



Brief Church Profile

First Congregational UCC
266 S Chestnut St | Ravenna, OH 44266-3098
<http://ravennaucc.org/>

1. WHO ARE WE TODAY – *description of who you are as a church, and your vision and mission statement*

As the first church in Ravenna, established 203 years ago, we continue to provide leadership in the community. Our mission statement of 2002 reflects the strong commitment we have to this principle. “The vision of First Congregational Church of Ravenna, Ohio is to be the physical representation of the love and truth of Jesus Christ as shared with Christians and non-Christians in Ravenna and beyond.” Hence, we are a mission giving church. We financially support local missions, including – Center of Hope, Safer Future, King Kennedy Center, and others in addition to volunteer hours of these and Loaves and Fishes.

2. WE LIVE OUT OUR VISION AND MISSION THROUGH THE FOLLOWING – *worship, faith formation, care and fellowship, mission and outreach opportunities:*

We have continually provided regular Sunday worship services, indoors and outside, and special extra liturgical services without interruption for many years. Even during the pandemic we quickly adapted to Zoom and Facebook presentations and continue to offer these plus in person worship.

We are a very fellowship-oriented congregation and are known for our welcoming and friendly attitude. Our physical building is often made available for community events and we serve as a Red Cross emergency evacuation site. We are home to a very active Girl Scout program of over 130 kids who meet several times a week. We welcomed them to our church when our sister church, First Christian, Disciples of Christ, had to sell their building.

Several years ago, our pastor started an adult study group. We call ourselves Thursday Theologians and meet for a sack lunch and study weekly. It has become a wonderful program and 8-10 folks attend regularly. We were able to continue throughout the pandemic via Zoom and recently resumed in person study.

We have been in the past and continue to be a very mission minded congregation with both hands on and financial participation. There is an attachment listing some of the organizations we have assisted.

Our scholarship program is currently assisting 40 students in various fields of study. Since its inception in 1963 the program has provided over \$1,000,000 in educational funding. The program is available to non-members.

Our Women’s Fellowship, over the years, has provided thousands of dollars in donations to various women focused groups. Funding was obtained by multiple church/public dinners and special group dinners.

The church has supported and Women’s Fellowship has implemented 18 years of participation in Loaves and Fishes, a community church sponsored program that provides Saturday hot lunches to the folks who are in need of help.

One area we all feel we have neglected is our “care” ministry. We do need help to restore what used to be an active part of our church. We aren’t as good at caring for ourselves as we should be.

3. STATISTICAL DATA

- Active Membership: 60
- Total Reported Membership: 99
- Sunday Worship average attendance: 30 (3-5 online)
- Average Church School Attendance 2-7
- Members serving on Boards and Committees (DO NOT include small groups): 9
- Mission outreach giving, annual: 2.5 % of the budget
- Our church's annual plan for resourcing the ministry (budget): 320,536
- Number of staff persons serving the church: 6

4. WHAT HAVE BEEN SOME TRENDS IN THE CHURCH FOR THE LAST 5 YEARS?

We have become an "older church" in the last several years. Our "younger" members are in their fifties! Folks younger than that do occasionally attend, mostly on Christmas and Easter.

The pandemic made it necessary to become more tech savvy, learning how to Zoom etc. Surprisingly we did fine with this.

We continue to worry about how to attract new members, young and old, but have yet to discover the secret. We have been without a real music ministry for 10 years and that has been a huge loss for some of us.

5. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR? WHAT HAVE BEEN SOME TRENDS IN THE LARGER COMMUNITY/TOWN IN WHICH THE CHURCH IS LOCATED?

Before Covid our community was struggling with increasing poverty and now it has become an even more serious issue.

Our schools have a declining enrollment and many of the students are food deprived. The Ravenna School system is currently on a 100% subsidized lunch program.

Ravenna, as the county seat, has seen an increase in people without any housing and consequently the various issues that brings.

The general population is transient, with 75% living in rental properties.

On the plus side, we have a wonderful community focused library and an active group, Main Street Ravenna, working to keep the city moving forward with revitalization projects and activities.

There are many folks who are very supportive of the town and are always willing to work on any number of projects.

6. THE SPECIFIC MINISTRIES/ISSUES YOU EXPECT OUR NEXT PASTOR to address during their tenure -including the gifts, talents, and skills and leadership style you are looking for in your next pastor

Our next Pastor must be able to continue to guide us in the teachings of Jesus and how to apply them in our lives. We want to continue learning and practicing the philosophy of the UCC by providing a welcoming and non-judgmental environment.

We need/want a confident, but not controlling, leader who is able to relate to older and potential younger members. Someone relatively easy going who can diplomatically work with many different folks with lots of ideas. We hope our new leader would want to continue working/meeting with other community religious leaders via RAMA.

We definitely want to continue our Thursday Theologians and hope there might be a need for a confirmation

class in the future.

Our congregation appreciates a good sermon from which we learn something new.

Patience and a highly developed sense of humor are a must!

We don't expect much, do we?

Skill in attracting younger families while promoting openness of UCC.

7. PROVIDE AN ESTIMATED COMPENSATION RANGE you are offering in dollar amounts. If less than fulltime, specify the hours to be worked.

Half time - We follow the Heartland Conference Compensation guidelines and we'll be glad to negotiate.

Edith Scott

Council/Search Committee Chairperson

April 18, 2025

Date



Signature of Association Staff

May 26, 2025

Date

Association Staff member assisting:

Rev. Dr. Elena Larssen, Transitional Association General Minister

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