

United Church of Christ

Central Congregational Church Profile

Madison, Ohio

Associate Pastor/Christian Education Director

November 2024

Central Congregational Church Profile Contents

- **Profile of the Ideal Candidate**
- **Who is God Calling us to Become?**
- **Who Are We Now?**
- **Who is Our Neighbor?**
- **References**
- **Consent and Validation**

"We are a Christ-centered community, united in faith and committed to rebuilding, renewing, and growing together in love. Guided by the Word of God, we strive to equip the saints for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up in unity, maturity, and love. We follow the calling to 'walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called' (Ephesians 4:1). Through grace, we share the hope of the Gospel and serve as a light to the world."

Profile of the Ideal Applicant

Central Congregational Church is at an exciting crossroads, as we are seeking a full-time teacher and leader who is ready to grow with us. This is a unique position that could evolve based on your strengths and passions. Whether you start as a youth director, Christian education director, or even as an associate pastor, this role offers the flexibility to shape your future in ministry as you help us shape ours. We invite a leader who shares our vision for growth and who will walk with us as we build a stronger, more dynamic future together. We are open to a wide range of possibilities and are looking for someone eager to be part of something important—helping to lead our church into a season of dynamic growth and deeper impact. If you're ready to make a difference and grow with us, we want to hear from you!

Qualifications:

A Bachelor's degree or active progress towards one in Christian Education, Ministry, or a related field is preferred. Candidates should also possess a heart for serving young people and be excited to inspire them in their faith journey. A candidate should have a strong Christian faith, be grounded in biblical truth, and possess a deep love for Jesus Christ.

Salary:

The salary for this position will be in line with or comparable to the guidelines set forth by the United Church of Christ (UCC) Conference, ensuring fair and equitable compensation based on experience and qualifications.

Skills and Traits:

Strong communication and interpersonal skills, especially with youth and young adults, along with a passion for outreach and fostering spiritual growth across generations. The candidate should excel in building relationships between different age groups and demonstrate creativity and initiative in developing engaging programs for youth, families, and the broader church community.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Developing outreach strategies to attract new members, particularly families and young people.
- Overseeing youth programs, including planning activities, Bible studies, and service projects.
- Potentially preaching opportunities and assisting in worship services as needed.
- Working closely with church leadership to create a welcoming and dynamic church environment.

Who is God Calling Us to Become?

Vision Statement

"We are a Christ-centered church who proclaim God's love and nurture spiritual growth and outreach."

Central Congregational Church envisions a vibrant future where we are not only a place of worship but a central, transformative presence in the Madison community. God is calling us to grow as leaders in faith, offering an open and inclusive space where every individual—regardless of background, identity, or faith journey—is welcome to find hope, purpose, and a spiritual home.

Our church is committed to a journey of continual renewal, where we strengthen our connection to Christ while meeting the needs of an evolving community. As we move forward, we aim to embrace new expressions of worship that reflect our diverse congregation, incorporating both contemporary and traditional elements to make our services more welcoming and accessible to all.

To support our growth and outreach, we have begun plans to develop a neighboring plot of land with the construction of a pavilion—a space envisioned as a hub for worship, fellowship, and community events. We see this as just the beginning, as we prayerfully explore ways to expand this land for additional ministries that will serve and uplift our community.

Our ultimate goal is to continue being a place where discipleship flourishes, faith is deepened, and every person is empowered to live out God's love in meaningful ways. We are committed to nurturing spiritual growth, expanding our outreach, and continually building a welcoming church family that serves with compassion and purpose. Through these efforts, we strive to shine as a beacon of hope, love, and leadership for all in Madison and our wider community.

Who Are We Now?

Name of Church: Central Congregational Church

Denomination: United Church of Christ (UCC)

Address: 71 Park Street, Madison, OH 44057

Website: www.centralcongregational.com

Phone Number: 440-428-3802

E mail Address: central@centralcongregational.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/centralcongregationalmadison>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/@central44057>



Our Church History

Central Congregational Church has a rich history dating back to 1814, when a small group of early settlers formed the first Congregational church in the area. Without a permanent building, the congregation initially met in homes and various community spaces. In 1830, twenty-four individuals from the First Congregational Church, officially organized as the Second Congregational Church and eventually built their first dedicated place of worship. Over time, the church grew, and in the early 1890s, it was remodeled into the brick building that still stands today. In 1976, the church expanded further with the addition of an education wing.

Our church's roots lie in the Congregational tradition, which originated with the Pilgrims and Puritans who sought religious freedom in America in the early 1600s.

Congregationalism places a strong emphasis on self-governance, with each church managing its own affairs, and on individual freedom in matters of faith.

In the 20th century, the Congregational Church merged with other denominations to form the United Church of Christ (UCC). Central Congregational Church is proudly a part of the UCC, continuing to uphold the values of local church autonomy and personal freedom in faith.

Worship and Ministry

Worship Service Times: 10:00 AM Sundays

Style of Worship: Traditional with a blend of contemporary elements

Sacraments Celebrated:

- **Communion:** Observed on the first Sunday of every month, offering an open invitation to all believers to partake in the Lord's Supper.
- **Baptism:** Celebrated as a sacred covenant, offered to both infants and adults, marking a commitment to the Christian faith.

Special Services and Events:

- **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service:** A beloved tradition with carols, scripture readings, and candlelight to celebrate the birth of Christ.
- **Easter Sunday Service:** Includes a morning service with a pre-service breakfast and an Easter egg hunt during children's church.
- **Maundy Thursday and Good Friday:** Solemn services that prepare our hearts for Easter by reflecting on the Last Supper and Christ's passion.
- **Lenten Lunches:** Held on Wednesdays during Lent, these well-attended gatherings bring together our church family and members of the community for fellowship, reflection, and a shared meal as we journey through the Lenten season.
- **Other Services:** All Saints' Sunday, Ash Wednesday, Pentecost Sunday, Outdoor Service, Worldwide Communion Sunday.

Music and Arts Ministry:

- Our choir leads worship from September to June, deeply rooted in traditional hymns and supported by our talented organist.
- Special music is often featured, with guest musicians and members sharing solos, instrumental pieces, and choral performances.
- **Seasonal Celebrations:** Throughout the year, we host special events like "Hymn Sings" and seasonal cantatas.

Our worship services at Central Congregational are deeply rooted in Christian tradition, creating a reverent yet welcoming atmosphere that incorporates scripture readings, prayer, hymns, and reflective moments. Occasionally, we incorporate contemporary praise songs to connect with the diverse preferences of our congregation, blending tradition with modern expression. Communion is celebrated as a time of unity, reflecting on Christ's sacrifice and grace.

Along with our regular and seasonal services, we hold occasional healing services, prayer vigils, and worship nights centered on themes like renewal, missions, or community prayer.

The organ, a centerpiece of our music ministry, has been meticulously maintained and provides a majestic backdrop to worship. For special occasions, we bring in a variety of instruments—guitars, violins, and handbells—that add a dynamic richness to our worship experience.

Youth Program

In years past, Central Congregational Church's youth program flourished, offering vibrant opportunities for faith and fellowship. Our summers featured community-wide Vacation Bible School, drawing young families from across the area, and high school mission trips took students to different parts of the country to serve and grow in their faith. Youth Sundays were also a cherished tradition, as our youth would take the lead in planning and conducting an entire worship service.

Today, though our youth attendance has decreased, our commitment to nurturing young hearts remains strong. Each Sunday service includes a dedicated children's message following the first hymn, after which children head to Children's Church in our Sunday School rooms. Monthly all-ages youth events—such as movie nights, game nights, and seasonal gatherings—offer fellowship and fun for youth and their families.

Our Board of Christian Education, in partnership with the pastor, coordinates and guides these efforts, ensuring that Central Congregational continues to offer meaningful programs that build faith, friendships, and lasting memories.

Congregational Demographics

Size of Congregation: Our Sunday worship services typically have an average in-person attendance of 50 people.

Age Range:

Our congregation spans a wide range of ages, from as young as 2 to as seasoned as 96, with the majority of our members being over the age of 60. We cherish the wisdom and life experience of our long-standing members, as well as the fresh perspectives that our younger participants bring to our church community.

Diversity:

Our congregation reflects the broader Madison community as we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for individuals from all backgrounds. While our membership currently mirrors the local racial and ethnic makeup, we are actively working to reach out to people of diverse cultural, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Our goal is to build a church that is not only a place of worship but a true community, where everyone feels valued, supported, and empowered to grow in their walk with Christ.

Church Leadership and Staff

Current Leadership Team:

Pastor Richard Hughes, who faithfully served the congregation by providing spiritual leadership, pastoral care, and guiding the church in its mission and vision..

Staff Positions:

- **Church Secretary:** Handles administrative tasks, communications, and assists with church events.
- **Organist:** Provides musical leadership, working closely with the choir director to enhance worship services.
- **Choir Director:** Leads the choir in weekly rehearsals and Sunday performances, ensuring that music remains a vital part of worship.
- **Custodian:** Ensures the building is well-maintained and welcoming for all services and events.

Volunteer Leadership:

Our congregation relies heavily on a dedicated group of volunteers who serve in various capacities. The church's governance structure includes five key boards: Deacons, Missions, Worship and Music, Christian Education, and Trustees. These boards, along with the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary, form the Church Council. We also have a dedicated Church Historian and many volunteers who contribute by serving as ushers, scripture readers, and coordinators for fellowship events.

Church Facilities

Building Description:

Central Congregational Church's facilities are a blend of historic and modern spaces, carefully maintained to serve the spiritual and community needs of today. The original building, with its stunning architectural details and stained-glass windows, houses the sanctuary, offices, and several smaller meeting rooms. The newer portion of the church includes the Fellowship Hall, which is used for gatherings, meals, and special events. The hall is equipped with a commercial kitchen, allowing for large-scale events and community dinners. Additionally, the church features classrooms for Sunday school, a nursery, and the pastor's office.

Prayer Garden:

In a small courtyard between the old part of the church and the newer part of the church is a small prayer garden. This was built as an Eagle Scout project by one of our members.

Accessibility:

We strive to make our church accessible to all, with handicap-accessible lifts that provide access to all levels of the building. We also have a handicap-accessible restroom to accommodate those with mobility challenges.

Technology:

Central Congregational is equipped with modern technology to enhance both worship and educational experiences. In the sanctuary, a computer and projection system are used for multimedia presentations during services, while audio and video equipment support our online ministry. Services are broadcast on both Facebook and YouTube, allowing those unable to attend in person to worship with us virtually. The Fellowship Hall is outfitted with a smart TV for presentations and small group gatherings, while one of the Sunday school classrooms features an interactive projector, supporting creative and engaging lessons for children and youth.

Financial Information

2023 Financial Summary for Central Congregational Church

Income Sources

- **Total Income:** \$213,338.89
 - **Offerings:** \$127,343 (59.7%)
 - **Online Offerings:** \$3,500 (1.6%)
 - **Rental Revenue (Property):** \$26,133.80 (12.3%)
 - **Other Sources (Trusts, Savings, Missions, Concert Series):** Remaining funds, contributing 26.4% of total income.

Expenditures

- **Total Expenditures:** \$219,549
 - **Missions:** \$10,319 (4.7%)
 - **Repairs:** \$34,583 (15.8%)*
 - **Utilities:** \$15,116 (6.9%)
 - **Special Events:** \$3,006 (1.4%)
 - **Salaries, Benefits, & Taxes:** \$115,916 (52.8%)
 - **Professional Fees:** \$7,314 (3.3%)
 - **Office Expenses:** \$31,777 (14.5%)
 - **Ministry:** \$1,514 (0.7%)

**Repairs were higher than usual in 2023*

Financial Health and Stewardship

Central Congregational Church is proud to be entirely debt-free, allowing us to focus our resources on ministry and growth. In addition to annual income from offerings, rental revenue, and special events, the church benefits from a robust financial foundation in the form of trust funds. As of December 31, 2023, these trust funds totaled approximately \$592,688. These funds are designated to support the church's ongoing mission, provide stability, and allow for future initiatives as we continue to serve the Madison community.

This financial freedom, coupled with careful stewardship, enables us to address maintenance needs, support mission work, and explore growth opportunities without the burden of debt.

Who is our Neighbor?

As a congregation, we strive to live out the teaching to "love your neighbor as yourself," focusing not only on the needs within our church family but also on the broader Madison community.

Demographics and Target Groups

Madison Village and Madison Township together form a vibrant community with a combined population of approximately **21,917**. The community's age distribution highlights several ministry opportunities:

- **24% of the population is under 18 years old** (approximately 5,260 people), presenting opportunities to engage children and youth through faith-based programs.
- **59% are aged 18-64** (approximately 12,931 people), encompassing young adults, working families, and professionals.
- **18% are over 65 years old** (approximately 3,726 people), representing a significant group for ministry focused on senior support and engagement.

The median age in Madison is 44.9 years, reflecting a balance of younger families and older adults. Economically, the median household income is \$77,000 in the village and \$66,250 in the township. The area's poverty rate is relatively low at 6.25%, but there remain pockets of need that our outreach programs aim to address.

Housing and Economic Characteristics

Madison Village has **1,421 housing units**, with the majority being owner-occupied (1,207). Madison Township has an additional **7,972 housing units**, bringing the combined total to **9,393 housing units** across the village and township.

Unmet Needs and Ministry Opportunities

In our ongoing outreach, we've observed several areas where additional ministry could have a profound impact:

- **Youth and Family Engagement:** With nearly a quarter of the population under 18, there is a strong need for programs that provide safe, nurturing environments for children and teens. After-school activities, mentoring, and spiritual development opportunities could help connect with these families.
- **Support for Seniors:** The significant proportion of residents over 65 presents opportunities for initiatives such as caregiving support, social activities, and programs addressing isolation or mobility challenges.
- **Food and Housing Insecurity:** Programs like our Blessing Boxes and support for the Madison Food Center help meet immediate needs, but we see potential to expand partnerships and offer long-term solutions for families in crisis.

Vision for Collaboration

To maximize our impact, we envision partnerships with local schools, community organizations, and other churches. Collaborative initiatives could include:

- Community-wide Vacation Bible School programs.
- Youth mentorship and leadership training with local educators.
- Family workshops or seasonal events that connect neighbors and foster community bonds.

Extending Our Mission

This vision aligns with Central Congregational Church's goal of being a "central, transformative presence" in Madison. We believe the candidate for this role will be instrumental in realizing this vision by helping us identify and act upon ministry opportunities that align with our calling. Together, we can nurture a thriving, faith-centered community that reflects God's love for all.

Welcome to Our Community



Madison, Ohio, is a town steeped in history and culture, offering a vibrant local arts scene. At its heart is the renowned Rabbit Run Theater, one of the last remaining barn theaters in the nation, where residents and visitors alike enjoy live performances in a rustic, charming atmosphere. Madison's historic charm is further reflected in its well-preserved architecture, tree-lined streets, and community events that celebrate its rich heritage. The town is a haven for those who appreciate small-town living while having access to unique cultural experiences right in their backyard.

Remarkably, few communities of Madison’s size offer such a wealth of amenities. The area is home to a vast number of community parks and Metroparks, providing spaces for hiking, fishing, playgrounds, and seasonal activities like sledding and tobogganing. These parks offer countless ways to enjoy the outdoors and connect with nature.



In addition to its arts and history, Madison is surrounded by some of the region's best attractions. The town is home to many wineries with quality restaurants, offering a rich experience for wine enthusiasts and food lovers alike.

Just a short drive away is Geneva State Park and Lodge, where outdoor recreation meets scenic beauty, and the harbors on Lake Erie provide a tranquil setting for boating and fishing. Located just north of one of the largest Amish communities in Ohio, Madison allows easy access to their craftsmanship, markets, and culture.



Madison’s location also provides convenient access to some of the region’s most exciting cities. Situated within an hour of Cleveland and Erie, and just a short drive from Pittsburgh and Akron/Canton, residents have the best of both worlds. Whether it’s catching a game from Cleveland’s pro sports teams, exploring the world-class museums and theaters, or enjoying the diverse culinary scenes these cities have to offer, there’s no shortage of activities. Madison offers a peaceful retreat while keeping you connected to the arts, sports, and cultural opportunities of major metropolitan hubs.



Outreach Programs

Central Congregational Church takes its mission to serve the community seriously. Some of our ongoing outreach programs include:

Blessing Boxes: Located on the church grounds, these are stocked with non-perishable food items and personal care products, available to anyone in need.

Food Center Support: In partnership with the Madison Food Center, we help provide food assistance to local families, supporting the center both financially and with volunteer hours.

Seasonal Giving Programs: During Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, the church organizes food and gift drives to support families in need.

Community Meals: We host occasional free meals for the community, offering both nourishment and fellowship.

Monthly Mission Support:

- **January:** Forbes House
- **February:** Project Hope
- **March:** One Great Hour of Sharing
- **April:** ECHO
- **May:** Nueva Esperanza
- **June:** Heifer Project
- **July:** Holy Joe's Café
- **August:** Salvation Army Utility Shut Off Program
- **September:** Our Church's Wider Mission
- **October:** True Freedom
- **November:** Christmas Basket Program
- **December:** Veterans of the Cross

In addition to these programs, we are constantly exploring new ways to serve our neighbors. Our focus is on addressing both immediate needs (such as hunger and shelter) and long-term issues (such as education and job training).

Partnerships

We collaborate with other local churches, civic organizations, and nonprofits to extend our reach and multiply the impact of our efforts. Some of our key partnerships include the Madison Food Center, the Lake County Council on Aging, and local school districts. Through these collaborations, we are able to offer additional resources to the community and support initiatives that align with our mission of love and service.

Our Church is part of the Madison Christians Ministerial Association - which does many activities in the community including a week long VBS for children.

Application Process

Application Deadline: Until Filled

How to Apply:

If you are interested in applying to Central Congregational UCC and have a ministerial profile, please send your request to apply to searchandcall@livingwaterone.org.

If you are interested in applying to Central Congregational UCC and do not have a ministerial profile, please send your resume to:

Terry Fleischer

Chairperson, Central Congregational U.C.C. Search Committee

124 Square Drive

Madison, Ohio 44057

Or via email at: tfleischer@windstream.net