



Name of Church
First Church of Christ in Mansfield Congregational

Address
PO Box 36
Mansfield Center, CT 06250

Conference:
Southern New
England

Association:
Windham

Title
Mansfield Center, CT: Part-Time Settled Pastor

Start Date
Jun 16, 2025

Description
FCC Mansfield Congregational - Mansfield, CT; Part Time Settled Minister

Church Contact Information

(860) 423-9008 (Church Primary Phone)

office@mansfielducc.org (Primary Email Address)

Listing Information

Web Presences

<http://www.myfcc.info/>

Type: Professional

<https://www.facebook.com/FCCMansfield/>

Type: Professional

<https://www.youtube.com/fccmansfield>

Type: Professional

Additional Formal Ecumenical Affiliations

No response

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person

Name:

Rev. Carol Steinbrecher

Title:

Area Conference Minister North Central Region

Phone:

508-244-4887

Email:

SteinbrecherC@sneucc.org

Summary Ministry Description

We are a small but active and vibrant spiritual community. As an Open and Affirming, Just Peace and Green congregation, we welcome all no matter where they are on life's journey. We are known in the community for our social justice activism and support of many local service organizations and service projects. We encourage our lay leaders to be active participants in Sunday worship service and in the leadership of the church.

We are looking for someone who can lead us as we move forward with a capital campaign and visioning retreat. We are excited about the future of our church and the role we can play in this tumultuous world. We see ourselves as a community that can offer sanctuary to all. Our motto is "Where Faith takes Action." We look forward to learning and growing with our new minister as we plan ways to support our current and future congregation and community.

Church pictures



What we value about living in our area.

We are located in northeast Connecticut, approximately 25 miles east of our state capital in Hartford, about half-way between New York City and Boston. While this largely rural area is known as Connecticut's "Quiet Corner", we are also close to small urban communities such as Willimantic and within driving distance of major urban centers.

We are home to the flagship state University of Connecticut which has a beautiful campus and significant influence on the region and our membership (think Basketball, Engineering and Agriculture). Eastern Connecticut State University is also nearby in Willimantic.

Mansfield and surrounding towns offer numerous opportunities for outdoor recreation, with several nature preserves, state parks, state forests, lakes, ponds and rivers nearby. Our community and senior centers offer numerous social and recreational opportunities for children and adults. Fresh local produce is available from several seasonal farmer's markets and at one of the few remaining store front food cooperatives in New England. Families often move to our community to access our highly regarded public school system.

Our church membership comes from Mansfield/Storrs and a variety of small local towns within a 15 mile radius. Many of our members choose to be members of First Church, despite having more local Congregational churches in the communities where they reside.

Current size of membership

85

Average in person attendance

45

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?

7

Languages used in ministry

English

Position Title

Mansfield Center, CT: Part-Time Settled Pastor

Position Duration

Settled

Compensation Level

3/4 Time (approximately 30-32 hours/week)

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

Link to current Conference guidelines

<https://www.sneucc.org/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:**

Our congregation identified three priority characteristics for our future pastor to embody.

The first was as a friend/fellow traveler.

We seek a warm and loving person who can relate to us with kindness, thoughtfulness and compassion. We seek a minister who listens well, easily relates to all ages, and who shares our commitment to social justice and inclusivity. We value creativity, intelligence and humor. We enjoy music and sacred art such as visual arts, drama, and dance, as part of our worship service. We want someone who is willing to roll up their sleeves and join us on our journey into the future, embodying our motto "where faith takes action." We want someone who is flexible and who uses their faith to learn with and from us to better us and the community.

Second:

The second priority characteristic is for our minister to be a spiritual guide that encourages each member's personal spiritual journey. We truly believe that no matter where you are on life's journey you are welcome here. We are a congregation made up of many who were raised in a Christian community, though not in the UCC church. We want to grow in our understanding of the Gospel and be empowered to turn the Christian message into action.

Third:

The third role we value in our minister is that of a strong worship leader. We want someone who is comfortable leading a worship service with contributions from lay leaders and children. Congregational members are intricately involved in Sunday worship through a variety of tasks including digital ministry, greeting, delivering announcements, leading several parts of the liturgy, preparing for and serving communion, and occasionally preaching. We have volunteer leadership for our choir, and individuals who provide music ministry. We provide regular opportunities for the children's worship circle to participate in services. We appreciate sermons that are biblically based but also connect to our day to day lives and current world events. We value sermons that reflect personal experiences. Our congregation enjoys the inclusion of elements from other traditions and faith in worship. We believe it celebrates the diversity and the unity of our church and better reflects the image of God.

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)	56250	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing Allowance	0	✓	✓
Any Experiential Difference (Related to years of experience)	15000	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salary Basis: 71250			
Pension/Annuity	7875	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Security and Medicare Offset	4303	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical/Dental Insurance	17250	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life Insurance	844	<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.

The Housing Allowance will be a portion of the Cash Basis. The candidate will determine what percentage will be reported as Salary and what percentage will be reported as Housing Allowance.

The Experiential Difference is negotiable and based upon experience, expertise and other factors.

Pension/Annuity is 14% of salary plus housing allowance.

Social security/Medicare is a self-employment tax offset of 7.65% of salary and housing.

The placeholder amount shown for Medical/Dental is the non-Medicare rate for single coverage of an individual age 41+ under UCC Health Benefit Plan A single coverage for Dental and Vision.

Life Insurance/Disability is 1.5% cash salary and housing.

Total compensation package range is \$86,522 to \$104,995 depending on experience.

Compensation package includes up to \$1800 annually for Continuing Education, up to \$1700 annually for Mileage Reimbursement, and up to \$1200 annually for Professional Expenses.

The expected living situation for our next minister.

We expect that the Pastor lives within commuting distance, supported by a housing allowance.

If a parsonage is provided, will the church offer a home equity allowance to the pastor? (The recommended guidelines for a home equity allowance is equal to 1.5% of the average home value in the community; this is considered taxable to the minister. The Housing Equity Offset should not be calculated into the Salary Basis upon which other Benefits are determined. Churches should consult a tax advisor prior to establishing any account for an equity allowance to ensure compliance with IRS rules on nonqualified deferred compensation plans.)

No

We own a parsonage but it is currently being rented by a long-term tenant and is not available for housing the pastor at this time.

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

We are open to conversation with any candidate about bi-vocational employment. We have a very active lay ministry that has served the church well when we have any absences of our pastor.

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

Reimbursement for use of personal vehicle.
Conference and/or Association meeting registrations
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.

Our minister will have the support of the Windham Area Interfaith Ministries (WAIM), the Windham Association of the Southern New England Conference, the Clergy Communities of Practice, First Church of Christ Pastoral Support Committee and other UCC conferences and workshops as they are available.

Who Is God Calling to Minister with Us?

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

Our primary ministry goal is to support and expand our current vibrant congregation and the impact we have on the greater community. We are preparing for a congregational retreat to re-focus our mission. We postponed the retreat until we had a new settled pastor so they could participate and learn about our congregation. We are also in the process of planning for a capital campaign to address the physical needs of the church including accessibility and energy efficiency,

We have a continued commitment to be a welcoming and inclusive community for everyone regardless of ability, sexual orientation or race/culture. We would like to expand our social justice and community outreach and service projects.

We want to focus on spiritual formation and education and would like to offer more intergenerational fellowship opportunities. We are looking for guidance to address the needs of the youth in our church as they enter middle and high school. We are looking to expand opportunities for children to actively participate in worship. We are also looking to create more adult education opportunities.

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

We are planning a congregational retreat when our new minister joins us. We are looking to re-visit our mission and determine our focus into the future. We are involved in many community service organizations. One of the items we will focus on at the retreat is how to best make use of our unused space to serve the community. This will also allow our capital campaign to take shape. We are excited to begin this new journey in collaboration with our new minister. We will rely on their guidance to keep us focused and help narrow our priorities for the next three to five years and to do so in service of our faith.

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

As an Open and Affirming congregation, we use inclusive language in most of our worship to be respectful of all.

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. **Exhibiting a spiritual foundation and ongoing spiritual practice.** We are committed to life long spiritual development and faithful personal stewardship.
2. **Working together for justice and mercy.** We want to expand our understanding of our community context and how we can support necessary change.
3. **Strengthening inter-and intra personal assets.** We respect the dignity of all God's people and want to maintain a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life experiences.
4. **Caring for all creation.** We look to provide hope and healing in a hurting world by nurturing care and compassion for God's 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.

God is calling us to continue the flow into deeper waters of our own faith-based affirmation, "where faith takes action". We are a warm and welcoming congregation. Our doors are open to people of all faiths, sexual orientations, races, and abilities.

We recognize that although we are an aging congregation, we have an up and coming younger generation eager to raise their children in a faith community. As such, we see our future as one that increases our partnership with the wider community to access and support services and broaden the reach of our congregation. We see a need given the turbulent times both nationally and abroad to be a safe sanctuary for all—a haven where people feel welcomed, supported and able to participate in efforts to improve the lives of our neighbors.

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

We are offering intergenerational worship and would like to expand these opportunities to accommodate the diverse ages of the children. Based on input from parents, we would like to offer confirmation for teens and social, wholesome peer activities for all the children. The congregation would like to create more intergenerational family-oriented activities for the church and the wider community.

We would like an adult education program to enrich our understanding of the Christian faith and equip us for ministry amongst the world's challenges.

We are a healthy, strong congregation making our own decisions with guidance from our interim pastor. Thanks to the guidelines in our Behavioral Covenant, our congregation manages and resolves conflicts well.

To assess the long-term needs of the church, we will be hosting a visioning retreat in the near future. We are also planning for a capital campaign to address the physical infrastructure of the church.

Currently, various community groups regularly rent our Fellowship Hall, and we are exploring ways to make more use of our unused space available.

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

While our congregation is drawn from a variety of Christian traditions (only 27% were raised in the UCC), we mostly view the Bible as authoritative and instructive, but not literal historic or scientific truth. We understand God to be the source of all goodness, life, and love. As Christians, we see Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of God's covenant with humanity and the clearest example of the life we are to lead. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live out the Gospel in our community.

Strengths or positive qualities of our congregation.

We are known as a warm and welcoming faith community with a commitment to social justice.

We were one of the first UCC churches in Connecticut to become an official Open and Affirming Church (1990). This decision was not taken lightly and required a year of discernment. As part of this decision, we were intentional to include individuals of all abilities. Members of the wider community have indicated their appreciation of our stance on this issue often citing our public signage and willingness to support the LGBTQ+ community and our inclusion of individuals of all abilities.

One of the items we take great pride in is our Behavioral Covenant. Established in 2009, the covenant was developed as a result of prior conflict within the congregation. We knew that the behaviors we were exhibiting were not the behavior that portrayed our faith. Since the development of the covenant, we have eliminated past conflicts and are appreciative of the honesty and comfort we experience in our church community today. We have had many congregations reach out to us to ask if they can use our covenant as a basis for developing one of their own.

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

Our current challenge is we have an aging population with many long term members who are over the age of 60. Over time, this will impact our financial stability; however, we have an active group of young families. We want to make sure our faith community is meeting their needs. We have major work to do on our physical plant for accessibility and energy efficiency and are planning a capital campaign to address this.

What worship is like when our congregation gathers.

Our worship services (Sundays 10:15 to approximately 11:15) are very welcoming and interactive. We enjoy greeting each other before and after the service. Congregational members are intricately involved in Sunday worship through a variety of tasks including digital ministry, greeting, delivering announcements, leading several parts of the liturgy, preparing for and serving communion, and occasionally preaching. We also have volunteer leadership for our choir, and individuals who provide music ministry. We have a wonderful talented organist. We provide regular opportunities for the children's worship circle to participate in services, including on communion Sunday. We have a traditional time of offering prayers that allows for public or silent reflection. We have a variety of traditions surrounding the seasons of Advent and Lent. Our Children's Worship Circle meets during the service time, though children often contribute to parts of the service and join us for communion. We enjoy a post-service Fellowship Hour each Sunday hosted by church volunteers.

The educational program/faith formation vision of our church.

Our Children's faith formation program which we call the Children's Worship Circle is facilitated by an employee who is a certified teacher. She is assisted by other congregational members and some parents and grandparents. The Sanctified Art curriculum is used in conjunction with experiences that are meaningful and engaging for the children. Some examples include decorating a new Christ Candle for the sanctuary, preparing snacks for Fellowship Hour, working with a member who is a music educator to perform during church services and learning about green practices by planting a church garden and maintaining our composter.

As some of the children in our worship circle are entering middle school, we are working with parents to involve them more in worship time and planning for future activities that are age appropriate to engage them, including a confirmation experience.

For adults, we offered a mid-week reflective time at Advent and a meditation time during Lent, sometimes accompanied by music.

We have a mid-week book group that meets regularly. There were no formal faith formation scholarly series offered this year as in the past, due to the current transition in ministry.

How our congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

We adopted a new governance structure in 2014 (see attached). This was based on research about small churches and the fact that we were "spending more time in meetings, then we believe necessary for good governance." We went from 78 elected positions to 19-23. We have three elected officers (Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk), three Ministry Teams, a Governing Board and some small sub-committees. The Governing Board has 7-11 members, with a rotating facilitator every 6 months. The Governing Board replaced our Executive Council. The Governing Board does not need to approve all decisions of Ministry Teams and committees. The Ministry Teams (Spiritual Life, Caring, AdMinistry) have three elected leaders but rely on congregational volunteers for tasks. Ministry Teams make operational decisions and form sub-committees as needed.

There are many opportunities for members to participate on boards and ministries. Volunteers coordinate multiple fundraisers annually. When we review the rolls of our congregational membership, we are always so appreciative that almost all active members play a role in the day to day functioning of the church.

When it comes to decision-making, 5 hours are spent in meetings per month.

Is the pastor expected to attend all church meetings?

No

In times when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. These were the key leaders in taking this action and this was accomplished by...

In January of 2024 a Congregational church in New London, CT, that was built in 1851, collapsed. We, like many congregations, struggle with the maintenance of an old historic church, as our current building was erected in 1866. A few weeks after the New London collapse, we brought in a structural engineer to advise us on a planned partial roof replacement. During his inspection he traveled to our third-floor attic, above our sanctuary, and discovered a crack in a beam. He declared the sanctuary unsafe for use. This happened just two weeks prior to the major fundraising concert planned in the sanctuary.

Some of our highly skilled church members sprang into action. Led by a member specializing in historic renovation, they determined how to get four 16 x 8 foot beams up the narrow winding staircase leading to the attic. The beams were bolted to the cracked beam and determined sufficient and safe by the engineer. The project was completed the day before the fundraiser, and it also resulted in a completely cleaned out attic!

We are fortunate to have many talented members in our church community who are always willing to contribute in any way they can to sustain our faith community.

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

☞ [FCC Board Manual 2024-25 rev Aug 2024.docx](#)

☞ [2025 January Annual Meeting Packet.pdf](#)

☞ [2025 June Annual Report Packet.pdf](#)

☞ [OrgStructure .pdf](#)

☞ [Treasurer Handbook FCC.pdf](#)

☞ [FCC Board Manual 2025-26 July 2025.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:	85
NUMBER OF ACTIVE NON-MEMBERS:	7
TOTAL OF CHURCH PARTICIPANTS (SUM OF THE NUMBERS ABOVE):	92

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

No

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

TIME	PERCENTAGE
MORE THAN 10 YEARS:	72%
LESS THAN 10, MORE THAN 5 YEARS:	11%
LESS THAN 5 YEARS:	17%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

No

Number of total participants by age:

AGE	NUMBER
0 -1 1	12
1 2 -1 7	0
1 8 -2 4	1
2 5 -3 4	4
3 5 -4 4	6
4 5 -5 4	2
5 5 -6 4	5
6 5 -7 4	30
7 5 +	25

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

No

Percentage of adults in various household types:

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE ADULTS UNDER 35 :	0%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH MINORS:	21%
SINGLE ADULTS AGE 35 -65 :	10%
JOINT HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO MINORS:	53%
SINGLE ADULTS OVER 65 :	16%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

EDUCATION LEVEL	PERCENTAGE
HIGH SCHOOL:	2%
COLLEGE :	25%
GRADUATE SCHOOL:	66%
SPECIALTY TRAINING:	7%
OTHER EDUCATION LEVEL:	0%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

EMPLOYMENT TYPE	PERCENTAGE
ADULTS WHO ARE EMPLOYED :	29%
ADULTS WHO ARE RETIRED :	68%
ADULTS WHO ARE NOT FULLY EMPLOYED :	3%

ARE THESE NUMBER ESTIMATES?

Yes

The range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

We have a highly educated congregation - 98% have at least some college, trade or vocational school. 66% have advanced college degrees. 68% percent of our congregation is retired, though many maintain some consulting or volunteer work in their prior profession. 66% of our congregation are professional or technical workers. 7% of our congregation are service workers, 5% are carpenters/contractors, and 5% are in sales. 10% of members in our congregation are self-employed.

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

We are primarily a White congregation though we do have members who identify as Black, Asian, Native American and Hispanic. Our congregants' past denominations include 27% UCC, 27% Roman Catholic, and the rest is spread out over a variety of Protestant denominations. Worth noting, no one in a recent congregational survey indicated they were not raised in a faith community.

What diversity means in our context?

We value the diversity in our congregation which consists of different races and cultures, sexual orientations, ages, religious experiences and abilities. We live by our creed of no matter who you are or where you are on life journey you are welcome here.

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

No

Participation and Staffing

Participation and Planning of Gatherings

WAYS OF CHURCH GATHERING	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
Baptisms (number last year)	4	Interim Minister
Children's Groups or Classes	12	Meets weekly Children's Worship. Circle Staff
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	50	Interim Minister
Church-wide Meals	5	Volunteers
Choirs and Music Groups	20	Volunteer choir leaders
Communion (served how often?)	13	Minister and lay leaders
Community Meals	1	Volunteers
Funerals (number last year)	2	Interim Minister
Intergenerational Groups	4	Ministry of Spiritual Life
Prayer or Meditation Groups	2	Ministry of Spiritual Life
Public Advocacy Work	35	Many members involved
Worship (digital / online / livestream)	52	every Sunday plus some special events
Other	5	Lay leader fundraiser

Worship Times

WORSHIP (TIME SLOT):	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
10:15 - 11:15	45	Minister and Ministry of Spiritual Life

Additional comments:

No response

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

NAME	THREE- WAY OR FOUR- WAY COVENANT	MINISTRY SETTING	TYPE OF MINISTRY ROLE	RETIRED
Rev. Lois Happe	none	none	none	✓
Rev. Ann Plumley	none	none	none	✓
Rev. Tom Clough	none	none	none	✓

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

NA

List of all current staff:

STAFF POSITION	HEAD OF STAFF	COMPENSATION	SUPERVISED BY	LENGTH OF TENURE FOR CURRENT PERSON IN THIS POSITION
Interim Pastor	Interim Pastor	Part-time	Governing Board	1 year
Custodial contract	Interim Pastor	Part-time	AdMinistry	3 years
Organist	Interim Pastor	Part-time	Ministry of Spiritual Life	25 years
Children's Worship Circle Coordinator	Interim Pastor	Part-time	Ministry of Spiritual Life	3 years

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

We value the leadership of our minister, supported and encouraged by a strong lay ministry. We look forward to our minister's spiritual leadership as we partner together to continue our mission in the wider community and to deepen our personal faith in God.

Church Finances

Current Annual Income

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	128351
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	19640
Fundraising Events	10554
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	15903
Rentals of Church Building	3355
Rentals of Church Parsonage	23060
Total	200863

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

186969

Attach most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer's report as shared publicly with the congregation, or – if your church does not pass an annual budget–list current budgeted expenses here.

☐ [Download church budget](#)

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage?

42

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church?

No

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? (indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year)

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered?

The amount of support is determined by the Southern New England Conference and is based on their Proportional Giving formula.

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

4

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.

We are in the beginning stages of planning a capital campaign.

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.

No response

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?

Funds are drawn upon request as needed for specific uses

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

same

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

We don't have any amount going to operating budget

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

N/A

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

Edward Jones Investment Accounts

Other Assets

Checking account 42266 Money Market \$24,815.

Reserves (savings):

No response

Investments (other than endowment):

253981

Does the church have a parsonage?

Yes

Fair market rental value of the parsonage:

23060

How is the parsonage used?

Section 8 rental

Street

543 Storrs Road

City

Mansfield Center

State

CT

Zip

06250

Finished square footage:

1696

Number of Bedrooms:

4

Number of Bathrooms:

2

Assessed real estate value:

164500

Available for minister residence?

No

Expected minister residence?

No

Condition of structure, systems and appliances

fair - good

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs

AdMinistry

Parsonage pictures

Description of all buildings owned by the church:

We own the church and the parsonage. The parsonage is located adjacent to the church building across a small parking lot.

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

NA

Accessibility features of our building(s):

Exterior access such as ramps for wheelchair users or people requiring other mobility assistance
Accessible parking spaces
Listening devices in the sanctuary, or wireless technology to connect to hearing aids
Large print bulletins
Handrails on all stairs
Sound system in sanctuary and other meeting places (fellowship hall, large meeting rooms, etc.)
Wheelchair areas in sanctuary (other than "front or back")

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs:

The sanctuary is accessible. Our Fellowship Hall is accessible by using a portable ramp.

Policies regarding financial practices of the church:

Our finances are primarily controlled by our Treasurer and Collector with many guardrails in place. We have adopted a Treasurer's Handbook that outlines all of our fiscal policies. On a monthly basis, the Treasurer meets with another church member to review every payment made and to reconcile all accounts. We have a professional audit conducted every three years and an internal audit, conducted using a protocol provided by our accountant, annually. We have a committee that oversees our investments and insurance coverage. Major expenses are approved by our Governing Board.

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

Our congregation is very generous in their annual pledging. We dedicate a portion of our budget to OCWM and to local service organizations. In addition to pledging, our members are very generous in goods and services offered to the church, including offering in-kind professional services.

Historical Information

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

We were one of the first UCC churches in Connecticut to become an official Open and Affirming Church (1990). That decision was not taken lightly and required a year of discernment before reaching a congregational vote. Unfortunately, as a result of that vote we lost some long-term members. As difficult as that was, the majority of the congregation felt that, as a congregation committed to social justice, it was the right statement for our community to make. As part of that decision, we were intentional to include individuals of all abilities. Members of the wider community often comment positively on our signage that publicly proclaims our commitment to be welcoming of all.

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

We experienced many challenges during the COVID pandemic. Despite this, we established a Covid team to keep the congregation apprised of best practices for staying safe. When possible, we worshipped outdoors, maintaining safe distances. When we re-opened worship in our sanctuary, we were very intentional about seating and adopting new practices for communion and showing a sign of peace during service. One of the positive outcomes of the pandemic was the establishment of our digital ministry which continues to be an integral part of how we worship and reach others. We take pride in the professionalism of our digital ministry. It allows the homebound and those far away to be included in worship as well as providing the opportunity to view services at a later date. Our digital ministry has also allowed us to project messages, hymns and prayers on the sanctuary wall during worship.

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.

One thing we take great pride in is our Behavioral Covenant. Established in 2009, the covenant was developed as a result of ongoing conflict within the congregation. While we greatly value the diversity of opinions in our congregation, we knew that the behaviors we were exhibiting were not reflective of our faith. Through the process of developing the covenant, we affirmed "in a spirit of trust and love, to treat each other respectfully, to listen without judgement, to value one another's ideas and feelings, and to speak honestly and directly, fostering growth and understanding among us, so that our actions and intentions embody God's vision." Since the development of the covenant, we have eliminated past conflicts and appreciate the honesty and comfort we experience in our church community today. We have had many congregations reach out to us to ask if they can use our covenant as a basis for developing one of their own.

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

Aside from the Open and Affirming vote described above, we have not had any recent major conflicts in our church. The use of our Behavioral Covenant has served us well to appreciate the diverse opinions of our members and to encourage understanding and reflection of varying points of view. The Covenant is revisited regularly to guide our discussions and behaviors as we make important decisions impacting the church.

Ministerial History (previous ministerial staff for the past 30 years)

<i>Name:</i> Rev Barbara Libby (Interim)	<i>Years of service:</i> 1	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Rev. Lindsay Fulmer	<i>Years of service:</i> 12	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Rev. Matthew McCaffrey (Interim)	<i>Years of service:</i> 2	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Rev. Ann Plumley	<i>Years of service:</i> 8	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Rev Joseph Blotz	<i>Years of service:</i> 14	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Rev. Charles Ericson (Interim)	<i>Years of service:</i> 1	UCC Standing

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

We appreciate a minister who has strong Biblical knowledge and encourages lay leaders to participate in many aspects of the worship services. Our pastor needs to share our passion for social justice and service to the community.

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

No

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

No

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

No

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

No

Community Vision

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

We have a broad outreach through our Ministry of Caring to local service organizations. We provide monetary support to the Quiet Corner Refugee Resettlement Project, Project Hope, the Covenant Soup Kitchen, the Holy Family Shelter, United Services, WAIM, Mansfield Human Services, Church World Service, and Natchaug Hospital.

We donate tangible items and services at WAIM, Natchaug Hospital, the Holy Family Shelter, the No Freeze Shelter and our Blessing Box (small food pantry). We organize community giving events to collect needed items. We sponsor families from WAIM and Mansfield Services at Christmas time.

Our Sewing and Service Ministry donates school bags, health kits, prayer shawls and comfort quilts.

We share our space with the Special Olympics, PFLAG, Fitch House (parking), Take Note!, Girl Scouts, Quiet Corner Quilt Group, Indivisible, Worth Fighting For, and family and community gatherings.

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

The Pastor and lay delegates participate in meetings of the conference and the association. A lay member of our congregation is the registrar for the association. Additionally, members are offered the opportunities to participate in events sponsored by the conference and the association. In the past, our pastor has served as a conference delegate to General Synod.

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

Our church led the efforts throughout northeastern CT to establish the Quiet Corner Refugee Resettlement Project (2016). In collaboration with the Statewide Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS) and other faith congregations in northeastern CT, we have successfully relocated and supported five families; three from Syria, one from Afghanistan, and one from Nicaragua. This difficult work is ongoing and relies on the efforts of many committed and talented volunteers, including members of our congregation. Once families are relocated, volunteers continue to provide support including providing rides to appointments, offering informal English language instruction, helping to set up their homes, assisting with enrolling children in school, accessing appropriate medical care, and finding employment opportunities.

We host the Indivisible and Worth Fighting For group meetings for the region, as well as PFLAG, Special Olympics and Girl Scouts in our Fellowship Hall.

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.

Creation Justice.

Just Peace.

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 are actively committed to our designation as an Open and Affirming, Just Peace and Green church and strive to grow in all of these areas. We have not pursued other designations though are very active with Immigrant Welcoming. Our immigration work is done with a variety of other churches and volunteers. We are currently not considering additional designations, though that may be considered at our future congregational retreat.

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

For many years, we have participated in an Easter sunrise service with First Baptist Church. In our mission activities, we join with people of many other faiths to serve the community through Windham Area Interfaith Ministries (WAIM). We partner with many other faith organizations as part of our Refugee Resettlement Project. We are planning a monthly music series with a local synagogue and other UCC congregations. Members of our congregation have participated in meetings with a faith-based community organizing group that is in its infancy and spear-headed by a neighboring Rabbi.

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

We are a community of people with diverse faith backgrounds and traditions, including Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Southern Baptist, Presbyterian, Jewish, Congregationalist and Unitarian. While diverse in background, we are united in striving to understand God's will. We value each person's unique perspective and recognize that we are all pilgrims, each on our own faith journey.

We have freedom; we enjoy the privilege and wrestle with the responsibility of interpreting how the scriptures apply to our daily lives. We are bound together by our struggle to build a covenant with God and support one another even while we may be taking different paths.

When we started our profile process, we wondered if this mission statement was outdated. In actuality, it continues to portray who we are and who we want to grow to become. We love our diversity, our unique experiences, and our commitment to using that to act on improving our community.

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.

While we are a congregation committed to community ministry, we recognize as a 3/4 position the ability of our minister to participate in community activities may be limited. We have members who are willing to conduct this work. We believe our minister should be a leader in working with other organizations and faith communities to identify opportunities to provide support. When possible, we appreciate our minister's attendance at events we are sponsoring that include the broader community and organizations we support. We understand that this is part of the time they have allocated to support First Church. The Governing Board and Pastoral Support Team will work with the new pastor to define activities that are a priority for their involvement and what can be delegated to congregation members. We do think it is important that our pastor participate in wider UCC and Windham Association events in order to develop those relationships and represent our faith community.

The ARDA or MissionInsite Reflection

ARDA/MI File

No response

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

Almost 60% of homes within a 5-mile radius of our church are single family houses. More apartment-style housing is increasing, particularly close to the University of Connecticut. Much of Mansfield has a rural feel, yet is proximal to the busier Windham/Willimantic area and university locations. Almost 30% of the population within our radius identifies as a racial minority. More than half of residents are employed, and there is notably a large percentage (23%) of 18–20-year-olds due to housing near universities. 79% of the population is English-speaking only.

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.

Our congregation's demographics differ due to the UConn and ECSU campuses which have younger and more racially diverse populations. The Willimantic area has a higher Hispanic population than our congregation. Mansfield is known for its school system that helps to attract families, and the universities bring diversity to the town.

Worth noting, the UConn campus has a UCC church and the ECSU campus has a UCC church within walking distance. We enjoy our partnership with both churches. Understandably, students looking for a faith community are more likely to access one within walking distance.

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

Our congregation has a large membership of educated professionals due to the proximity to two major universities. We often draw members from surrounding communities, approximately from a 15-mile-wide radius. Though those communities have local UCC churches, we often have members who choose to travel to be a member of our faith community.

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

These are some examples of quotes the Search Committee collected in response to a recent anonymous community survey when asked, "How are we perceived by the community?"

"Love your presence in the community."

"Open and wanting to help the community."

"A wonderful example of equality and love for all."

"Progressive and inclusive."

Key themes from the responses indicated we are welcoming and inclusive, trusted and respected, and active and impactful with our level of community engagement.

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

A recent survey indicated the following attracted our members to the congregation:

1. The worship style
2. The minister
3. The social outreach
4. The music program
5. The church's reputation and my friends are here

References

☒ Christine Dimock

Completed: Tuesday, Jul 22, 2025

Take Note! is a nonprofit musical organization that has been home-based at the First Church of Christ in Mansfield for over 22 years.

Primary Email Address: dimock87@gmail.com

Personal Cell: 860-933-8516

Reference Response

Our organization provides free a cappella fundraising concerts for other local nonprofits. A completely volunteer organization, we have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for our neighbors in need. We have long been supported in our mission by First Church. Since our inception in 2003, First Church has provided weekly rehearsal space, as well as performance and reception facilities for an annual concert. We have, in turn, assisted First Church in its fundraising efforts by performing a number of benefit concerts for various church projects, have contributed annually to help offset the cost of utilities and have helped with furniture and air purifier purchases. We are committed to the church and the church is similarly committed to us. Our symbiotic relationship benefits the greater community in many ways, and we look forward to many more years of partnership with First Church.



■ Rev. Deborah Pallatto-Fontaine

Contacted: Tuesday, Jul 22, 2025

Email Address: debrapallatto@gmail.com

Personal Cell: (860) 315-2056

Mobile Phone: 860-315-2056

Reference Response

No response via portal – Paper copy of response will be made available



■ Stacey Estrella

Contacted: Tuesday, Jul 22, 2025

Primary Email Address: sestrella@nahealthcare.com

Reference Response

No response via portal – Paper copy of response will be made available

Closing Prayer

Gracious God - We have worked hard to represent the dreams of our congregation for the future of our church. We look forward to conversations and reflection with those interested in learning more about First Church of Christ in Mansfield. Led by our faith, broaden us, challenge us, continue to guide us on the work you are calling us to do. We rely on our discernment to reflect our belief that "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." We gratefully take the next steps in our search journey, Amen.

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.

Pastoral Search Committee, Church Moderator, Church Treasurer, Church Collector, Members of the Congregation and wider community via surveys and focus groups

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Come join us "*Where Faith takes Action!*" Let's get to work!