

**Name of Church**

Grace UCC

**Address**PO Box 394  
Taneytown, MD 21787**Conference:**

Central Atlantic

**Association:**

Catoctin

**Title**

Settled Pastor

**Start Date**

Sep 1, 2024

**Description**

Grace UCC is located in the picturesque town of Taneytown, MD. Our small congregation, 150 members strong, is involved in a variety of community based mission opportunities, which include feeding the hungry and engaging in shared ecumenical worship. Our church is seeking a pastor who will not only feed our spirits, but equip the congregation to be stronger leaders and nurture our thriving youth contingent...

**Church Contact Information**

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[410-756-2302](tel:410-756-2302) (Church Primary Phone)

[gillgr8033@gmail.com](mailto:gillgr8033@gmail.com) (Email Address)

**Listing Information**

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**Web Presences**

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<https://GraceUCCTaneytown.com>

Type: Professional

**Additional Formal Ecumenical Affiliations**

*No response*

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

Sheresa Simpson-Rice

**Title:**

Associate Conference Minister for Leadership Development

**Phone:**

(717)318-6865

**Email:**

ssimpson-rice@cacucc.org

**Summary Ministry Description**

Our church has a history of loving and caring for both our members and those in need in our community. As we age, we need new members to pick up the mantle and lead us into the future. We are looking for a pastor who is relatable, compassionate, creative, and energetic to help us transition and grow, and to lead us in our efforts to turn our love for one another into action and helping us be the eye, hands, feet and voice of Christ on earth.

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

Taneytown is a charming and meticulously maintained small town, serving as an idyllic bedroom community. Positioned within an hour's drive of Baltimore and Frederick, Maryland, as well as Gettysburg and Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C., we offer access to rich historical, cultural, medical, educational, and employment opportunities.

Our community boasts excellent public services, encompassing responsive police and fire departments. We take pride in our robust school system, comprising both elementary and middle schools conveniently located within town limits. Additionally, our Parks & Recreation department ensures ample leisure and recreational activities for residents.

With capable local leadership at both governmental and organizational levels, Taneytown thrives with a diverse array of national and local community service organizations.

**Current size of membership**

116

**Average in person attendance**

45

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

No

**Languages used in ministry**

English

**Position Title**

Settled 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:**

We are seeking a new Pastor who is relatable. In preaching and teaching to a multi-generational congregation, we hope the pastor will demonstrate an understanding of the struggles of being a Christian in modern America and possess the ability to relate God's word to our daily lives so that all members feel understood, encouraged, and inspired.

**Second:**

We are seeking a pastor who is compassionate. We desire a pastor who cares about all members of the church, both those regularly in attendance at worship and those who are homebound. Our pastor should be a good listener, able to provide counseling and referrals as needed.

**Third:**

We are seeking a pastor who is creatively energetic. We seek someone ready to lead worship with creative energy to bring new directions in ministry with a focus on families and children. Our pastor should search for ways to introduce those changes to those who may be afraid of or resistant to change.

## 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)	49191	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing Allowance	21000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any Experiential Difference (Related to years of experience)	10000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salary Basis: 80191			
Pension/Annuity	12024	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Security and Medicare Offset	5865	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical/Dental Insurance	17000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life Insurance	600	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability Insurance	600	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worker's Compensation	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Living nearby 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

No parsonage is provided. The pastor receives a housing allowance.

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

Not applicable - we seek a full time, settled pastor.

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

Reimbursement for use of personal vehicle.

Conference and/or Association meeting registrations

Criminal background checks.

Community of Practice Participation.

Other:

1. Grace UCC provides the Pastor the opportunity for a paid 3-month Sabbatical after 5 years of service. The Pastor must serve at least 18 months after completion of the sabbatical.
2. 4-Weeks annual vacation
3. Maternity/paternity leave
4. Continuing education funds (\$500 or as determined by Consistory)

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

The Central Atlantic Conference supports two avenues for clergy: (i) a Complimentary Ministerium, gathering monthly to foster camaraderie; and (ii) a Communities of Practice Program, facilitating monthly collegial support sessions for a yearly program fee.

Taneytown's Caring and Sharing Ministry convenes an ecumenical committee of local pastors, which coordinates activities and extends mutual support.

Grace's Pastoral Relations Committee convenes quarterly, serving as a liaison between pastor and congregation. The committee offers support/guidance and serves as a sounding board for the pastor.

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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.

Growth has stagnated and we have an aging congregation. Many pre-Covid activities have not restarted. We are seeking a pastor who can help:

- Build a strong children and youth program
- Increase the congregation size
- Reengage with Christian education at all levels

The congregational survey we conducted showed we have a clear desire for all of these things, but that desire needs to become action. We are looking for someone to help us reenergize so these things come to fruition.

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

We hope our new pastor will:

- Be recognized as a leader in the community
- Work with local churches and civic organizations
- Help lead events that bring the congregation and community members into contact with one another to build and foster relationships, and train the congregation to support them
- Help translate our loving and nurturing spirit into action

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

Must be able to relate to a multigeneration congregation, with English as the primary language.

This is important because our congregation has very distinct age groups and we seek to find common ground so that all members, no matter where they are on life's journey, can continue to grow and develop spiritually.

### 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.

- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit. We are looking for someone to help us to open our eyes to what God is calling us to do.
- Loving God, following Jesus Christ, and being guided by the Holy Spirit, living a life of discipleship. We are looking for someone who has a strong moral character and personal integrity.
- Bringing Life to sacred stories and traditions in worship, proclamation and witness. We are looking for someone to bring God's word to life.
- Encouraging Leadership development of self and others through continuing education and lifelong learning. We are looking for someone to mentor all age groups to continue developing their faith.

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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.

We want to become a welcoming family who attracts and retains more brothers and sisters. We believe we are being called to learn to accept change in order to grow.

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

The last confirmation class introduced a new format using 4-6 Full Day Retreats versus traditional weekly classroom style. Due to the fact we had not had a confirmation class since before COVID, the confirmand group ranged from 13-22 years of age. The format was extremely successful. Each confirmand had to perform an individual service-based project either within the church or in the community. They participated in church services throughout their year of confirmation. We eliminated the need for individual statements of faith in front of the congregation which lead to more participation in the confirmation class. We will continue to adapt the confirmation class to meet the needs of the youth and encourage participation.

COVID prompted us to record services which has led to continued video recording and distribution of services through social media. The church launched a \$25K capital improvement project to upgrade the audio video equipment and install a fixed video system. We are now able to make the audio/video recordings much more user friendly, and have the potential to integrate audio and visual content into the worship service.

The Men's Group kicked off Family Movie Night to promote wholesome family entertainment. The intent is to provide a chance for the community to get together and provide exposure to both the Men's Group and faith-based services available in Taneytown. Next steps are to get other churches involved in supporting the ministry and building awareness.

## Congregation Reflections

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

At Grace UCC, our vision and mission are an integral part of who we are, and as such are displayed on the screen as part of the pre-worship announcements every Sunday. Our vision states that we aspire to be Christ's faithful disciples, and our mission is to "Reveal Christ's Love; Be His hands; Walk in His footsteps and Inspire Faith in God". To live out this mission and vision, our services are less "fire and brimstone" and are more thought provoking, inspirational, and accepting or forgiving. We believe that God is loving and ever present, and that Jesus is the central figure of the teachings that we use as inspiration for Christian actions in our daily lives. We believe in the power of the Holy Trinity and that the Holy Spirit moves each of us to utilize our individual talents as we seek to grow in faith, both individually and as a congregation.

### Strengths or positive qualities of our congregation.

Ours is a congregation with a long, proud history and families that have attended for generations.

Perhaps our greatest strength is a willingness to serve, to see a need and act to fulfill it through many missions. One main outward mission was the founding of the Grace United Learning Center (GULC) preschool program that is housed in our church building. This important service to the community is widely recognized for outstanding teaching and care.

We support Homewood at Plum Creek [UCC Retirement & Assisted Living Community] through an annual auxiliary drive and holiday card ministry. An annual gift drive helps the children at Hoffman Homes for Youth celebrate Christmas. Church volunteers set up, staff, and tear down a Red Cross Blood Drive multiple times a year. We help provide meals to the needy through the Carpenter's Table, and a weekly food collection during worship collects donations for the local food bank.

Lay Life and Works committee coordinates fundraisers such as bingo, serves food at church events, and assists in youth activities. SonShine committee coordinates funeral luncheons, transportation assistance, and cards and visits to the infirm.

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

As a congregation, we have a wide range of adaptability to change. Some are slow to let go of the past, even while saying they know we need to change. Others are eager for immediate change. We have a rich history and tradition that is valued by older members and youth alike. Rather than lose our heritage, we seek to use it as a springboard into the future. This can only happen as we learn how to better communicate our needs, desires, and concerns to one another as we strengthen the church for future generations. Together we need to learn to be open and receptive to a multitude of ideas and to embrace a pace of change that allows everyone to stretch and grow as comfortably as possible.

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

Grace UCC hosts a single traditional service every Sunday morning at 10:15 within our historic sanctuary. The service includes responsive participation from the congregation, numerous short music responses or hymns, a message for youth, prayers and the Lord's prayer, a message, a choral anthem or special music, and a blessing. There is both a musical prelude and a postlude. Communion occurs once a month, and during special services, as appropriate.

Although we experimented with separate contemporary services featuring modern music, instrumentals, and a relaxed atmosphere, we encountered challenges in sustaining this format on a weekly basis. While it was positively received, we have not been able to establish it as a regular offering. It is clear from our congregational survey that many would like to see more of a musical blend that incorporates more contemporary Christian music with the traditional hymns already being sung, and that many are seeking a more energizing and upbeat service style. Special services such as baptisms, weddings, and memorials typically adhere to traditional worship practices.

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

Twice a month, during our Sunday worship service, Grace UCC provides a Sunday School program for children, also known as Children's Church. The service begins with the children participating upstairs in our sanctuary, where they receive a special Children's Message. Subsequently, they are dismissed to attend Sunday School downstairs for the remainder of the service. In 2023, we conducted a confirmation class with 8 confirmands, whose ages ranged from 14 to 22. Additionally, our Youth Group convenes regularly and actively participates in community-based initiatives. This signifies our commitment to nurturing the spiritual growth of our youth.

Throughout the year, adults may take part in various Bible studies, with a particular emphasis during Advent and Lent when we have a full-time Pastor available. This has fallen off with the post-Covid era and the current pastoral search, but it is clear from our surveys that the congregation is looking for increased opportunities to study the word of God together.

Our Men's Group meets bi-weekly for Bible study, discussion and service projects. Outreach includes the Mother's Day breakfast and Movies in the Park.

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

The Grace UCC Consistory is an elected board of 6 deacons and 6 elders that directs the financial, spiritual and daily operations of the church. The Consistory meets monthly with meetings lasting approximately 2 hours. Members are elected by the congregation on a staggered basis for two-year terms with the ability to serve a maximum of four years consecutively. The Deacons tend to focus on the operation of the church including development of the operating budget, and processing the weekly giving, The elders of the church make up a separate Spiritual Council, which meets monthly to pray for the church and address any immediate needs. A separate Pastoral Relations committee is strictly focused on the well-being and growth of our Pastor. The Committee meets quarterly with the pastor, and the discussions of this committee are private and confidential. The Music & Worship committee meets quarterly to plan services.

A set of organizational bylaws guide the direction and operations of each of these teams and is available to the pastor.

The Pastor typically attends: Consistory, Spiritual Council, Music & Worship, and Youth Activities, typically entailing 5-6 hours per month.

**When it comes to decision-making, 5 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...**

When Covid struck, the church needed to act quickly to decide how best to follow government guidelines and protect the health of all members. Decisions were made through the combined efforts of the consistory and the pastor and were continually evaluated and revisited by this leadership group throughout the many months of the pandemic.

**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 November 2009 \(1\).pdf](#)

**11-Year Report**

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**

Describe those who participate in your church.

DEMOGRAPHIC	NUMBER
NUMBER OF ACTIVE MEMBERS:	70
NUMBER OF ACTIVE NON-MEMBERS:	5
TOTAL OF CHURCH PARTICIPANTS (SUM OF THE NUMBERS ABOVE):	75

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

TIME	PERCENTAGE
MORE THAN 10 YEARS:	74%
LESS THAN 10, MORE THAN 5 YEARS:	21%
LESS THAN 5 YEARS:	5%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

**Number of total participants by age:**

AGE	NUMBER
0-11	6
12-17	12
18-24	8
25-34	19
35-44	6
45-54	8
55-64	11
65-74	12
75+	34

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

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

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE ADULTS UNDER 35:	15%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH MINORS:	21%
SINGLE ADULTS AGE 35-65:	10%
JOINT HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO MINORS:	30%
SINGLE ADULTS OVER 65:	24%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

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

EDUCATION LEVEL	PERCENTAGE
HIGH SCHOOL:	33%
COLLEGE:	33%
GRADUATE SCHOOL:	21%
SPECIALTY TRAINING:	9%
OTHER EDUCATION LEVEL:	4%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes



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

EMPLOYMENT TYPE	PERCENTAGE
ADULTS WHO ARE EMPLOYED:	34%
ADULTS WHO ARE RETIRED:	46%
ADULTS WHO ARE NOT FULLY EMPLOYED:	20%

**ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?**

Yes

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

We have a wide range of occupations including teachers, computer specialists, businesspeople, farmers, and medical professionals. This is true of both the currently employed and the retirees within our congregation.

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

Ethnically, the last reported information (2019) for the area shows the population is

92.6% Caucasian, 1.7% Black, 2.6% Hispanic, and 1.2 % Asian. The church membership reflects this as our congregation is predominately Caucasian.

**What diversity means in our context?**

We are a predominantly white, older congregation including many who have been lifelong members of this church and community. Diversity largely comes through those who have moved to the area and found us while seeking a church home. They tend to bring a variety of traditional religious backgrounds with them.

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

No

**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)	0	Class members
Baptisms (number last year)	7	Pastor/family
Children's Groups or Classes	10	Youth leaders
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	75	Pastor/Music and Worship committee
Church-wide Meals	35	Lay Life and Work
Choirs and Music Groups	10	Choir director/Organist/Music and Worship
Church-based Bible Study	0	Pastor
Communion (served how often?)	50	Pastor served monthly and holy days
Confirmation (number confirmed last year)	8	Pastor/confirmands
Funerals (number last year)	6	Pastor/family
Intergenerational Groups	6	@6 groups of 6 each
Outdoor Worship	30	Pastor/Music and Worship
Prayer or Meditation Groups	5	Pastor
Retreats	12	Pastor/confirmands
Weddings (number last year)	0	Pastor/couple
Worship (digital / online / livestream)	48	Pastor/Music and Worship
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	Class members
Youth Groups or Classes	10	Youth leaders

**Worship Times**

WORSHIP (TIME SLOT):	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
Sunday at 10:15am	45	Pastor/Music and Worship

**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.

NAME	THREE-WAY OR FOUR-WAY COVENANT	MINISTRY SETTING	TYPE OF MINISTRY ROLE	RETIRED
Bob Rock	none	UCC	Pastor	

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

Bob Rock is a retired minister that is currently unable to actively participate in the church's mission/activities, due to health concerns.

**List of all current staff:**

STAFF POSITION	HEAD OF STAFF	COMPENSATION	SUPERVISED BY	LENGTH OF TENURE FOR CURRENT PERSON IN THIS POSITION
Office Secretary	No	part	Consistory President	1 year
Choir Director	No	part	Consistory President	15 years
Organist	No	part	Consistory President	2 years
Nursery Care	No	part	Consistory President	1 year
Sexton	No	part	Consistory President	15 years

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

We find that overall, once people accept either in a volunteer role or paid position, they tend to settle in and keep it long term. Even in our hired positions, for example, the organist replaced someone who retired after more than 35 years of service.

**Church Finances**

**Current Annual Income**

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	188906
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	20000
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	14037
Rentals of Church Building	11060
Rentals of Church Parsonage	10935
Support from Related Organizations (e.g. Women's Group)	6000
<b>Total</b>	<b>305288</b>

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

292475

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?**

42

**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?**

OCWM donations are gathered as specific donations by members throughout the year. In 2023 the total was \$6,611 or 2.2% of total income.

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

2

Total amount of loan debt:

No response

Reason for debt:

Debt is \$0 and payments are current

Are capital and other payments current?

Yes

### Capital Campaigns

Description of any building programs projected or underway.

No building projects are underway or projected. The roof was replaced in 2023 and the capital needed was raised by the congregation.

### Pictures



Description of any capital campaigns in the last ten years:

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
2022	New roof on sanctuary	100000	100000	Stopped leaks and potential damage to the structure
2021	New Audio-Visual System	25000	25000	Improved audio and video experience during service and ability to quickly record and distribute service via email

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.

The roof replacement project aimed at fixing any damaged sub-roof materials and structure and replacing the roof tiles with synthetic slate with a 50-year warranted life. The goal was to keep the traditional look and feel of the previous slate roof.

**Does your church have an endowment?**

Yes

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

1333370

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

Funds are drawn from interest earned on the accounts after approval of the Consistory primarily, and for special needs or to finance special projects, or to make up annual operating shortfalls. Often the funds are repaid from the giving of members and through special collections.

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

Any draw only comes from the interest received on investments

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

(1) A draw from interest was made in 2023 in the amount of \$20,000 to cover operating expenses (2) A Draw from interest was made in 2022 to make down payment on new roof, then replenished from pledged amounts (3) Draw to fund new audio-visual system and then replenished from pledged amount

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

Draws are done on an as needed basis only from the endowment investment proceeds and not from the principal. Therefore we do not foresee an end to the endowment.

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

The church has two endowments, The first has subaccounts for education, scholarship, building improvement and undesignated. The second is totally undesignated. In addition, there is a Cemetery fund in the amount of \$1,195,513 for operation of the Grace UCC Cemetery. See the Investments below

**Other Assets**

The church sold its parsonage and has invested the funds. Income from the investment is shown on the P&L statement as income from other sources and ranges from approximately \$8,000 to \$10,000 annually

**Reserves (savings):**

*No response*

**Investments (other than endowment):**

1195513

**Does the church have a parsonage?**

No

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

Built in 1890; three-story well-kept brick church seating 300, handicapped accessible, with elevator; air conditioned; cushioned pews; pastor & secretarial offices; individual Sunday church school classrooms; youth recreation room; attached two story Parish Hall. The parish hall built in 1952 with auditorium and kitchenette on upper level. The lower level is used by Grace UCC Learning Center (daycare and pre-school); rest rooms on two levels; adequate paved parking lot; adjacent cemetery with a block storage building.

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

We have access to a community activity building that includes a sound system and small stage, lighted bingo board, large gathering space with tables and chairs, a licensed kitchen, and 2 bathrooms. This is used for bingo, large funeral lunches, Family Night, and the blood drives. Taneytown Memorial Park has pavilions for rent that the church has utilized in the past for picnics. The park is within easy walking distance from the church.

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

Exterior access such as ramps for wheelchair users or people requiring other mobility assistance

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Interior access to different floors for wheelchair users or others with mobility aids (elevator, chair lift, ramps)  
Access to worship spaces, including chancel and pulpit, for wheelchair users and people with other mobility aids  
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.)  
Curb cuts  
Wheelchair areas in sanctuary (other than "front or back")

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**Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs:**

The worship space, classrooms, offices, restrooms, and fellowship hall are wheelchair accessible. The church has an elevator to all floors including the sanctuary.

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

The budget process at our church involves the Deacons drafting a budget proposal for review by the Consistory and later presentation to the Congregation for voting. This budget is meticulously crafted by analyzing historical giving and expenses while considering potential changes in giving patterns or anticipated expenses such as inflation. Once approved by the Congregation, the budget undergoes monthly scrutiny at Consistory meetings, where actual expenses and income are compared against the budget.

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

Our budget reflects a commitment to supporting various aspects of church life. For instance, the fact that less than 50% of the total annual budget is allocated to the minister's salary and benefits demonstrates our dedication to sustaining the church's health and funding community outreach and missions.

We take pride in our ability to fund substantial capital projects without dipping into our endowments. Additionally, our congregation's contributions to the Pastor's Emergency Fund enable us to assist neighbors facing emergencies, providing essentials such as food, gas and rental assistance

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**Historical Information**

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

The most transformative event in recent memory occurred with the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus. Services were halted for a significant period in 2020, prompting Pastor Ostendorf to provide daily messages on YouTube. This crisis prompted an investment in a new audio/visual system, enabling the church to share services with shut-ins and those uncomfortable with in-person gatherings.

Though attendance initially dropped, it has slowly rebounded, with our current average attendance reaching 80% of pre-pandemic levels. However, the decline in attendance is also attributed to the aging congregation and the loss of several members over the past three years. Despite these challenges, our commitment to serving both our local and remote members remains steadfast, with our video mission continuing even as our congregation returns to in-person services.

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

- In 2021, we relocated our audio equipment to a new booth in the rear of our sanctuary and added fixed video recording equipment at the same time. We were able to raise a total of \$25,000 to complete this project in only 6 months.
- In 2023, we completed a full roof replacement at a total cost of \$105,000, which has been completely paid for by member donations and fundraisers.

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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.

We recognize that this an area of growth for us. Often members seek to avoid direct conflict. Rather than go directly to someone with an issue there are side conversations with like-minded people, which tends to reaffirm an individual's feelings. This means that while there are not usually open disagreements, there may be an undercurrent of tension because issues are not resolved. We desire to learn how to more effectively communicate our differences of opinion openly and honestly, and we hope that all of us will learn together how to better love one another as Christ has loved us.

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

Navigating the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic was a pivotal issue for our congregation, particularly regarding the feasibility and safety of conducting in-person services. Given the predominance of older members within our congregation, concerns about the transmission of the virus were paramount. The Consistory, after prayerful deliberation, devised a comprehensive plan that allowed for carefully spaced in-person gatherings, implementing additional precautions such as temperature monitoring, mask-wearing, provision of sanitizers, and mandatory physical distancing. Adjustments were also made to collection practices and communion procedures to address worries about the handling of offering plates and communion elements. Furthermore, the dedication of our members ensured the continuity of our food collection ministry, while our existing audio-video capabilities proved invaluable in maintaining connectivity and service provision to our congregation.

**Ministerial History:**

<i>Name:</i> Steven Ostendorf	<i>Years of service:</i> 20	<b>UCC Standing</b>
<i>Name:</i> Sam Askew	<i>Years of service:</i> 1	<b>UCC Standing</b>
<i>Name:</i> Keith DeBord	<i>Years of service:</i> 7	<b>UCC Standing</b>
<i>Name:</i> Rod Lawall	<i>Years of service:</i> 6	

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

Our prior settled pastors have been males, which previously seemed to be a requirement for our congregation. With the inclusion of female supply ministers and interim pastors over the past 20 years, as well as over the past few months, we believe that our congregation has become more open to candidates other than white males.

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

No

**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

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

No

**Community Vision**

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

We seek to serve the most basic needs of the community through meal provision for the hungry and through the establishment and support of our Learning Center that provides outstanding affordable childcare and early childhood education. We also provide wholesome and free family entertainment with the Movies in the Park. We often support those in need during the holidays and have a pastor's emergency fund to support community members in need.

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

The yearly budget traditionally allocates funds for meeting participation; nonetheless, engagement in broader UCC gatherings is inconsistent. While association meetings see occasional attendance from members, the consistent attendees of such events have either passed away or can no longer participate. Additionally, other members have yet to take on a more active role in supporting these initiatives.

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

We are not currently active in social movements.

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.

God Is Still Speaking

Other UCC designations:

**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.**

Our current focus is on how we interact with and support the Taneytown community versus wider church missions. We tend to the needs of our elderly population and believe that God has something to say to each of us, no matter who we are or where we are on life's journey.

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

We participate with other churches in Taneytown for a Good Friday Service and reading of the Passion. Prior to Covid, the churches participated in a Cross Walk on Good Friday, stopping at each church for a short message, prayer and song.

We expect the new pastor to participate in the ecumenical council which is part of the Caring and Sharing Ministry. That council enables local pastors to coordinate activities within Caring and Sharing and beyond.

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

**Vision:** We aspire to be Christ's faithful disciples.

**Mission:** Reveal Christ's love; be his hands, walk in his footsteps; and inspire faith in God

Within the church itself we serve one another through prayer, service, meals etc.

Fundraising events conducted by our Lay Life and Works Committee enables us to reach outside the church to help care for those less fortunate through community programs such as Caring and Sharing and Carpenters Table, as well as sponsorship of families during the holidays. We provide the community the opportunity to get to know us through our involvement with Grace United Learning Center, Family Movie Nights in the Park, Pet Blessing Service, a Live Nativity, Community Easter Egg Hunt, Trunk or Treat, Bingo, and Souper Bowl of Caring.

**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.**

We believe the initial focus will be on re-energizing the congregation and attracting new members. This may be accomplished with outreach events in the Taneytown community through the support of lay people. Our pastor will participate in the community Ecumenical Council to coordinate activities with other local churches. Eventually, the goal is for the congregation to be able to more actively support wider missions.

## The ARDA or MissionInsite Reflection

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ARDA/MI File

No response

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

Our church is located in the heart of Taneytown, within the actual town limits. The Taneytown election district houses nearly 11,000 people, with just over 8,200 of those people living within the actual city limits. The population is evenly divided across all age brackets. There is a 55 and older community as well as several other existing and planned housing developments, with the planned construction projected to bring 9-10 % growth in the community within the next five years.

**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.**

Ethnically, the last reported information (2019) for the area shows the population is 92.6% Caucasian, 1.7% Black, 2.6% Hispanic, and 1.2 % Asian. The church membership reflects this as our congregation is predominately Caucasian.

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

The local area has a median income well below the rest of Carroll County and the surrounding areas. The local schools reflect this, with Taneytown Elementary designated a Title 1 school with more than 40% of the students receiving free or reduced lunch. Consequently, several of the church missions focus on helping those in need such as contributing to the Carpenter's Table meals for those in need, weekly collections for the local food bank, annual fall clothing drive, and providing gifts to resident youth at the Hoffman Homes facility and the elderly at Homewood during the winter holidays.



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

This spirit of generosity and giving is widely noted in the community. We are also known for our learning center (GULC). It has an outstanding program for preschool and kindergarten aged children that prepares them well for the transition to public school and provides before and after school care. The twice-yearly presentations from the children and learning center staff during worship expose young families to the offerings of the church. Our members often invite others to visit and join them in worship, and those that stay with us comment on the warm welcome they receive at Grace.

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

Some of our newest members were drawn to the church because sermons emphasize a more loving and forgiving God rather than focusing on hellfire and damnation. Others see the way we participate in the community and value that commitment to the local neighborhoods. New members become active in church life when other members recognize their individual gifts and invite them to utilize their talents by joining various committees or actively participating in worship and fellowship.

**References**

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Linda Summers

Completed: Monday, Jun 24, 2024

I provided pastoral support (including preaching and visitation) from January - March 2024, until an interim pastor was found for Grace UCC Taneytown

Personal: 717-357-6377

**Reference Response**

This congregation, although small in numbers, is very active, both within the church as well as the community. Their desire to reach the community is evident in the very successful day-care they offer. Although the congregants are primarily older, they have a vibrant core of youth, which I believe is a huge benefit for their congregation. Beyond that, I believe Grace's main strength is that they desire to be true to the Bible in their philosophy and decisions. They are a kind and welcoming congregation and were a pleasant group to lead in worship each week!



Crystal Baker

Completed: Monday, Jul 15, 2024

Crystal Baker, Child care center Director of Grace United Learning Center which is located in the Grace United Church of Christ

Business: 4107562696

**Reference Response**

I feel that I have seen most of their outreach programs which are wonderful! The church has many members that are dedicated to our children and their growth with the lord. They plan out wonderful activities, food and fun for everyone that attends. This includes Egg hunts, outdoor picnics, spring programs and lots of invitations to events held by the church. I feel that the bond some of these members have are a huge strength for the church, many of these people are more like friends and I think that shows a lot about the church. They want to be with each other more than just Sunday mornings! I think all churches are struggling right now and this church needs a leader who is ready to lead but also understand that this congregation is doing an amazing job of spreading the love of Jesus and has many people to help as well!



Rev. Jerry Fuss

Completed: Thursday, Jul 18, 2024

Served as Pastor at Grace UCC, Taneytown, MD. 1977-85; periodic pastoral supply; lived in are 40+yrs; phone 301 378 2134 (home) or 410 259 1113 (cell)

Email Address: gfuss827@comcast.net

Personal: 410-848-0307

**Reference Response**

GUCC has a long history of faithful ministry and service in this rural Carroll Co community. Stable financially and conscientiously served by dedicated leaders, the church seeks pastoral ministry and spiritual guidance discerning ways to best live out their commitment to faithful worship, nurture, spiritual growth, sense of community, and service to others. As an aging congregation in a growing town, GUCC is quite open to new leadership and opportunities to discern ways in which to serve and involve individuals and families in the community around them. Committed to serving basic human needs, they actively

support organized ecumenical community efforts to that end. *Grace United Learning Center*, using church space, serves younger families who see GUCC as a welcoming, supportive place. One can glean a good understanding of the faith, mission, caring and service of Grace UCC through its website. GDF

### Closing Prayer

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"Christ has no body but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world." Theresa of Avila

This, like our mission statement, spells out our desire to be His hands on earth and to walk in His footsteps. We pray that in partnership with our new pastor we find renewed vigor in our walk to continue doing good, renewed strength in our hands to serve God and others, and limitless compassion to love as He has taught us.

### 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.*

The church Search Committee:

Kelsey Fowler

Gill Grady

Tom Hogg

Elaine Miles

Lee Ann Peck

David Rethemeyer

Jim Storey

Jay Wantz

The Grace UCC Consistory provided assistance in membership rolls and compensation guidelines.

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

We feel the profile provides a good representation of who we are and look forward to sharing more with you during the interview process.