



Name of Church
The Congregational Church of Topsfield
Address
9 E Common St Topsfield, MA 01983
Conference:
Southern New England
Association:
Northeast
Title
Pastor
Start Date
n/a
Description
CC Topsfield Pastor Search

Church Contact Information

No contact information has been added to this profile.

Listing Information

Web Presences

<http://topsfieldchurch.org>

Type: Other

Additional Formal Ecumenical Affiliations

N/A

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person

Name:

Rev. Katie Omberg (they/them)

Title:

Bridge ACM for the Northeast Region; Southern New England Conference, United Church of Christ

Phone:

508-244-4769

Email:

ombergk@sneucc.org

Summary Ministry Description

We are hoping to grow our church in terms of size of congregation and active involvement in actionable mission work. We are seeking a minister who will inspire us and facilitate our attracting new and younger families and expressing our faith through action.

Church pictures



What we value about living in our area.

Topsfield and its surrounding towns are within a short driving distance to cities such as Boston; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; and Portland, Maine; but the area also has a rural feel, with hiking trails, the Ipswich wildlife sanctuary, and Bradley Palmer State Park. It is also in close proximity to the ocean and beautiful North Shore beaches. We value our sense of community in a safe and welcoming environment.

Current size of membership

199

Average in person attendance

58

Does your church hold virtual worship services?

Yes

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

Video Conferencing

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

10

Languages used in ministry

English

Position Title

Pastor

Position Duration

Settled

Compensation Level

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

Link to current Conference guidelines

[Download compensation guidelines](#)

Scope of Work

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:

- Is an effective preacher

Second:

- Is accepting of people with divergent views

Third:

- Inspires people to put their faith into action

Compensation and Support

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)	48000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Housing Allowance	48000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Any Experiential Difference (Related to years of experience)	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salary Basis: 96000			
Pension/Annuity	13440	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Security and Medicare Offset	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical/Dental Insurance	19200	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life Insurance	1600	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability Insurance	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worker's Compensation	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Additional benefits:

Self-employment tax offset: \$ 7344

Continuing Education: \$ 2100
Professional Expenses: \$ 1500
Misc. additional Benefits: \$ 2000

The expected living situation for our next minister.

The pastor will live either in town or in one of the surrounding communities.

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

N/A

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:

Other:

As mentioned there are additional benefits part of the package that can be reallocated where needed.

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

The Southern New England Conference offers several groups for ministers in the conference.
Information is available at <https://www.sneucc.org/clergy-resources>.

Who Is God Calling to Minister with Us?

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

We wish to collaborate with a new minister by exploring new ways to connect with the community and make that outreach part of our mission. This could mean getting involved in more community events and also inviting the community to our events. We look to empower members to actively foster a culture of service locally and globally instead of only participating in board driven activities.

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

We hope that our new minister will assist our congregation with focusing our efforts on effective, realistic missions beyond our church walls that we can accomplish with our current congregational members.

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

The Congregational Church of Topsfield is a traditional New England Congregational Church. There are no special language or cultural requirements.

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.

- Working Together for Justice and Mercy
- Exhibiting Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice
- Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions
- Caring for All Creation

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 hope to become a congregation that is a beacon of hope in a world of despair.

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

• Over the past year, every one to two months, we have held special intergenerational worship services in our fellowship hall, with more upbeat and varied music than our traditional service in the meetinghouse. The intent is to actively engage the children and youth in worship, and to keep the adults interested as well. For these services, we have brought in outside musical groups including a saxophone quintet and a blues band, and have also had our own congregants be the lead singers. We have used the more informal format to “act out” Bible verses such as the Jonah story, and to do small-group activities at the tables where we sit for these services. Recently one of our congregants reinstituted the Women’s Ministry, the various events of which include a book study, a cooking class, a floral arranging party, and a hands-on service event at one of our mission partners. • Finally, in a change to our traditional youth group mission trip, which was usually a one-week volunteer experience over the summer in an out-of-state locale, in 2024 our youth instead went on a weekend local mission trip. They stayed overnight in the Congregational church one town over and served projects right in our backyard (in Lawrence, North Andover, and Georgetown). This allowed more of the youth to participate than would have been possible for a longer trip.

Congregation Reflections

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

We believe in practicing what Jesus taught us through serving and welcoming others, and in supporting those in our community with love and acceptance. We see the Holy Spirit in our midst in many different ways: in worship during a particularly beautiful musical piece that is shared by our choir or bell choir, during a prayer of Thanksgiving or a particularly relevant sermon that is preached, or, outside of the meetinghouse, by participating in a service project with others in the congregation.

Strengths or positive qualities of our congregation.

Our congregation is very friendly and open to all. We voted several years ago to be Open and Affirming and try to live that as part of our worship practice and be open to all. Our congregation is very supportive of those in need. We have a strong Board of Missions and Outreach, which funds nonprofit and faith-based organizations in our area and the wider world; many members of the church are involved with volunteer opportunities. We also support each other during hard times in our individual lives—often when one has a change in circumstances (a death, a birth, a lost job, an illness), other members of the church will rally around that person or family to bring food and support as needed.

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

As a small church with aging membership we are struggling to implement the ideas we have to rejuvenate our congregation and continue with our activities.

What worship is like when our congregation gathers.

Traditional worship takes place in our historic meetinghouse, located in the center of Topsfield. Service is in a standard Congregational format, with Passing of the Peace, hymns, prayers, music, and a sermon, which is normally around twenty minutes. Communion is served on the first Sunday of the month. Occasionally we will have baptisms or welcome new members during the service as well—these events involve the parents of the baby or the new members covenanting with the church (saying vows) and the congregation welcoming them. Traditionally, one of our Prayer Shawl Ministry members will present a handmade prayer shawl. All services are enhanced by audiovisuals on TV screens and are broadcast on local TV, and since Covid there is also an option to join via a Zoom meeting. Services are also provided at the church’s website for viewing.

We have recently started doing an Intergenerational Service in the fellowship hall, with more modern and upbeat music, with the aim of getting more of the children and younger families involved. This has been well received and has attracted some younger families who don’t normally attend our church.

The educational program/faith formation vision of our church.

Our youth may be part of the church’s Faithworks youth group, attending social activities, and also the annual mission trip. In addition, there are also several Sundays where the youth attend a Sunday School after a brief time in worship—they meet in the coffee shop down the street to discuss their faith with the youth leaders. Our younger children attend Sunday school after a brief stay in church with their parents. During the service with their parents, children are provided “children’s worship bulletins” to match up with the week’s scripture lesson so that they are primed for the lesson in Sunday school. They review a Bible lesson with their teacher and then have a discussion and do a craft. Our Sunday school teacher is following the liturgical calendar for lessons. Children are also encouraged to participate in church, providing music or serving as readers. Adults are able to attend book or Bible study throughout the year. This is sometimes led by the minister, and sometimes by a lay member. Recent topics included Reading the Bible Again for the First Time by Marcus Borg and a Lenten Bible study led by one of our congregants, himself a Methodist minister.

How our congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

Decisions are discussed in committees and then often are presented in “Church Chats” during fellowship hour after church, or during the annual meeting. Information and minor decisions are also communicated during the announcements section at the beginning of Sunday worship or in the email notice (Inspire) that goes out weekly. CCoT boards are defined in the bylaws and meet at least monthly. Board chairs, Moderator(s), Clerk, Treasurer, and Pastor form the Church Council, which also meets monthly. Responsibilities of the boards are as follows: Board of Trustees: Cares for and maintains custody of all funds and property of the church. Board of Deacons: Guides spiritual life of the congregation. Board of Mission and Outreach: Promotes mission and social outreach locally, regionally, and nationally. Board of Children & Youth: Creates program for Christian education. Board of Community & Communications: Organizes fellowship activities of the church and outreach to the broader community. All rights and duties of these groups are defined in the “Bylaws of the Congregational Church of Topsfield, Massachusetts” from January 2025, which are available together with the “2025 Annual Report.”



When it comes to decision-making, 0 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...

Council is the central group to make decisions.

Any church member has direct and quick access to Council members and the Pastor. Requests for help are initially by phone and can be sent out to the congregation by email within short time.

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

[Bylaws 02-02-2025.pdf](#)

[ANNUAL MEETING 2025_02_02.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:	199
NUMBER OF ACTIVE NON-MEMBERS:	34
TOTAL OF CHURCH PARTICIPANTS (SUM OF THE NUMBERS ABOVE):	233

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

No

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

TIME	PERCENTAGE
MORE THAN 10 YEARS:	90%
LESS THAN 10, MORE THAN 5 YEARS:	5%
LESS THAN 5 YEARS:	5%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Number of total participants by age:

AGE	NUMBER
0-11	14
12-17	11
18-24	5
25-34	5
35-44	11
45-54	17
55-64	25
65-74	74
75+	58

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE ADULTS UNDER 35:	3%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH MINORS:	18%
SINGLE ADULTS AGE 35-65:	2%
JOINT HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO MINORS:	45%
SINGLE ADULTS OVER 65:	32%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

EDUCATION LEVEL	PERCENTAGE
HIGH SCHOOL:	15%
COLLEGE:	50%
GRADUATE SCHOOL:	35%
SPECIALTY TRAINING:	0%
OTHER EDUCATION LEVEL:	0%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes



Percentage of adults in various employment types:

EMPLOYMENT TYPE	PERCENTAGE
ADULTS WHO ARE EMPLOYED:	40%
ADULTS WHO ARE RETIRED:	55%
ADULTS WHO ARE NOT FULLY EMPLOYED:	5%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

The range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

People in the congregation work primarily in professional jobs—finance, business, computers, engineering, medical.

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

Most of the congregation, like our surrounding communities, is Caucasian (white). We do have several members who hail originally from Germany and other European countries. We are welcoming of others, however, and do have a smattering of members from different ethnic backgrounds.

What diversity means in our context?

Most of the congregation, like our surrounding communities, is Caucasian (white). We do have several members who hail originally from Germany and other European countries. We are welcoming of others, however, and do have a smattering of members from different ethnic backgrounds.

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

Yes

Comment after the exercise:

We became O and A in 2008, and have not revisited a diversity initiative since.

Participation and Staffing



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)	18	Lay leaders, pastor
Baptisms (number last year)	50	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	18	Youth Director
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	241	Pastor/Music Director
Church-wide Meals	55	various church boards
Choirs and Music Groups	23	Music director
Church-based Bible Study	17	Lay leaders, pastor
Communion (served how often?)	55	Pastor
Confirmation (number confirmed last year)	0	Pastor/youth leaders
Intergenerational Groups	0	Youth leader
Outdoor Worship	55	Pastor, AV team, Boards
Public Advocacy Work	20	Board of Mission and Outreach
Weddings (number last year)	0	Pastor
Worship (digital / online / livestream)	58	Pastor/Music director/AV
Young Adult Groups or Classes	12	Youth leader

Worship Times

No Response

Additional comments:

N/A

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

No Response

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

N/A

List of all current staff:

No Response

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

We are a small church that offers many opportunities.

Church Finances



Current Annual Income

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	414440
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	114123
Endowment Draw (beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal")	50161
Fundraising Events	25267
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	100000
Grants	47901
Rentals of Church Building	62603
Total	814495

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

558398

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?

30

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

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered?

Flat sum: \$ 5.000

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

NaN

Total amount of loan debt:

No response

Reason for debt:

No response

Are capital and other payments current?

Yes

Capital Campaigns

Description of any building programs projected or underway.

N/A

Pictures

Description of any capital campaigns in the last ten years:

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

Description of any capital campaigns underway or anticipated:

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

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

N/A

Does your church have an endowment?

Yes

What is the market value of the assets?

No response

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

Regular

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

4%

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

we budget for regular monthly income from the endowment

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

Current earnings have outpaced withdrawals in recent years; influx into endowment with the sale of non-productive assets

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

The land sale will add over \$1M to our endowment portfolio in late 2025 or early 2026.

Other Assets

No response

Reserves (savings):

No response

Investments (other than endowment):

No response

Does the church have a parsonage?

No

Description of all buildings owned by the church:

The Meetinghouse and the Emerson Center are the only buildings owned by the church. The Meetinghouse is built on town property and will fall back to the town once it is not used for at least 3 years.

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 child care spaces for wheelchair users and people with other mobility aids
Wheelchair access in bathrooms
Handrails on all stairs
Sound system in sanctuary and other meeting places (fellowship hall, large meeting rooms, etc.)

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs:

In the meetinghouse wheelchairs have an entry door at the side of the building. There is access to the nave, narthex and bathroom.
There is no access to the sanctuary, sacristy and choir room.
In the Emerson Center there is access to fellowship hall, parlor, bathrooms and office area via main entrance and elevator.
There is no access to the upper level rooms.

Policies regarding financial practices of the church:

Board Chairs authorize payment of bills assigned to their board. Any other bills are handled by the Trustees.

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

The church has made a conscious effort to ensure that we can support our staff and programs as our pledge income over the past several years has shrunk as a percentage of our overall budget. By making adjustments and selling assets, we are well positioned to fully fund our church's mission for the foreseeable future.

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

One of the most important and consequential events to our church in the past ten years has been the sale of the "Emerson fields"—a parcel of land adjacent to our fellowship hall which had previously been rented out to the town for use as baseball fields. Our church was approached by an interested buyer (with the plan for this land to become low-income senior housing) and we have an agreement with this buyer. We intend to use the funds from the sale to create an endowment to support future church activities. Another important event in the life of our church was the decision in 2008 (made after a church-wide vote) to become an Open and Affirming congregation in the UCC model.

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

During the COVID pandemic, we had to abruptly start using Zoom for church services. As a result of this change, we installed two large TV monitors at the front of the meetinghouse, as well as cameras inside so that the service can be recorded. With the TV monitors, our minister has been able to incorporate more audiovisual elements in the service (e.g., showing a clip of a video that is relevant to the sermon). We also still have many congregants who sometimes or regularly attend service over Zoom.

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.

Whenever there is a consequential decision as above, we typically have one or more Church Chats to allow people to have time to express their opinion in a public forum. We then vote on these decisions during a formal church meeting.

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

As mentioned above, the sale of the Emerson fields to an outside buyer was a challenging time for our congregation. There were strong opinions on both sides of the issue, and the decision was ultimately resolved through our Annual Meeting and the voting process. Another controversial decision was in allowing alcohol to be served in the Emerson Center; this decision was proposed as a way to make our fellowship hall more favorable for rentals. There were several Church Chats about this topic, and then ultimately a simple majority vote was held and the votes were in favor.

Ministerial History:

No response

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

N/A

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.

LifeBridge, Salem, MA: members prepare meals at a homeless shelter. Refugee Immigration Ministry: support refugees and asylum seekers in the wider community. Community Garden: a vegetable garden on-site to deliver produce to local food pantry. Fair Booth: operate a restaurant booth at the annual Topsfield Fair to support church's missions. Peniel Dialogue: forum for both church and community members to participate in a dialogue about challenging topics. Youth Mission Activities: Our youth served at local community-facing organizations. Women's Ministry: sponsors and organizes various opportunities for women of the church and beyond to get together to share community. Collations: supports and organizes receptions (food, tables, cleanup) after funerals held at our church, for either members or non-members. Roots of Peace (onetime event): Roots of Peace is local Palestinian and Israeli initiative for understanding, nonviolence, and transformation. Boy Scout Troop #81: church sponsored.

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

Our minister sometimes goes to the more local and national meetings or activities related to the UCC (we as a congregation have supported and encouraged this), but in general, our congregants haven't attended these meetings or conferences.

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

Our church supports the activities of the Tritown Human Rights Coalition and the Earth Day Planning Committee.

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.

Open and Affirming (ONA).

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.

We display an Open and Affirming sign in front of the church and have participated in the Pride parade that has been held in our town for the past several years. "God is Still Speaking" was previously part of our church's witness, although it hasn't been discussed as much recently.

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

In the past, during Holy Week, the Topsfield churches had ecumenical services, but after Covid, that has fallen away.

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

Our church held a "visioning process" in early 2024 during which leaders and church members attempted to come up with a core vision statement, and while a unified statement was not agreed upon, the quote from Micah 6 to "act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God" seemed a fitting summary of the church's beliefs, with the values of open-mindedness, compassion, fairness, and justice being important to most. We recognize the challenges that our church faces with declining membership and competing priorities for our time. A good example of this is the annual restaurant booth: Each year it has become harder and harder to fill all of the slots for staffing the booth, and as a result, many of the members of the church booth committee are at risk of "burning out". Our church does not suffer from lack of great ideas, but the challenge is in having enough people able and willing to do the work to make the project a success.

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.

Our current pastor spends his time crafting a sermon as well as the prayers for our worship service (he has often modified existing prayers or written his own), as well as structuring the worship service, in conjunction with the music director. He also attends many or most of the lay meetings (although that isn't specifically required; he has preferred to be very involved with the governance and organization of the church). He has been available for pastoral care, and he tends to know the life concerns of church members and their families, because he makes it part of his work to stay abreast of church members' personal challenges and to offer support. He does the same, to a more limited degree, for members of the wider community. As mentioned above, our current pastor has attended local and national UCC meetings and also keeps himself involved with spiritual activities in the community not directly related to church.

The ARDA or MissionInsite Reflection

ARDA/MI File

[Download ARDA/MI File](#)

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

In the town of Topsfield we are currently seeing the age group of 30 to 50 as a majority, the group of seniors are declining. From our research we understand that younger families use the weekends for mostly sports which affects even Sunday mornings when we have our Church Service. Seniors are moving out of the closer area because of high property taxes.

As mentioned earlier, members age over 65 are dominating the congregation and younger families need new reasons to join a church.

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.

It is similar to the local demographics in the community. Most of our towns share the same demographics: higher house prices, good schools and few industrial areas.

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

We are currently working to attract younger families by offering Inter-generational services. Together with the Tritown Council we are offering during the week activities for students in our Emerson Center.

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

Community leaders know that they can rely on the church to help them with various community events and projects (Strawberry Festival, Earth Day, town cleanup, etc.) in the form of space use, volunteer recruitment, and promotion.

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

People are attracted to our openness and willing to engage with others. There is a strong sense of community and belonging as well as "being cared for" in our church.

References

☒ Janelle Pescadore

Completed: Thursday, Mar 20, 2025

I've partnered with Topsfield Congregational Church for 4 years through community events planning, especially the LGBTQIA+ Pride Parade.

Primary Email Address: Janelle.pesc@gmail.com

Mobile Phone: 7812288868

Reference Response

I have had the pleasure of working with the Topsfield Congregational Church for the past four years through my role as the organizer of Tri-Town Pride. Their unwavering support for the LGBTQIA+ community has been invaluable. From volunteer assistance to providing space and resources when our nonprofit was just beginning, they have demonstrated true allyship. Their generosity has helped make Pride events possible and strengthened our community. Additionally, I've had the opportunity to volunteer with their Topsfield Fair booth, working alongside their members and building meaningful connections. Their commitment to inclusion, collaboration, and community service makes them an outstanding partner in fostering a welcoming environment for all.

☒ Meredith Shaw

Completed: Monday, Mar 24, 2025

The agency that I lead, Tri-Town Council, is a community partner of the Congregational Church of Topsfield.

Primary Email Address: mshaw@tritowncouncil.org

Business: 9788876512

Reference Response

Meredith Shaw, Executive Director Tri-Town Council
7 Grove St. Topsfield, MA
cell: 617.688.3722

I will be leaving TTC as of April 11th. I can still be reached at the email address provided, but have included my cell phone, rather than our office phone. Feel free to use that number to get in touch. Thank you!

I have been connected to the CCOT as a community and coalition partner since 2012, when the youth pastor joined our youth substance use prevention Coalition. As a local community based non-profit, the church has been a generous and valued partner



over the years. We've collaborated on many community (youth and adult) events, and the church is a pillar of support for the Tri-Town community, youth and families.

☒ Ron Mastrogiovanni

Completed: Tuesday, Mar 25, 2025

As a non-member, I have been involved in church-related community activities such as working at the Fair and participating in community dialogues.

Primary Email Address: rm@hvsfinancial.com

Business: 6178759313

Reference Response

As a non-member, my experience with the church is linked to its essential role in the community regardless of religion. Members spend two weeks annually working at the Fair, selling dinners. Income generated from the fair is donated to several charities. I believe the church could raise the amount donated to charities from members, but since it is important to the town, members donate their time to prepare food, run the grill, and wash pots & pans.

The church also contracted with Essential Partners (EP), an organization that manages dialogues that address highly controversial issues. I was asked to take the EP facilitator training class, and we had several successful dialogues.

And I was invited to attend a Bible class, which I had never done. Members accepted me with open arms, and I significantly increased my understanding of the Bible.

This church is an essential part of our community.

Closing Prayer

Micah 6:8 "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Statement of Consent

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.

This Pastoral Search Committee created the profile with the help and support of the Church Council

Werner Griesshammer Katie Townes Alison Miller Charlotte Melling Peter Lindholm Tony Rogers Cathy Imboden Susie Reed

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

No response