

# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

**Peace United Church of Christ**

**Rochester, Minnesota**

**Fulltime Lead Minister**

Minnesota Conference

April 2, 2025

### LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- Position Posting
- Who Is God Calling Us To Become?
- Who Are We Now?
- Who Is Our Neighbor?
- References
- Consent and Validation

*“God is able to provide you with every blessing, so that  
having all sufficiency in all things at all times,  
you may abound in every good work.”  
(2 Corinthians 9:8)*

## **1. POSITION POSTING**

### **1a. LISTING INFORMATION**

Name: Peace United Church of Christ

Address: 1503 Second Ave. NE

Rochester, Minnesota 55906-4165

Supplemental web links: <https://www.peaceunited.us>

Type: Professional

### **Church Contact Information**

Brian Winters, Search Committee Chair

**Additional Formal Ecumenical Affiliations** – none

### **UCC Conference Staff Contact Person**

Name: Cindy Mueller

Title: Minister for Congregations in Transition

Phone: 612.871.0359 ext. 4

Email: [cindym@uccmn.org](mailto:cindym@uccmn.org)

### **Summary Ministry Description**

Peace United is seeking a full-time, lead pastor to support us in our mission of “caring without limit, embracing without exception and loving without condition.” The new pastor will be a dynamic leader who will empower and collaborate with church staff, the congregation and the community in living this mission. Peace is an Open and Affirming (ONA) church that strives to fully embody all that means. Peace values diversity, authenticity, faith, love, courage, curiosity and fun!

We seek a pastor who will:

- Engage fully in the life of the church and our community
- Support adults, teens, and children in spiritual development
- Motivate congregants to utilize their gifts

- Collaborate with our engaged, creative, hardworking staff
- Empower congregants integrate their faith into their day-to-day lives

Peace United's long-term pastor, Paul Bauch, is retiring in June 2025. Peace has been anticipating this transition for four years. Paul's initial plan to retire was delayed when the church experienced a traumatic fire in 2022. While working to rebuild and adjust after Covid, Paul agreed to stay and see the church through the storm. Peace proved its resilience and reimagined what it means to "be the church." Peace has worked extensively with author/pastor/activist John Pavlovitz. John made multiple visits to Rochester, engaged with small groups, staff and the council, and joined a retreat to envision the future. The result of this work is a new, clearer mission that Peace is embracing with courage and curiosity. Peace has a vibrant staff who work tirelessly to make the church a fun, engaging, thought-provoking place for people of all ages and backgrounds. Because of Peace's work with John, the intentional focus on this impending transition, and the strong lay leadership, it is the unified opinion of the Search Team, Church Council, the congregation, pastors, and staff that Peace is ready to move forward with a new lead pastor rather than follow an interim pastor process.





## **What we value about living in our area.**

Rochester is a diverse and constantly changing city that also reflects the best attributes of the Midwest. With a population of 120,000, Rochester continuously invests in itself through improvements in entertainment, dining, and recreation. The area's major employer, Mayo Clinic, employs 42,000 people locally and has been steadily growing since its founding over 160 years ago. Every year, Rochester hosts over 3 million people from all over the world for healthcare and educational needs. Due to Mayo Clinic's ongoing success, the community has had the privilege of financial stability, a strong focus on health and wellness, and a growing number of multicultural and recreational activities. Rochester is home to an international airport and located 80 miles from the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area. Peace United desires that our lead pastor live in, or very near, Rochester so they can be fully engaged at Peace United and in the community. Rochester is a safe, family-centered community with excellent school systems and an exceptionally high quality of life.

**Current size of membership** - 400

**Average in person attendance** - 100

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

**Choose platform type(s) and number for virtual worship** -

Video Hosting Platform

**On average, how many views are received per service?** - 150

**Languages used in ministry** - English

**Position Title** - Lead Pastor

**Position Duration** - Settled

**Compensation Level** - Full Time

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

**Link to current Conference guidelines** -

MN Conference compensation guidelines found [here](#).

## **1b. SCOPE OF WORK**

The Scope of Work developed by our church can be found here - [Download scope of Work](#)

## **Three core competencies that we imagine could be foundational in our next minister's relationship with the church -**

### First:

**Communication:** Openness and trust have defined the congregation's relationship with previous lead pastors and that has been possible because of their genuine, caring and respectful communication style.

Peace's next lead pastor should continue this work by:

- Delivering passionate, knowledgeable sermons that embolden congregants' faith journey towards justice.
- Counseling congregants with care and integrity through active listening.
- Being relatable and genuine in their communication with congregants, from youngest to oldest.
- Effectively and respectfully communicating with staff.
- Utilizing skills of discernment and communication to apply strategic and progressive insight into the mission and future of the church.

### Second:

**Collaboration:** Peace has a very beloved, yet humble staff. Dylan is a brilliant, generous musician and programming director. Jerry is a passionate, authentic preacher who challenges listeners. Clare is an organizational genius and a true servant leader. It is essential that our new pastor collaborate with and empower them.

This includes:

- Working alongside church staff in the development and delivery of passionate worship services and engaging programming that connect the teachings of Jesus to the realities of today's world.
- Having a good work ethic and being a self-starter with consistent follow-through.
- Managing staff in a way that enables them to continue to use their gifts, encourages them in their work and supports them in maintaining a healthy work-life balance.
- Building connections among diverse groups of people with varied perspectives.
- Recognizing talent and skills among congregants and staff alike, empowering them to serve the church and the larger community.

Third:

**Spiritual Leadership:** Peace United values an approach to spirituality that includes questioning, acknowledges the dualities and contradictions in the Bible and in traditional Christian theologies. Peace takes the Bible seriously but not literally and values the integration of other spiritual beliefs. It is important that the pastor provides spiritual leadership that recognizes these complexities and makes room for wondering.

The new lead pastor will provide spiritual leadership by:

- Offering genuine care through listening effectively, reflecting and praying.
- Sensitively answering, but not oversimplifying, theological questions from staff and congregants.
- Mentoring youth as they seek to find meaning in their own faith journeys.
- Approaching the Bible as a living document that at its best is viewed through the lens of inclusivity, seeing Jesus as a fierce advocate for justice and unconditional love.

### **1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT**

The salary basis (comes from the [Call Agreement Workbook](#), equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/ Housing Allowance).

	Amount or Percentage (if determined)	Is this Negotiable	Pastoral Candidate Determines
Salary (Cash basis determined from Conference/Guidelines) 1			
Housing Allowance 1			
Any Experiential Difference (Related to years of experience) 1			

	Amount or Percentage (if determined)	Is this Negotiable	Pastoral Candidate Determines
Pension/Annuity		✓	
Social Security and Medicare Offset		✓	
Medical/Dental Insurance		✓	
Life Insurance		✓	
Disability Insurance		✓	
Worker's Compensation		✓	

**If needed, please comment further on your church's salary and benefits for the minister.**

1\* As indicated Peace United intends to follow Minnesota Conference Guidelines as it relates to:

- Compensation Components
- General Benefits
- Leaves of Absences, Sabbaticals, and Other Leave Benefits

We will follow conference guidelines in providing for a cash salary, housing allowance, and the following benefits:

- Housing allowance in accordance to conference guidelines
- Social Security offset
- Retirement Annuity contributions
- Life and Disability Insurance
- Health and Dental insurance including spousal and dependent
- Paid Vacation in accordance to conference guidelines
- Holidays and Days Off in accordance to conference guidelines
- Malpractice Insurance
- Criminal Background check reimbursement
- Mileage reimbursement consistent with the IRS rate and reasonable additional travel expenses for church business
- Continuing Education expense
- Professional expenses related to performance of ministry
- Compassionate and Personal leave (including sick and personal)
- Civic Service leave (including Jury Duty and Military)
- Short Term Disability Leave
- Parental Leave
- Sabbatical Leave, three months after five years of service

All compensation and benefits within the Conference guidelines are negotiable at the mutual agreement of the Pastoral candidate and the church council.

**The expected living situation for our next minister** - Living in or near Rochester, MN

**If a parsonage is provided, will the church offer a home equity allowance to the pastor?** - No

A parsonage is owned by the church, but it is currently unavailable. A housing allowance will be offered in accordance with Conference guidelines.

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

**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.

- A local progressive pastors group meets periodically in the Rochester Community
- An annual Fall Retreat for clergy
- Outdoor ministry opportunities
- *4th Thursdays* are offered in a hybrid format for up-to-date information and resourcing in faith formation
- Two seminaries in the Twin Cities
- The Conference Annual Meeting
- Boundary Training and Anti-Racism training in a variety of formats & locations
- Covenant Days to gather regional clergy & laity
- Continuing education opportunities

**1d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?**

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

Peace United is seeking a dynamic and loving leader to continue our momentum in becoming an even more thriving church that advocates for those in need by growing Peace's community, both in and outside the church's walls. To do this, the pastor will:

- Work to build and fortify relationships, both new and old, in and outside the church that will attract and retain members.

- Strive to expand the reach of social justice in Rochester, the state of Minnesota and nationally.
- Pursue new and refreshing ways to continue the work of Jesus with both compassion and authenticity.
- Equip and empower everyone, through word and action, to both question and deepen their relationship with God.
- Most importantly, LOVE.

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

Community engagement:

- Targeted outreach: continue Peace’s advocacy for marginalized communities and engage the congregation in building relationships by following Jesus’s example.
- Interfaith collaboration: strengthen bonds with ally churches as well as build bridges and find common ground with other faiths.

Social justice advocacy:

- Build coalition: in collaboration with the social justice team, engage in activism and continue to work with community organizations focused on the needs of marginalized communities.
- Raise awareness and mobilize action: educate and inform the congregation about local and global social justice issues to encourage critical reflection on faith and encouraging meaningful action.

Passionate Speaker:

- Share messages within the church in creative ways.
- Effectively communicate in person and in writing.
- In partnership with Community Engagement and Outreach Coordinator, ensure appropriate and contemporary communication strategies are utilized.
- Ignite a passion for service at Peace United and within our broader community using inspiring and compelling narratives.

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

Peace United seeks a lead pastor whose actions and commitments reflect Jesus's example of confronting injustice and working to defeat all forms of bias and oppression. This includes the use of language that is inclusive, culturally sensitive and relevant to our day, and embracing the humanity and culture of staff, congregation and community. Peace welcomes all church attendees to put their affirmed pronouns on their name tags and use person-first language. The members and staff are open to exploring new and creative ways of doing things. Peace is an adventurous church.

**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 -**

1. Peace United desires a pastor who loves God, follows Jesus, and is guided by the Holy Spirit. This pastor lives a life of discipleship, prays actively, and nurtures spiritual practices.
2. The ideal pastor for Peace has knowledge and understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures, New Testament and other sacred texts; using Biblical texts mindfully, acknowledging the development of ideas over time. They draw connections between the older passages and Jesus's teaching which redefined our relationship with God. They integrate contemporary texts like The Message to help interpret scripture in a manner that inspires congregants to spread joy and live well. They focus on engaging children, youth, and families with sacred stories in a way that emphasizes justice and inclusion for all people.
3. They will nurture care and compassion for all by organizing events to support the community, promoting sustainable practices within the church and supporting local initiatives. They will practice self-care by modeling healthy boundaries, encouraging members to participate in wellness programs, promoting mental wellbeing and stress management and providing resources for spiritual retreats. They will provide hope and healing by establishing support groups, partnering with local agencies and supporting inclusive programs.
4. They will confront injustice and oppression by organizing activities for social justice issues, welcoming refugees and immigrants within the community and by creating a safe space for open discussions. By gaining familiarity of the Rochester area, the pastor will engage with local and state organizations to address community needs. They will engage in outreach by supporting mission trips, and by providing resources and support to underserved populations. The pastor will support Peace's designation as a sanctuary church and be prepared to house families in need. They will build relationships of mutual trust by partnering with other faith communities and groups.

## **2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?**

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

### **Who God is calling us to become as a congregation -**

We believe that God is calling us as a congregation to lean more fully and radically into living Christ’s message of loving without condition, embracing without exception and caring without limit. Ultimately, that means that we are called to forge brave partnerships with other communities of faith and organizations that are sharing in this work - groups like Listos (the Spanish immersion preschool that shares our space) Christway Church, Family Promise, the Landing and other organizations that support those with housing insecurity, Rochester Pride and Isaiah (an interfaith organization that works to realize racial, economic and climate justice).

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

Peace United has worked with author/pastor/activist John Pavlovitz to go deeper in our faith, connect with each other, and engage with the community in meaningful ways. This included small group meetings, leadership and committee meetings with John, and a church leadership retreat with 50 participants in May 2024.

Peace supports the Rochester Rainbow Choir with Dylon's time (directing and organizing), and space to practice and perform. The choir has grown exponentially and is a safe haven for the LGBTQIA+ community. There are a growing number of opportunities to support those being marginalized in this current political climate. Peace will continue to honor these values and show up for others.

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

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

### **3a. CONGREGATION REFLECTIONS**

We would describe **our congregation’s life of faith** as...

The people of Peace United like to have fun, take risks, and learn together. Peace takes the Bible seriously, not literally, and the worship team works hard to ensure that our messages relate scripture to the cultural and political issues that impact the lives of the congregation with music, messages and prayers. There is an appreciation of being challenged. Inclusive language in all aspects of worship and communications is important, and the traditional “Our Father” is changed to more inclusive names for God in the Lord’s Prayer. Images of

God as a parent or creator and inclusive pronouns for God are used. The Holy Spirit is the presence that comes when singing about our most essential values - doing justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with God. It is the presence that calls us to enter into communion with one another.

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

Peace United is engaged, active, energetic, joyful and genuine. This is the 120th year of the church and the most recent 60 years were led by only two lead pastors. There has always been a focus on trust and a positive, healthy dynamic between the lead pastor and the congregation. Peace is known throughout our community as a progressive church that works with a very broad array of people, as well as welcoming new experiences both in worship and in the community.

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

Need to strengthen: Peace's congregation is predominantly white. An area of growth would be getting various cultures to feel welcomed. Peace's new pastor must be respectful of the races, ethnicities, and cultures of all. They will work with the congregation and staff to make Peace United a multicultural church. Peace shares space with Christway Full Gospel Church (since 2019; Christway is a predominantly Black congregation), LISTOS bilingual preschool (since 2015), and La Senda Antigua (a Spanish-speaking congregation). The congregations and groups using the building provide opportunities for collaboration and community-building, and there is much more work to do.

### **What worship is like when our congregation gathers -**

Worship on Sundays is creative, bold and engaging. It is different every week: there is a structure, but the flow of the service changes. It is collaborative: the pastor partners with staff, musicians and members to deliver a worship experience which is well received by the congregation. All Sunday services are accessible in-person and online.

Sacred texts are connected to the Pathways theme, picture books, songs and music, the get-to-know-each-other question, prayers, images/videos, current events and how the congregation is showing up in this world. Peace uses inclusive language and shares pronouns, making people feel as welcome and as loved as possible.

In all baptisms, the Pastor presents the child to the congregation and hands the child to a member of the congregation. This symbolizes the congregation's acceptance to love, care, and support the child and family.

We currently celebrate Communion on the 1st Sunday of each month in addition to Holy Days and special occasions. Though we generally observe Communion in the traditional

fashion, we enjoy finding unique ways to partake as well. Peace celebrates an open Communion table at which all are welcome with no exceptions.

### **The educational program/faith formation vision of our church -**

Two years ago, Peace United's faith formation program was completely revised. Peace now has an intergenerational program called "Pathways." Dylan plans the activities, and volunteers of all ages sign up to take turns leading the activities. For example, groups have made cookie dough together and brought it home to bake with a neighbor, read children's books with themes of love, acceptance, diversity, and collaborated with members of all ages to add to this lead pastor profile!

Other educational opportunities include service projects, mission trips, confirmation for teens and Our Whole Life (OWL). Adults participate in Beverage and Bible and Women's and Men's fellowship groups that meet weekly. Peace frequently offers Wednesday night book studies and has piloted a program called The SPARK which provides a space for rethinking what church can be. Recently, The SPARK provided an opportunity to bring forward the stories and experiences of people who have been alienated and traumatized by church experiences. One of these stories became the focus of a worship service, creating space for a dialogue that led to creating an even more inclusive and radically welcoming environment.

### **How our congregation is organized for ministry and mission -**

The congregation is the center of our ministry. All members are encouraged to take an active role in advancing our mission. Major decisions are made by the people of Peace United at annual, semi-annual and special congregational meetings. After the faith community has set the direction for the congregation, the leadership and staff are empowered to move forward.

To implement its ministry and mission, Peace United has a twelve member church council with diverse representation that meets monthly. The Pastor serves as an "ex-officio" member with a voice but not a vote.

As part of the visioning process in 2024, the ministry model was reorganized. Teams work to advance the faith community's vision. These lay-led teams include: Creative/Worship, Social Action, Pathways (education programming) and Connections (visibility, hospitality, Welcome Crew). Each team has one member of the church council who serves as a liaison, so both the team and council stay well-informed. The congregation has a long history of a close working relationship with the pastor and staff. Open communication, trust, respect and collaboration are essential.

**When it comes to decision-making,** 15 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...

In 2020, to control the Covid pandemic, the state of Minnesota suddenly ordered all churches to close. The chair of the church council promptly called the Pastor to collaborate. The chair then called an emergency church council meeting to develop a plan. The council made some initial decisions, and then created a three-person Covid task force. The task force consisted of church members with health care knowledge and experience. This group met virtually each week, discussed the Minnesota Department of Health's most recent Covid-related data, and decided the best plan to prioritize the health and safety of the congregation (worship outside, inside or online, to require or not require masks, etc.).

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

[Organizational Chart.pdf](#)

[Bylaws.pdf](#)

**3b. 11-YEAR REPORT** from the UCC DataHub can be found here - [Download 11-Year Report](#)

### **3c. CONGREGATION DEMOGRAPHICS**

**Describe those who participate in your church:**

<u>Demographic</u>	<u>Number</u>
Number of active members:	300
Number of active non-members:	353
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	653

**Are these numbers estimates?** - Yes

**Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:**

<u>Time</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
More than 10 years:	60%
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	30%
Less than 5 years:	10%

**Are these numbers estimates? - Yes**

**Number of total participants by age:**

<u>Age</u>	<u>Number</u>
0-11	40
12-17	20
18-24	5
25-34	8
35-44	20
45-54	30
55-64	100
65-74	200
75+	230

**Are these numbers estimates? - Yes**

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

<u>Household type</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Single adults under 35:	5%
Households with minors:	20%
Single adults age 35-65:	5%
Joint households with no minors:	45%
Single adults over 65:	25%

**Are these numbers estimates? - Yes**

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

<u>Education level</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
High school:	15%
College:	40%
Graduate School:	35%
Specialty Training:	10%
Other education level:	0%

**Are these numbers estimates? – Yes**

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

<u>Employment type</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Adults who are employed:	30%
Adults who are retired:	60%
Adults who are not fully employed:	10%

**Are these numbers estimates?** - Yes

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

Our congregants have diverse work and educational experiences focused on healthcare, education, finance, hospitality, social work, the arts, etc. The educational level of Peace United reflects the broader community of Rochester which has a high percent of college educated individuals. Approximately 75% of Peace members report having a college or graduate degree whereas 70% of the nearby residents report having some college or a bachelor's degree. This emphasis on education is likely due to the high degree of professional and healthcare related employment opportunities in the community.

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

Peace United is composed primarily of members of European descent. The Peace United congregation is approximately 95% white. For context, the racial makeup of the neighborhood surrounding Peace United is estimated to be about 73% white, 8% Black, 7% Asian and 6% Hispanic.

**What diversity means in our context?**

Diversity means the inclusion of people from different ethnic, social, religious and economic backgrounds, as well different sexual orientations and gender identities. While Peace United may be a predominantly white congregation, Peace United is diverse in many other fantastic ways. Peace has members from other religious backgrounds, who are very wealthy and who struggle financially and members with a variety of disabilities. Peace has long been an ally to the LGBTQIA+ community and our congregational makeup reflects that as well. Peace is diverse in a lot of ways.

**Has our congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do we plan to hold one on the near future** - No

### 3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

#### Participation and Planning of Gatherings

<u>Ways of Church Gathering</u>	<u>Estimated number of people involved in attendance</u>	<u>Who plans each of the listed gatherings</u>
Adult Groups or Classes (in person or online)	30	Lay leaders/Pastors
Baptisms (number last year)	5	Lead Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	20	Director of Music and Programing
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	200	Lead Pastor, Director of Programming & Music, Social Justice Pastor, Community Engagement & Outreach Coordinator, Lay leaders
Church-wide Meals	25	Lay leaders
Choirs and Music Groups	20	Director of Programming & Music
Church-based Bible Study	20	Lay leaders/Pastors
Communion (served how often?)	100	Lead Pastor, Social Justice Pastor, Lay leaders

<u>Ways of Church Gathering</u>	<u>Estimated number of people involved in attendance</u>	<u>Who plans each of the listed gatherings</u>
Community Meals	25	Lay leaders
Confirmation (number confirmed last year)	0	Pastor / staff
Drama or Dance Program	0	N/A
Funerals (number last year)	10	Lead Pastor
Intergenerational Groups	20	Director of Programming & Music, Lay leaders
Outdoor Worship	40	Lead Pastor
Prayer or Meditation Groups	20	Lay leaders
Public Advocacy Work	50	Lay leaders
Retreats	0	Staff
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	20	Pastor / Lay leaders

<u>Ways of Church Gathering</u>	<u>Estimated number of people involved in attendance</u>	<u>Who plans each of the listed gatherings</u>
Weddings (number last year)	0	Pastor
Worship (digital / online / livestream)	300	Pastor/staff/Tech Team
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	Staff
Youth Groups or Classes	20	Lay leaders/Pastor

#### Worship Times

<u>Worship (time slot):</u>	<u>Estimated number of people involved in attendance</u>	<u>Who plans each of the listed gatherings</u>
10:30	100	Lead Pastor, Director of Programming & Music, Social Justice Pastor, Community Engagement & Outreach Coordinator, Lay leaders

#### **Additional comments:**

These demographics, percentages, and numbers are broad estimates, Peace has not assessed the church population since before 2020.

There are plans to collect more data and update numbers in May 2025.

**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 -**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Three-Way or Four-Way Covenant</u>	<u>Ministry Setting</u>	<u>Type of Ministry Role</u>	<u>Retired</u>
Glenn Holland	none	N/A	Inactive	
Winston Janusz	none	N/A	Inactive	
David Marcham	none	Retired	Pulpit Supply	✓
Jocelyn Tupper	none	Retired	Pulpit Supply	✓
Allan Vrieze	none	Retired	Pulpit Supply / Communion	✓
Karl Rist	3	Mayo Clinic Nurse	Pulpit Supply / Communion / Weddings	
Jean Boese	none	Retired	assist with weddings and funerals	✓
Tammy Rider	none	Presbyterian Care Assistant	Pulpit Supply / Communion	

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

**List of all current staff:**

<u>Staff Position</u>	<u>Head of Staff</u>	<u>Compensation</u>	<u>Supervised by</u>	<u>Length of Tenure for Current Person in this Position</u>
Community Engagement and Outreach Coordinator	No	Part	Lead Pastor	8 years
Finance & Membership Coordinator	No	Part	Lead Pastor	1 month
Youth Activities Coordinator	No	Volunteer	Lead Pastor	7 years
Social Justice Pastor	No	Part	Lead Pastor	5 years
Custodian	No	Part	Lead Pastor	14 years
Building Supervisor	No	Volunteer	Lead Pastor	12 years
Director of Programming and Music	No	Full	Lead Pastor	5 years

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

Peace United has an engaged congregation, active staff and variety of activities offered. These prompts don't necessarily reflect what Peace offers and what the congregation is involved in, since many activities are non-traditional. The Peace United congregation has a passion for social justice.

## Church Finances

### Current Annual Income

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	355211
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	7596
Endowment Draw (beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”)	2974
Fundraising Events	26942
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	850
Rentals of Church Building	39383
Wedding Fees, Funeral Fees, Honorariums, Non-pledged giving	18988
<b>Total</b>	<b>451944</b>

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): 563475

**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? – 28%**

**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?**

A specific Sunday is designated and a special offering is held during service.

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

N/A

**Total amount of loan debt - 180053**

**Reason for debt:**

New entry and welcome center, new nursery, renovated kitchen, new administrative space.

**Are capital and other payments current? - Yes**

**Capital Campaigns**





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

<u>Year(s)</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Impact</u>
4	New entry and welcome center, nursery renovation, renovated kitchen, and new administrative space.	1200000	1020000	

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

<u>Year(s)</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Impact</u>
2025	Retire debt, parking lot repair and resurface, roof replacement	300000	0	Debt retirement, parking lot resurfacing, partial roof replacement

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

The largest component of the upcoming capital campaign is debt retirement, to complete the mortgage payments on the church. The second component is repairs and maintenance - Peace has one section of roof that has not been recently replaced, and it is badly in need of replacement. Peace's parking lot also needs repairs and resurfacing due to its age and usage.

**Does your church have an endowment?** - Yes

**What is the market value of the assets?** - 386730

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

As needed

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

2024 - \$17,000; 2019 - \$96,500; the draw was 82% less in 2024 than five years ago.

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

2024 - \$17,000; 2023 - \$0 2022 - \$0; 2021 - \$0; 2020 - \$-0; 2019 - \$96,500

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

Approximately 23 years if we assume nearly 0% rate of return on investment, assume perhaps five years past that with an average ROI on investment.

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

\$17000 / \$386730 = 22.75 years

**Other Assets**

79918 in checking accounts; value of the building ; value of the parsonage

**Reserves (savings):** 155929

**Investments (other than endowment):**

*No response*

**Does the church have a parsonage? - Yes**

**Fair market rental value of the parsonage:** 1600

**How is the parsonage used?**

The parsonage is currently provided to our Social Justice Minister as his home.

**Finished square footage:** 1170

**Number of Bedrooms:** 3

**Number of Bathrooms:** 2

**Assessed real estate value:** 233400

**Available for minister residence?** No

**Expected lead minister residence?** No

**Condition of structure, systems and appliances -**

Good condition ; home has all appliances.

**Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs -** Church Council

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

Church, located at 1503 2nd Ave NE, Rochester, MN, 55906.

Parsonage, located at 1521 2nd Ave NE, Rochester, MN, 55906.

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

**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 worship spaces, including chancel and pulpit, for wheelchair users and people with other mobility aids

Access to childcare spaces for wheelchair users and people with other mobility aids

Closed captioning on sanctuary screen and/or livestream

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”)

**Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs:**

Sanctuary, altar/pulpit, lobby, office areas, bathroom, fellowship hall, Peace room, and all classrooms

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

Peace United employs a professional accounting firm. Cash or checks donated to the church are recorded by the Finance Coordinator. Finance Coordinator codes all expenditures of the church to match appropriate budget categories and checks are distributed by the accounting firm. A member of the council is elected Financial Secretary and works with staff and council to draft and manage the operating budget. Peace has a Memorial fund. It is overseen by senior members of the church; requests for funds are made through the Lead Pastor and approved by the appointed members.

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

Similar to other churches of Peace United's size, both financial giving from current congregation and overall membership could be increased. This would allow Peace to fully act on the congregation's mission and vision.

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

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

- Peace United began its journey to full inclusion for LGBTQ+ community in 1997. In 2006, the congregation voted overwhelmingly to become Open and Affirming (ONA) and has remained committed to its promise. Peace's identity as ONA has been a guiding light in all decisions made.
- Before Covid, Peace had already been thinking about how our worship needed to evolve to keep our church and mission alive. Peace quickly switched to virtual services and found ways to provide at-home faith formation, engage with members and share music. The church is proud of our interactive and casual worship.
- In April 2022, Peace United sustained five million dollars of damage after an arsonist began a fire in our north wing. Initially, this was a devastating blow for both staff and congregation. This challenge became an opportunity to improve facilities, grow as a community and grow in our faith.

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

In 2023, as part of our work with John Pavlovitz, we re-envisioned what religious education could look like at Peace United. We expanded Dylan's role to Director of Programming and Music. Dylan collaborated with those previously involved in faith formation, those interested in creating this new program and members who are experienced K-12 educators to create an intergenerational model. The name Faith Formation sounded limiting and may trigger people with a history of church trauma, so the model was renamed Pathways. The themes from Pathways are integrated into the Sunday morning worship. This provides a cohesive, multi-layered engagement of the text and theme for the day. The lessons are relevant to our real lives and the structure has facilitated opportunities for community-building among congregants of all ages.

**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.**

The process of becoming a Sanctuary Church was a point of challenge and growth for the congregation. Several members suggested Peace United become a Sanctuary Church in 2017. The idea was presented to the Pastor and council, a task force was formed and

presentations were done for the congregation. All questions were welcomed and respected. Several months into the process, it became clear the majority of the congregation supported the concept, but a minority had some serious concerns. The task force announced a listening session, invited the entire congregation and welcomed all to speak and share their thoughts. The task force prioritized making it a safe place so those with a minority opinion felt respected and heard. One final educational session was held with additional information, a time for questions and discussion. A congregational meeting was then called, thoughtful discussion took place and the proposal easily passed with overwhelming support.

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

Over the past few years, Peace United navigated through two significant conflicts that profoundly impacted our congregation and leadership team: the Covid pandemic and a devastating building fire in 2022. These events tested our community's resilience and fortitude but ultimately brought out the best in us. The Covid pandemic forced us to adapt quickly to new ways of worship and community engagement, while the building fire challenged us to come together, rebuild our physical space and embrace forgiveness. Through it all, our faith and commitment to each other remained steadfast, guiding us through these difficult times.

**Ministerial History:**

*Name:* Paul Bauch

*Years of service:* 23

**UCC Standing**

*Name:* Jerry Locula

*Years of service:* 4

**UCC Standing**

*Name:* Winston Janusz

*Years of service:* 3

**UCC Standing**

*Name:* Beth Rogers

*Years of service:* 2

**UCC Standing**

*Name:* Kayla Bonewell

*Years of service:* 7

**UCC Standing**

*Name:* Linda Reynolds

*Years of service:* 6

**UCC Standing**

*Name:* David Droog

*Years of service:* 2

*Name:* Tom Uphaus

*Years of service:* 15

**UCC Standing**

*Name:* Dorus Underdahl

*Years of service:* 7

**UCC Standing**

*Name:* Carl Schroedel

*Years of service:* 31

**UCC Standing**

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

Peace United has been a strong, vibrant congregation for over 120 years. Nearly half of the work Peace has done has been led by just two successive lead pastors. As such, the church has been defined by a trusting, positive relationship between lead pastor and congregation. Peace United has also had a rich collection of associate pastors over the years. They have complimented the lead pastor's skill set in numerous ways, including expertise with youth and providing diverse perspectives.

**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

#### **4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?**

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

##### **4a. COMMUNITY VISION**

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

One area of passion is Peace’s support for the LGBTQIA+ community. Peace is a platinum sponsor of Rochester Pride. Peace hosts a transgender support group, the Rochester Rainbow Choir, Drag Queen Bingo, a Pride bike ride and picnic, dueling pianos and tribute concerts with dinner. The Social Action committee meets monthly and coordinates efforts to support five community groups which provide assistance to underserved people in the Rochester area.

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

Peace United is actively involved in the work, committees and activities of the United Church of Christ. Delegates regularly attend Minnesota Conference Meetings and the General Synod. The pastors have also served on the Conference Board of Directors, as General Synod delegates and search teams for various conference staff positions.

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

Peace United is committed to supporting social justice outside of our church walls. The Social Action team helps organize our members. Peace founded the Samaritan Bethany care facility at which we volunteer and have standing membership on their board. The pastors and lay leadership meet with other progressive pastors and are involved with ISALAH-MN

**We are involved with and support:**

Free Wednesday community meals, Movin’ Mondays (free exercise), Drag Queen Bingo, Rochester Pride, Rochester Rainbow Choir (Dylon directs), Little Food Pantry, Juneteenth, Christway Full Gospel Church (predominantly Black church) and La Senda Antigua (Spanish speaking church), LISTOS bilingual preschool, Channel One Food Bank, Project Legacy, Family Promise Rochester, Adopt-a-Highway, Rochester Women’s Shelter, Seasons Hospice, Hawthorne Helps, Jefferson Elementary School, Recovery is Happening, Once

and Future Classics and the Calliope Theater Company, The Landing, Rochester Male Chorus, Planned Parenthood

**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. List any partnerships which your congregation has formally adopted, or movements which otherwise apply to your congregation.

Open and Affirming (ONA).

Immigrant Welcoming.

**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.**

Peace United is driven by a spirit of social justice and compassion. As noted we are a church that lives and breathes our Open and Affirming stance and we recently became a local Sanctuary church. We are open to exploring additional partnerships and would welcome the opportunity to learn more about our partners and ourselves.

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

The Peace United building is home to additional two congregations: Christway Full Gospel Church (predominantly Black congregation) and La Senda Antigua (Spanish speaking congregation). Both groups use the building for worship Sunday afternoons (1pm, 3pm), Bible studies, and community celebrations. Pastor Paul has forged a strong friendship/relationship with the pastor and leaders of Christway, and they have discussed ways to bring the congregations together in events and programming. This is work that needs to be continued as it is apparent that while theology differs, our passion for forging community does not. Peace also works closely with the local Unitarian Universalist church and other progressive congregations on several issues including LGBTQIA+ rights and protections for our immigrant neighbors. Pastor Paul and Pastor Jerry both participate in regular meetings with other local clergy to forge connections and create teachable moments as well.

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

In 2024 we adopted our new mission "Loving without condition; embracing without exception; caring without limit." This statement is both simple and bold. We talk about it and affirm it every week in our worship service. It defines us and our priorities. Loving

without condition means that we share love with everyone regardless of how vast our differences may be. Embracing without exception means that EVERYONE is welcome in our space. We have a welcome team that greets each person as they come in the door, gets to know visitors and encourages us to all wear name tags and affirm our pronouns. Caring without limit is a calling to stay engaged, even when the work is hard, disheartening or exhausting. Peace won't give up in the fight for justice, love and inclusion because God doesn't give up on us.

**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.**

It is a high expectation that our new lead pastor represents Peace United's mission and makes connections with the community and those we support/serve/care about. This is not a pastor's job alone, and it is powerful when a pastor shows up and speaks up for love and Peace.

**4b. The ARDA Reflection**

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

Approximately 65% of our members are 65 or older. In our surrounding neighborhood, 22% of the population is 55 or older, 29% are between the ages of 25 to 45 and 24% are under age 18. This demographic of younger individuals with children in proximity to the church is an area of potential growth for Peace. Peace's members are 95% white whereas 74% of the near vicinity population are white. Increasing our ethnic diversity is certainly an opportunity for growth. Peace likely has a higher percentage of people who identify as LGBTQIA+.

**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.**

The average age of members is older than many neighborhoods adjacent to Peace United. As we try to connect to a younger generation and try to make our programs more intergenerational, this may shift. We hope to continue to create more programming for families and children to increase the participation and involvement of families in our church. Peace sits in a lower middle class neighborhood which puts us in a great spot to connect to the community and provide outreach to neighbors in need. Our congregation is predominantly white, whereas the neighborhood is more racially diverse.

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

Peace United has been working toward bringing our mission outside of the church walls. We do this by providing opportunities for the community to engage in Peace United activities that are not necessarily "churchy." This includes hosting community events, our support of LISTOS preschool, sharing our space with Christway Full Gospel Church and Spanish-speaking La Senda Antigua. We offer a relaxed style of worship and use pronouns and nametags. Our minister of social justice, Pastor Jerry, brings the perspective of a Black man from Liberia to scriptures and world events.

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

Peace United's passionate support for the LGBTQIA+ community is for what we're best known. Peace is a Platinum sponsor of Rochester Pride. We host the Rochester Rainbow Choir, Drag Queen Bingo, Pride bike ride and support groups. Our openness and accessibility has made Peace a desirable and inviting space for the community. Peace has a long history of being the "community church and pastor," providing funerals, weddings and pastoral care for both members and non-members. Peace has become the "light on the hill" for many who are seeking a safe, inclusive and affirming community.

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

Most visitors are drawn to Peace United because of Peace's inclusivity, varied music and entertainment, ONA status and strong stance on social justice. Visitors are greeted by the Welcome Crew who offer sincere joy and fellowship that extends beyond the first visit. All are encouraged to use name tags with pronouns. New members appreciate Peace for this sense of welcome along with the interactive relationship between staff, which creates a relaxed style of worship. They frequently say that after attending just one service, they feel they have found their spiritual home.

## **5. REFERENCES**

**Reference Reflections #1 John Pavlovitz;** Consultant that worked w/our church last year

When I was invited by Peace United into a year-long collaboration to craft the community's collective future together, I heard words I often hear from ministers and church leadership teams when speaking about their intentions: words about doing bold, creative things on behalf of its mission, about respecting but not being beholden to what had been done before, about directly confronting injustice and inequity in ways that emulated Jesus.

As a veteran minister, consultant, and leadership developer, these are variations on themes I've become quite familiar with. I've also gotten used to the disappointment that

often comes when I discover the community isn't really prepared to move from aspiration to incarnation of its values. Despite the best of intentions, they invariably encounter barriers of blind spots, fear, or self-preservation and accept a fine, but ultimately watered-down version of what they might be. That was not my experience with Peace United. At every turn, I was surprised by their courage and creativity and by their refusal to choose the ministry of least resistance.

They are a fearless, joy-fueled, relationally centered, vision-led community that is the product of passionate clergy, empowered lay leaders, and inspired human beings working in concert to craft something that is truly unique. In my travels to hundreds of faith communities over the last decade, I can count on one hand those that have been able to embody the lofty words and admirable ideas in the way Peace United has. They have done this by asking difficult questions, by leaning into challenging conversations, and by putting the lives of human beings at the heart of everything they do—not only those already part of their community, but those they might connect with well beyond the building on Sunday.

The minister and leader who seeks to partner with Peace United should be someone who knows that the Church that must be is in many ways not the Church that has been. It should be someone who truly embraces possibility, welcomes unpredictability, and loves audaciously. And that person will find willing partners in a loving community of people who know that they too define, shape, and embody Peace, and who will give their pastor permission to be authentic and to bring their true selves to this difficult but beautiful work.

It has been my true honor and joy to partner with them and I would welcome any conversation on my experience. In gratitude.

John Pavlovitz

<https://www.peaceunited.us/pastor-profile>

## **Reference Reflections #2 - Linda Reynolds**

Rev. Linda Reynolds Relationship to the Congregation: Associate Pastor at Peace United 2003-2009, now retired UCC Pastor Current home church: Kirkwood United Church of Christ, Kirkwood, MO (Missouri MidSouth Conference)

**Describe some areas of strength in this church's ministry:** My relationship with Peace United began in 2003 when I was called to be their Associate Pastor. I served there until 2009 when I felt called to return to a ministry opportunity that would allow me closer proximity to my family in the St. Louis area. I have remained, from a distance, a friend of the congregation and colleague of Pastor Paul. Cameron Trimble has encouraged congregations to see themselves as “schools of love” where people learn to be “more

compassionate, spiritually mature and socially responsible”. The creativity of leadership, response and engagement of the congregation, and intentional commitment to the needs of the community have fostered Peace United’s core presence in the Rochester Community. It was, when I served there, and continues to be a “school of love”. After a discernment process, the congregation of Peace United voted to become an Open and Affirming congregation (2003?), and it remains a “safe space” as a spiritual home and/or community for ALL people. Their intentional ministry to the LGBTQ+ community and allies adds a vibrancy and energy to their congregational life. Inclusivity of all God’s people is a core value of Peace United. Spirit inspired worship is one of the heart beats of the congregation. It is collaborative, with music that allows people to connect, relevant prayers and concerns for the community, deep encounters with the messages of Scripture and active participation of all worshippers. It is marked with honesty, integrity, and pastoral concern for all. It is a rare worship experience where personal introductions include pronouns: inclusivity at its best. Worship and Music are core values of Peace United. Peace United is a center of peacemaking, activism and service to the Rochester community and beyond. The congregation believes in the urgent call to heal the broken and unjust systems of our world. The opportunities to volunteer both within the church community and Rochester community are extensive, allowing each person to discern their gifts and respond accordingly. Engagement and outreach are core values of Peace United. My ministry experience at Peace United was an opportunity to encourage new models and ways to approach Faith Formation. In 2003, with the support of the Senior Pastor and Council, children remained in worship and Sunday School/Faith Formation followed. Their current educational program, Pathways, created by Dylon Starr (Director of Program and Music), is intergenerational. It meets before worship and prepares participants for the worship experience using the theme and Scripture for the day, with stations or workshops to meet the needs of a variety of learning styles. In addition, there are opportunities weekly for age-appropriate faith formation experiences. Faith Formation for all ages is a core value of Peace United. In the past five years, Peace United has navigated COVID and a heartbreaking, destructive church fire. Strong pastoral leadership, talented staff and the congregation responded with deep commitment and care to stay successfully engaged as a faith community and a staple of the Rochester community. Their love and vitality as a community of faith is evident in their ministries and as you share in worship and/or the life of the congregation. Somewhere on the Peace United website it says something like: let us SHOW you what we believe.

**Describe some areas for improvement in this church’s ministry:** My hope for Peace United is that they continue to build on their strengths. Pastor Paul has served and modeled strong pastoral servant leadership for more than two decades and retires from the

congregation having always encouraged visioning, implementation and engagement. His presence, love for the people and an ongoing vision for the future are gifts that have enabled a long-term, healthy ministry. The staff is gifted and ready for a future that holds the congregation's articulated vision as their guiding principles: caring without limit, embracing without exception, loving without condition.

**Describe a significant experience you have had of this church's ministry:** A personal reflection and a key memory/experience: when my husband and I moved from the St. Louis area to Rochester in the fall of 2003, we settled into a rental home until we found one to purchase. In the spring of 2004, we were assured that moving (again) wouldn't be a big deal and on the morning of our scheduled move, the street was lined with cars, trucks and congregation members who moved all our "stuff" to our new home. Congregational care, for one another and the Rochester community, is a core value of Peace United. Memory/experience of what became the annual Thanksgiving Dinner on the Sunday before Thanksgiving: This was (and is) a meal for anyone who wants to come. Those early years in 2004-2009, the meal was prepared by the congregation (amazing fellowship, collaboration, fun) and the community response was extraordinary with tables for our many guests set up all over the building. It remains a lifelong memory for me of authentic hospitality and servant leadership. For Peace United...it is who they are.

**Anything else you wish to share:** Peace United, from my experience and perspective, has embraced the power to act creatively rather than be reactive to the challenges of congregational life and its future. They have a vision and advocate for values and resources that serve the common good and protect the vulnerable. They are a People following the way of LOVE. My prayers are with Peace United as they engage in their search for their next Lead Pastor,

Linda Reynolds

Cell: 507-254-7630 [lindareyno@aol.com](mailto:lindareyno@aol.com)

<https://www.peaceunited.us/pastor-profile>

### **Reference Reflections # 3 - Dan Doering**

It is my privilege to write this letter of reference and recommendation for Peace United in Rochester, MN. Since my arrival in 2010, Peace United has been a steadfast partner in sharing the good news of God's inclusive love for all people in the Rochester community, continuing a legacy that began well before my time. This vibrant faith community actively lives out its belief through meaningful ministries, including outreach to the 2LGBTQIA+ community, its commitment as Sanctuary congregation, and its role in hosting the LISTOS

dual-immersion Spanish - English preschool. And this is just a glimpse of the impactful work they do.

Peace United is widely recognized for its deep commitment to serving the Rochester community. It is common to find its members volunteering in local homeless shelters and organizations addressing food insecurity. What stands out is their quiet dedication, they serve not for recognition but as a heartfelt response to the Gospel.

Additionally, Peace United boldly engages with the pressing societal issues of our time. No topic is off limit for study, discussion, and action, no matter how complex or controversial. Their commitment to advocating for “the least of these” is something I deeply admire.

As a ministry partner to my own congregation, People of Hope, Peace United has been invaluable. I cannot praise them enough for their faith, service, and impact. Anyone would be fortunate to engage in ministry alongside this remarkable community.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any further questions. May God continue to bless you!

Dan Doering

Personal Cell: 507-461-2544

<https://www.peaceunited.us/pastor-profile>

### **Closing Prayer**

Creator God,

We come before You with open hearts, deep trust in your wisdom and faith in the Spirit’s guidance.

We pray for the pastor to answer Your call with a heart full of love, humility and faithfulness. We pray for our congregation to welcome our new lead pastor and new beginnings. We pray we all remain united in prayer and purpose, supporting one another as we wait, trusting You are guiding every step of this journey.

As we move forward together, may we live out the call to love and serve one another, as echoed in the song “We Are Called” by David Haas.

Amen.

### **Statement of Consent**

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital

information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

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

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

The Search Committee has held periodic congregational listening sessions seeking input regarding the search process and valued Pastoral characteristics. The Committee met with staff to explain the profile process. Staff offered advice regarding the current working relationships and their excitement for the future. The Committee used a Pathways session to explain the process and learn from the children and teens at Peace regarding their vision for the future.

The committee has worked to be as inclusive and transparent as possible while maintaining confidentiality for all parties involved.

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

Peace United was one of the first churches to use this new profile tool. We encountered a few glitches in the new system for which we created work arounds. We were unable to upload our references in the designated location. Below is a URL to our three letters of reference including contact information. We encourage the reader to review these references and, if desired, to reach out to them for additional details and background.

<https://www.peaceunited.us/pastor-profile>

Thank You

Signed: **Brian Winters**; Search Committee Chair

May 31, 2025

### **6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE**

The congregation is currently in good standing with the conference named – yes

**Staff Comment:** Peace UCC is a vibrant church with a very strong leadership capacity.

To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete - yes

To the best of my knowledge, available church financial information is presented thoroughly - yes

**My signature below attests to the above three items.**

**Signature:** *Rev. Cindy Mueller*

**Name / Title:** Minister for Congregations in Transition

**Email:** cindym@uccmn.org

**Phone:** 612.871.0359 ext. 4

**Date :** 4/2/25

This document is created through support to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and is only possible through the covenantal relationships of all settings of the United Church of Christ.

*"Jesus answered them, 'Have faith in God!'" – Mark 11:2*