

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Who
are
we

Who
is our
neighbor

Who is
God
calling us
to become

?

The new Local Church Profile is not just for congregations in search of a pastor. *All* congregations are encouraged to engage in its process of discovery every 3-5 years. The UCC Local Church Profile reflects valuable data, assesses ministry, clarifies change, and helps advance the calling of the congregation. Not just to be completed by a search committee – the more participation, the better!

MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



The Church in Silver Lake

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Open & Affirming: Y

Accessible: Y

Conference: Heartland

Association: Living Water Association Ohio NorthEast

Staff contact person: Rev. Nayiri Karjian

WHO ARE WE TODAY

An Open and Affirming congregation we embrace the example of Jesus in welcoming all people and providing a safe place especially for LGBTQIA+ persons, helping heal the hurt caused by the institutional church so together we can spread God's message of unconditional love and extravagant acceptance to all.

We are committed to embracing everyone who comes through the doors of the church and supporting them, no matter where they are in their lives with a focus on uplifting the LGBTQIA+ community spiritually and in leadership opportunities. Beyond that, we are committed to love and service. We are energetic, involved and supportive. We have one goal: for God's love to be revealed as open and affirming.

We are also a growing, vibrant and multigenerational congregation committed to our core values of openness, social justice and service. We are theologically and spiritually curious. We continue to discover the best ways for continued engagement in congregational life, ministry and mission.

We will welcome a pastor who:

- *Facilitates inspiring worship experiences*
- *Offers Pastoral Care*
- *Is open-minded with strong leadership skills*
- *Guides us in increasing engagement in worship and in the wider community*
- *Is visionary who will minister with us and guide us in the mission of the church*

Core Competencies desired in our new settled minister:

- *Warm and friendly; relationship oriented*
- *Knowledgeable of scripture and historical context*
- *Willing to challenge congregation to live out our faith*

Position Title: Minister

Position Duration: Settled, Called Pastor, three-quarter time

Compensation Level: we follow the Clergy Compensation guidelines of the Heartland Conference UCC.

1b. Scope of Work

As found in the Call agreement workbook

1c. Compensation and Support

Salary Basis: Conference guidelines and negotiable

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

A person deeply committed to the Christian faith who loves the challenge of ministering in this trying time and inspires the church congregants towards works of service. We want a minister who can foster joy and connection. We would like a minister who can increase engagement, continue to increase worship attendance and help to grow our church ministries. We would like a leader with a worldview who can attract and minister to a diverse congregation.

Ability to:

- * Support individuals who have suffered church trauma/hurt.*
- *Champion LGBTQIA+ individuals/groups with emphasis on Trans community*
- * Increase diversity especially regarding varied racial representation.*
- * Facilitate engagement in the ministries of the church.*
- * Bolster social justice programs.*

Marks for faithful and effective ministry:

- Working together for Justice and Mercy*
- Caring for All creation*
- Strengthening inter and intrapersonal assets*
- Engaging Sacred Stories and tradition*

THE SPECIFIC MINISTRIES/ISSUES YOU EXPECT OUR NEXT pastor to address during their tenure including the gifts, talents, and skills and leadership style you are looking for:

Our church appreciates a collaborative style of leadership with a sense of direction and structure. We look forward to partnering with a pastor who can inspire increased engagement and growth.

Gifts and skills in the following area:

- Experience with grief, especially church trauma and hurt as well as healing*
- Vast openness to diversity, to LGBTQIA+ individuals/groups including Trans community*
- Attention to racial diversity*
- Ability to facilitate engagement*
- Support social justice programs.*



We have a spacious outdoor gathering area where worship has taken place as well as several prayer vigils. The one pictured here is for peace in Ukraine.



The rainbow colors reflect our Open and Affirming stature.



A bright spot on many Sundays is the children's moment that is for all ages!



We have a beautiful sanctuary with an open altar and two large screens where images can provide a powerful connection to the sermon which is live streamed every Sunday.



We have a lovely park next door where we can hold worship followed by a barbecue!

THE VILLAGE OF SILVER LAKE is situated in Northeast Ohio and is nestled between the towns of Cuyahoga Falls, Stow, and Munroe Falls. We're a progressive, Open & Affirming congregation in an affluent village and draw our members from a roughly 30-mile radius. We value our proximity to the cities of Akron, Kent and Cleveland, where some of our members are engaged in several exciting ministry and service opportunities. There are professional sports teams and a great art scene in the area. Northeast Ohio also boasts some of the best medical care in the United States. These diverse cities have large universities and vibrant LGBTQIA+ communities. We are a haven for people who have experienced church trauma because of their sexuality and gender expression.

Our geographic area has a lot to offer! Our cost of living is low, we have wonderful parks including the Cuyahoga Valley National Park which is just a short 15-minute drive away. We have several major universities nearby including Kent State University, University of Akron and Case Western Reserve University. We have terrific school systems in our area. In addition, we have a beautiful and well-maintained church building and grounds.

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP:

108 adults, 25 children (database)

Average worship attendance:

2023:62, 2024:66

Sunday school average attendance:

12-13

Boards and Committees

Cabinet: 8

Trustees: 6

Social Justice:20

Outreach:5

Family Life:7

Spiritual Life 8-10

WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?**Mission Statement**

The Church in Silver Lake aims to embody the transformative power of love and Christ-centered community by embracing individuals as an Open and Affirming community. Our mission is to cultivate connection, community, and social justice; working relentlessly towards a world where every person is valued, supported and empowered to live authentically and with dignity.

Vision Statement

The Church in Silver Lake aims to be a shining light of hope and compassion, spreading God's love and acceptance to everyone. We strive to create a Christ centered community that embraces everyone, promotes social justice and champions equality for the betterment of society. We strive to inspire positive change and foster a world where everyone can live in harmony and unity through our actions and outreach.

WHAT HAVE BEEN SOME TRENDS IN THE CHURCH FOR THE LAST 5 YEARS?

Our church handled Covid well. Post covid we have been welcoming new participants in worship, young families with children and an increased enthusiasm for doing missions outside the church walls. Our members are interested in additional opportunities for service, friends are happy to volunteer; people are engaged with children's activities, and congregants are encouraged to form ministry groups that will serve the community and we boast an active Church Chat on social media that allows opportunity for involvement.

The interim transitional time afforded us much needed reorganization and structure in our life together. We have begun to connect with the wider church and appreciate our covenantal relationships.

WHAT HAVE BEEN SOME TRENDS in the larger community/town in which the church is located?

- *Trends and opportunities shown in our wider community:*
- *60% of people in the surrounding area do not attend church*
- *Social and political discord is common.*
- *Racial injustice is seen in surrounding areas.*
- *Health crisis and financial concerns are top issues among congregants.*
- *Increase in LGBTQIA+ community*

Our church is known as The Church in Silver Lake, as being Open and Affirming and as having a successful pre-school.

Some experiments congregation has engaged in:

****Implementing a solid Sunday School curriculum with volunteers has taken 5 years but is currently in place and functioning well now.***

****Family Life: This year we began monthly dinners after Communion Sundays that grown in attendance every month.***

**** Under the previous settled minister, the church's organizational structure had become disorganized but during the interim we have become more centered on our emerging mission and vision***

WE LIVE OUT OUR VISION AND MISSION THROUGH THE FOLLOWING

– worship, faith formation, care and fellowship, mission and outreach opportunities:

Our Worship Services are a blend of traditional and contemporary styles, even eclectic. We value sermons that are informative, thoughtful and inspiring, with historical context revealed with practices that can be put into action every day. We strive to grow in deepening our understanding of God, how to embody God's love in this world, and how to continue to become a community connected and committed to the church's ministry. We also value quality music, creative liturgy, and worship that is a whole experience.

Our educational faith formation program for children uses Celebrate Wonder curriculum which engages their natural sense of curiosity to help them understand God's love. It creates a safe space to ask big questions, helping children explore the Bible in ways that feed their imagination and encourage creativity.

Our care and fellowship ministry includes a family life monthly dinner which is held on Communion Sundays. This program continues to help us build community and grow in care for one another. Our congregation cares deeply for one another - we have a robust prayer group, LGBTQIA+ members and friends are embraced, young families with children are extravagantly welcomed, Frayed Nerves and Interconnections are two groups started and supported by church members.

Our Mission and Outreach ministry is important to us. We are called to change lives.

We participate in:

- *Akron Pride*
- *Ronald McDonald House.*
- *Silver Lake summer festival*
- *Run a fit and fall proof class*
- *Trip to Columbus to provide political support for trans-rights*
- *Members attended and supported Kent State university's safe space training.*
- *Members attended and supported Kent State's Back to school Pride open house.*
- *Members provide a Thanksgiving give back dinner every year*
- *Church sponsors a Scout troop #7153*
- *Church members donated to a local homeless shelter named Miller House*
- *Good Neighbors; donations are collected at different times during the year*
- *Provide grocery gift cards to families in need.*

We are working on increasing our involvement in the local community. Last summer we shared a picnic with Akron First Congregational UCC, participated in interfaith activities, and continue to make effort to be involved in wider UCC Association and Conference ministries.

As a congregation we would like to explore becoming a:

- *WISE Congregation for Mental Health*
- *Creation Justice church*
- *Inter-cultural/multi-racial church*

What our worship is like when congregation gathers:

We have one worship service at 10 AM on Sundays that is a blend of traditional and contemporary styles. We have a vibrant worship with people who are excited to be together; it is joyful and very much like a family gathering. Our service is intergenerational with children playing a vital role. We have a wonderful music leader who continues to grow that part of our worship. We have a team of musicians-piano, guitar, drums-as well as a small but beautiful choir. We also have a lovely bell choir that enhances worship on occasion.

From our transition team report:

- *Most members value a good sermon, good music and a positive church atmosphere*
- *Members value a service where God is mentioned, the bible verse shared, and insight into how words can be put into action.*
- *Members enjoy a sermon that increases our understanding of God, challenges us to be better people, and teaches us how to embody God's love in this world.*
- *Members value a sermon that gives an increased communal feeling and follows an order of worship that includes the Lord's Prayer.*

Music:

Music that aligns with the sermon topic and is contemporary.

Recent positive church atmosphere:

There was a recent baptism where all kids put their hands in the water and where all congregants were asked to be godparents. This gave the sense of belonging, purpose and community that is valued by our congregation.

Educational program/faith formation vision of our church

The vision of this church is to ensure Christian education across lifespans and to grow disciples to spread God's love.

Sunday school:

Solid education age 2 through 7th grade we average 12-13 children each week.

Currently divided 2-5-year-olds in one room with two adults.

1st-7th grade in separate room with two adults.

Topic or curriculum recently used in Sunday School classes:

"Celebrate Wonder"

Although we have an active church school program, as a congregation we feel a need for more opportunities for children and youth to grow in their faith. We would like this to include a confirmation class and youth to be included in worship services as ushers and other service opportunities.

We also have a thriving pre-school that is active during the week. It offers classes to 3-4- and 5-year-olds. Currently it is at capacity with a waiting list! Their joy and growth are evident throughout our church. The settled minister will sit on the board of the pre-school as does the moderator of Cabinet. There are multiple opportunities for interaction between church members and pre-school activities.



Preschool kids light up the sanctuary for Mother's Day!



Lunch with family life committee volunteers in fellowship hall for families after kids' performance



Preschool Performance!



Church in Silver Lake Preschool: A great opportunity to serve the community, grow our church and share God's love!

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS:

Number of active members: 108

Average church attendance: 70

Percentage of participants who have been in the church taken from a recent church survey:

More than 10 years: 15

Less than 10, more than 5. Years: 25

Less than 5 years: 27

Total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Are these numbers of estimates?
12	5	3	8	12	11	5	18	11	no

Household types

		Is this number an estimate?
Single adults under 35	4	no
Households with minors	19	
Single adults 35-65	5	
Joint households with no minors	25	
Single adults over 65	14	

Education level of adult participants

		Is this number an estimate?
High school:	4	
College:	31	
Graduate school:	24	
Specialty training:	5	
Other:	3	Juris Doctorate. Law school, post-doctoral

Adults in various employment types:

		Is this number an estimate?
Adults who are employed	35	
Adults who are retired:	27	
Adults who are not fully employed:	5	

Range and occupations of working adults: from blue collar and part time employees to PHD professors and a retired judge.

These also include:

- Dean of an art school

- Principal of an elementary school
- Engineers
- Nurses
- Lawyers
- Professional driver
- Warehouse workers
- HR professionals
- A retired archeologist
- Mental Health professionals
- Social workers

Overall ethnic and racial heritage: Mostly white European but have a few members who are people of color. We are mostly mono-cultural but would like to work on this aspect to become more diverse.

Participation and Staffing

<u>Ways of gathering</u>	<u>Estimated number of people involved</u>	<u>Who plans each of the listed gatherings</u>
Adult groups or classes	41	Church members
Baptisms	4	Pastor, music director, spiritual life
Children's classes	15	Spiritual Life
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	52 Christmas Eve 110 Easter	Pastor, music director
Church wide meals	1x/month	Family life
Church based bible study	3-7	Lay leader
Communion	Once month, first Sunday	Pastor, music director, volunteers who serve and bake bread
Community meals	Thanksgiving dinner 50	Lay leader
Confirmation		Pastor, music director
Drama or Dance program	N/A	
Funerals	2	Pastor, music director
Intergenerational groups	41	Frayed Nerves Theology on Tap
Outdoor Worship	50	Pastor, music director
Prayer/Meditation groups	1 meditation group 1 prayer group	Prayer group led
Public Advocacy work	10-15	Lay leaders
Retreats	10	Moderator, Vice-Moderator

Theology or Bible Programs	10	Lay leaders
Weddings last year	1	
Worship time slot	Sundays 10-11 am	
Young Adult groups of classes	N/A	
Other		

Comment: our church supports:

- the Zane Foundation for autism awareness
- A local scout troop
- Autism foundation organization
- BSA Troop 7153
- The Meditation Studio space

Staff Position	Head of Staff	Compensation	Supervised by	Length of tenure
Pastor (Interim)	Steven Savides	Part time	Congregation	<1 year
Office manager/Secretary	Layne Wheeler	Part time	Senior Pastor	
Pre-school director	Morghan Weekly	Full-time	Senior Pastor and trustees	
Pre-school teachers	7		Pre-school director	
Custodians	1	Part time	Trustees	
Music leader	1 Kate Swope	Part-time	Senior Pastor	
Treasurer	1	Part-time	Trustees	
Director of Christian Education	1	Part-time	Senior Pastor	

Reflection: We have a very active and involved congregation. Despite the challenges of the past few years: Covid Pandemic, losing our settled pastor, working to find an interim pastor... we are experiencing a period of growth. People with positive prior church experiences engage more easily than those who have suffered church hurt/trauma. As a church we need to be more intentional in getting all members and regular attendees the opportunity for involvement.

CHURCH FINANCES

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$110,264
Endowment Proceeds	NA (Note 1)
Endowment Draw	\$13,193 (Original forecast)
Fundraising Events	\$0
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$0
Grants	\$0 (Separate from operating budget)
Rentals of Church Building	\$10,684
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$0 (no Parsonage)
Support from Related Organizations	\$27,985 (Contribution from CSL Preschool Operations)
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$0
Other (Fellowship Hall Fees for Events)	\$2,000
Other (Interest Income from Banking Accounts)	\$2,156

Note 1. The CSL Endowment is managed on a total return basis. The Endowment can today sustainably provide \$12,000 to \$13,000 per year (see below)

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for current fiscal year): \$166,282

What is the percentage of total ministerial support of total budgeted expenses? 39.3%

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

Is your church 5-5, does it include each of the following contributions during the church year?

No

\$0 Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM-basic support)

\$0 One Great Hour of Sharing

\$0 Strengthen the Church

\$0 Neighbors in Need

\$0 Christmas Fund

How is OCWM basic support gathered? If calculated as a percentage of the operating budget, what is the percentage? Not gathered

What is the church's current indebtedness: \$0

Total amount of loan debt: \$0

Reason of debt: NA

Are capital and other payments current? All accounts are current

BUILDING PROJECTS

Capital campaigns of last ten years (All part of a planned program to cover deferred maintenance, enhance safety, reduce operating cost & expand ministry reach).

Year (s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2018	Additional Sanctuary Wheelchair access	Donated	100%	
2019	Replace Kitchen Steps & Railing	\$5,000	100%	
2019	Sanctuary LED Lights	\$2,000	100%	
2019	New playground fence	Donated	100%	
2019	Parking Lot Repairs	\$2,000	100%	
2019	PS Door Additions & Outside Door Replacement	\$16,000	100%	
2021	New video camera & computer system	\$5,000	100%	
2021-22	PS & Fellowship Hall Roof Replacement	\$42,000	100%	
2022	Narthex Roof Replacement	\$8,000	100%	
2023	Sanctuary Roof Maintenance	Donated	100%	
2022-23	New boilers and heating system upgrade	\$40,000	100%	

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe: Not at this time

Year	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact

Prominent mission component involved in the most recent capital campaign. Maintain place of worship, increase safety and increase ministry reach.

Church Endowment:

Market value of assets? \$243,044

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? Funds are withdrawn periodically throughout the year as needed to maintain the operating account balance above a minimum threshold – usually twice a year.

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

Year	Endowment Draw	Approx %
2024 (Current Est)	\$6,500	3%
2024 (Orig. Forecast)	\$13,200	6%
2023	\$6,400	3%
2022	\$26,700	12%

2021	\$20,100	9%
2020	\$17,800	8%
2019	\$35,200	16%

Describe the draw on the endowment, if any, to meet operation budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: The endowment draw is largely used to support the operating budget (see table above). Fundraising campaigns largely fund capital projects.

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? Indefinitely at current budget levels – current withdrawal rates are around the sustainable \$12,000 to \$13,000 per year.

Comment of above calculations/estimates: Over past 7 years, budget management/cost reduction, successful Stewardship Campaigns and expanded non-donation income have brought the budget support within the long-term sustainable draw on the endowment of \$12,000 to \$13,000 per year.

Other assets:

Reserves (checking/savings) \$37,150

Investments other than endowments \$0

Church does not have a parsonage.

Buildings owned by church: \$3,770,000 (debt free)

- Main church complex: Sanctuary, Narthex, Fellowship Hall wing and Education/Administration wing – plus separate lodge/storage building.
- Non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church. None
- Which spaces are wheelchair accessible?
 - Sanctuary/Worship Space
 - Fellowship Hall
 - Narthex including restroom
 - Lodge/storage building

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

As a church we are reaching a point of financial sustainability enabling us to live into our mission of embodying the transformative power of love and Christ-centered community.

We hope to work toward a realignment

To the wider UCC association

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN SILVER LAKE

In the 1880's, The Silver Lake Amusement Park, a very popular leisure venue was founded by a Quaker who posted a sign at the park that said, "no tobacco, no swearing and no lewd dancing". The popular park closed after 30 years when the government commandeered the railroads that ran nearby to ship war material during World War I.

By 1946, a school had been built and it was time to build a church. Three congregational ministers and six couples met, and plans were soon underway to write a constitution for a new

Congregational church. The Western Reserve land grants from the Connecticut Land company are indicative of the huge New England influence in the area as new landowners brought their religion and traditions with them. There are several Congregational churches (now called United Church of Christ) withing spitting distance of each other.

An interesting phenomenon happened. When rubber companies recruited the best and brightest scientists from universities and businesses across the country to help with the World War II efforts, they were in effect recruiting for the Church in Silver Lake. The men brought their families with them and looked for a good location to settle. The Silver Lake area had a pleasant, peaceful, leisurely reputation from the days when the park operated there. These men wanted the best for their families. The second-tier rubber company management began to settle in the area. They brought new ideas, interests and food. The church had always put a high priority on education-either formal academics or self-education. Most of the church's children went on to college or university.

The women of the church have always been faithful and strong. They have worked to build their families, community and church. Women's Fellowship attracted women from the local communities for lunch and having speakers with a religious theme. These fellowship meetings actively brought in new members. As the years rolled by, more and more women entered the workforce and Women's fellowship groups became more retiree centered. Widowers requested to join so they could talk with the friends of their departed wives. Eventually men were given the right to vote at the fellowship meetings. Unfortunately, this wonderful group did not survive the Covid pandemic.

Traditionally our services have been based on the Bible and are presented in the lecture style of teacher rather than a Bible thumping preacher. They are dynamic, intellectually stimulating and on point. One leaves the service with a sense of mission and with the assurance that another such sermon awaits the next Sunday. Our second minister, John H. Keefe, held the longest tenure of 25 years, and is our only minister to have the term Minister Emeritus confirmed on him. He was from New England as most, but not all our ministers have been. The church used to have five choirs and reached its peak membership in 1985 with 464 members. Membership is around 100 now with a growing number of families with young children.

In 2014, Brad Jagger answered the call to be our settled minister. He was the only one that applied at that time. He was brash, didn't follow rules, he was fun, lovable and many of his sermons were based on Walt Disney characters which he loved. He was young, had two beautiful teenage daughters and suddenly a lot more teenage boys were attending church. The youth group flourished and even took a mission trip that followed the Civil Rights movement. While the church had never turned anyone away, Brad led us, unanimously, to become an Open and Affirming church, where we could advertise what we were. Attendance was on the rise during Brad's tenure, when suddenly into his ten-year call, Brad announced by mass email that he had accepted a call from a church in Florida. The members were stunned.

Rev. Dr. Steven Savides accepted the call to be our Interim minister. The Cabinet asked Steven, in addition to his other interim duties and responsibilities, to bring structure and order back to the church, which had become too chaotic. First, Steven had to tend to the palpable grief of the members. He did this with grace, faith, sermons, meetings and has once again brought us to be a whole and vibrant church. With a gentle, but firm hand, Steven has led us to see an alternative, more orderly way of doing things. Membership has continued to increase on Steven's watch. He has told us that with a church that is so filled with love and capable of taking care of one another so beautifully; now is the time to go out into the communities and minister to those who need to feel God's love at work. We now await the call for our next settled minister.

Staff Member's name	Years of Service	UCC Standing Y/N
Reverend Dr. Steven Savides	1	Y
Reverend Brad Jagger	9	Y
Reverend Diane Shirey	8	Y
Reverend John Keefe	25	Y

We would envision pastoral care being a significant part of this time along with preparing for and leading worship. We also hope for active involvement in facilitating outreach to include diversity initiatives and engagement efforts as well as social justice programming.

 Richard Lynch
 Council/Search Committee Chairperson

 June 10, 2024
 Date

COMMENTS FROM THE ASSOCIATION

Silver Lake UCC is a unique congregation with a call to minister to all people with a special focus on LGBTQ+ persons. As an Open and Affirming congregations its members are engaged and active making the church a living congregation. Anyone who attends Sunday morning worship realizes that it is a congregation with a heart for celebrating diversity, pluralism and multiplicity. The pastor who will serve this congregation will benefit from having awareness and experience in helping heal religious trauma and building communities where ALL are welcome extravagantly, proudly and unabashedly.


 Signature of Association Staff

 June 10, 2024
 Date

Association Staff member assisting:
 Rev. Nayiri Karjian, General Minister
 nayiri.agm@livingwaterone.org