open and Affirming status to gain a deeper understanding of what this means for us. The congregation has also been clear in their desire for a Pastor-led Bible study as opposed to a Lay-led one.

*How our congregation is organized for ministry and mission:*

- The Church Council consists of elected officers (Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, two At-large members), a representative from each of the four Ministries, along with the Pastor, Assistant Moderator and Past Moderator who are non-voting members. The four Ministries are: Worship and Care, Outreach, Spiritual Formation and Nurture, and Stewardship. Each Ministry is designed to have four to six members.
- Communication is generally accomplished through Sunday morning online and verbal announcements, weekly Constant Contact email messages and monthly newsletter. We are proud of our church website, [www.uccstj.com](http://www.uccstj.com). Copies of newsletters are posted to the website. We also have a Facebook page where we host recordings of online worship services and post ongoing updates for events.

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

Approximately 3 hours per month with Church Council meetings, 4 to 5 hours per month with meetings with the four ministries, and 4 hours per month with staff meetings.

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

March 2020: The church went from active in-person worship to fully online in the course of a week. The rapid transition was led by the then-current pastor with staff, Council and worship leadership all kept informed via email. Our initial online services were not elegant. We kept exploring options and improving each week. Meetings and Lenten study also moved online using Zoom as we kept trying to stretch the creative and technological boundaries. Church staff assembled and arranged for distribution of "Holy Week in a



Box” worship aids for families/households. A month later, our online Holy Week services were quite successful.

February 2021: The then-current fuel supplier failed to deliver to the church causing furnace failure and frozen pipes. The first pipes to burst were in the electrical room which took out all the alarm systems. Luckily a tenant was walking his dog, heard water running and called the fire department around 2:00 am. By 3:00 am our Moderator was on site with the fire department. By 7:00 am the custodian had a plumber and an electrician on site to begin emergency repairs. Our interim pastor, church staff and Church Council were informed within 24 hours. The insurance company was called the same day and the building was reopened for staff within the week. The kitchen was refurbished as of August 2022 with a new stove, upgraded electrical wiring, a new floor, and a thorough cleaning and refreshing of equipment.

September 2023: Our newly appointed settled pastor resigned suddenly, giving only two weeks notice and little in the way of reasonable explanation. Amid understandable feelings of hurt and betrayal, the church leadership moved quickly to support the church staff and community. Two former pastors in the congregation made the offer to fill pulpit supply and pastoral care needs, and within a week began helping to assist the church through our current period of transition. Despite everything, the church has survived, and even thrived through this period, and we eagerly await the chance to move forward with new long-term pastoral leadership.

*The Church organizational structure, bylaws and/or annual report further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance?*

Bylaws and 2022-2023 Annual Report are attached to this profile.

### 3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

Note: United Community Church was founded in 2016. There are only eight years of data available for this entity.

United Church of Christ											
Eight Year Church Profile based on reported UCC yearbooks											
Church:	821005										
Assoc:	800	Schedule: 0	United Community Church, UCC					St Johnsbury	VT	05819	
Year	Current Expenses	Capital Expenditures	Basic Support	Total Other Giving	Total OCWM	Other Gifts	Wider Mission	Basic Supt% Curr Local	Total Expend	Pledges and Offerings	
2016	225,068	65,000	234	600	834	-	834	0.10	290,902	37,000	
2017	267,475	149,690	2,248	9,092	11,340	2,393	13,733	0.84	291,208	56,291	
2018	267,475	-	800	617	1,417	-	1,417	0.30	268,892	53,712	
2019	226,475	9,325	870	500	1,378	3,042	3,042	0.38	229,517	39,373	
2020	232,526	-	3,816	2,485	5,998	9,366	16,742	1.64	249,268	49,687	
2021	229,719	-	4,000	1,594	5,594	536	6,130	1.74	235,849	46,139	
2022	310,825	76,273	4,000	1,754	5,754	993	6,747	1.29	393,845	74,631	
2023	301,581	134,972	5,000	1,747	5,747	1,050	7,797	1.66	444,350	81,901	

### 3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

*Participation in our church.*

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	60	Yes
Number of active non-members:	40	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	100	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:	n/a	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	65%	Yes
Less than 5 years:	35%	Yes

*Number of total participants by age:*

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate?</i>
7	6	7	5	5	5	15	25	25	Yes

*Number of various household types:*

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	4	Yes
Households with minors:	7	Yes
Single adults age 35-65:	8	Yes
Joint households with no minors:	30	Yes
Single adults over 65:	30	Yes

*Education level of adult participants by percentage:*

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	3%	Yes
College:	73%	Yes
Graduate School:	20%	Yes
Specialty Training:	4%	Yes

Other (please specify):		
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*Percentage of adults in various employment types:*

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	40%	Yes
Adults who are retired:	40%	Yes
Adults who are not fully employed:	20%	Yes

*Range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:*

We have a wide range of professions, from those requiring doctorates to professionals in the trades, entrepreneurs and their employees, clergy, and retirees who continue the pursuit of lifetime learning. We have a significant number of educators and health care workers at all levels in our congregation. There are also non-profit professionals, security workers, custodians, government workers, and people in clerical and retail occupations.

*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?*

The congregation is predominantly White - as would be expected in rural northern Vermont, and we do have some racial diversity among active members in the congregation.

**3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING**

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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	15	pastor, lay leaders

Baptisms ( <i>number last year</i> )	1	
Children's Groups or Classes	8	pastor, spiritual formation ministry
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	125	pastor, musicians, worship ministry
Church-wide Meals	20-30	lay leaders
Choirs and Music Groups	20	music director, handbell director
Church-based Bible Study	15	pastor
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )		1st Sunday each month, Maundy Thursday, Easter
Community Meals	150/day	Every Wednesday and Friday lunch
Concerts	150	
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	2	pastor, spiritual nurture ministry
Drama or Dance Program		
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	4	pastor, music director
Intergenerational Groups	18	Christian Ed, pastor
Outdoor Worship	40	Worship & care, pastor, musicians
Prayer or Meditation Groups		
Public Advocacy Work	6-20	Pride parade/Crop walk, Youth Service walk, VT Workers Center, March for Medicaid, Immigration Rally
Retreats		
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	1	pastor, musicians, bridal party
Worship (time slot: 10:00 am )	30-50 in person	pastor, musicians, worship ministry
Worship (time slot: 10:00 am)	10-20 online	above plus worship technology coord.
Young Adult Groups or Classes		



Youth Groups or Classes		
Book Study group		spiritual formation ministry

*Additional comments:*

The church hosts approximately 40 community groups that meet regularly in the church. We also host many community events such as Chowder Suppers, Dessert and Dancing with live music, a Men’s Breakfast and Women’s tea. Our Community Lunches serve about 150 people in house and with bag lunches to go. Local organizations also use our space to host concerts, lecture series, and special events such as First Night North. The church also serves as the depot for collections (blankets, tools, kits, etc) during the year for Church World Service.

*Members or regular participants in our congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers.*

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Rev. Jay Sprout	No		Co-Guest pastor	Retired (2013)
Rev Steve Winkler	No		Co-Guest pastor	Retired

Rev. Jay Sprout, retired pastor of one of our predecessor congregations, is currently serving as one of our Co-Guest pastors providing pulpit supply and pastoral care.

Several retired pastors of mainstream denominations have been members in past years.

*Current staff, including ministers. Pastor serves as Head of Staff*

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current position
Music Director / Secretary		Part time	Pastor and Worship & Care	1980 (including predecessor congregation)

Secretary		Part time	Pastor and Stewardship Chair	2014 (including predecessor congregation)
Handbell Director		Part time/contract	Pastor and Worship & Care	5 years
Worship Technology		Part time/contract	Pastor and Worship & Care	2020

## REFLECTION

*Reflection: The congregational demographics and activities above help to reflect our congregation's overall ministry?*

We consolidated two Congregational churches in St. Johnsbury to form United Community Church eight years ago. We are a young congregation with a still evolving identity, and our demographics show there is room for growth. We are committed to community outreach and serving all. We hope the children in our congregation learn through faith formation to become active, committed, faithful participants in our world - both locally and globally. We would be a fruitful setting for someone who wanted to minister *with* a small, but mightily envisioned and hopeful group of people. We want to grow in number, and we believe that will happen as we deepen our faith, our sense of identity as one congregation, and our positive impact on our community. We aspire to be a source of light and strength for our community. Any minister who joins us now will be helping to develop a young church, establishing footings for ministries into the future.

## 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$ 65,226
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>generally higher than a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	\$ 110,430

Endowment Draw ( <i>drawing down on principal</i> )	\$ 149,570
Fundraising Events	\$ 4,037
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose -Missions	\$ 13,693
Grants (COVID federal employment grants were used -PPP)	\$ 0
Rentals of Church Building	\$ 7,362
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )	\$
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$
Other (specify): Transfer from apartments & parsonage	\$ 207
Other (specify): Bequests	\$ 50,000
TOTAL	\$ 400,525

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

Budgeted expenditures FY 2024: \$264,115

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

35% budgeted for pastoral support during FY 2023

*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 the operating budget, what is that percentage? (recommended 10%)*

Flat amount included in Budget

*What is the church's current indebtedness?*

Total amount of loan debt: 0.00

*Reason for debt:* N/A

*Are capital and other payments current?* Yes

We currently have a project of exterior masonry repairs underway. The total budget is \$70,000, and is partially funded (\$20,000) by a grant. The project is projected to take place from Summer 2024 - Summer 2025.

*Capital activity in the last ten years, describe:*

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2022-23	Church Roof	\$100,000	\$135,000	We have a new roof for the entire church as of 2023

*If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:*

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact

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

We hope to maintain and protect the church building for continued and future use by congregation and community.

*Does your church have an endowment?*

Yes

*What is the market value of the assets?*

\$2,256,670 as of February 2024

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

2024 budget includes a regular draw of \$15,000 / month

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

Draw has been \$15,000 a month, approximately 8% of value

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

Draw on endowment covers 72% of operating budget expenses

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

The finance ministries are actively working to assure that draw on endowment does not negatively affect total net value.

*Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:*

Market gains in recent years have been able to support the current draw on investment. We realize this rate of draw will not be permanently sustainable. We are open to working together to realize other levels and varieties of income generation.

*Other Assets:*

Rental properties are managed separately from the church accounts.

*Reserves (savings):* \$

*Investments (other than endowment):* \$

*Does your church have a parsonage?*

Yes

*Fair market rental value of the parsonage:*

\$36,000 / year

*How is the parsonage used?*

Currently empty.



*Street / City / State / Zip:*

161 Fairbanks Drive, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

*Finished square footage:*

approx. 2000 sq. ft.

*Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms:*

5 Bedrooms, 1 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Baths

*Assessed real estate value:*

The town assessment on the parsonage is \$176k. Per Zillow real estate website it is \$213k.

*Available for minister residence:*

Yes

*Expected minister residence:*

Parsonage preferred

*Condition of structure, systems and appliances:*

Building is well-maintained. Exterior painted 2023. The structure is historical, and features many charming interior decorative elements unique to a home of the late Victorian period located in a town with access to fine lumber and creative artisans. It is a home with ‘old world charm and new world amenities’, as are most of the beautiful, historical homes on Main Street and surrounding the Church. Electrical, heating and plumbing systems are all updated, inspected, and well maintained. All appliances are new. Kitchen and bathrooms have been remodeled.

*Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs or up-dates.*

Chair of Stewardship Ministry

*Describe all buildings owned by the church:*

Five buildings surrounding the Church property: Three buildings comprising 15 individual apartment rental units offered at affordable rates. The apartments have been recently updated and most are occupied at present. One small rental home, and a second small house which is presently being used as the Community Food Shelf at no cost to those operating the service.

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

Not Applicable

*Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?*

Worship space in Sanctuary, offices, restroom, and all fellowship and education areas are wheelchair accessible. An elevator accesses all three levels of the building. (Pulpit, choir loft and balcony are not wheelchair accessible and are rarely used.)

*Reflection:*

Our congregation is blessed with a large historical building, a generous endowment and a long history of Christian service in the predecessor congregations. Recent congregational feedback clearly stated that we value being active and visible in our missions, especially those in the local community where there are many physical and personal needs. However, during every discussion of the budget someone points to the fact that our monthly expenses for staff and programs exceed a sustainable draw on our endowment. That implies that we have a need of income — income to continue our active mission work and income to pay the monthly bills of the building and our programs. In a Church, income often translates to growing a membership. Our active membership is very dedicated spiritually and in physically stepping up to tasks, and an honest look at the picture shows a very overworked active membership. We are continually challenged by this issue, and are aware that we may need to consider alternatives to the traditional solution of growing our membership. Addressing this is something with which we need help, focus, creativity and strategy.

### **3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

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United Community Church was formed Easter Sunday, 2016 from two predecessor congregations, located ½ mile apart. Together, the consolidated congregation decided which building to designate as its hub. Despite congregational discussion and vote, many members from the predecessor congregations have drifted away from the new church. We realize now that this is because we did not understand how important it was to dedicate more time and effort to engaging all members before consolidating operations. Currently about 30% of the active worshipers have no connection to either predecessor congregation. We are continuing to grow as a new congregation and there still remains the opportunity to re-engage some of these “drifted” members.

There was, originally, one Congregational church on Main Street; however, as the population of St. Johnsbury grew, so did the congregation. Eventually the congregation grew too large for the existing church building. In 1851, one quarter of the church

membership was chosen by lottery to form a new church to be located on property ½ mile south of the existing church building. This is how South Church came into existence. The South Church building was completed on January 14, 1852. It was designed to be a replica of the original North Church building. Continued growth in the community led to a replacement of the original North Church “Wren style” building in 1881 with the Victorian style, limestone church building that now houses United Community Church. The South Church building was donated to the St Johnsburry Academy once the unification of the 2 churches was completed. UCC does still retain some provisions to be able to use the building for special occasions such as weddings and funerals.

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

Adapting to the pandemic, we moved to online worship. Since then, we have transitioned to a hybrid worship model. The hybrid worship model has continued to provide the benefit of increased accessibility for our members.

*Our congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict.*

The process of creating one new congregation from two existing congregations was in itself a challenging process. Each church had a long history of traditions and long term pastors which was disrupted by the consolidation. Since then we have had little stability with our Pastoral calls - a series of Interims, Bridges and short term Settled Calls. Understanding that this is a national trend, and that health issues and personal needs do happen, we still looked inward as a congregation to see how we could do better to support a pastor. Our most recent call was done with much discussion, research, discernment, and prayerful decision making. We felt that we had addressed each and every concern of our new pastor as promptly and effectively as possible, and yet he chose to terminate his call very unexpectedly and with very short notice leaving this congregation feeling misled and wounded. But we have an incredibly strong, dedicated and resourceful core congregation. Once again, we have looked inward and gathered information so see what we could do better in the future. We know that we have much to offer and so have faced forward to begin the search again.

A second ongoing challenge has been the property that the church has owned for several decades. There are a total of 15 rental units and it has been long understood that it was a mission to help provide safe affordable housing in our community. However, we realize that we as a congregation may not be able to afford to maintain this mission. There has been much delayed maintenance over the years that has led to unsafe conditions that we have been recently addressing at a great cost. The management of these units also

demands a tremendous amount of our staff’s attention. Over the past couple of years we have seriously considered selling the properties to an appropriate owner. But there are those in the congregation that want to keep these units as a part of our mission and that they believe that they can become profitable. So we are currently in a trial of a year of turning over the management of the properties to a professional management company to relieve the strain on our staff and to see if they can be more financially efficient than we have been able to be. We have also started some discussion groups to see what members of the congregation think our mission should be - should it include these rental units or can our resources be directed to something more effective? This group is also considering other long-term questions that the Annual meeting does not allow for full consideration of.

Lastly, another recent challenge that occurred during COVID when the building was closed. Due to a failed delivery of fuel oil, the pipes froze causing a flood and a great deal of damage to our basement where our large commercial kitchen is housed. We had served large free community meals from this kitchen for decades until we had to close due to COVID. This flood actually spurred us to overhaul the long-neglected kitchen. We painted, replaced the flooring, cleaned and reorganized, and finally purchased a new stove. We have had the Community Meal site reopened for over a year now serving about 150 meals every Wednesday and Friday.

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

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev. Jay Sprout and Rev. Stephen Winkler (Pulpit Supply)	2023 - present	Yes
Rev. Andrew Ponder Williams	2022 - 2023	Yes
Rev. Kurt Herber (Interim)	2020 - 2022	Yes
Rev. Elisa Lucozzi	2017 - 2020	Yes
Rev. Joan Vincent (Bridge)	2014 & 2016	Yes
Rev. Douglas Moore (Designated Term)	2014-2016	Yes

Rev. William Bartholomew (Interim – predecessor congregation)	2013-2014	Yes
Rev. Jay Sprout (predecessor congregation)	1982 - 2013	Yes
Rev. Mark Milligan (predecessor congregation)	2011-2014	Yes
Rev. William Schutter (Interim - predecessor congregation)	2009 - 2011	Yes
Rev. William Nelson (Interim – predecessor congregation)	2007 - 2009	Yes
Rev. Bonnie Haas (predecessor congregation)	2005-2007	Yes
Rev. Lee Moore (Interim - predecessor congregation)	2004-2005	Yes
Rev. Stephen Winkler (predecessor congregation)	1984-2004	Yes

*The church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:*

Both predecessor congregations enjoyed successful long-term pastorates. Since those pastorates ended the predecessor congregations and the new United Community congregation have struggled with incomplete interim periods and short-term pastorates. The United Community congregation is hungry for engaged, compassionate leadership and ready to work toward a significant ministry in the St. Johnsbury community.

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

Yes. An interim pastor in each predecessor congregation was given notice.

*Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?*

No

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

No



## 4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

a. COMMUNITY VISION

b. MISSION InSite

### 4a. COMMUNITY VISION

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*How the relationships and activities of our congregation extend outward in service and advocacy:*

The United Community Church sees itself as the heart of the St Johnsbury community. This starts within the building, which functions as an unofficial community center. We host exercise classes for the council on aging, alcoholics anonymous meetings, Vermont Workers Center meetings, local neighborhood meetings, local band rehearsals, concerts, and many others events. In the last year, approximately 40 organizations used our church in some way. The Kingdom Community Services food shelf operates out of a building on the church campus and organizes weekly meals in our basement community kitchen. The church is a visible Open and Affirming space for the LGBTQIA community. Dating from its construction over 100 years ago, the church has been a welcoming space for not just our congregation, but the entire community - reflected in the beautiful nature themed construction and decorative elements that evoke God’s presence without overt Christian symbolism.

Our congregation looks to build upon this strength as we move forward. Post-pandemic and post-kitchen renovations, we have resumed hosting weekly community lunches, and envision new ways this asset can be shared with our community. While our strength is in local connections, we are moved to serve global needs, such as providing housing for asylum seekers in collaboration with a local partner organization.

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

The United Community Church is active in the Northeast Association, with two members attending meetings. The church is a Five for Five contributor to the Vermont Conference and UCC. Members of the church attend the Vermont Conference Annual Meeting each year. A member of the congregation serves on the Conference Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee. A member of the congregation attended the last two national synod meetings.

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"/> I_ 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"/> X_ Open and Affirming (ONA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming                     | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X_ 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                                   |

*Reflection on which of the above statements our congregation interested in working toward in the near future:*

The congregation is proud to be designated as an ONA congregation. Accessibility work over the years has included a covered, exterior ramp, and elevator accessing all three levels of the church building, a fully accessible restroom and removal of pews to accommodate wheelchairs. Much of our teaching and the focus of many sermons is that God Is Still Speaking. We strive to hear how we can live this truth in our own lives and offer it to others. We hope that our congregation is known for its openness, accessibility, and welcoming attitude throughout our community.

*Our congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities:*

We regularly host or participate in ecumenical worship including MLK observances, New Year's Eve services, outdoor jazz services, Easter Sunrise service and community Thanksgiving services. The church shares its space with other denominations and faith traditions. For example, the local synagogue prepares a Christmas Dinner for anyone in the community who wants to attend, and they use the UCC church to serve the meal. We are a part of a network of local churches that pool resources and assist those in need in the local community. For example, we participate with Kingdom Community Services (KCS) and other community churches, each hosting two free meals a week. This service has continued for decades in St Johnsbury.

*Mission Statement:* As one body in communion with God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, we, covenant with one another to care for and love each other as Jesus Christ loves us, and to

maintain, support, and foster a compassionate ministry in our community and throughout all God's creation.

We try to live faithfully in accordance with our mission statement. That we care for one another, and maintain, support and foster compassionate ministry in our community and beyond is indisputable. The majority of the time and effort that the church and its members are engaged in, as described in our activities and mission in this document, are intended to live out this mission statement.

*Scope of work assigned to our pastor:*

We have sought to make our governance structure more lean and more efficient in an effort to support both pastoral and justice ministries in the congregation, in the community, and beyond. We seek to serve *with*, rather than “be served”. We understand that our hunger for meaningful worship and ministry requires that we do our share in supporting pastoral leadership with the time and resources to develop professionally, spiritually and collaboratively, with us.

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

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*Our congregation's [MissionInsite report](#) with data for our region. What trends and opportunities are shown?*

Per our 2021 Mission InSite report, our region's five largest Mosaic segments are Bohemian Groove (13%); Town Elders (12.4%); Unspoiled Splendor (7.5%); Rooted Flower Power (7.5%); and True Grit Americans (6.4%). These segments are primarily middle-aged and older, low to middle income, and composed of many more singles/couples than families with school-age children. For the most part people in these segments are willing to contribute time and/or money to a church.

*How our congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which our church connects?*

In the neighborhoods adjacent to and connected with our church, there are many families with school-age children, but the neighborhood still trends toward a middle aged and elderly population. Our church is adjacent and connected to neighborhoods with more extreme poverty than is reflected in the congregation. Finally, the community has an increasing population of color we seek to welcome into our faith fellowship.

The immediate neighborhood of the Church encompasses the dichotomy of the town — from affordable apartments to the wealthy of St. J. who are actively restoring the opulence of the Victorian Age that created this area. There are retirees and young families, professionals and unemployed, highly educated and less so, varieties of emotional and mental stability, socially accepted and marginalized, homeowners and renters. All live as neighbors within these blocks. We are concerned that our Sunday congregation lacks a presence of those who are at our door during the week for the Food Shelf, a warm coat, a free gas card, community meals, or another problem the “Church is expected to solve”. Is there a way we can reach the neighborhood spiritually as well as physically? How do we truly equip our neighbors who struggle in a variety of ways with the spiritual tools to empower sustainable and faithful lives?

*Demographics of the community shaping our ministry:*

The demographics of the community surrounding the church help shape our ministry in the form of outreach. We support the Food Shelf, supply gas cards and other necessities for people who stop in the office. Kingdom Community Services provided a community lunch once a week out of our kitchen and, for a time, we had a community coffee and conversation time for anyone who wanted to stop in on weekday mornings. Much of this has been directed towards those in need. It should be noted that there was, at times, some negative reaction to opening up our church to people who are often invisible to Main St. life. The church provides affordable housing in the church-owned properties surrounding our building. In addition, there has been outreach to families with children in the form of alternatives to trick or treating on Halloween as well as use of our outdoor space for community gatherings of all ages. In conjunction with meeting the physical needs of those in our neighborhood, we want to have a greater spiritual impact on our wider community. Regardless of the faith tradition of the observer, we desire to “walk our talk” of discipleship in such a way that those who care to look, see followers of Christ engaged in loving their neighbors.

*What we hear when we talk to community leaders and ask them what our church is known for?*

Most often we are known as “the active, supportive, friendly, and accepting Church”, and we appreciate and seek to build upon that reputation. Less so, and somewhat discouraging, we are also known as “the rich Church”, always good for a hand out. We would like to transform that latter dynamic in line with active stewardship, building on our resources to empower those within and around us.

Public Servants and Community Leaders have shared these thoughts:

- “I appreciate space provided for community meetings and the community meals program, while also recalling some community concern regarding the daytime “shelter” program.”
- “United Community Church is an important convening place that offers a unique spiritual and experiential component enhancing musical performances. UCC is a place that encourages connection and provides one of the key social fabrics in St. Johnsbury.”
- “UCC in St J. is truly an open door church as it functions as the hub of local community life. They always welcome anyone and generously allow various groups to use their facilities. I strongly believe they show the best example of genuine Christian Hospitality.”
- “I hope we can work together in the future in a more cooperative way as I am sure the church congregation has the best intentions.”
- “Being quite new to the community, and not knowing the programs or the congregation members, I am aware that it is a historical landmark of the Community and certainly hope it will always have the community support and funding to preserve it as the beautiful and significant structure it presents in the middle of Main Street St Johnsbury”
- “UCC is known for being a progressive institution, with a visible focus on social services and supporting those in need. It has a strong foundation in the community, with hundreds of years of history, and generations of churchgoers. The building itself is a fantastic community resource for performances and community meals & activities. Words that come to mind when I think of UCC are caring, empathetic, welcoming... and historic, artistic, engaged.”

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

People who are involved said they were personally invited and felt needed; they felt “welcomed” by congregants and often personally invited by the Pastor, and many felt called to our involvement in missions. People also cited their commitment to faith formation of their children. There has been a positive response to the more recent increase in the inclusion of youth in our church services.

## 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

**Rev. Joan Vincent**

Retired, United Church of Christ, Glover, Vermont  
802-535-3957 / joanwv@gmail.com / Pastoral colleague  
Reference Letter attached

### REFERENCE 2

**The Rev. Dr. Claire W Bamberg**

UCC Minister and CEO of Potentials Coaching & Consulting / Local and National  
860-323-3905 / claire@clairebamberg.com (preferred) / Consultant  
Reference Letter attached

### REFERENCE 3

**Chad Whitehead**

Town Manager, Town of St. Johnsbury  
Office: 802-748-3926 / cwhitehead@stjvt.com / Local public official  
Reference Letter attached

### PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES

Describe some areas of strength in this church’s ministry.

Describe some areas for improvement in this church’s ministry.

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church’s ministry.

Anything else you wish to share.

## 6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

### 6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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

**A New Version of the Prayer of Jesus**  
written by the Rev. Dr. Robert Charles Smith

Eternal Spirit, Earth Maker, Pain-Bearer, Life-Giver,  
Source of all that is and that shall be,  
Father and Mother of us all,  
Loving God in whom is heaven

The hallowing of your name echo  
    Through the universe!  
The way of your justice be followed by  
    Peoples of the world!  
Your heavenly will be done by  
    All created beings!  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom  
    Sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
For you Reign in the glory of the power  
That is love, now and forever. Amen.



## 6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

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

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

Search Committee

Church Council

Congregation members through questionnaires and feedback

Previous (2021) Search Committee

This profile leans heavily on the work done by our previous United Community Church search committee in 2021. We would like to acknowledge the work they accomplished, much of which was adopted wholesale or adapted for this profile.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

We hope candidates with questions will feel free to contact us for clarification. We have been as thorough as we could be in providing complete information for your consideration.

Signed:

Peter Schweigert

Search Committee Chair

April 19, 2024

## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

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

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

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:

Name / Title:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

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**



To Whom It May Concern:

It has been over 5 years since I have been in active ministry relating to the United Community Church, UCC of St. Johnsbury. Therefore, my memory is dated but I am on occasion called to fill the pulpit so my "feel" for the place is still active.

A great strength to this congregation is their approach to diversity and their active ministry involving the surrounding community. They offer their historical building for many meetings, concerts, events, and twice a week free meals to those in need. Even though they have only a few youth, they have maintained an active program for children and youth, weaving them into the fabric of the older congregation. They have an active music aspect of their ministry that draws from the community but enriches the congregation as well.

This church, when I was the interim minister, comprised two congregations, located not very far from each other, but with different histories. After much searching they decided to give one church building to the St. Johnsbury Academy and continue a joint ministry out of the historical building just to the north. Therefore South Congregational Church joined with North United Church of Christ in worship in the North building. Both churches in the past, and now presently the one, have been actively involved in the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Northeast Association. They are ecumenically minded and are Open and Affirming and support other justice issues.

The challenge of this congregation is how to maintain a large, historical building and not deplete its endowment while maintaining an active ministry. The church draws members from various towns within driving distance to St. Johnsbury and my vision during my short ministry was to establish small group ministries in the surrounding towns with the hope of meeting the needs of those no longer actively involved but finding themselves isolated in a chaotic world, in need of connections and spiritual guidance. Another challenge, as experienced throughout the church, is how to maintain active involvement as the congregation grows older. Another challenge is how to maintain several rental properties surrounding the church in a neighborhood that is mostly upper class with a mission to offer housing below the average rental. How does this fit in the mission of the church?

It was a great pleasure and rewarding ministry for me to be called to serve both South Church with a short interim, and later minister to both congregations during the time they experimented with alternating worship, and later as they were ending their journey of coming together as one and searching for a settled pastor. They survived during the covid period and learned how to offer worship remotely, and that ministry continues.

Rev. Joan Vincent, retired  
United Church of Christ  
Glover, Vermont



May 2, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

Hello! My name is Claire Bamberg, and I am pleased that you are seriously considering serving this community of faith.

I worked with United Community Church periodically, over a three-year period as a consultant. They did a great deal of very good work and are ready to thrive! We worked on several things together: realigning their budget years with the realities of the rhythm of life in this community, communication techniques supporting healthy interpersonal conversation, even when discussing difficult topics, navigating boundary concerns, developing "job descriptions" for various volunteer leadership positions in the church, and the creation of a Safe Church policy, to name a few.

I found this church easy to work with, wise in its leadership choices and deeply engaged with and committed to the community and environs of St. Johnsbury.

There are some congregations that find a place in a consultant's heart long after the work is done. This is one such group of people. I encourage you to consider them carefully and thoughtfully, as I know they will any candidate whose profile they receive and choose to explore.

Should you have any questions or concerns you would like to explore, please be in touch with me. My contact information is below my signature.

Grace and Peace to you, and blessings on your search process,

The Rev. Dr. Claire W. Bamberg  
PO Box 22  
Randolph Center, VT 05061-0022  
[claire@potentials.us](mailto:claire@potentials.us)  
<https://potentials.us/>



# TOWN OF ST. JOHNSBURY

Town Manager's Office  
51 Depot Square, Suite 3  
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819  
802-748-3926  
[www.stjvt.com](http://www.stjvt.com)

Town Clerk 802-748-4331  
Dispatch 802-748-2314  
Police 802-748-2314  
Fire 802-748-8925  
Public Works 802-748-4408  
Assessor Office 802-748-4272

April 15, 2024

To Whom It May Concern;

RE: United Congressional Church, St. Johnsbury, Vermont

I am pleased to provide this reference letter for the United Congressional Church of St. Johnsbury, Vermont. I have been in this role as the Town Manager here in St. Johnsbury since 2015 and have had many very positive interactions with members of the congregation and previous pastors from the UC Church. On numerous occasions when there have been pending emergency events, such as blizzards or potential flooding, the Church has proactively gotten me their contact information ahead of the emergency. It was clear that they were there if anyone in the community needed shelter or any other support. Fortunately, we have not had to send anyone their way, but there is great comfort in knowing they are available and willing to be called upon if needed.

I often see members of the UC Church involved in community planning and development, including participating on our housing committee and working with social services to address homelessness. Members are also involved in planning efforts to support our rich cultural, art, and recreation economy. St. Johnsbury is a great community to be a part of, and the UC Church and the members of their congregation are part of what makes it great!

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about St. Johnsbury, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

u

Chad L. Whitehead  
Town Manager

C:

**United Community Church,  
United Church of Christ**

**1325 Main Street  
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819**

**By-Laws**

**As Adopted February 28, 2016**

*Amended January 28, 2018; Amended February 18, 2018*

*Amended January 31, 2021; Amended February 6, 2022*

**Article I. NAME**

The name of the Church shall be

*United Community Church,  
United Church of Christ.*

**Article II. MISSION STATEMENT**

As one body in communion with God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, we, the members of United Community Church covenant with one another to care for and love each other as Jesus Christ loves us, and to maintain, support, and foster a compassionate ministry in our community and throughout all God's creation.

**Article III. OUR COMMITMENT**

We will let love be genuine; resist what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love and care for one another with mutual affection. We will not lag in zeal, but will be ardent in spirit and serve the Lord. We will rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, and persevere in prayer. We will strive to meet the needs of the community and extend hospitality to strangers.

We will pray for those who persecute, rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. We will live in harmony with one another and assist those less fortunate. We do not claim to be wiser than others, nor do we repay anyone evil for evil. So far as it depends on us, we will live peaceably with all.

*(A modern paraphrase of Roman's 12: 9-18)*

**Article IV. GOVERNANCE**

1. United Community Church, United Church of Christ, (the "Church") acknowledges Jesus Christ as its Supreme Head, and receives the Scriptures as a proven guide in matters of faith. The governance of the Church is vested exclusively in the membership. United Community Church is in a covenantal relationship with the Congregation and mission bodies of the United Church of Christ and holds standing as a member church in the Northeast Association of the Vermont Conference. The United Community Church is an Open and Affirming congregation.

2. All active and associate members of this Church shall be entitled to privileges of the floor and to vote in all Congregational meetings of the Church.
3. United Community Church enthusiastically welcomes as members in good standing all former members of South Congregational and North Congregational Churches. United Community Church hereby adopts as part of its fundamental documents the Covenant between South Congregational and North Congregational, adopted on May 17 and May 24, 2015, specifically including these words: *“North and South earnestly desire that there be no guest and no host congregation and that from this day forward there is to be one congregation ... taking up residence in God’s house from which it shall spread God’s justice and love throughout the town of St. Johnsbury, the Northeast Kingdom region and beyond as God wills.”*
4. The majority vote of the members present is final for all matters, except three fourths of the vote is required when acting upon the call of a Pastor (Article VI, Section 2), and two thirds of the vote when amending the *By-Laws* (Article XII).

#### **Article V. MEMBERSHIP**

1. United Community Church (the “Church”) offers the following categories of membership and association:
  - A. Active member;
  - B. Associate member.
2. The active members shall be persons received into membership by public acceptance of the Church’s Mission Statement and Commitment, and:
  - A. On confession of faith and baptism (if not previously baptized); or
  - B. By reaffirmation of faith.

Associate members are those persons who wish to associate with this Church without terminating their active membership in the church with which they previously were associated. Associate members shall have all the privileges and responsibilities of active members.

3. Active members wishing to unite with any other church may request letters of transfer to the church with which they wish to unite.
4. Any member is entitled to termination of membership upon his or her written request.

#### **Article VI. OFFICERS**

1. The officers of the United Community Church shall be Pastor, and Associate Pastor if any; a Moderator and an Assistant Moderator; a Treasurer and an Assistant Treasurer; a Clerk and an Assistant Clerk. Each officer, except the Pastor and Associate Pastor, shall be elected annually. No officer, except the Pastor and Associate Pastor, may serve in the same position more than five consecutive years. After five consecutive years each such person shall be ineligible for re-election to that position for a period of one year.

2. The Pastor shall share the responsibility for the spiritual welfare and worship life of the Church with the Ministry of Worship and Care and all members of the congregation. The Pastor shall seek to enlist people as followers of Christ, visit the sick and the bereaved and other members and friends of the Church, preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, and shall have responsibility for services of public worship. The Pastor shall administer the activities of the Church in cooperation with the Church Council and the Ministry of Worship and Care. The Pastor shall be responsible for the staff, acting as its senior member and manager of its various functions and roles. She or he shall be a member ex-officio without vote on all Ministries, Committees, and the Church Council.

The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite time by a three-fourths vote of the members present at a meeting of the Congregation called for such purpose. In the call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated. While the term of the Pastor shall be indefinite, either party may terminate the relationship upon two months' notice. The Church may terminate a pastor's call only by a majority vote of the members present at a meeting of the Congregation called for such purpose.

The Church may call an Associate Pastor on such terms and for such period as shall be set forth in the call for the Associate Pastor. The Associate Pastor shall work with and under the direction of the Pastor. She or he may be a member ex officio without vote on Church Council, and any Ministry and Committee on which he or she is asked to serve.

3. The Moderator is the lay leader of the Church and shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Church for a term of one year and shall be eligible for re-election up to four consecutive terms after which he/she shall be ineligible for one year to serve as Moderator. The Moderator shall preside at meetings of the Church Council, at the Annual Meeting and at special meetings of the Church. A Vice Moderator shall be elected at the Annual Meeting and serve in the absence of the Moderator and otherwise assist the Moderator as needed. The Vice Moderator position has the same term limits as the Moderator.

4. The Treasurer shall have charge of and be responsible for the custody and recordkeeping for the funds and securities of the Church, under the direction of the Ministry of Stewardship and the Investment Committee if one is created.

The Treasurer shall keep full and accurate accounts of assets, liabilities, receipts and disbursements and other transactions of the Church in books belonging to the Church.

The Treasurer shall deposit all funds received by the Church in banks or other depositories as may be designated by the Ministry of Stewardship or the Investment Committee, and shall disburse the funds of the Church as directed by the annual budget of the Church, the Ministry of Stewardship, or under the terms of gifts given to and accepted by the Church.

If permissible under the terms of the applicable gift, funds may be released from trust principal only upon majority vote of the Congregation at an annual meeting or special meeting.

The Treasurer shall provide to the Ministry of Stewardship and applicable Committees, statements of all



transactions of the Church and reports of the financial condition of the Church whenever required by the Ministry of Stewardship or the Church Council.

The Treasurer shall serve as a voting member of the Ministry of Stewardship. The Treasurer shall appoint the Receiver of Offerings.

The Assistant Treasurer shall discharge such of the duties of the Treasurer when asked to do so by the Treasurer or the Ministry of Stewardship.

5. The Clerk shall keep a complete record of all meetings of the Congregation and the Church Council and assure that proper notice of all warned meetings is given to the Congregation. The Clerk shall be responsible for the maintenance of the register of the members of the Church with dates of their admissions and transfers, records of baptisms, marriages, and deaths. The Clerk will submit a written report to the Church at the annual meeting. The Clerk shall be elected to a one year term at the annual meeting.

The Assistant Clerk shall discharge such of the duties of the Clerk when asked to do so by the Clerk or the Church Council.

## **Article VII.**

### **RELATIONSHIP AMONG CHURCH BODIES AND WITH THE CONGREGATION**

These By-Laws provide for the organization of Ministries, Committees, and Church Council. The Church Council (Article X) and, ultimately, the congregation, are responsible for the overall management and supervision of the Church. Accordingly, issues or decisions of great importance being considered by the Ministries should be discussed with the Church Council and, where appropriate, the Congregation as part of the Ministries decision-making processes.

## **Article VIII. MINISTRIES**

1. There shall be four Ministries as follows: Ministry of Worship and Care, Ministry of Outreach, Ministry of Spiritual Formation and Nurture, and Ministry of Stewardship. Decisions shall be made by consensus. If consensus is not reached the matter shall be brought to the Church Council. After three consecutive two-year terms, each person serving on a ministry shall be ineligible for re-election to that ministry for a period of one year.

2. The Ministry of Worship & Care shall consist of at least four to six members nominated and voted upon at the Annual Meeting for a staggered, two-year term. All members are encouraged to participate in the Ministry of Worship & Care as part of the responsibility of membership. Friends of the Church are encouraged and welcomed to participate in the Ministry of Worship & Care. The spiritual ministry of the church, including worship services, music, and hospitality, shall be the overall responsibility of the Ministry of Worship & Care working with the Pastor. The Ministry shall support the Pastor by keeping the Pastor informed of the needs of the congregation. They shall assist the Pastor in carrying out pastoral duties in whatever ways appropriate. Their concerns shall include all matters relating to worship and the care of the congregation. The Ministry of

Worship & Care shall be responsible for the evaluation of the ministry of the Church, including the Pastor and Associate Pastor. Annual evaluations shall always include input from a broadly representative group of the Congregation. They shall also make recommendations regarding compensation for the Pastor and Associate Pastor.

3. The Ministry of Outreach shall consist of at least four to six members nominated and voted upon at Annual Meeting for a staggered, two-year term. All members are encouraged to participate in the Ministry of Outreach as part of the responsibility of membership. Friends of the Church are encouraged and welcomed to participate in the Ministry of Outreach. The Ministry of Outreach shall promote, interpret and actively support the mission of the Church and encourage congregational participation in outreach programs and offerings. The Ministry of Outreach shall be responsible for matters that relate the local Church to the larger church fellowship and to the world, specifically including raising and addressing issues of social justice at the neighborhood, local, state, and national levels.

4. The Ministry of Spiritual Formation and Nurture shall consist of at least four to six members, nominated and voted upon at Annual Meeting for staggered, two-year terms. All members are encouraged to participate in the Ministry of Spiritual Formation and Nurture as part of the responsibility of membership. Friends of the Church are encouraged and welcomed to participate in the Ministry Spiritual Formation and Nurture. The Ministry shall have supervision and direction of the education work of the Church, including both youth and adult education, in cooperation with the Pastor and the Director of Christian Education if such a position is filled. The Director of Christian Education shall be a non-voting member of the Ministry.

5. The Ministry of Stewardship shall consist of at least four to six members to be nominated and elected to a staggered, two-year term. In addition to the elected members, the Treasurer shall serve as a voting member of this Ministry. For the first four years of the life of the Church, the elected members shall be half from South Church and half from North Church. The Ministry shall be responsible for the funds and property, both real and personal, belonging to the Church and to prepare a proposed annual budget for the ensuing fiscal year to be presented to the Church Council for its review and recommendation within one month of the annual meeting. The budget shall be presented to the Congregation for action at the annual meeting.

The Ministry of Stewardship shall adopt appropriate policies as to those checks, notes, or other instruments for the payment or withdrawal of monies which shall require the signature of the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer. The Stewardship Ministry shall oversee the work of the custodian and the Property Manager, if and when the Church fills such position.

#### **Article IX. SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

1. The Church Council has the authority to create committees as necessary for the proper functioning and operation of the Church. (See Article XI., Section 3 regarding the Nominating Committee.)

2. In the event of a vacancy in either the Pastor or Associate Pastor position, the Church Council will recommend, for appointment by the Congregation at a special meeting or the annual meeting, a Pastoral Search

Committee of not more than eight members. The Search Committee will serve until a new Pastor or Associate Pastor is selected by the Congregation, or until the Congregation disbands the Committee. After a diligent search, using all appropriate means to identify candidates, the Committee will recommend to the Congregation a qualified person to be Pastor or Associate Pastor.

The Committee will provide an opportunity (such as a “Candidate’s weekend”) for members of the Congregation to meet and question a candidate Pastor or Associate Pastor (non-interim) prior to a Congregational vote. This opportunity would be separate from a social occasion. The Committee may select a qualified person to be an interim pastor for the anticipated duration of the search for a Pastor or Associate Pastor.

If a vacancy occurs on any Pastoral Search Committee, the Church Council may appoint an active member of the Church to fill such vacancy for the remainder of the Committee’s service.

3. The Pastor and Associate Pastor may each appoint a Pastoral Relations Committee consisting of four members as needed.

### **Article X. CHURCH COUNCIL**

The Church Council shall consist of 10 members: the Moderator, the Treasurer, and the Clerk; one representative from each Ministry; and two at-large members elected from the Congregation at the Annual Meeting for a staggered, three-year term; and the Pastor. The Pastor shall be a non-voting member. The Moderator or, in his or her absence, the Assistant Moderator of the Church Council shall preside over meetings of the Church Council. The Clerk or, in his or her absence, the Assistant Clerk shall attend meetings of the Church Council and act as secretary.

It shall be the function of the Church Council to coordinate, direct and implement policy in all matters pertaining to the operations and activities of the Church between meetings of the Congregation. The Church Council shall facilitate communication within the church. The Council shall focus on the future and vision for the Church. The Council should meet at least six times a year to hear reports and recommendations from the Pastor, the respective ministries, and officers of the church. A quorum for conducting business shall consist of at least five members of the Council.

The Church Council shall have the authority to act for the Church in any matter within its jurisdiction. Any action approved by the Church Council shall, upon request by at least three Church Council members, be referred to the Congregation as a whole for final resolution at the next annual meeting or at a special meeting warned for that purpose in accordance with these By-Laws. The Council shall submit to the annual meeting a comprehensive program involving the chief objectives of the Church for the coming year and beyond. It shall be the duty of the Council to fill any vacancies in elected offices, Ministries or Committees, or its own membership, for the remainder of the applicable term.

### **Article XI. MEETINGS**

1. The fiscal year of the Church shall be the calendar year, July 1 through June 30.

2. The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held in May, to hear and act upon the reports of its officers, Ministries, Committees, and auxiliary organizations; to elect officers and Ministry and Committee members for the ensuing fiscal year, and to do any business proper to be done. The exact date and time of the meeting shall be decided each year by the Church Council and shall be warned both in the printed bulletin and from the pulpit at least two (2) Sundays before the date of the meeting, as well as by written communication mailed or distributed to all the active and associate members of the Church.
3. In sufficient time before the Annual Meeting, the Church Council shall appoint a Nominating Committee of three members who shall prepare a slate of nominees for all open positions. The slate shall be available to the membership at the time the annual meeting is warned.
4. A quorum for conducting business at any Congregational meeting of the Church shall be the number of voting members present as represents ten percent (10%) of the active and associate members of the Church on the membership lists as of the most recent Annual Meeting.
5. The business at the annual meeting shall include:
  - A. Prayer
  - B. Reading records of last annual meeting.
  - C. Report of Officers, Ministries and Committees.
  - D. Election of Officers, Ministries, and Committees.
  - E. Approval of the annual budget.
  - F. Any business specified in the call of the meeting.
  - G. Any other business for discussion only
  - H. Adjournment.
6. Special meetings of the Congregation may be called by the Moderator upon action by the Church Council requesting such a meeting, or on written request of such number of members of the Church as then represent five (5%) percent of the then voting membership of the Church. The call for such meeting must be by written notice, posted and announced as for the annual meeting, and must specify the business to be presented.

## **Article XII. AMENDMENTS**

These By-Laws may be altered or amended by a two thirds vote of the members present and voting at a regular or special meeting of the Congregation, provided that a notice specifying the time of the meeting and substance of the proposed amendments shall have been given in the printed bulletin and from the pulpit on the two (2) Sundays immediately preceding said meeting, as well as by written communication mailed or distributed to all the active and associate members of the Church.

## **Article XIII. RULES OF ORDER**

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall be parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure at all meetings, except when they are inconsistent with any rules in these bylaws.

*Amended 1/28/2018; 2/18/2018*



**United Community Church**  
United Church of Christ  
1325 Main St.  
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819



## 2023/2024 Annual Report

### 2023/2024 in review

**As one body in communion with God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, we, the members of United Community Church covenant with one another to care for and love each other as Jesus Christ loves us, and to maintain, support, and foster a compassionate ministry in our community and throughout all God's creation.**

United Community Church continues to adjust to changes that come our way. When Rev. Andrew Ponder Williams was called to another parish, members and friends stepped up to assist in pulpit supply. Members of each of the ministries and church council have stepped up and taken on responsibilities to keep the church moving forward as we begin the search for a new pastor. As the song says, "the church is not a building, the church is not a steeple, the church is not a resting place, the church is a people." Our time and talents continue to be used to forward our mission as stated above.

Our mission projects over the course of the year have been many. Besides supporting the national office of the United Church of Christ and the Vermont Conference of United Church of Christ, we also support the UCC special offerings; Neighbors in Need (October), Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross) (December), One Great Hour of Sharing (March), and Strengthen the Church (June). These offerings are used both globally and locally as needed. United Community Church is also the Church World Service (CWS) depot. Area churches in Vermont and New Hampshire, drop off boxes of completed kits in early May and the 18-wheeler comes usually the second week of May to pick them up. You should see the driver back the truck up into our parking lot – right between the stone pillars and around the car port! As a church we assembled 37 school kits, 46 hygiene kits and 20 clean-up buckets. With 7 other churches in northern Vermont and New Hampshire, the CWS truck picked up 284 school kits, 446 hygiene kits, and 20 clean-up buckets weighing a total of 1336 lbs. After the flooding in July, Vermont received some of the clean-up buckets back to help with our local recovery. We also sent to CWS donations for 39 blankets and 5 tool kits.



Locally, we have a wonderful group of volunteers that preps, serves, and cleans up for the Community Lunch Program. Free hot lunches are provided in our fellowship hall on Wednesdays and Fridays. Each meal averages around a hundred diners either eating in or taking out. Prep is often done on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. All volunteers are welcome however, we do ask that you see either Beth Norris or Erika Thompson for a background check application. This is part of the safe church policy. Several bag lunches are also prepared and taken to the Salvation Army store in St. Johnsbury where those that need them can come and get them. Our kitchen and many of the volunteers participate in the Community Thanksgiving Meal and the Christmas Dinner. These also are free and open to the public.



Feeding others is also a great fund-raising activity. The Chowder Supper was moved to the evening before the Solar Eclipse. Cooked mostly by those who identify as male, it was a delicious meal with many choices of chowder both with milk and non-milk. The Maple Breakfast was part of St. Johnsbury's Maple Fest. With donations from Maple Grove and White Market, many people were fed



wonderful pancakes, sausages and fruit. Both of these events were raising money to match the Historical Preservation Trust Grant that we received for the repointing and masonry work on the tower. Through the efforts of Betty Keller and the Stewardship Ministry, we received this matching grant of \$20,000. The complete project will take more than the \$40,000 but this is a start. Also raising money for this project was the Mardi Gras Dessert and Dancing event in February. We had a great time dancing and listening to Swing North Big Band. They rehearse in the UCC sanctuary on the second Tuesdays of the month.

Church Council after much discussion and research has handed the apartments over to a property management company. We still oversee them but the day to day is now done by Garrett's Properties. We continue to maintain the church building and grounds and the food shelf. The labyrinth continues to get regular use by towns people. On Wednesdays during the school year, you will find Erika and Barbara out front on the sidewalk giving lollipops to passersby. Lollipops are enjoyed by both young and elders between 2:40 and 3 pm on Wednesdays. Chocolate hearts were given out in February! St. Johnsbury was in the path of the total solar eclipse this year and our south lawn was an ideal spot to experience this once in a lifetime experience. Many people took time to see our sanctuary, read the signs about the tower project, and of course use our restrooms. Erika, Barbara, and Jessica gave out small bags of popcorn in the afternoon. Several people gave us donations for the use of our lawn. Phil Brown put together a loop of music from our services that played through our sound system and on the two screens at the front of the sanctuary.



We continue to use and expand the technology in our worship services. Sunday morning services are on FACEBOOK live and recorded so they can be broadcast on KATV during the week. We use a combination of live projection and PowerPoint. Congregants can use either the PowerPoint for the words to the liturgy and hymns or the bulletin and hymnals in pews. Over the course of the year, we have had several special services. During the summer we were privileged to have Donna Murray substitute for Barbara during her vacations and also in the fall James Farmer when Barbara was hospitalized. Jim treated us to an organ concert just before Thanksgiving as a fund raiser for the ongoing organ fund. Other special services included the Maple Leaf Seven and a Jazz quartet. We were all looking forward to the Swinging Epiphany, but the weather conspired against us and it had to be cancelled. Christmas Eve was on a Sunday this past year and



we did the "The Good News of Jesus' Birth" as a pageant. The story was read by Lance Abella and acted out by various members of the congregation. We had a special service on Ash Wednesday with special music by the United Community Handbell Ensemble. Led by our supply ministers, Rev. Steve Winkler and Rev. Jay Sprout we have added Taizé music to several special services including Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. We continued our tradition of a light meal with the Maundy Thursday/Tenebrae service in the sanctuary. Good Friday was observed

with communion following the Lenten Bible Study time. Weather again conspired against us on Easter morning so we moved the early service from Mt. Pleasant Cemetery to UCC beginning at the cross on our front walk and moving to the chapel (tomb), and then the front of the church for the breaking of bread. Easter Celebration was capped off with all invited to sing the "Hallelujah Chorus."

Besides fellowship hour following worship services, we have enjoyed each other's company throughout the year. Breakfast for all those who identify as male meets on the first Saturday of the month. Tea for those who identify as female is on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Outreach Ministry sponsored the Haunted Sanctuary on Halloween. Many townspeople came and enjoyed the Hansel and Gretel decorations (complete with oven), Toccata in d minor (beginning) on the organ, and our "scary" friends. Pictures were taken for those who wanted a memento, and trick or treat candy or item was given out. During Advent and Lent, Pastors Sprout and Winkler led Bible Study on Friday afternoon. Sunday school has returned on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month. Students grade six and under are invited to leave worship following



the anthem and will have a chance to learn about scriptures and also do a project. United Community Handbell Ensemble meets Wednesday evenings and plays during worship once a month. United Community Choir rehearses Sunday mornings at 9 am and after worship on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays.

Many organizations use our building during the week. We are truly a community center. The St. Johnsbury Town Band presented their annual Veteran's Day concert as a fund-raiser for the St. Johnsbury History and Heritage Center. Two weeks later, they did their Christmas concert in our sanctuary. Catamount Arts has used our sanctuary as a venue while they wait for the repairs on their building. St. Johnsbury Players continue to hold meetings and rehearse in our building. As part of St. Johnsbury Sparkles, they presented "radio version Christmas Carol" in our sanctuary. Rehearsals for "This Old House" were held in our building although performances were in a different venue. Umbrella has a group that meets here on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. AA can be found in the Sunday School room Monday through Friday at noon. Al-anon meets there on Saturday mornings. The Agency on Aging exercise class is in the fellowship hall east on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays. Tai Chi comes in on Saturday mornings. Continua rehearses here on Monday evenings. St. Johnsbury OSHER Lifelong Learning Institute has been using our sanctuary as a venue for their Thursday afternoon lectures. LINK, bike repair, has a spot in the fellowship hall east. Several other organizations meet once a month or so in our various meeting rooms.

## **United Community Church Annual Meeting** **May 14, 2023**

The Members of United Community Church met for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation, held simultaneously in person and via Zoom to allow participation of those unable to attend in person, at 11:30 am on May 14, 2023.

In attendance were the Rev. Andrew Ponder Williams, minister; Melanie McGregor, bookkeeper; Phil Brown, moderator; and Congregants of United Community Church.

The meeting was called to order by Phil Brown, moderator.

Andrew offered the opening prayer.

### **Article 1: Shall the members of the church accept the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation held on May 22, 2022, as presented in the 2023 Annual Report?**

A motion was made by Helene Milas to accept the minutes from last year's Annual Meeting as presented, seconded by Pam Dearborn. The motion passed.

### **Article 2: Shall the members receive, discuss, and approve the reports contained in the 2023 Annual Report?**

A motion was made by Randall Northrop to approve the reports contained in the 2023 Annual Report, seconded by Bertie Koelewijn. The motion passed.

A special thank you was given to Barbara Connelly for her work on getting the annual report organized, printed, and distributed. She received a round of applause in thanks.

### **Article 3: Shall the members approve the budget presented by the Stewardship Committee and approved by the Council for the period of Fiscal Year 2024, July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024?**

A motion was made by Randall Northrop to accept the budget as presented, seconded by Beth Norris.

Kris Norris, chair of Stewardship, presented the budget.

- Kris noted the budget is not balanced
- It shows where we are
- This year we have done some great things and our best asset is our people
- We spent money on the Apartments and Parsonage (\$125,000)



- This was offset by several large donations which were a great help
- Not comfortable with drawing so much from the endowment but it was intentional
- This year we hope for fewer repairs/maintenance but we need a roof
- Apartment work was done to keep them good and not let the costs grow

Greg Brown wanted to plant a seed or two

- Really likes the church, impressed by the leadership, Andrew, the focus
- But .... Someday the well may run dry on the endowment
- Aim to draw no more than 4%

Melanie McGregor (bookkeeper) presented her view

- We know it is a deficit budget
- Only thing we can cut is missions; other expenses (fuel) are beyond our control
- Parsonage expenses

First year with a minister

Costs due to that

- Restricted Funds

Track down the records: where they came from, what are the restrictions

May be able to help with some expenses (organ, windows)

Honor the spirit of the donation

Phil Brown had a point of order

- This church has existed for 6 years
- What is the path of the new church?
- Roof is not part of the deficit

Gail Warnaar

- As part of Council, she finds it amazing what we have accomplished this past year
- We look at the expense side; we need to look closer at the income side
- Appreciates what has been done and the people who are doing it
- It is up to each of us to do our part to contribute and limit the deficit

Following the discussion, the motion to accept the budget passed with 2 abstentions.

#### **Article 4: Shall the members elect the slate of officers and members of the Ministries and Church Council presented in the 2023 Annual Report?**

Alice presented the list of nominees for church offices and ministries. There were several amendments and corrections:

Elisa Rowell had been omitted from Stewardship and needed to be added.

Alice made an amendment to add Neil Abella to Stewardship. With no objections, Neil was added.

Beth Norris noted that we should have delegates to the UCC Conference next year listed in the annual report: Betty Keller and Randall Northrop had been asked and will be delegates.

Changes/amendments to the Nominating Committee will be made if there are no objections –

Hearing none, the nominees were added.

Kathy Brown noted that Hospitality needs all church members to help.

Phil Brown made a motion to elect officers and accept the slate with amendments. Gail Warnaar seconded. The motion passed.

#### **Article 5: Shall the members consider any other business that may be presented at the meeting?**

There were several concerns and comments:

- Concern about heating the sanctuary  
Can we congregate in another part of the building in winter to save fuel?  
If we cannot maintain the church, should we consider other options?
- Kris (Stewardship) acknowledged and appreciates these concerns

The church building attracts people to us

Provides the space for what we do

- Has anyone looked into more green energy to defray costs?

Solar panels?

Would it harm the building to turn the heat down?

- Andrew empathized with the concerns

Noted other churches are in worse shape than us

It is not uncommon for churches to look for ways to repurpose their church buildings

Ours is in constant use

- Building is a good way to spend our endowment

What is needed is more uses

Also market ourselves

We are not like other churches

Be more explicit about what we do and who we are

- Several people said they love this church, our members and what we are doing

Let's figure out how to keep it going!

- Our church is a non-profit historical building and people want to make use of it (concerts, etc)

- We will have a table at the Stars and Stripes celebration in Lyndonville

Help us there – we are different and have a message to convey

Help us make a float

- Visit the museum and tag onto their tours
- Andrew commented that we have planted the seeds, opened the doors, reached out to NVU, and we will be a presence at the Stars and Stripes.

We are appreciated

JOIN THE BANDWAGON!!

Pam Dearborn made a motion to adjourn the Annual Meeting of the Congregation. Jess Sanville seconded it.

We ended the meeting by joining hands around the sanctuary and singing:

'Blessed Be The Ties That Bind'

## **United Community Church Special Meeting of the Congregation**

November 19, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Phil Brown, moderator.

Members present: 31 members

**Question 1: Shall the members elect the nominees for the Search Committee as presented by the Church Council and, if so elected, charge the Search Committee to represent the congregation in the search for a Settled Pastor?**

The following people were nominated to serve as members of the Search Committee:

Pam Dearborn, Alice Kitchel, Peter Schweigert, Kate Fish, Kristan Norris, and Randall Northrup as alternate.

Gail Warnaar moved that we elect the slate as presented and charge them as representing the congregation in the search for a Settled Pastor. Erika Thompson seconded the motion. The motion carried and the Search Committee was elected, and charged.

**Question 2: Shall the members consider any other business that may be presented at the meeting?**

Gail presented new business: She has been given permission by Council and charged with forming a committee that will be active from January through June, 2024, to gather opinion/thoughts of the congregation through Listening Sessions on three questions:

How do we the congregation look at and define our mission, our investments, and our apartments?

The information gathered will be shared with Council and is expected to provide Guidance to Council and a new settled pastor as we move forward as a congregation.

Erika took a picture of the new Search Committee.

As there was no other new business, the meeting was adjourned.

## Moderator's Annual Report

Phil Brown

### Thank you:

It has been quite a year for United Community Church. Together we have carried out important ministry in our community while also addressing several challenges in our congregational life. This is only accomplished through the dedication of time, resources, and expertise by members and friends of our congregation. This has been an “every member” effort and every contribution, whether large or small, visible or behind the scenes, has been important to helping move our church forward into our mission. All are deeply appreciated, and I want to particularly thank:



Your Church Council has met faithfully every month to carefully discuss the ongoing and immediate issues facing the church. Their prayerful consideration and thoughtful decision-making helped guide our church through a pastoral departure and other impactful issues. Particular recognition goes to Elisa Rowell, who is completing her 5-year term as Treasurer, and Vicki Scherer, who ably represented Spiritual Formation and will be heading to college in the fall. There may be additional changes to the Council as the Ministries reorganize following Annual Meeting. Please refer to the Community Current for a current list of Council members.

Kris Norris has devoted hundreds of hours to oversight and care of the church building and the rental properties. His care, with assistance from Greg Brown, Randall Northop, and others, has effectively addressed many maintenance issues while anticipating and preventing additional issues. The members of the Stewardship Ministry have worked to preserve our buildings while trying to work within the Budget voted by the congregation. They have prepared a Budget for next year that continues to show more expenses than income in the hope that members and friends will step up to help fill the gap.

The Outreach Ministry, under the direction of Alice Kitchel, has led us through several outstanding mission and fund-raising events. While the Ministry provides planning and leadership, it is volunteers from the congregation and community who make these events successful. I particularly want to thank the folks who stepped up for the Maple Festival Pancake Breakfast when so many of our “regular” volunteers needed to be out of town for other commitments.

The Worship and Care and Spiritual Formation Ministries have been working together this year. With the leadership of Karen Sayles, Kathy Brown, and Erika Thompson the Ministries have reinvigorated our Sunday School ministry for children, continued seasonal Bible Study for adults, planned and facilitated exceptional worship experiences for Christmas Eve and Holy Week, provided continued support for our online worship ministry, and offered background and guidance for our supply clergy.

Speaking of Supply Clergy, so much of what we have accomplished this year has only been possible because of consistent pulpit supply and worship leadership provided by Reverends Jay Sprout and Stephen Winkler. Their commitment to supporting the worship life of the congregation during this time has provided space for the Council and Ministries to focus on their core tasks and projects. This blessing cannot be overstated! Thank you, Steve and Jay.



The Search Committee, led by Peter Schweigert, has been working in the background to renew our Church Profile. This task is now complete, and the Profile will soon be available for prospective pastors to review and consider.

The Search Committee will soon be moving into the active Profile review and candidate interview process. We offer them prayers for guidance and discernment as well as our thanks.

Clearly the most visible and consistent ministry of the congregation has been the Community Meals program led by Beth Norris with a mighty crew of food preparers, set-up and servers, and clean-up and dishwashers. Each week they have prepared and served over 200 meals to members of our community. We thank each person who has worked on the meals or contributed food for the meals or even just come and eaten with our guests on Wednesday and Friday and helped them feel welcomed.

Our online worship ministry serves multiple members of our local and remote community. Through live hybrid worship, recorded worship services on Facebook, and rebroadcast of worship services on KATV we are reaching a broader congregation than we can see on a Sunday morning. Sean Cavanaugh, Betty Keller and Randall Northop have been instrumental in keeping the ministry going.

Our church musicians led by Barbara Connelly and Phil Brown continue to enhance our worship, expand our presence into the community and provide an entrée for other musicians into our congregational life.

The “un-named” – whether you choose to contribute anonymously; work quietly, unnoticed in the background; are working outside of my range of knowledge; or possibly I’ve forgotten to mention you – please know that you are appreciated. The folks who choose one small job and make it their ministry are critical to supporting and building up this body of Christ.

Finally, our church staff, Erika Thompson and Barbara Connelly, do wonderful work keeping all of our ministries, missions, worship events, and outreach activities organized and communicated. We could not ask for more devoted service to our congregation. Jessica and Shari, work diligently to keep our building clean and welcoming.

So, however, you have contributed to the life of United Community Church during the past year, please know that you are appreciated. Your efforts, or dollars, or time, or thoughts have made a difference. The year ahead promises many opportunities to continue contributing to and growing our church community and mission. Thank you for your part in this ministry.

Blessings

## **Outreach Ministry**

Alice Kitchel, Barbara Connelly, Beth Norris

The charge of the Outreach Mission is to “promote, interpret and actively support the mission of the church and encourage congregational participation in outreach programs and offerings.” To that end, we offer events that welcome and support the community, and bring some financial return to support various church needs. Along with local projects, Outreach raises funds for our larger church efforts and collects items for kits that go out as needed to the world. Our congregation is excellent at volunteering and making events and projects successful, thank you. Looking forward, we are open to interpreting our mission in new ways but want to do so thoughtfully so that we do not duplicate the work of other organizations and instead work along with them. During the past year, the Community Lunch program continued to serve many people in the community. Beth and her crew of devoted workers provided delicious lunches on both Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year. About 100 people are regularly served. Donations to the lunch program are always welcome. And during the past year,

### **June, July, August 2023**

- Collected moneys for the United Church of Christ “Strengthen the Church” special offering
- Provided refreshments for the Make Music event that Catamount Arts sponsored on our South lawn.
- Started looking for items for health kits, school kits, and clean up buckets

## September 2023

- Started planning for our Haunted Sanctuary

## October 2023

- October 7th, put on a brunch/lunch for the “Fall for St. Johnsbury” foliage festival
- October 31st, put on our Haunted Sanctuary for the children (of all ages) in our community, it seemed like thousands meandered through the sanctuary
- Collected moneys for the special mission offering, Neighbors in Need



## November 2023

- Organized volunteers to set up, put together meals for take-out, and clean up Thanksgiving Dinner, 300 people served, 100 take-out meals provided
- Started collecting gifts for co-op Christmas

## December 2023

- Continued collecting gifts for co-op Christmas
- Organized volunteers for the Christmas Dinner put on by Kingdom Community Services
- Collected monies for the Christmas Fund

## January 2024

- Started planning for an event with the Swing North Big Band, Mardi Gras & Valentines

## February 2024

- Put on the Mardi Gras Valentines event February 13th with many donations of time for decorating and desserts



## March 2024

- Put up the Easter egg tree with items for Church World Service kits.

## April 2024

- After liaising with the town, museum, and community for months, helped to organize how the church building, grounds and parking lot will be used during the eclipse. Many visitors donated toward building projects.
- Assisted the men’s group Chowder Supper by providing pies and helping to set up
- Put on the Maple Fest Pancake Breakfast serving 180 people and raising over \$2,000.00

## May 2024

- Put together 25 school kits, 53 hygiene kits, and 20 clean-up buckets.
- Gather donations for Blanket Sunday, Mother’s day

## Reach Out

Erika Thompson

Reach continues to be a very busy and important mission in the church. We continue to house the diaper bank for the community. Gas cards are an item that we offer. With the increase need for them, people can only get 1 every 90 days, 1 per household and you must have a valid driver’s license. I want to thank members of the church for their ongoing donations to Ted and Frannie’s gift of non-perishable foods.

I also have been mentoring a young mother in the community and connecting her with services.

This past winter I supported and saw an increase in homeless people visiting the office. The requests have varied from looking for support to wash clothing, shower, or warm clothing to wear. Several of these visitors were relocated due to the flooding in Barre and unaware of what social services are available in our community. I have taken time to help connect people to agencies. I have helped people connect with Umbrella, NECKA, NKHS, the Hub, Community Connections and Hope.



## Stewardship Ministry

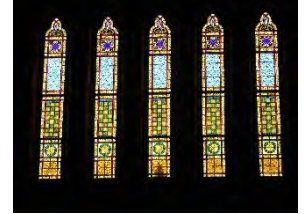
Betty Keller, Amanda Cochran, Melanie Fox-McGregor, Randall Northrup, Elisa Rowell, Kris Norris

This past year has seen many volunteer hours and many changes to our structures and processes. The Winter of 2024 was quite mild and fuel costs were substantially less than previous years. Bourne's Energy has provided us with good service and installed tank monitors and programmable thermostats where needed.



We have a new roof and many people have contributed to maintenance and clean-up of all of our properties. Garrett's Properties has been helpful in the management of our apartments, but much is still required of the Stewardship committee and volunteers. As we predicted, there will be no real profits from these apartments this year. The church building and parsonage continue to require upkeep and significant financial output. The food shelf is mostly supported by KCS and their grants.

Two projects have recently been funded by grants. The warming oven in the kitchen by a KCS grant. Mortar and repointing to the outside of the building are being funded by a Historic Preservation Trust Grant. Future projects that could use support are stained glass windows, energy efficiency issues and meal site needs.



All of these church needs are managed by our donations and our endowment.

Donations have improved dramatically over the past few years. The more that these donations grow the lower the percentage is that we take from the endowment. In spite of our heavy use of these accounts we are seeing an increase in the balances due to a rise in the global markets. Hopefully next year the apartments will generate some positive revenue instead of expense on the church. The advisory committee has hopefully engaged us in some helpful discussions regarding all of this. Please take time to consider how we can be good stewards of all that has been gifted to us.

### Apartments

Erika Thompson

In the early part of this year, I worked closely with Stewardship and Garrett Properties to transition the apartments over to their management. Part of this was also supporting the tenants in this change. This involved several meetings and figuring out the logistics. After Garrett's Properties took over, a slow transition out of the role of apartment manager happened for me. I want to thank the congregation that trusted me for the previous years to have this role. I have learned many things and enjoyed the relationships and challenging work of creating leases, and policies while balancing being a church and a business.

### Garrett's Properties

It appears that we will need to go with the door repair estimate, as this is a major capital repair that we cannot handle in-house. We had a few turnovers and a fuel spill, but all those units are now rented at market value with fewer issues from the neighbors. I anticipate a couple more turnovers as some residents are looking to buy houses, and we will not renew some leases. We had significant fuel expenses and repairs this winter, but we plan to be much more proactive about repairs moving forward to prevent these types of costly repairs. We also plan to raise the rents on a few units and recommend letting tenants take over as many utilities as possible. We will have to check all the units for peeling paint for IRC certification, which is necessary for multi-unit homes. This is something we can do in-house, and will schedule it.



## Spiritual Formation and Nurture

Erika Thompson, Gretchen Steen, Vicki Scherer

- Advent and Lent Bible Study lead by Rev. Steve Winkler and Rev. Jay Sprout
- Children's time as continued during Sunday Services
- We put out a Children's bulletin.
- Youth have remained very involved in worship.  
Including Ellie Raser and Andre Abella singing with the choir.
- We honored our graduates on Graduation Sunday.  
Eighth grade Jonah Raser - St. Johnsbury, David Evans - Barnet School.  
Cameron MacGregor and Jupiter McGregor graduated from St. Johnsbury Academy.  
Natalie Chapman, Alexis Sanborn, and Felicity Perreault from Lyndon Institute.  
College Lance Abella and Callahan Beck.
- Helped sponsor the haunted sanctuary.
- Movie and Popcorn night
- We had a Christmas pageant that we performed on Christmas eve.
- We honored and thanked Kathleen her time on the ministry
- Our ministry continues to work closely with Worship and care.
- Sunday School meets twice a month. This was possible by the amazing volunteering to teach Sunday School from Vicki Scherer, Karen Sayles, Kathy Brown, and Gretchen Steen.
- We have offered online classes for child safeguarding and protecting vulnerable adults for our Sunday School volunteers.
- The youth of the church made peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the meal site.  
This was for the end of our Beatitudes study.
- During Lent Nancy Reynolds came in and made praying pretzels with the youth.
- We are looking forward to the confirmation of Jonah Raser and Ashley Scherer.  
They have been working hard on finishing this with the support of Rev.. Jay Sprout, Rev. Steve Winkler and their mentors Newcomb Greenleaf and Karen Sayles.
- We welcomed new members Kate Piper and Linda Perkins.



## Worship and Care

Karen Sayles, Kathy Brown

Ex officio: Phil Brown, Barbara Connelly, Erika Thompson

This has been a year of growth and change in our church life. It may seem like a funny time to begin the new year with celebrating our graduates in June and immediately moving into vacation time. But, such is church life. We had Donna Murray join us as guest organist several times over the summer along with special music from



Maple Leaf 7, the St. J Jazz Quartet and Pat, Alice, and Pam. We also had people filling in for our tech regulars. And guest ministers joined as well. It makes for an interesting time of year.

In September we had new challenges when Pastor Andrew left to answer a new call. Jay Sprout, Ann Hockridge, Steve Winkler, Joan Vincent and Phil Brown filled our pulpit through September and October. We are very thankful for their support during this tough time.

Also in October we celebrated World Communion Day with breads from many nations while Beth provided a children's message connected to Neighbors in Need and world hunger, providing each member of the congregation with a bag lunch during fellowship time.

In November we began an "Interim to Interim" period with the Reverends Steve Winkler and Jay Sprout leading us in worship and providing pastoral care. Originally this arrangement was meant to extend only through November and December but it has been such a blessing to us all that they offered to continue through June and perhaps beyond! It has been wonderful to have these 'old friends' join us once again!



December saw a large Bible study group meet each Friday afternoon, a wonderful Readers' Theatre Pageant (thank you, Erika!) on an incredibly hectic Christmas Eve, with both morning and evening worship services! A huge thank you to all who participated! It wouldn't be the same without you all!

The Swinging Epiphany service was cancelled due to weather in January. But Lent began on February 13th with an Ash Wednesday service with the Bell Choir performing. Barbara and Phil played their parts on piano and guitar. The Advent Bible study was so well received that we had a Lenten Bible study on each Friday afternoon during Lent, led by Steve and Jay.

Holy Week began with Palm Sunday, complete with a palm parade that had the choir leading the youth of the congregation (and most of the congregation as well) in a parade around the sanctuary. Maundy Thursday was observed with a Communion and Tenebrae service. Those who attended read scripture, ate a meal that might have been on the table at the first supper, shared stories, sang songs and were led in a meditative service led by Steve and Jay. On Friday the sanctuary was open from 12-3pm with a service of communion at 2:15. Easter began with a "sunrise" service beginning at the cross in front the church and ending at the communion table in the sanctuary with the breaking of bread. The traditional Easter service at 10am ended with a large group gathering to sing the Hallelujah Chorus! Powerful and meaningful throughout the entire week.



April was a quiet month in comparison. Donna Murray came back to be guest organist on April 28th; she will join us for two more Sundays in June.

On May 19th, Pentecost, we will have a Confirmation service for two of our youth. June 2nd we will celebrate our graduates (8th grade, high school and college). June 8th there will be a breakfast for anyone interested in finding out more about joining our church. On June 16th we will receive new members.

A busy year. As you can see, some of it hasn't happened yet. Come join us!

We are grateful for all those who participate in worship. A special thanks to Kathy and Carew for decorating the sanctuary! Also to Phil, Sean, and Betty, our tech team! For readers and ushers and acolytes! Bell Choir and voice choir! Special thanks to Barbara and Phil for music and Erika for children's messages! Thank you all!

### Music

Barbara Connelly, music director, organist; Phil Brown, Handbell Director



*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, **singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs**, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Colossians 3:16*

A big **THANK YOU** to all the choir members who faithfully sing almost every Sunday (Kathy Brown, Pat Campbell, Bertie Koelewijn, Karen Sayles, Pam Dearborn, Betty Keller, Alice Kitchel, Heather Winkler, Lisa Barfield, Phil Brown, Roger Damon, Newcomb Greenleaf, Jay Sprout, Steve



Winkler). We are always looking for choir members even if you only wish to sing for one season. We rehearse before worship at 9 am on Sunday and after church on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays at 11:30 am ending around 12:30 pm. United Community Church is blessed with having a devoted United Community Handbell Ensemble that meets Wednesday evenings at 6 pm. With members from various area churches, they ring a selection once a month on average. Phil Brown is our director and he even can direct and fill in missing parts! Like the choir, they always welcome new members.

During the worship service we usually hear Barbara Connelly on the organ or piano, however this year we were also blessed to have several Sundays with Donna Murray playing the organ and one Sunday in November Jim Farmer filled in on an emergency situation. Later that Sunday afternoon, Jim performed a wonderful concert for us on the organ. Other Sundays that Barbara was away, the Maple Leaf Seven provided Dixieland music for us and the Jazz Quartet accompanied us. We have parishioners (Phil Brown, Kathy Brown, Pat Campbell, Paul Connelly, Pam Dearborn, Alice Kitchel, Ellie Raser, Luke Raser) willing to share their talents with us. If you can offer a prelude, offertory, postlude or anthem some Sunday, contact Barbara Connelly in the office. Using our talents to praise God is an important way to worship.

### **United Community Handbell Ensemble**

United Community Handbell Ensemble has had an interesting and productive year. We've had three successive new members join the ensemble; however, other commitments have made it impossible for each of them to remain with us long term. So, we are currently projecting three open positions available for new or returning ringers in the fall.

Despite the turnover, the ensemble has maintained an active performance schedule. In addition to participating in seven Sunday morning worship services and Ash Wednesday, the ensemble presented our "carol-ring" program for Tree Lighting at the Mountain View Grand and for St. J. Sparkles in December. Due to multiple cases of COVID we were not able to perform for First Night – North this year. We were asked to provide music for the memorial service for Sunny Wood. These performances were often made possible by our strong cohort of handbells "subs" who are willing to step in for an occasional rehearsal and performance.



Altogether, our "outside" performances netted \$1,000 for the Bell Fund. We used these funds, along with earnings from last year, to purchase a new E-3 bass bell. This bell will be dedicated to the memory of Brian Hanson and his years of devotion to the handbell ministry. With the purchase of this bell there are now just two bells remaining to complete our full 5-octave set. While these larger bells are quite expensive, they are a lasting and meaningful form of remembrance.

United Community Handbell Ensemble is an ecumenical gathering that includes members from three other faith communities. One of the challenges with scheduling Sunday morning offerings is coordinating schedules so that all our handbell musicians can be available. This is particularly important when we are ringing "short-handed". We always welcome returning musicians or new folk who would like to become handbell musicians. If you, or someone you know, is interested in this ministry of music please speak to me or any of our members.

Blessings of music

### **United Community Church Mealsite**

Beth Norris, manager

It's been quite a year for us in the kitchen as we represent our church in the Community. With your help and support, we have prepared and served over a thousand meals a month, hosted an Alcoholics Anonymous Convention, a wedding, the Thanksgiving Meal, and the Christmas Meal (prepared by the Beth El Synagogue) among other things. We began a new Outreach Mission which supplies meals to the homeless community

through the Salvation Army. We put in an estimated 99 hours a week of volunteer time (and often more) as we joyfully work to “Feed God’s Sheep” most of whom are grateful for our work and the delicious food we prepare.

We have found, however, that we can no longer sustain the pace under which we’ve been working, so our Ad Hoc Kitchen Committee made the difficult decision to discontinue our Friday meals. We will, however, continue to offer Wednesday lunches as we have for about 30 years (with the exception of a break during Covid.) We are currently in discussion with Kingdom Community Services (KCS) and the Academy to decide how we can continue to meet the needs of our community moving forward. Both KCS and the Academy are active supporters of our UCC Mealsite as they both supply and donate food from their resources. For example, KCS wrote a grant that bought us a new warming oven which we have found to be an indispensable resource for us. KCS also donates from other grants so we receive meat products, eggs, and fresh vegetables through them. Our Chef, Josh Lyford, travels to the Academy every Friday during the school year to pick up their food donations. We have found that we struggle to feed our guests when the Academy is not in session, and last summer was a true test of our staying power. In addition to all of that, the gleaning organization Salvation Farms delivers all sorts of goods throughout the year. For example, we recently received a box of seed potatoes that we were able to distribute to our guests. Where there is a need, God provides!

Thank you for your critical support with your gifts of canned goods, juices, and money. Now that Freihoffer’s Outlet store has closed, bread has become increasingly difficult to find, and it’s wonderful to see several loaves sitting in our donation box! Together, we can continue to provide healthy and nutritious meals every Wednesday. It is a tradition that began with open hearts and minds, and one that we hope will continue for many years.



## What the Staff Has Been Up To

### Paul Bergeron (Property Manager) Until the end of July 2023

- ❖ Responding to emergencies in church buildings
- ❖ Completed Lead Paint training.
- ❖ Maintenance on apartment
- ❖ Over saw the flipping of apartments
- ❖ Lawn care
- ❖ Keeping the building secure
- ❖ Restoring the metal meal-site chairs
- ❖ Deliver meals to housebound tenants.
- ❖ Overseeing parking for large events at church
- ❖ Policing parking dispute
- ❖ Opening and closing the church

### Jessica (specialty cleaning)

- ❖ Helped clean and organize third floor.
- ❖ Shampooed all carpets.
- ❖ Creates sandwich boards when needed.
- ❖ Murphy oiled all woodwork in the whole church.
- ❖ Cleans bathrooms daily.
- ❖ Clean heaters
- ❖ Helped with eclipse.
- ❖ Vacuum and clean sanctuary weekly
- ❖ Clean offices
- ❖ Clean parlor
- ❖ Hang up posters around town.
- ❖ Anything else asked.

**Barbara Connelly (music director & Secretary)**

- ❖ Leading music worship (organ, piano, voice)
- ❖ Newsletter
- ❖ Bulletin
- ❖ Monthly Bulletin Board
- ❖ Organizing parking spot rentals
- ❖ Filing and organizing music room
- ❖ Selecting music for services
- ❖ Organ/piano was tuning arranged
- ❖ Helped with candidate week
- ❖ Helping with worship and care
- ❖ Working with people reserving space in the church
- ❖ Lead choir rehearsals

**Erika Thompson (Community outreach & secretary)**

- ❖ Schedule webinar for Sunday services
- ❖ Create Children's time Sunday message.
- ❖ Communications with tenants
- ❖ Work with NECKA
- ❖ Work closely with stewardship.
- ❖ Transition apartment management to Garrett property.
- ❖ Perform background checks.
- ❖ Locate training for Sunday School volunteers.
- ❖ Bulletin boards
- ❖ Attend diaper bank meetings.
- ❖ Assist with people in need (gas cards, food, diapers.)
- ❖ Christmas Pageant
- ❖ Order meal site supplies.
- ❖ Facebook
- ❖ Lesson plans for Sunday school
- ❖ Support community people in connecting with agencies.

**Barbara & Erika**

- ❖ Combining of member files
- ❖ CWS
- ❖ Updating directory
- ❖ Valentine's day dance
- ❖ Chowder supper
- ❖ Pancake Breakfast
- ❖ Updating constant contact
- ❖ Sunday morning services slide show
- ❖ Starting a membership drive
- ❖ Lollipop Wednesday
- ❖ Thanksgiving meal
- ❖ Assist with worship planning.
- ❖ Staying current with CDC guidelines
- ❖ Attending trainings
- ❖ Weekly staff meeting
- ❖ Advertising events
- ❖ Press releases.
- ❖ Haunted sanctuary
- ❖ Organize pictures of saints from the church.
- ❖ Support members of congregation
- ❖ Scarecrows
- ❖ Worship and care.
- ❖ Staff development
- ❖ Organize ladies' tea.
- ❖ Presented at Conference annual meeting.
- ❖ Support Pulpit supply pastors.
- ❖ Cleaned out former pastor's offices.
- ❖ Cleaned parsonage.



New Members:  
Kate Piper  
Linda Perkins



# United Community Church, United Church of Christ

## Statement of Activity - CHURCH

### Budget 2025 and Estimated 2024 Actual

	ACTUAL+PROJECTED		Prev Fiscal Yr	2024		2025	
	7/1/23 to 6/30/24		7/1/22 to 6/30/23	7/1/23 to 6/30/24		7/1/24 to 6/30/25	
	PROJECTED	ACTUAL	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	
<b>Revenue</b>							
<b>4000 Offerings</b>							
4001 OFFERINGS - CHURCH SERVICE	23,849.65	18,535.45	18,000.00	23,000.00			
4003 OFFERINGS - MAIL	34,330.36	39,614.77	45,000.00	45,000.00			
4005 OFFERINGS - IN KIND	2,844.86	8,856.41	0.00	0.00			
4010 OFFERINGS- LOOSE	7,167.72	3,977.06	3,000.00	3,000.00			
4015 OFFERINGS - ONLINE	6,421.23	4,308.72	4,000.00	4,000.00			
<b>Total 4000 Offerings</b>	<b>\$ 74,613.82</b>	<b>\$ 75,292.41</b>	<b>\$ 70,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 75,000.00</b>			
4030 DECORATING	756.50	-7.90	500.00	500.00			
4110 Church Use							
4112 Church Use - Building	5,841.00	5,251.50	5,000.00	5,000.00			
4112.1 Church Use - Parking	2,295.00	2,110.00	2,250.00	2,250.00			
<b>Total 4110 Church Use</b>	<b>\$ 8,136.00</b>	<b>\$ 7,361.50</b>	<b>\$ 7,250.00</b>	<b>\$ 7,250.00</b>			
4200 OFFERINGS- GIFTS/BEQUESTS	10,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	0.00			
4400 Interest Income	136.07	207.10	200.00	200.00			
4450 GRANT ( MASONRY)							
4600 Miscellaneous Income	0.00	2,049.00	2,000.00	2,000.00			
4625 Community Fundraising	1,715.79	1,988.05	0.00	2,000.00			
4630 Directed Donations	0.00						
4040 Music Income (Organ Fund) (RSTRIC ACCT)	1,686.00	-429.89	0.00	0.00			
4615 Bell Fund (RSTRIC ACCT)	1,050.00	970.00	250.00	250.00			
4617 Roof Fund	1,366.99	898.69	0.00	0.00			
4632 Community Meal Site	8,531.35	2,976.55	5,600.00	10,000.00			
4639 Other	3,266.71	4,587.12	3,000.00	1,000.00			
<b>Total 4630 Directed Donations</b>	<b>\$ 15,901.05</b>	<b>\$ 9,002.47</b>	<b>\$ 8,850.00</b>	<b>\$ 11,250.00</b>			
4800 Missions							



4805 Local Missions	496.00	478.85	1,000.00	1,000.00
4810 UCC/CWS Special Offerings (PASS THRU)	2,237.73	3,060.50	2,000.00	2,000.00
4820 Discretionary Fund	1,200.00	1,160.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
4890 Noisy Collection	0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
<b>Total 4800 Missions</b>	<b>3,933.73</b>	<b>4,699.35</b>	<b>4,700.00</b>	<b>4,700.00</b>
Total Revenue	115,192.96	150,591.98	93,500.00	122,900.00
Gross Profit	115,192.96	150,591.98	93,500.00	122,900.00

**Expenditures**  
**6000 CHURCH OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE**

6012 Electric	6,835.73	5,582.93	4,500.00	6,000.00
6020 Propane-1325 Church- #10 and #11	378.21	598.20	1,125.00	500.00
6022 Heating Fuel #1 Bourne's	25,868.91	35,928.60	35,000.00	35,000.00
6022.5 Heating Fuel - KCS #8 Bourne's	-399.83	-2,931.64	0.00	0.00
6032 Phone/Internet	2,911.32	3,166.70	3,000.00	3,000.00
6033 Cell Phone	190.00	456.00	500.00	0.00
6040 Water & Sewer	1,086.02	1,133.30	1,000.00	1,000.00
6050 Grounds/Plowing	3,099.87	4,127.19	5,000.00	6,000.00
6060 Custodial Supplies	6,337.54	6,887.16	6,000.00	6,000.00
6061 Custodial Service ( CNTRCD)	19,916.25	0.00	0.00	20,000.00
6070 Church Insurance	22,702.46	15,755.36	18,750.00	18,000.00
6080 Church Repair & Maintenance				
6082 Church Repair & Maintenance	11,817.27	17,440.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
6082.75 KCS	0.00	56.78	0.00	0.00
6083 TRASH Service	2,542.40	5,642.00	3,000.00	1,500.00
6084 ELEVATOR Service	175.00	1,397.78	1,000.00	1,000.00
6085 ALARM MONITOR Service	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00
Total 6080 Church Repair & Maintenance	15,134.67	25,136.56	14,600.00	13,100.00
<b>Total 6000 CHURCH OPERATIONS &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>	<b>104,061.15</b>	<b>95,840.36</b>	<b>89,475.00</b>	<b>108,600.00</b>

**6092 Church Capital Improvements(Depreciation)**  
**6200 OFFICE EXPENSE**

6220 Office- Copier Rental/Repair/Usage Fees	2,324.32	4,081.06	4,200.00	1,200.00
6230 Office -Postage	640.65	666.44	600.00	600.00
6240 OFFICE EXPENSES.	1,487.98	2,025.79	2,000.00	2,000.00
6241 Office Supplies	1,297.92	1,432.72	1,000.00	1,300.00

6508.5 Custodial Taxes Church Only	1,402.66	-1,476.67	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Gross Payroll Church Employees</b>	<b>56,756.62</b>	<b>53,674.63</b>	<b>59,229.50</b>	<b>57,732.00</b>
<b>6510 PASTORAL MINISTRY</b>				
6512 PASTOR SALARY -WAGES	12,923.41	43,999.99	48,000.00	48,000.00
6513 PASTOR SALARY- SS/MED OFFSET	988.61	4,263.58	5,141.00	5,141.00
6514 BENEFITS	0.00			
6514.1 Annuity/L&D/ Health/ Vision/Dental	3,978.40	8,869.20	10,416.00	23,328.00
6514.3 Mileage REIMBURSEMENT	346.50	825.35	1,000.00	1,000.00
6514.4 Business Meals	42.09	927.12	500.00	500.00
6514.5 Continuing Education	2,270.00	1,486.00	3,500.00	2,000.00
6514.6 Ministry Expenses	674.51	1,658.76	1,500.00	1,500.00
<b>Total 6514 BENEFITS</b>	<b>7,311.50</b>	<b>13,766.43</b>	<b>16,916.00</b>	<b>28,328.00</b>
<b>Total 6510 PASTORAL MINISTRY ( Wages and Benefits)</b>	<b>\$ 21,223.52</b>	<b>\$ 62,030.00</b>	<b>\$ 70,057.00</b>	<b>\$ 81,469.00</b>
6518 Payroll Taxes	3,989.77	4,028.34	3,675.00	4,100.00
<b>Total 6500 Salaries and Benefits</b>	<b>\$ 77,980.14</b>	<b>\$ 115,704.63</b>	<b>\$ 129,286.50</b>	<b>\$ 139,201.00</b>
<b>6600 Parsonage Expenses</b>				
6601 Cable/Internet	595.52	1,772.55	1,650.00	1,650.00
6602 Electric	950.09	1,648.86	1,800.00	1,800.00
6603 Fuel #9 Bourne's	2,721.01	5,097.52	5,000.00	5,000.00
6604 Insurance	549.00	398.04	400.00	400.00
6606 Grounds/Plowing	875.00	6,006.94	2,500.00	2,500.00
6607 Repair & Maintenance	7,259.58	16,299.94	7,000.00	7,000.00
6608 Water & Sewer	1,353.96	612.26	850.00	850.00
6610 Parsonage Misc Exp.	98.98	61.49	0.00	0.00
<b>Total 6600 Parsonage Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 14,403.14</b>	<b>\$ 31,897.60</b>	<b>\$ 19,200.00</b>	<b>\$ 19,200.00</b>
<b>6700 Mission Expenditures</b>				
6710 OCWM UCC OFFERING	5,000.00	4,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
6712 UCC Special Offerings(PASS THRU)	2,275.73	2,725.15	2,000.00	2,000.00
6714 CWS OFFERINGS ( PASS THRU)	493.98	1,446.37	1,000.00	1,000.00
6720 Local Missions	0.00	348.85	0.00	0.00
6725 Discretionary Expenses	1,200.97	1,081.06	1,500.00	1,500.00
<b>Total 6700 Mission Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 8,970.68</b>	<b>\$ 9,601.43</b>	<b>\$ 9,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 9,500.00</b>
<b>6800 MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE</b>				

6810 Decorating	1,546.77	851.50	1,200.00	1,200.00
6815 Bookkeeping/Treasurer (CNTRCD)	7,537.60	4,189.04	3,500.00	5,250.00
6820 Interpreter Costs	0.00	3,390.00	0.00	0.00
6819 Consulting	0.00	1,757.64	1,000.00	1,000.00
6830 Investment Advisory	0.00	1,026.25	0.00	0.00
6835 Legal Fees	0.00	0.00	1,500.00	0.00
6850 Per Capita Dues	1,425.90	0.00	1,650.00	1,500.00
6855 Prayer Stoles ( Yarn)	0.00	39.62	100.00	100.00
6860 Pulpit Supply	6,200.00	200.00	1,000.00	1,200.00
6865 Worship Supplies	23.30	774.18	500.00	500.00
6870 Special Events/Membership	409.49	1,051.53	1,000.00	1,000.00
6875 Hospitality Supplies	61.70	78.28	0.00	0.00
6880 Vt Conference Delegates	308.50	260.00	500.00	500.00
6885 Technology Expenditures	3,069.69	1,422.46	2,000.00	2,000.00
6887 Advertising/Marketing	1,090.98	4,327.74	2,000.00	2,000.00
6888 Community Outreach	100.00	88.99	100.00	100.00
6890 Fundraising Event	129.98	310.92	0.00	300.00
6895 Furniture Expenses	0.00	556.89	0.00	0.00
6898 Kitchen Equipment	1,200.66	1,178.08	0.00	0.00
6899 Other Miscellaneous	3,831.87	149.98	3,700.00	3,700.00
6900 MEAL SITE				
6911 SUPPLIES/FEEES	6,219.68	3,809.59	200.00	6,500.00
6913 FOOD SERVICE CONTRACTOR (CNTRCD)	10,200.00	7,050.00	10,400.00	10,400.00
6915 FOOD EXPENSE	9,380.19	2,566.70	200.00	6,000.00
Total 6900 MEAL SITE	\$ 25,799.87	\$ 13,426.29	\$ 10,800.00	\$ 22,900.00
Total 6800 MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE	\$ 52,736.31	\$ 35,079.39	\$ 30,550.00	\$ 43,250.00
Unapplied Cash Bill Payment Expenditure	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
6897 Depreciation Expense	107,725.79	91,317.15		
Total Expenditures	\$ 390,847.02	\$ 403,601.81	\$ 463,526.50	\$ 391,516.00
Net Operating Revenue	\$ (275,654.06)	\$ (253,009.83)	\$ (370,026.50)	\$ (268,616.00)

Other Revenue

7700 Investment Income									
7710 Investment Income -PFA - 10028									
7711 PFA - 10028 - Dividend/Interest	7,463.35		19,524.13	0.00				19,500.00	
7713 PFA-10028 - Realized Gain/(Loss)	37,670.69		28,500.07	0.00				28,500.00	
7717 PFA - 10028 - Unrealized Market Gains	0.00		0.00	0.00				0.00	
Total 7710 Investment Income -PFA - 10028	\$ 45,134.04	\$	48,024.20	\$	0.00	\$	48,000.00		
7720 Investment Income - PFA - 10029									
7721 PFA - 10029 - Dividends/Interest	8,867.46		13,163.93	0.00				12,000.00	
7723 PFA-10029- Realized Gain/(Loss)	11,571.40		-1,189.69	0.00				0.00	
7727 PFA - 10029- Unrealized Market Gains	0.00		0.00	0.00				0.00	
Total 7720 Investment Income - PFA - 10029	\$ 20,438.86	\$	11,974.24	\$	0.00	\$	12,000.00		
7730 Investment Income -PFA - 01137									
7731 PFA - 01137- Dividend/Interest	13,205.49		24,229.61	0.00				25,000.00	
7733 PFA - 01137- Realized Gain/(Loss)	24,168.61		22,293.94	0.00				20,000.00	
7737 PFA - 01137 - Unrealized Market Gains	0.00		0.00	0.00				0.00	
Total 7730 Investment Income -PFA - 01137	\$ 37,374.10	\$	46,523.55	\$	0.00	\$	45,000.00		
Total 7700 Investment Income									
TOTAL PFA - Dividend/Interest	102,947.00	\$	106,521.99	\$	0.00	\$	105,000.00		
TOTAL PFA - Realized Gain/(Loss)	25,136.30		24,229.61	0.00				25,000.00	
7737 PFA - 01137 - Unrealized Market Gains	73,410.70		22,293.94	0.00				20,000.00	
Total Other Revenue	102,947.00	\$	106,521.99	\$	0.00	\$	105,000.00		
Other Expenditures									
8000 Investment Expense									
8010 PFA - 10028 - Investment Expense	2,970.61		4,667.86	0.00				4,600.00	
8020 PFA - 10029 - Investment Expense	3,496.64		3,199.56	0.00				3,200.00	
8030 PFA - 11037 - Investment Expense	8,392.16		7,475.67	0.00				7,500.00	
Total 8000 Investment Expense	\$ 14,859.41	\$	15,343.09	\$	0.00	\$	15,300.00		
8005 Draws from Investment Accounts									
8015 PFA - 10028 - Draw from Investment	0.00		294,548.33	180,000.00				180,000.00	
8015.5 Investment Draws Dep to Operating	-180,000.00		-180,000.00	-180,000.00				-180,000.00	
8015.75 Investment Draws - Capital Projects/Etc	-69,096.66		-114,548.33						
Total 8005 Draws from Investment Accounts	\$ (249,096.66)	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-		
Total Other Expenditures									
Net Revenue	(234,237.25)	\$	15,343.09	\$	-	\$	15,300.00		
Draw Projected to Manage shortfall	61,530.19	\$	(161,830.93)	\$	(370,026.50)	\$	(178,916.00)		
		\$	335,000.00	\$	180,000.00				
				\$	(35,026.50)	\$	1,084.00		

Overage/(shortfall) \$ (35,026.50) \$ 1,084.00



# United Community Church, United Church of Chris

## RENTAL Statement of Activity Comparison

### Budget Worksheet (7/1/2023 to 6/30/2024) FY 2024

	PREV YR ACTUAL		ACTUAL + PROJECTED		Approved		BUDGET FY 2025
	7/1-6/30/2023		7/1 - 6/30/2024		Budget FY 2023	Budget FY 2024	
Revenue							
5000 Apartment Rental Income							
5001 Apartment Rent - 19 Steeple		5,886.50					
		Rent per					
		Month					
5002 19 Steeple #2 - 2nd floor front	17,500.00	\$ 1,100.00	13,150.00	\$	12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 13,200.00
5003 19 Steeple #3 - 3rd floor	8,150.00	\$ 750.00	8,850.00	\$	7,800.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 12,150.00
5004 19 Steeple #4 - 2nd floor rear	7,800.00	\$ 750.00	8,700.00	\$	7,800.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 12,150.00
5005 19 Steeple #5 - 1st floor rear	7,050.00	\$ 1,000.00	10,333.00	\$	7,800.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 12,000.00
5006 19 Steeple #1 - 1st floor front	12,000.00	\$ 1,100.00	12,900.00	\$	12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 13,200.00
Total 5001 Apartment Rent - 19 Steeple	\$ 52,500.00	\$ 4,700.00	\$ 53,933.00	\$	\$ 47,400.00	\$ 47,400.00	\$ 62,700.00
5010 35 Steeple	14,575.00	\$ 1,800.00	14,636.27	\$	14,400.00	\$ 14,400.00	\$ 21,600.00
5020 Apartment Rent - 24 Steeple							
5021 24 Steeple #1 - 1st floor front-	14,000.00	\$ 1,100.00	11,900.00	\$	8,400.00	\$ 8,400.00	\$ 13,200.00
5022 24 Steeple #2 - 2nd floor rear	9,350.00	\$ 950.00	11,950.00	\$	10,200.00	\$ 10,200.00	\$ 12,750.00
5023 24 Steeple #3 - 2nd floor front	8,690.00	\$ 1,250.00	15,000.00	\$	12,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,450.00
5024 24 Steeple #4 - 3rd floor	7,156.00	\$ 1,300.00	7,843.33	\$	7,800.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 15,600.00
5025 24 Steeple #5 - 1st floor rear	7,720.00	\$ 750.00	8,675.00	\$	7,800.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 11,250.00
Total 5020 Apartment Rent - 24 Steeple	\$ 46,916.00	\$ 5,350.00	\$ 55,368.33	\$	\$ 46,200.00	\$ 49,200.00	\$ 68,250.00
5030 Apartment Rent - 56 Church							
5031 56 Church - #3 - 2nd floor rear	10,700.00	\$ 1,400.00	10,550.00	\$	12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 16,800.00
5032 56 Church - #2 - 2nd floor front	8,001.00	\$ 750.00	8,750.00	\$	7,800.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 11,250.00
5033 56 Church #4 - 1st floor rear	7,800.00	\$ 700.00	8,300.00	\$	7,800.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 11,100.00
5034 56 Church #1 - 1st floor front Office	12,600.00	\$ 1,200.00	14,100.00	\$	12,600.00	\$ 12,600.00	\$ 15,300.00
Total 5030 Apartment Rent - 56 Church	\$ 39,101.00	\$ 4,050.00	\$ 41,700.00	\$	\$ 40,200.00	\$ 40,200.00	\$ 54,450.00
Total 5000 Apartment Rental Income	\$ 153,092.00	\$ 15,900.00	\$ 165,637.60	\$	\$ 148,200.00	\$ 151,200.00	\$ 207,000.00
5075Laundry Fund	592.25		150.00	\$		\$	
Total Revenue	\$ 153,684.25	\$ 15,900.00	\$ 165,787.60	\$	\$ 148,200.00	\$ 151,200.00	\$ 207,000.00
Gross Profit	\$ 153,684.25	\$ 15,900.00	\$ 165,787.60	\$	\$ 148,200.00	\$ 151,200.00	\$ 207,000.00

Other Expenditures

7000 Electric - Apartments									
7001 Electric - 19 Steeple	2,720.88	3,279.41	\$	2,400.00	\$	2,400.00	\$	2,800.00	
7002 Electric - 35 Steeple	1,848.02	1,950.00	\$	2,350.00	\$	2,200.00	\$	1,800.00	
7003 Electric - 24 Steeple	2,605.02	2,649.93	\$	2,650.00	\$	2,650.00	\$	2,600.00	
7004 Electric - 56 Church	4,921.16	5,359.97	\$	3,400.00	\$	4,000.00	\$	4,500.00	
<b>Total 7000 Electric - Apartments</b>	<b>12,095.08</b>	<b>13,239.31</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>10,800.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>11,250.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>11,700.00</b>	
7010 Water & Sewer - Apartments									
7011 Water & Sewer - 19 Steeple	1,748.00	1,810.40	\$	2,700.00	\$	2,000.00	\$	1,800.00	
7012 Water & Sewer - 35 Steeple	813.41	859.73	\$	800.00	\$	800.00	\$	1,000.00	
7013 Water & Sewer - 24 Steeple	1,300.93	1,130.75	\$	1,625.00	\$	1,500.00	\$	1,200.00	
7014 Water & Sewer - 56 Church	1,545.75	2,003.09	\$	1,600.00	\$	1,200.00	\$	1,800.00	
<b>Total 7010 Water &amp; Sewer - Apartments</b>	<b>5,408.09</b>	<b>5,803.97</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>6,725.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>5,500.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>5,800.00</b>	
7020 Fuel - Apartments									
7021 Fuel - 19 Steeple #6	9,126.50	6,000.00	\$	3,700.00	\$	9,000.00	\$	9,000.00	
7022 Fuel - 35 Steeple #3	1,911.51	4,089.62	\$	1,800.00	\$	2,000.00	\$	2,000.00	
7023 Fuel - 24 Steeple #5	12,580.92	11,000.00	\$	5,100.00	\$	12,000.00	\$	12,500.00	
7024 Fuel - 56 Church #2	8,720.09	4,800.00	\$	3,450.00	\$	8,000.00	\$	8,000.00	
<b>Total 7020 Fuel - Apartments</b>	<b>32,339.02</b>	<b>26,889.62</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>14,050.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>31,000.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>31,500.00</b>	
7030 Propane - Apartments									
7031 Propane - 19 Steeple #8, #9	483.11	797.66	\$	300.00	\$	500.00	\$	800.00	
<b>Total 7030 Propane - Apartments</b>	<b>483.11</b>	<b>797.66</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>300.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>500.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>800.00</b>	
7040 Real Estate Taxes - Apartments									
7041 Real Estate Taxes - 19 Steeple	6,059.04	6,372.30	\$	6,105.00	\$	6,105.00	\$	6,500.00	
7042 Real Estate Taxes - 35 Steeple	3,253.74	3,422.14	\$	3,280.00	\$	3,280.00	\$	3,500.00	
7043 Real Estate Taxes - 24 Steeple	9,246.88	9,778.02	\$	9,370.00	\$	9,370.00	\$	9,500.00	
7044 Real Estate Taxes - 56 Church	8,867.52	9,326.42	\$	8,940.00	\$	8,940.00	\$	9,200.00	
<b>Total 7040 Real Estate Taxes - Apartments</b>	<b>27,427.18</b>	<b>28,898.88</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>27,695.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>27,695.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>28,700.00</b>	
7050 Grounds - Apartments	5,420.00	1,825.00	\$	2,000.00	\$	2,000.00	\$	3,000.00	
7055 Bookkeeping/Treasurer- Apartments	4,195.11	1,420.95	\$	3,500.00	\$	3,500.00	\$	1,750.00	
7057 Payroll- Apartments	25,783.02	3,955.05	\$	26,000.00	\$	27,300.00	\$	-	
7057.5 Payroll Taxes - Apartments	1,956.87	299.61	\$	1,989.00	\$	1,989.00	\$	-	
7059 Property managers	0.00	13,002.70	\$		\$		\$	24,200.00	



7060 Repairs & Maintenance - Apartments	2,342.68		4,766.04						\$	4,800.00
7061 Repairs & Maintenance - 19 Steeple	11,521.27		8,000.00	\$	5,500.00	\$	5,500.00	\$	\$	20,100.00
7062 Repairs & Maintenance - 35 Steeple	1,084.83		4,000.00	\$	3,000.00	\$	3,000.00	\$	\$	1,800.00
7063 Repairs & Maintenance - 24 Steeple	15,886.61		14,000.00	\$	5,500.00	\$	5,500.00	\$	\$	15,000.00
7064 Repairs & Maintenance - 56 Church	19,769.57		4,500.00	\$	4,000.00	\$	4,000.00	\$	\$	14,000.00
<b>Total 7060 Repairs &amp; Maintenance - Apartments</b>	<b>50,604.96</b>		<b>35,266.04</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>18,000.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>18,000.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>55,700.00</b>
7070 Insurance - Apartments										
7071 Insurance - 19 Steeple	855.37		1,426.30	\$	825.00	\$	1,067.85	\$	\$	1,200.00
7072 Insurance - 35 Steeple	292.45		418.47	\$	325.00	\$	949.20	\$	\$	400.00
7073 Insurance - 24 Steeple	985.97		1,646.22	\$	840.00	\$	1,305.15	\$	\$	1,400.00
7074 Insurance - 56 Church	1,135.35		1,675.58	\$	1,125.00	\$	1,305.15	\$	\$	1,500.00
<b>Total 7070 Insurance - Apartments</b>	<b>3,631.54</b>		<b>5,166.57</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>3,490.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>5,002.35</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,500.00</b>
7090 Miscellaneous Expenses - Apartments	864.30		836.00	\$	750.00	\$	750.00	\$	\$	750.00
7095 Legal Exp- Aprtment	700.00		0.00	\$	-	\$	-	\$	\$	-
7100 Church Reimbursement against Draw	0.00		0.00	\$	15,000.00	\$	15,000.00	\$	\$	-
<b>Total Other Expenditures</b>	<b>170,908.28</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>136,401.36</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>130,299.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>134,486.35</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>168,400.00</b>
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>(17,224.03)</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>15,900.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>29,386.24</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>17,901.00</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>38,600.00</b>

### Passumpsic Financial Advisors, Investment Account – APR. 30,

**2024** Market Value as of June 30, 2023 \$2,417,604 Account Activity

Investment Fees (\$12,159) Interest/Dividends/Capital Gains \$25,136 Income Realized

Gain/Loss \$73,411 Draw (\$244,141) Change in Market Value \$268,586

Market Value as of April 30, 2024 \$2,528,437 Change in market value as of April 30, 2024 \$354,975 %

increase in market value 14.68%

Draw 7/1/2023 to 4/30/2024 (\$244,141) % Draw 10.1%

Net change in market Value as of April 30, 2024 \$110,833 % Change in market value 4.58%

# Parish Register

## Total Membership, May 1, 2023

Active 100  
Associate 315

## New Members

April 9, 2023	Justin Deth	(Confession of Faith)
October 22	Kathryn Piper	(Transfer from Lower Waterford Congregational Church)
March 10, 2024	Linda Perkins	(Transfer from Third Congregational Church, East St. Johnsbury)

## Loss of Membership

### Deaths

*3 active + 7 inactive*

July 25	Barbara Ashton Lamont	<i>(August 9, 1926)</i>
August 13	Virginia Mae Kimball Johnson	<i>(July 7, 1925)</i>
October 12	Evelyn Mulliken	<i>(December 24, 1940)</i>
October 18	Edwin R. Magnus	<i>(May 12, 1942)</i>
October 19	Marjorie Reed	<i>(March 27, 1935)</i>
December 2	Ferguson McKay	<i>(June 21, 1932)</i>
December 16	Jane McKay	<i>(November 8, 1923)</i>
December 16	James (Jim) Kennedy	<i>(April 10, 1946)</i>
January 18, 2024	Nathalie (Sunny) Wood	<i>(May 8, 1934)</i>
March 6	Kathryn "Kate" Aring Piper	<i>(August 30, 1951)</i>

## Total Membership, April 30, 2024

Active 100  
Inactive 308

## Death of Former Pastor

April 8 Rev. Kurt Frederick Herber *(October 21, 1946),*

*\*member of United Community Church, UCC  
^ friend of United Community Church, UCC*

## United Community Church Officers and Ministry Members

### Head of the Church: Jesus Christ

Start of term

**Moderator:** Phil Brown July 2022  
**Assistant Moderator:** Amanda Cochran July 2024  
**Treasurer:** July 2024

**Assistant Treasurer:** Helene Milias July 2023  
**Clerk:** Karen Sayles 2022  
**Assistant Clerk :** Kathy Brown 2023

**Members at large:**  
Gail Warnaar July 2022  
Pam Dearborn July 2022

#### Outreach Ministry

Alice Kitchel 2017  
Beth Norris 2022  
Barbara Connelly 2021  
Kola 2024  
Stephanie Rowe 2024

#### Worship & Care

Kathy Brown 2022  
Nancy Sprout 2024  
Bertie Koelewijn 2024  
\*Barbara Connelly  
\*Phil Brown

#### Spiritual Formation & Nurture

Erika Thompson  
Gretchen Steen 2017  
Karen Sayles 2023  
Lance Abella 2024  
Carew Magnus 2024  
2024

#### Stewardship

Kris Norris  
Betty Keller 2022  
Neil Abella 2021  
Randall Northrup 2024  
2024

\*Non voting member

\*\*\*\*\* WARNING: \*\*\*\*\*  
**ANNUAL MEETING OF UNITED COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
**May 12, 2024**

The Members of United Community Church are hereby warned of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation to be held at 11:30 AM on Sunday, May 12, 2024. The meeting will be held simultaneously in person and via Zoom. Each voting member attending via Zoom needs to attend on an individual computing device.

**Article 1:** Shall the members of the church accept the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation held on May 14, 2023, as presented in the 2024 Annual Report?

**Article 2:** Shall the members of the church accept the minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting held on November 19, 2023, as presented in the 2024 Annual Report?

**Article 3:** Shall the members receive, discuss, and approve the reports contained in the 2024 Annual Report?

**Article 4:** Shall the members approve the budget presented by the Stewardship Committee and approved by the Council for the period of Fiscal Year 2025, July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025?

**Article 5:** Shall the members elect the slate of officers and members of the Ministries and Church Council presented in the 2023 Annual Report?

**Article 6:** Shall the members approve changing United Community Church, UCC Bylaws, Article VI, section 3 to read:

3. The Moderator is the lay leader of the Church and shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Church for a term of one year and shall be eligible for re-election up to four consecutive terms after which he/she shall be ineligible for one year to serve as Moderator. The Moderator shall preside at meetings of the Church Council, at the Annual Meeting and at special meetings of the Church. ~~A~~ **Vice An Assistant** Moderator shall be elected at the Annual Meeting and serve in the absence of the Moderator and, **along with the Past Moderator, shall assist and advise** ~~otherwise assist~~ the Moderator as needed. The ~~Vice~~ **Assistant** Moderator position has the same term limits as the Moderator.

**Article 7:** Shall the members approve changing United Community Church, UCC Bylaws, Article VIII, section 2 to read:

2. The Ministry of Worship **& and** Care shall consist of at least four to six members nominated and voted upon at the Annual Meeting for a staggered, two-year term. All **church** members are encouraged to participate in the Ministry of Worship **& and** Care as part of the responsibility of membership. Friends of the Church are encouraged and welcomed to participate in the Ministry of Worship **& and** Care. **The Pastor(s), Music Director, Secretary(ies) and Worship Technology Coordinator shall meet regularly with the Ministry of Worship and Care.** The spiritual ministry of the church, including worship services, music, and hospitality, shall be the overall responsibility of the Ministry of Worship **& and** Care working with the Pastor. The Ministry shall support the Pastor by keeping the Pastor informed of the needs of the congregation. They shall assist the Pastor in carrying out pastoral duties in whatever ways appropriate. Their concerns shall include all matters relating to worship and the care of the congregation. The **voting members of the** Ministry of Worship **& and** Care shall be responsible for the evaluation of the ministry of the Church, including the Pastor and Associate Pastor.

Annual evaluations shall always include input from a broadly representative group of the Congregation. They shall also make recommendations regarding compensation for the Pastor and Associate Pastor.

**Article 8:** Shall the members approve changing United Community Church, UCC Bylaws, Article X, paragraph 1 to read:

The Church Council shall consist of ~~40~~ **12** members: the Moderator, **the Assistant Moderator, the Past Moderator**, the Treasurer, and the Clerk; one representative from each Ministry; and two at-large members elected from the Congregation at the Annual Meeting for a staggered, three-year term; and the Pastor. The Pastor, **Assistant Moderator and Past Moderator** shall be a non-voting members. The Moderator or, in his or her absence, the Assistant Moderator of the Church Council shall preside over meetings of the Church Council. The Clerk or, in his or her absence, the Assistant Clerk shall attend meetings of the Church Council and act as secretary.

**Article 9:** Shall the members approve changing United Community Church, UCC Bylaws, Article X, paragraph 2 to read:

It shall be the function of the Church Council to coordinate, direct and implement policy in all matters pertaining to the operations and activities of the Church between meetings of the Congregation. The Church Council shall facilitate communication within the church. The Council shall focus on the future and vision for the Church. The Council should meet at least six times a year to hear reports and recommendations from the Pastor, the respective ministries, and officers of the church. A quorum for conducting business shall consist of at least five **voting** members of the Council.

**Article 10:** Shall the members approve changing United Community Church, UCC Bylaws, Article X by adding the following 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph:

**The Assistant Moderator, Assistant Clerk and Assistant Treasurer shall assume the duties and right to vote of their respective officers in the absence of those officers. The Assistant Moderator, Assistant Clerk, Assistant Treasurer and Past Moderator may serve concurrently as Ministry representatives or Members-at-large. Each person shall have only one vote, even if serving concurrently in two voting positions.**

**Article 11:** Shall the members approve changing United Community Church, UCC Bylaws, Article XI, section 2 to read:

The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held ~~in May~~ **between May 1 and June 15**, to hear and act upon the reports of its officers, Ministries, Committees, and auxiliary organizations; to elect officers and Ministry and Committee members for the ensuing fiscal year, and to do any business proper to be done. The exact date and time of the meeting shall be decided each year by the Church Council and shall be warned both in the printed bulletin and from the pulpit at least two (2) Sundays before the date of the meeting, as well as by written communication mailed or distributed to all the active and associate members of the Church.

**Article 12:** Shall the members consider any other business that may be presented at the meeting?