

**Name of Church**

Saint Thomas UCC

**Address**6490 Linglestown Rd  
Harrisburg, PA 17112**Conference:**

Penn Central

**Association:**

Harrisburg

**Title**

Pastor

**Start Date**

Sep 1, 2024

**Description**

Pastor

**Church Contact Information**

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(717) 652-7259 (Church Primary Phone)

**Listing Information**

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**Web Presences**

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 <https://www.stthomasucc.net>

Type: Professional

**Additional Formal Ecumenical Affiliations**

*No response*

**UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person****Name:**

Nora Foust

**Title:**

Associate Conference Minister

**Phone:**

7176521560

**Email:**

nfoust@pccucc.org

**Summary Ministry Description**

St. Thomas is an historic church located in an historic and still-growing suburb of Harrisburg. We are seeking a full-time pastor to lead our congregation into the future.

We are reasonably healthy financially, and our physical church is in good condition-well maintained. Our congregation is very welcoming, loving and nurturing in our individual and collective faith journeys.

We are blessed with and grateful for our many talented and committed Christians who serve our church and our community in many and varied ways.

Our outreach ministry is very important to our congregation in which we hope to continue and grow.

If you are a dynamic pastor seeking and excellent opportunity to serve, please review these materials and schedule and opportunity to talk further.

**Church pictures****What we value about living in our area.**

Linglestown is in Dauphin County and is a fast growing and one of the best places to live in Pennsylvania. Living in Linglestown offers residents a suburban feel. We have close access to entertainment, cultural offerings and an assortment of outdoor activities.

We are located in South Central Pennsylvania and just nextdoor to Hershey, and the state Capital of Harrisburg. Major cities within close proximity include Washington DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York City.

**Current size of membership**

206

**Average in person attendance**

50

**Does your church hold virtual worship services?**

Yes

**Choose platform type(s) and number for virtual worship.****Video Conferencing**

On average, how many devices are logged in per service?

15

**Video Hosting Platform**

On average, how many views are received per service?

15

**Languages used in ministry**

English

**Position Title**

Pastor

**Position Duration**

Settled

**Compensation Level**

Full Time

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

Yes

**Link to current Conference guidelines**[🔗 Download compensation guidelines](#)**Scope of Work**

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Some fields reference [The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ](#).

The United Church of Christ recognizes *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers* in the formation of ministers, in the practice of active ministry, and throughout life. For the purposes of completing a denominational Profile, ministers are asked to spend some time with the *Marks*.

**The Scope of Work developed by our church using the [Call Agreement Workbook](#).**[🔗 Download scope of Work](#)**3 core competencies that we imagine could be foundational in our next minister's relationship with the church.****First:**

Conveying a caring and compassionate pastoral presence in our congregation and outside community.

St. Thomas has a relatively mature population-being cognizant of their needs is important (Spiritually, Emotionally, Physically).

**Second:**

Good worship leader who can inspire us to grow in faith and move forward.

Inspiring and prophetic preaching and teaching skills are valued.

**Third:**

Open to everyone in our community-"All are welcome here"

Outreach is very important to the St. Thomas congregation.

Participation in various settings of UCC including collaboration with conference associations, other church communities.

**Compensation and Support**

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The salary basis comes from the [Call Agreement Workbook](#), equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/ Housing Allowance. The Conference can assist in determining these amounts or provide a worksheet to be used to calculate these values.

SALARY AND BENEFITS OFFERED: SALARY BASIS: ITEM OFFERED	AMOUNT OR PERCENTAGE(If DETERMINED)	IS THIS NEGOTIABLE	PASTORAL CANDIDATE DETERMINES
Salary (Cash basis determined from Conference/ Association Guidelines)	41387	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing Allowance	12416	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any Experiential Difference (Related to years of experience)	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salary Basis: 53803			
Pension/Annuity	7532	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Security and Medicare Offset	4116	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical/Dental Insurance	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life Insurance	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability Insurance	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worker's Compensation	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**The expected living situation for our next minister.**

Local resident in the community with a housing allowance

If a parsonage is provided, will the church offer a home equity allowance to the pastor? (The recommended guidelines for a home equity allowance is equal to 1.5% of the average home value in the community; this is considered taxable to the minister. The Housing Equity Offset should not be calculated into the Salary Basis upon which other Benefits are determined. Churches should consult a tax advisor prior to establishing any account for an equity allowance to ensure compliance with IRS rules on nonqualified deferred compensation plans.)

No

NA

**How our church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment.**

NA

**Additional reimbursements the next Pastor can expect to receive as part of their employment:**

Reimbursement for use of personal vehicle.

Cell Phone and/or Internet.

Conference and/or Association meeting registrations

Other meeting registrations (or educational requirement registrations).

Criminal background checks.

Community of Practice Participation.

**Peer and professional supports available for ministers in our association/conferences.**

Penn Central Conference Staff Person: Facilitator of Clergy Care

St Thomas church pastoral support committee is available as needed.

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## Who Is God Calling to Minister with Us?

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The ministry goals we envision our next minister collaborating with the congregation to achieve.

1. Maintain community outreach
2. Develop/expand youth ministry
3. Continue to grow lay leadership
4. Create a cross generational connection, create opportunities for fellowship, and relationship building.
5. Spiritual growth and development: encourage imaginative spiritual growth among members, provide opportunities for prayer, contemplation and deepening faith.
6. Welcoming new members and ensuring a sense of belonging

How our vision of the minister we are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

The pastor will work with our Community Impact Team to continue to find innovative ways to help our local community and beyond.

Our current Discretionary Fund is available to provide support for our members and our surrounding community.

Pastor may be involved with our team who have participated in PCC Disaster Response Mission Trips to other states.

Two initiatives members of St. Thomas are focusing on include food insecurity and mental health support, and our pastor will be valuable to implement these strategies for those who need them.

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

English

Based on what we have learned about who our church is, who our church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, these are 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.

- Strategically creating the future of God's church
- Nurturing care and compassion for God's creation
- Provide hope and healing to a hurting world
- Engaging in mission and outreach

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## Who Is God Calling Us to Become?

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"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 God is calling us to become as a congregation.

Continued outreach to elderly/shut-ins

Disciples for one another in our congregation as well as our community

God is calling us to become a congregation that is compassionate and open to everyone

God is calling us to show our community that we care about everyone

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

Food Insecurity — Our Community Impact Team is involved with several food bank programs geared to this initiative

Mental Health — Affiliation with Christian Counseling services in progress

Solar panel project currently under way-Reinforcement and sustaining of God's creations

Enhancement of our children's education curriculum (Stepping Stones, Vacation Bible School, Boy Scouts)

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## Congregation Reflections

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We would describe our congregation's life of faith as...

We strive to establish a Christian congregation for worship, to promote the Christian life, and to advance the kingdom of God by all available means — for church members and for the broader community.

**Strengths or positive qualities of our congregation.**

Strong lay leadership in church

Welcoming of visitors and supportive of congregational members

Work to bring comfort to our members and neighbors in times of difficulty

Action oriented congregation who want to serve God and our local community

St. Thomas has been proud to be the "home" of very large scouting groups, and we see the possibility of including these youths more into our church family.

**A growing edge for our congregation and what we plan to strengthen as a congregation**

Need to enhance our Children's ministry: Sunday School, Stepping Stones, Vacation Bible School

A better representation of the diversity represented within our community

Finding a balance for our Sunday services (Traditional/Contemporary/Blended)

**What worship is like when our congregation gathers.**

Worship takes place in the sanctuary and is based around God's word through liturgy, music, scripture, reflection and prayer.

Lay leadership is involved with services each Sunday (reading Scriptures, prayers, announcements)

Good preaching includes dynamic Bible interpretation and engaging current events.

Music is greatly appreciated which can include a variety of styles.

At times throughout the year we move services to outside prayer garden - a beautiful space to celebrate God's wonders and creations.

Baptism follows "The Book of Worship."

The furniture in the altar area is movable to accommodate different music features (dulcimer group) or a tableau used Maundy Thursday for a Last Supper reenactment.

**The educational program/faith formation vision of our church.**

Adult Forum: Held after church service on Sundays (Adult Sunday school) Topics vary from prepared curriculum, study of particular books of the Bible, or current/community affairs.

Firepit fellowship: community and congregation invited to nights of fellowship/music

Weekday coffee hour (held once a month for fellowship and discussion of miscellaneous church concerns)

Stepping Stones (Sunday School), Vacation Bible School

Scouts (boy and girls) meet weekly in our church space

Midweek bible study (online)

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

Congregational led church.

Consistory (overall leadership) made up of Elders (spiritual life), Deacons (financial health)

The Pastor's role is leader of worship and a participatory member in Consistory, Elders and Deacons. Ad hoc member to any other committee as needed.

**When it comes to decision-making, 10 hours are spent in meetings per month.****Is the pastor expected to attend all church meetings?**

No

In times when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. These were the key leaders in taking this action and this was accomplished by...

Pastor, President of Consistory, Chair of Elders and appropriate committee leaders depending on situations will take action if a crisis or disaster takes place.

Recently when the roof of our Fellowship Hall sustained damage, the chair of Building and Grounds worked closely with the church administrative assistant and deacons to coordinate repairs with the insurance company, re-schedule activities as needed, and communicate the expenses incurred.

A copy of an organization structure, by laws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance

- [By-laws 2020.doc](#)
- [2023 Constitution .docx](#)
- [Church House Graphic 06.03.2024 w comments.pdf](#)
- [St. Thomas Through the Years.pdf](#)

## 11-Year Report

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Download a copy of the 11-Year Report developed with the help of our conference staff and UCC Data Hub.

- [Download 11-Year Report](#)

## Congregation Demographics

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Describe those who participate in your church.

DEMOGRAPHIC	NUMBER
NUMBER OF ACTIVE MEMBERS:	160
NUMBER OF ACTIVE NON-MEMBERS:	46
TOTAL OF CHURCH PARTICIPANTS (SUM OF THE NUMBERS ABOVE):	206

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

TIME	PERCENTAGE
MORE THAN 10 YEARS:	75%
LESS THAN 10, MORE THAN 5 YEARS:	10%
LESS THAN 5 YEARS:	15%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes



**Number of total participants by age:**

AGE	NUMBER
0-11	5
12-17	5
18-24	5
25-34	5
35-44	10
45-54	22
55-64	50
65-74	54
75+	50

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

**Percentage of adults in various household types:**

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE ADULTS UNDER 35:	2%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH MINORS:	10%
SINGLE ADULTS AGE 35-65:	12%
JOINT HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO MINORS:	56%
SINGLE ADULTS OVER 65:	20%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

**Education level of adult participants by percentage:**

EDUCATION LEVEL	PERCENTAGE
HIGH SCHOOL:	19%
COLLEGE:	46%
GRADUATE SCHOOL:	28%
SPECIALTY TRAINING:	6%
OTHER EDUCATION LEVEL:	1%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes



**Percentage of adults in various employment types:**

EMPLOYMENT TYPE	PERCENTAGE
ADULTS WHO ARE EMPLOYED:	24%
ADULTS WHO ARE RETIRED:	62%
ADULTS WHO ARE NOT FULLY EMPLOYED:	14%

**ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?**

Yes

**The range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:**

Broad range of occupations are represented at St. Thomas: hourly to professional, self-employed, and business owners make up our congregation.

**The mix of ethnic heritages in our congregation, and the overall racial make-up.**

Majority Caucasian

**What diversity means in our context?**

Age, Gender, and Race

Though St. Thomas is made up of a primarily Caucasian congregation, our members come from a variety of spiritual and cultural backgrounds.

**Has our congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do we plan to hold one on the near future**

Yes

**Comment after the exercise:**

No formal Inventory was used, but discussion was held.

We welcome ALL who seek to develop a stronger faith life.

**Participation and Staffing**

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## Participation and Planning of Gatherings

WAYS OF CHURCH GATHERING	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
Adult Groups or Classes (in person or online)	20	Pastor
Baptisms (number last year)	1	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	6	Christian Education
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	100	Pastor
Church-wide Meals	60	Hospitality
Choirs and Music Groups	20	Music Director
Church-based Bible Study	15	Pastor/Lay leader
Communion (served how often?)	15	Pastor
Community Meals	30	Community Impact Team
Confirmation (number confirmed last year)	1	Pastor
Drama or Dance Program	0	NA
Funerals (number last year)	5	Pastor
Intergenerational Groups	0	NA
Outdoor Worship	35	Pastor
Prayer or Meditation Groups	4	Lay leadership
Public Advocacy Work	0	NA
Retreats	18	Consistory/Pastor
Weddings (number last year)	2	Pastor
Worship (digital / online / livestream)	10	Tech team
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	NA
Youth Groups or Classes	0	NA
Other	93	Boy and Girl Scouts

## Worship Times

WORSHIP (TIME SLOT):	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
0900 AM	60	Pastor/Elders

## Additional comments:

*No response*

List of all members or regular participants in our congregation who are ordained or commissioned ministers, or who hold Lay Ministerial Standing. Additionally the names of Members in Discernment in our congregation.

*No Response*

Previous pastors or retired ministers who currently hold membership in the church and their role(s) in the life of the congregation:

NA



**List of all current staff:**

STAFF POSITION	HEAD OF STAFF	COMPENSATION	SUPERVISED BY	LENGTH OF TENURE FOR CURRENT PERSON IN THIS POSITION
Administrative Assistant	NA	part	Pastor	5 yrs
Music Director	NA	part	Pastor	25 yrs
Custodian	NA	part	Pastor/Adm Asst.	3 yrs

**Reflection: What this information reflect about our congregation's overall ministry:**

Our congregation is primarily led by dedicated members working in partnership with our pastor.

## Church Finances

**Current Annual Income**

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	161991
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	5177
Fundraising Events	23603
Grants	10000
Rentals of Church Building	27237
Total	228008

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

203872

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

[Download church budget](#)

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

48

**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  
Christmas Fund

**In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered?**

Total benevolence is 10% of giving. OCWM receives all remaining funds, after all other specific gifts are distributed.

**If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, this is the percentage?**

10

**Total amount of loan debt:**

*No response*

**Reason for debt:**

NA

**Are capital and other payments current?**

Yes

## Capital Campaigns

**Description of any building programs projected or underway.**

We are planning to add solar power, approx. \$100,000 (Funded by a bequest) 2024

Kitchen remodeled , approx.\$ 45,000 (Funded by a bequest) 2024

**Pictures**

**Description of any capital campaigns in the last ten years:**

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
2017	Parking lot repaving	0	0	Lot maintained
0		0	0	

**Description of any capital campaigns underway or anticipated:**

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
0		0	0	
0		0	0	

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

Due to recent large bequest monies our congregation received, our current capital projects do not need a campaign for funding.

**Does your church have an endowment?**

Yes

**What is the market value of the assets?**

9423

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

Interest Only

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

Same

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

No draw on principal

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

Indefinite

**Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:**

N/A

**Other Assets**

*No response*

**Reserves (savings):**

10243

**Investments (other than endowment):**

242270

**Does the church have a parsonage?**

No

**Description of all buildings owned by the church:**

Sanctuary with attached education wing with a fellowship hall addition.

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

None

**Accessibility features of our building(s):**

Exterior access such as ramps for wheelchair users or people requiring other mobility assistance  
Accessible parking spaces  
Interior access to different floors for wheelchair users or others with mobility aids (elevator, chair lift, ramps)  
Access to child care spaces for wheelchair users and people with other mobility aids  
Listening devices in the sanctuary, or wireless technology to connect to hearing aids

Wheelchair access in bathrooms  
Handrails on all stairs  
Sound system in sanctuary and other meeting places (fellowship hall, large meeting rooms, etc.)  
Accessible bathroom on each floor

**Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs:**

Hearing assistance equipment available  
Large screen TV's in front of sanctuary for easier viewing of printed bulletin  
Elevator with access directly to sanctuary

**Policies regarding financial practices of the church:**

Deacons are the committee in charge of financial matters working in conjunction with Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer  
Policies are available upon request

**Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what this information reflects about our congregation's mission and ministry:**

St. Thomas is debt free, and finances are stable.  
Congregational giving is our primary source of income at St. Thomas.

**Historical Information****Significant happenings in the history of our church that have shaped the identity of our congregation.**

- Our church has been a meeting place since the early 1700's with a Church building existing since 1856.
- Additional building renovations include the following
  - Educational wing (1959)
  - Fellowship Hall (1982)

- South foyer addition to back sanctuary entrance (2000)
- Extensions to East and West wings (2008)
- Pastors study added to accommodate more conveniences (2008)
- Transformation of interior of church-classrooms, nursery, carpet (2019) Sanctuary more inviting, image upgraded, conference room furniture, technology additions
- Started casual service/blended service conversation
- Mission Trips

#### A specific change our church has managed in the recent past.

Due to Covid we needed to manage many obstacles and challenges we focused on:

Broadening our worship experiences

On-line offerings as a result of the pandemic and this opened up our services to out of area members and shut ins

Offered bible study online and during week

Parking lot services-outside worship

Added UV lights in the sanctuary air conditioning systems

TV monitors were added to the front of the Sanctuary to aid our worship experience

**Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. "Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....". These are our congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict.**

St. Thomas has a suggestion box in our foyer for any input from any congregation member.

If a problem/issue arises, any member can speak to and or contact an Elder.

We encourage addressing the root cause of any conflict, promoting open communication, and fostering forgiveness.

In the past when any member had an issue to discuss the Elders welcomed 1:1 conversations if they so chose to speak out.

We encourage strong leadership from Consistory /Elders/ Deacons, Pastor to mediate conflict/ issues that arise.

The Consistory presents quarterly Congregational Meetings to keep open and transparent communication with all members.

#### The most recent major conflict through which our church has navigated.

- Elders learned that a member's grandson was denied baptism due to inactivity of the parents or child in our church or any Christian ministry. The Elders worked with the pastor to broaden the scope of eligible baptism candidates. The pastor would have a conversation with the Elders group if any requests were made that he did not feel comfortable with or agree with. This issue made us more aware of these types of issues and how they would be addressed in the future.

When there are disagreements occurring with long-standing members, we would like the pastor to consult with the elders.

#### Ministerial History:

Name: Stephen Gifford

Years of service: 18

UCC Standing

Name: Donald Wetzell

Years of service: 23

UCC Standing

Name: Daniel Schmidt

Years of service: 9

UCC Standing

Name: Paul Gehris

Years of service: 1

UCC Standing

#### What our church has learned about itself and its relationship with people who provided ministerial leadership.

Supportive to all pastors

Church minister relationship is dynamic, evolving, and requires intentional effort from both sides. When nurtured well, it leads to a thriving faith community.

Ministerial collaboration, trustworthiness, competence, passion and creativity are traits we are seeking.

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

Yes

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Yes

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

Yes

Has a previous minister been a contributor to conflict following their tenure as pastor?

No

## Community Vision

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

Our Community Impact Team (CIT) manages our outreach with support from congregational members;

CIT reports to congregation on a regular/quarterly basis.

Our members supply local and non local mission support, including outreach support and affiliation with Christian Churches United.

We host and offer support to several groups of Boy Scouts/ Girl Scouts of America.

All members regularly collect food to help decrease food insecurity in our community.

Consistory is currently working to develop a Christian counseling collaboration with an external partner.

Our congregation's participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ.

St. Thomas sends delegates to annual meetings of Penn Central conference.

How our church engages with the community organizing movements in our community.

St. Thomas collaborates with Christian Churches United (consortium of Harrisburg area churches)

Our community impact team and members support the Midwest Food Bank-(collecting food items, packaging and distributing items)

Members have collected laundry items to aid individuals' needs to be able to wash and dry their clothes.

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, through [Just World Covenants](#) or affiliations with other groups. Check any of the following partnerships which your congregation has formally adopted, or movements which otherwise apply to your congregation.

None.

What the above statement(s) mean(s) to our community. How our congregation plans to work toward the above statements of witness in the future.

Under proper leadership and with better understanding, we would consider future involvement with these partnerships. Keeping with our wish to increase work on mental health, we certainly could consider WISE or Creation Justice.

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

St. Thomas participates with fundraisers, and also supports programming for Christian Churches United to help with food banks, laundry care, and prisoner re-entry program.

How our mission statement compares to the actual time spent engaging in different activities.

We are called by God to be a caring and accepting family of diverse individuals, committed to Jesus Christ and to one another, seeking to serve God.

Our members nurture persons to have meaningful relationships with God and one another.

We are providing opportunities for additional fellowship (fire pit, coffee hours, friendship café, restaurant nights).

We are discovering and employing our unique gifts from God's spirit (Bible study, spiritual gifts workshops, survey)

We discern God's directions for our common life, regularly reinforcing that we are here to serve God and ask for his direction (worship services).

We continue to serve our community with deeds of compassion: Aveanna (Christmas gifts for special needs children), engage members (shut-in visitation and meals, discretionary fund to help cover bills as needed), and via our Community Impact Team, doing local and non-local mission work.

The scope of work assigned to our pastor(s). How their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time.

- Multifaceted, encompassing various responsibilities, driven by spiritual leadership, community service and ministry.
- Expectation to be involved in community and wider church with the ability to balance spiritual leadership, administration tasks and community engagement all while embodying compassion and mercy.
- Spiritual council offered for counseling and direction

Time expectations can be a difficult thing to balance, but our established church committees and elders can be called on to assist with this valuable part of our mission.



## ARDA/MI File

[Download ARDA/MI File](#)

From looking at our congregation's The ARDA or MissionInsite report, these trends and opportunities are what stood out to us.

Executive Insite report is attached

Population within study area is growing somewhat faster than Statewide growth rate-growth rate is 3.6%

Trends are showing growth, area is expanding

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

While we welcome all children of God, our congregational demographics do not reflect the community diversity.

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

Though there is a slight change in the community demographics, it is not currently changing our ongoing ministry at St. Thomas.

Current programming is tailored to our congregation.

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

St. Thomas has a long standing presence in our community since 1791.

- Community outreach with donations and volunteer presence.
- We are sometimes referred to as the "Church of many doors" due to our several building expansions needed to serve our congregation and community.
- Goods and services annual auction
- Blueberries and Chicken BBQ fundraisers

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

Resonating messages from newly involved members is that St. Thomas is very welcoming and comfortable. They feel "at home."

Our members go out of their way to introduce themselves and welcome you. We have many activities so that new persons can find something that suits their abilities and interests.

## References



☒ Kevin Smith

Completed: Thursday, Jul 25, 2024

St Thomas UCC member 1989-2022

Elder - 6 years

Consistory President - 4 years

Mobile Phone: 717.329.2727

### Reference Response

I am honored to act as a reference for St Thomas UCC and have submitted a reference letter to them, which may be used as needed. I am also receptive to emails or phone calls with additional questions.



☒ Richard Stokes

Completed: Friday, Jul 26, 2024

Richard Stokes, former member

Business: 7175807364

### Reference Response

#### Adapted from previous letter to Doug Ferguson

**Key strengths**—a strong core of committed long term members who are tremendously skilled in their roles of chicken barbeque, blueberry and other fundraising; flower and bush upkeep around the church; cemetery stone maintenance; and participation in the St. Thomas Dulcimers, to name just a very few. music director Betsy Smith's commitment and encouragement of members, young and old, remains vital. Also, a number of members are particularly gifted at greeting newcomers to the church and making them feel welcome.

An **improvement** I would like to see in the church's ministry would be perhaps a greater development of personal, empathetic relationships with community members from all walks of life, reaching out particularly to folks who have traditionally been marginalized.



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**Closing Prayer**

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*We come to You with hearts full of hope and anticipation. We lift the prospective minister whom You are preparing to lead our congregation. We ask for Your guidance, wisdom, and discernment as they consider this calling.*

*Grant them clarity, courage, and compassion.*

*May they be a shepherd after Your own heart, caring for the flock entrusted to their care. May their words bring healing, their actions inspire faith, and their presence radiate Your grace.*

*We pray for our members: to welcome a new pastor with open hearts, support them in their ministry, and walk with them in this sacred journey  
Amen*

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**Statement of Consent**

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

*For example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.*

St. Thomas Elders

**2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:**

The Salary and Benefits portion is open for negotiation depending on experience, education etc.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact us.