

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



Urban Sanctuary
San Jose, CA

Designated Term Minister

Northern California Nevada
Conference NCNC UCC

Disciples of Christ (Christian
Church (Disciple of Christ of Northern
California Nevada) – United Church of
Christ merged church

November 2019

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

Position Posting

Who Is God Calling Us To Become?

Who Are We Now?

Who Is Our Neighbor?

References

Consent and Validation

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

INSTRUCTIONS

The new Local Church Profile supports the calling and discernment of United Church of Christ congregations with their current or future pastoral leadership.

For many congregations, the interim time between ministers is an intentional season that is guided in part by the work of preparing a Local Church Profile. Through the Profile, the congregation can discover its data and express its story for the reliable discernment of a search committee and the beginning of a new pastorate. Searching ministers will want to see this document in its entirety.

The interim season is not the only time to give attention to questions and exploration of a congregation's vocation, however. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – WHO ARE WE NOW, WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR, and WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME – are meant to be updated every 3–5 years. Known as the “Discovery Document,” these three sections can be completed by a visioning group, a governing body, a transition team, or other entity in the church – not just by a search committee – in order to draw forward the gifts and imaginative possibilities of a congregation. The more participants, the better!

Some questions are easy to answer. Some are not so easy. Prompts are provided to stimulate narrative response if needed; these *italicized* prompts are merely examples from which to choose or to inspire your own. Efforts to answer the questions will prompt conversations and explorations and storytellings and many prayers, and as the Spirit moves throughout the process, congregations will shape a collective articulation of Christ's leading (WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME). This last question to be answered becomes the first section to be read by searching ministers in the Local Church Profile, and it is boldest and most actionable piece for faithful leadership into the future.

Your conference can provide materials referenced in the Local Church Profile, such as the 11–Year Report containing data as reported by your congregation annually to the UCC Data Hub and MissionInsite reports containing demographic information on your community. More information on types of pastorate in the United Church of Christ can be found in the *Call Agreement Workbook*. Be sure to use the *Call Agreement Workbook's* Scope of Work to describe in this Local Church Profile the position being sought.

When it is time for ministerial search, the conference can counsel you on posting the Local Church Profile together with your public listing at UCC Ministry Opportunities (<http://oppsearch.ucc.org>).

The last page of the Local Church Profile contains a statement that parallels the consent statement signed by ministers in the UCC Ministerial Profile. In keeping with the covenantal relationship between a church and those it seeks to call, this statement encourages an open, honest exchange of information. On behalf of the United Church of Christ, and on the basis of the best knowledge available to them, your conference staff will validate your completed Local Church Profile when it is ready to be shared in relationship with prospective new leaders.

POSITION POSTING

LISTING INFORMATION

SCOPE OF WORK

COMPENSATION & SUPPORT

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: Urban Sanctuary San Jose

Street address 80 S. 5th St. San Jose, CA 95112

Supplemental web links: <https://urbansanctuariesj.org/>

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

<https://www.youtube.com/@urbansanctuariesanjose9126/featured>

Additional ecumenical affiliations:

We are a Disciples of Christ/United Church of Christ merged church
UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person

Name: Rev. Melissa Tumaneng

Title: Associate Conference Minister, Pastoral Care & Churches in Transition

Email: melissa@ncnuc.org

Phone: Direct: (925)430-4745

Schedule: Tue/Wed/Select weekends

Summary Ministry Description:

In a short paragraph, reflect on where your church is going and what it might look like when you get there. What do you need to get there? Who are you seeking to join you on this part of your church's faith journey?

One guiding principle is: "It's not what you believe, but how you love."

As a small, aging community (though with some younger members) that is deeply **engaged in community building, spiritual exploration & growth, creativity & music (including in worship) and involvement in social justice** (via our relationship with **Recovery Café San Jose [RCSJ*]**, the **Center for Arts, Spirituality and Activism [CASA*]**, and more). (See UrSa, RCSJ, CASA attachment*) **We are moving towards deepening all these things.** How we are going to get there is, in part, to finalize decisions about the use of our land. What we do with our land impacts our financial sustainability. (see p.13) We will also get there by expanding some offerings of CASA*. Who will join us? We are strengthening connections with social justice activists via CASA*, welcoming members from Recovery Café* and deepening our relationships with one another through training in caring circles, worship and other meaningful activities, formally and informally. As far as ministerial accompaniment, we hope for a person of great heart, experience with the marginalized, familiarity with urban settings and a deep faith to sustain them.

Photographs:

Insert 1 – 3 images of your church, its people, its parsonage or building or gathering space, etc.



Our Sanctuary on Soulful Sunday (See on YouTube channel)



Members on a community outing.



Our church with our “Jesus was an Agitator mural.”

What we value about living in our area (2 – 3 sentences):

We are rooted where we can serve the poor. Our building is next to City Hall and join with a vibrant community of social justice activists for rallies, housing strategy, City Council Meetings, etc. Located in diverse downtown San Jose, we are near theatres, art galleries, music venues, and San Jose State University events. Our church has long fostered relationships with unhoused neighbors dealing with addiction, mental health issues, and practical needs. We collaborate with a downtown spiritual community: Baptist, Unitarian, Methodist, and Catholic Social Services.

Current size of membership: 39

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*):

N/A

Position Title: Pastor

Position Duration (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

We are interested in a Designated-Term – a called position for a designated time period for a defined purpose, (12 months) in which the pastor may move church membership to the congregation served and may move standing to the related association. But we are also open to an Intentional Term if a Designated Term does not emerge.

Compensation Level (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

½ Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

That is our goal.

SCOPE OF WORK (*add here the Scope of Work developed by your church using the Call Agreement Workbook*)

Core Competencies:

1. Caring, supportive, good listener
2. Collaborative, organized, good organizational & delegation skills
3. Honors other spiritual traditions/practices in addition to modern Christian values.
4. Experience with/knowledge of marginalized folks, an urban setting
5. Ability to write grants or a willingness to learn, with a focus on Center for Arts, Spirituality & Activism (CASA) and other church priorities as appropriate.

COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis *(from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance)*:

Benefits *(choose one)*:

Salary Basis:

\$45,660-\$51,130, including minister's share of SSA, housing allowance and salary

Salary includes optional benefits:

\$13,860 [for \$51,130 base]
\$19,336 [for \$45,660 base], for use to pay church's share of SSA, retirement [pension or TDRA], health insurance, professional expenses].

Other: Schedule flexible.
Paid vacation, sick days, continuing ed. Days.

What is the expected living situation for your next minister

Prefer the pastor live nearby. We understand this may be a challenge for an Interim.

Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister.

We hope the pastor will find housing near the church if possible. We understand this may be a challenge for an Interim.

State any incentives: Flexible schedule

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference:

Pastors can select local or Regional support. Local clergy groups can be cultivated or Regional resources tapped. Regionally, each association has a designated person (usually called a "Dean") to support the minister. In addition, the Conference has the Conference Minister (CM) and Associate CM (ACM) to support the minister.

Our current pastor really appreciated the Ministry Ethics and Health Boundaries Trainings that the DOC and UCC offered together. She found the trainers very supportive.

If applicable, describe how your church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment:

We are familiar with working with a bi-vocational Pastor. For over a decade our current pastor worked ½ time for the church, ½ time for Recovery Café in administration and development. We hope that the Pastor will find work that complements the work of Urban Sanctuary.

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

Describe the **ministry goals** you envision your next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve.

Grow and share our supportive, healing, diverse, inclusive community in worship, community building & other activities.

Strengthen & expand our Center for Arts, Spirituality and Activism (CASA) as a resource for

- a. spiritual healing and growth,
- b. activism/organizing support and connection, and
- c. collaboration with like-minded arts community.

Accompany us while we settle property use decisions, and work toward greater financial stability and sustainability.

Continue to collaborate with other churches and faith-based organizations around us.

Think outside the box. Dare new things.

Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an **impact beyond its walls**.

Continue our deep connection with Recovery Café San Jose.

Focus on strengthening & expanding our Center for Arts, Spirituality and Activism (CASA) as a resource for

- a. spiritual healing and growth,
- b. activism/organizing support and connection, and
- c. collaboration with like-minded arts groups.

It is with CASA that the Pastor's grant-writing skills will be especially important.

In this fraught time, there is a need for spiritual support for folks who might not go to a regular church service but would attend a class or session on meditation or other forms of spiritual support.

Help us be a homebase for comfort in these hard times.

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

We are a diverse class congregation. Some of us are privileged to own homes and have financial stability. Some of us live in low-income housing, are on section 8 vouchers (which are endangered by the current administration), or board and care homes. Some remain unhoused. Some of us have a history of addiction or mental illness. Many are families with LGBTQ+ members. Our pastor needs to be comfortable with folks who have experienced being pushed to the margins. Politically we skew liberal, and many folks are very involved politically. Though we are a predominantly White church, we have Asian, Black, Latino and Pacific Islander members and one Native American member.

Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministry

We look forward to working with a minister who will flourish among us in the following four elements from *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry*

[Marks-of-Faithful-and-Effective-Ministers.pdf](#)

A. We are heavily involved in **Working Together for Justice and Mercy** in how we exist & support each other in our community and how we work to “confront systemic injustice and oppression.”

Our community life is a daily practice in “the radical hospitality of God” and ongoing work to “identify and work to overcome explicit and implicit bias in our communal life.”

We are clearly in a time of transition, so “understanding community context and navigating change with a community” is important.

We would like to see the outreach of the Center for Arts, Spirituality, and Activism (CASA) grow.

Building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence” is paramount.

B. These are all foundational to our existence at Urban Sanctuary:

Caring For All Creation

Nurturing care and compassion for God’s creation.

Maintaining a basic understanding of mental health and wellness.

Practicing self-care and life balance.

Providing hope and healing to a hurting world.

Attending to one’s own spiritual and pastoral care, including engagement in supervision as appropriate.

Stewarding the resources of the Church.

C. Because churches are essentially volunteer organizations, we feel **Building Transformational Leadership Skills** in oneself and others is essential.

All of the following attributes are needed as we work to deepen our connections and care in our community, share the Good News in “out of church” ways via CASA and make decisions about our property and future. Attributes we need:

Empowering the Church to be faithful to God’s call and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.

Performing necessary and appropriate administrative tasks.

Working collaboratively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity.

Encouraging leadership development of self and others.

D. In addition, we feel the foundation of all of this is “**Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice.**”

E. We feel these parts of the other “marks” are important:

Strengthening Inter- and Intra- Personal Assets

“Respecting the dignity of all God’s People” and

“Demonstrating excellent communication skills”

Participating in Theological Praxis

“Demonstrating an appreciation for and participation in the ecumenical and interfaith partnerships”

“Experiencing and appreciating a variety of theological perspectives”

Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions

“Exhibiting knowledge, understanding, and continuing study of the Hebrew Scriptures

and the New Testament”

“Bringing life to sacred stories and traditions in worship, proclamation, and witness”

WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

God is calling us to:

- Grow & develop our spiritual lives.
- Show up for each other & deepen our authentic, caring relationships in the congregation.
- Joyful, interactive, creative, contemplative worship.
- Expand our eclectic outreach and connection to community outside the church through CASA.
- Continue our connection with RCSJ

Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.

For example, describe two experiments your congregation has initiated or engaged in the past year, what were the results and where do you see your next steps? Has your church had a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement; if so, where do you see that plan/vision taking you

A. Expanded our CASA outreach –

1. We became SURJ SCC's (Showing Up for Racial Justice – they organize White folks for racial justice) fiscal sponsor - allowing SURJ to fundraise under Urban Sanctuary/CASA's sponsorship, rent space below market value;
2. Sponsored two wellness retreats for BIPOC organizers & activists in San Jose;
3. Expanded the Ignatian Spirituality group to Recovery Cafe including overnight retreats (wildly embraced);
4. Sponsored several Soulful Sundays (Jazz) & one Gospel Concert which brought in many community members.

Next step: work on expanding CASA's outreach with spirituality programs (We have trained several Clearness Circles facilitators), other support for on the ground activists, organizers & affected community members, and programs in response to the difficult national & local political situation.

B. Land Study:

Our church undertook a multi-year study involving research about history of our land, reparations, and land usage in ways congruent with our values.

We explored many options for land use and discerned a strategic plan with two possible paths forward - low-income housing &/or expanding Recovery Cafe S.J (RCSJ).

We met with regional churches involved in developing low-income housing & received a grant to begin a feasibility study of our property, though CA state decisions mean later implementation. Discussions continue with RCSJ.

WHO ARE WE NOW?

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS
11-YEAR REPORT
CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS
PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING
CHURCH FINANCES
HISTORICAL INFORMATION

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation's life of faith.

For example, who is a favorite theologian admired in the congregation and why? How is God most often described in worship liturgy? In what ways would you describe the Holy Spirit in your midst?

"Small, but mighty" has come up as a descriptor of our church. One guiding principle is: "It's not what you believe, but how you love."

Our congregation is deeply spiritual and deeply engaged in the call to prioritize the marginalized. Faith-wise, we are eclectic, with many people enjoying a mix of perspectives,

Buddhist, Catholic, and more. Two spiritual leaders we appreciate are Thich Nhat Hanh and Richard Rohr because they call us to heal ourselves, be quiet, let the Divine manifest, and then carry our healing and peace into the world. 12-step readings are favored by members. William Barber, Howard Thurman, Pema Chodron and (jokingly) Stephen Colbert are admired theologians.

God is often described as Creator God, the Divine, God, Mother, Divine Helper and Lord. When we gather for worship, it is often a liminal space where, as Jesus said, "Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." The Holy Spirit manifests when we are quiet, when we share and listen, sing and pray for one another and the world. Our whole becomes greater than the sum of our parts.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

We've been described as "authentic." Kindness, compassion and generosity are abundant. We are welcoming, open and curious.

Our class and ethnic diversity intertwine with our inclusivity.

We care deeply for each other and help each other out. Many congregants describe church as being like family.

There is a high level of involvement in church and other creative, spiritual or activist endeavors outside the church.

We have poets, writers and musicians, storytellers and healers, preachers and a spiritual director, engineers, financial & technical folks. A lot of us are in 12 step programs, which deepens our culture of authenticity, humility, and deep listening.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

For example, where does worship take place, and what is it based around? What was a recent baptism like? What are some words used to describe good preaching?

Gathering for worship is the heart of our community.

Worship, which takes place in the sanctuary, is warm and informal with numerous people arriving after the service has begun. When months have a fifth Sunday, we've drawn on the congregation's many talents to offer a

service of lay-produced poetry and music. Music is a key strength of our worship. We benefit by having a professional musician as our Music Director. We are open to using seeming pop songs as reinforcements of a worship theme. For us, good preaching is relevant to the world we live in, grounded in Christianity, but also drawing on authors like Rumi and Mary Oliver. Worship offers us strength and hope as we persist in resisting the dominant culture. We always offer a fairly robust coffee hour with food far more extensive than donuts.

Good preaching:

- Is interactive and involves the congregation.
- Applies scripture to what is happening in our lives and world today.
- Inspires and gives hope in the face of adversity.
- Reaffirms God's presence and unconditional love for us.
- Calls us to healing and wholeness, and to share this with others.

Describe the educational program and/or faith formation vision of your church.

For example, how are young people in leadership? How do people continue to form their faith over a lifetime? Name a topic studied or curriculum used recently; what was the impact of this study on those who attended?

Like many mainstream churches, we have a majority of older members, but one of our youngest participants serves on the Program Committee and has offered art-related after-sessions (our version of adult Sunday school). Another younger member serves on the Search Committee and has also led after-sessions. The congregation has undertaken a very in-depth study of church land-use including the option of building affordable housing on our property. Our church is committed to making sure use of our property continues to serve those in need rather than being sold for a profit. This study also brought home the need for us to consider financial reparations to our local Native American tribes. A class on the Enneagram has been offered. Several cohorts have completed training in Clearness Circles (for discernment) and will train others. We had a grief support group for about a year. One member is offering a weekly Spiritual Poetry meeting. Our after sessions provide a rich mixture of educational, faith and community building topics.

The impact of these programs has deepened our awareness of important life and faith issues. In addition, the interactive nature of the sessions leaves people feeling that they are

participants in their learning rather than observers. They also sustain as we go out to serve and face challenges in our lives.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

For example, how are decisions communicated in your church? How are teams or committees organized? Where does your church struggle for vision?

We hold half-day retreats for big decisions (like starting the Center for Arts, Spirituality & Activism (CASA), building affordable housing, or seeking a new minister). Anyone interested can join a committee or team, but often specific people are recruited. Any relevant information regarding a decision is reported, reviewed and discussed with the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is the main governance body. Everyone is welcome to attend the Board meetings. Only Board members can vote. Updates are also reported in Congregational Meetings right after Sunday service, in after sessions (after the coffee hour), via email (for those who are homebound and attend via Facebook) and in one-on one conversations.

Certain decisions must be voted on by the congregation – like major property decisions and hiring a pastor.

Our struggle is less with vision and more with capacity. Our church is like someone who wants to do a lot and needs to be realistic with their limitations. We need to remember to take care of ourselves and each other so we don't burn out.

When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?

That depends how big the decision is. The search for a pastor involves many meetings, the Land Team meets every week to every other week. Program Team & Finance meet monthly. Hospitality, Personnel and Safety meet on an as-needed basis There is a Board of Directors meeting for 90 minutes every other month.

With Finance, Program, Land and the Board of Directors meeting – a pastor may average about 4 - 5 ½ hours of meetings a month. The Pastor meets with the Co-Presidents of the Board to prep for Board meetings as well.

Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?

When a member had a mental health crisis at church, members immediately gathered to assist him while we waited for outside support. There was compassionate follow-up with this person as well.

Our church administrative assistant (a magnificent asset) alerts key leaders via email and phone about, say, urgent sewer needs or furnace repair, offers the results of several bids, and the leadership discusses via email and okays the expenditure.

Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance? [Yes/No]

Yes, to by-laws. We also have financial information for all our years and can provide a list of board members and committees

11 – YEAR REPORT

Silicon Valley Progressive Faith Community merged with First Christian Church San Jose (Disciples of Christ) in 11/2019. Urban Sanctuary has not submitted data to the Center for Analytics, Research Development and Data (CARDD) report. Therefore, we do not have an 11-year report.

We will submit this year’s budget (attachment).

Here is a summary of our operating budgets for last 4 years.

Year	Operating Receipts	Capital receipts
2024	\$220,200	\$36,000
2023	\$223,900	\$35,000
2022	\$242,200	0
2021	\$224,400	0

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	38	
Number of active non-members:	9	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	47	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	40 %	X
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	28%	X
Less than 5 years:	32%	X

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
			2	2	14	20	5	x

$$35-44 = 4$$

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	4%	X
Joint household with minors:		
Single adults age 35-65:	74%	X
Joint household with no minors:	23%	X
Single adults over 65:	34%	X

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	32%	X
College:	28%	X
Graduate School:	36%	X
Specialty Training:	4%	X
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	17%	X
Adults who are retired:	72%	X
Adults who are not fully employed:	11%	X

Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

The folks still working include educators, writers, a creative engineer for music & theater productions, care providers, peer counselors, service providers at temporary housing sites, and a social worker. Retired folks include educators at various levels, technical writers, editors, engineers, business consultants, a pastor, a social worker, RN, Nurse Practitioner, construction worker, grocery clerk.

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. Most UCC congregations tend to describe themselves as “diverse.” Yet, the vast majority of UCC congregations are mono-cultural. What does diversity mean in your context?

Diversity here entails ethnic and class diversity. Though we are a predominantly White church, we have several Asian, Black, Latino and Pacific Islander members and one Native American member. (Some of these are regular participants, but not official members.) Because of our engagement with the Recovery Cafe in our building, a number of attendees are currently or formerly homeless people. None of our young members are well-off.

List the date your congregation has had or will have a conversation using a resource such as the Welcoming Diversity Inventory. Comment on the results.

We have not used this inventory, but it looks great.

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? (<i>list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff</i>)
Adult Groups or Classes	10-15	Congregational volunteers, pastor
Baptisms (<i>number last year</i>)	0	
Children's Groups or Classes	0	
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	45	Congregational volunteers, pastor, music staff
Church-wide Meals	25-30	Congregational volunteers
Choirs and Music Groups	6	Congregational volunteers, pastor, music staff
Church-based Bible Study	10	Does "The Chosen" count?
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	25-30	Pastor, lay leaders, weekly
Community Meals	7-10	Pastor, other pastors, congregational volunteers, (Maundy Thursday)
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	0	
Drama or Dance Program	2	Center for Arts, Spirituality and Activism
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	4	
Intergenerational Groups	0	
Outdoor Worship	0	
Prayer or Meditation Groups	4	Congregational volunteers
Public Advocacy Work	20	Congregational volunteers
Retreats	25	Congregational volunteers, pastor, occasional consultant

Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	7-8	Congregational volunteer minister (Walter) led group for us and a Methodist church about 10 weeks
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Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	1	
Worship (time slot: <u>10 AM</u>)	25-30	
Worship (time slot: _____)		
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	
Youth Groups or Classes	0	
Other		

Additional comments:

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a ministry beyond a congregation).

	Three-Way or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Jodi Capitola-Duran	Disciples of Christ DOC	BI vocational F/T social worker	Pulpit supply. Training as an interim	N
Walter Hudson	Presbyterian Church USA		Interim	Y
Steven Monhollen	DOC		Pastor	Y
Lita Kurth			Spiritual Director	N

If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation:

Lay leadership, pulpit supply

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff.

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Felecia Mulvany	Office & Building Manager	PT	Pastor	8 years
Neil Mac Pherson	Musician	PT	Pastor	6 years
Ryan Trujillo	Tech for church	PT	Pastor	3 years

Regan Albert Bookkeeper PT Office Manager 4 years

We also have a janitor and landscaper who are PT and managed by Felecia (office manager).

And a security company that makes rounds nightly - and managed by Felecia (office manager).

REFLECTION

Reflection: After reviewing the congregational demographics and activities above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's overall ministry?

We are aging. In part that means things we used to volunteer for (property projects, landscaping) most of us can't do anymore.

We have lost many long-standing members in the last five years to death or relocation, and this impacted tithing. But we have also gained new members. The fiscal difference is that our new members are less economically privileged. This all contributes to some of our financial challenges. But our eclectic congregation is a gift.

We have a lot of human resources in our congregation. Folks who can teach meditation, contemplative prayer, mindful self-compassion, and writing. A lot of congregants are involved in other "ministries" in the community working with National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), 12 step groups, Recovery Café San Jose (RCSJ), League of Women Voters, Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), the Rapid Response Network, This is What We Did! (an environmental nonprofit which a member started).

We'd love to continue to have enough critical mass to provide a place of spiritual sustenance in our church and through the Center for Arts, Spirituality and Activism. That is our challenge.

CHURCH FINANCES

Current annual income (dollars used during most recent fiscal year)2024

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$65,000
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>)	\$0
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i>)	\$0
Fundraising Events	\$4200.00
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$0
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$150,000
Rentals of Church Parsonage	N/A
Support from Related Organizations (<i>e.g. Women's Group</i>)	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$1000.00
Other (specify):	\$
Other (specify):	\$
TOTAL	\$220200

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

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.

Attached

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

32%

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)

No. We have participated in the CROP walk, make routine contributions for several DOC missions and one DOC-UCC combined mission.

- Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
- One Great Hour of Sharing
- Strengthen the Church
- Neighbors in Need
- Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? (recommended 10%)

1%

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: \$42350

Reason for debt: loan for roof replacement – through DOC Financial

Are capital and other payments current? Yes

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.

N/A

If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2022	3 yr campaign for \$60,000, building maintenance	\$60,000	\$40,000	Assisted with roof loan, paid for new furnace
2018	150 th Anniversary Celebration	\$10,000	\$10,000	Capital projects, building maintenance

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
		\$	\$	
		\$	\$	

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

Mission: Pay for a new furnace, pay down roof loans, and establish a long-term maintenance fund.

Does your church have an endowment? No

Other Assets

- Reserves (savings): \$44,000
 - Security for loans \$24,000
 - Operating funds/checking acct: \$ 25,000
- Investments (other than endowment):
 - \$106,000 scholarship fund

Does your church have a parsonage? No

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

We have a church building, built in 1939, that is 14,000 sq ft.
 We lease, full time, 3000 sq ft to Recovery Café San Jose (below market value).
 The sanctuary is 3600 sq ft.
 There are 2 offices (general & Pastor’s) and 2 classrooms.
 The sanctuary, classrooms, and most of the storage are leased to another congregation that meets Sunday afternoons and several evenings.

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church: none

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

Sanctuary worship space, pulpit, fellowship space, classroom, patio, main office.

Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's mission and ministry?

For example, when was a time the church made a major budget change? How is the budgeting process done? What new ministry initiative has your church financed?

The Finance Committee, in consultation with the Board of Directors and Personnel Committee, develop the annual budget. The Board drives the budget priorities. If there are big financial considerations, like starting the Center for Arts, Spirituality & Activism (CASA) or moving the pastor from ½ to ¾ time, the Board & Finance Committee does the research and due diligence, decides on a recommendation and then invites the congregation into the conversation.

The church ran a fundraising campaign in 2022 to support the beginning of CASA and to raise funds for building maintenance.

Building maintenance is important for the mission of the church and Recovery Café.

The vision of the Center has evolved. We initially hoped to hire a part time director/organizer for the Center. What transpired after a time was the decision to bring our pastor from a ½ time position to a ¾ time position and have her oversee the development of the Center. This increase in salary was paid for by the campaign. Initially it was thought the Center would generate income. This has gone slowly.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.

Seventeen years ago, church leaders and Pastor Bainbridge decided to move from solely providing shelter to our unhoused neighbors, to offering a healing, community centric recovery program (Recovery Café). (See attachment.) After 3 years of planning, First Christian Church of San Jose (FCC) founded Recovery Café in 2014, It has grown to be a large, independent 501c3 which continues to be housed in our building; about 1/3 of our church members are also Cafe members. Quite a few church members volunteer at the Café. One church member sits on RCSJ's board.

In Fall 2019, First Christian Church (DOC) and Silicon Valley Progressive Faith Community (a UCC start-up) merged to become Urban Sanctuary San Jose. This officially occurred after 2 years of combined worship and leadership (the combined leadership of SVPFC and FCC was called the (“Guiding Council”). Our UCC Pastor, Nicole Lamarche left to pastor a church in Boulder, Colorado in Jan. 2019.

Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.

See discussion above. FCC was numerically larger than SVPFC. FCC embraced SVPFC with open arms. There was a lot of change and some expected discomfort. We held meetings to talk about what folks’ vision around worship and what was most important to people. We tried out new things. We removed the pews in the sanctuary and got chairs that could be rearranged. Worship was changed up. People came to accept and enjoy the changes in the flow of worship and new ordained and lay leadership. Here we are 6 years later, greatly benefiting from the merger on multiple levels.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. “Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....” Describe your congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict.

If there is a serious issue with a congregant, say disagreeing with the pastor or disagreeing with church governance, in the past we have had individual or dual (2 leader) conversations and deep listening to understand the issue and reassure the congregant they are being heard. If there needs to be a change – this is offered. Often this settles the issue.

We are a small, listening church. Big decisions are made with a lot of transparency and congregational interaction.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/No)
Dana Bainbridge, Pastor	17 1/2 in April 26	no
Robert Shiveley, interim	1 year	no
Vaughn Beckman, pastor	1 year	no
Larry Sweeney, pastor	9 years	no
Richard Miller, pastor	8 years	no

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

Ministers are people too. It's important to support the minister yet maintain boundaries and allow them to find their own ministerial support.

Churches are volunteer organizations, so optimally a minister is good at shepherding, inspiring, leadership development, sharing power and delegating. In small churches, we all need to ask what is ours to do?. Being a pastor is a nuanced position.

We appreciate ministers who include and invite use of congregant's talents in worship, program development and all aspects of church life as appropriate.

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

Y/N/Ask us:

Yes, but not within the last 30 years. The issue was strong disagreement about property use.

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Y/N/Ask us

NO

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

Y/N/Ask us

NO, but one pastor left due to illness.

WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

COMMUNITY VISION

MISSION INSITE

COMMUNITY VISION

How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?

The members of the original church, First Christian Church, repeatedly made the decision to remain where they were downtown in order to serve the poor. This has evolved into more of an accompaniment model. We strive to walk alongside our marginalized neighbors. This lies at the heart of Urban Sanctuary.

Recovery Cafe San Jose (RCSJ): Ongoing connection: We have member on their Board, some of us volunteer, lead classes and recovery circles, some members are employed there, we sponsor fundraisers at the church]

Center for Art Spirituality and Action (CASA): Sponsored: Ignatian Spirituality Group marginalized folks meet at church & this group has expanded to RCSJ, two retreats for local BIPOC activists, provided space and refreshments for activist groups gathering to speak at City Hall (we are next door), supported a Rapid Response legal Observer training (to show up for ICE raids) with SURJ. Sponsor Community Living Coalition meetings—people with lived experience pushing for oversight of local of board & care homes, sponsor Soulful Sundays Jazz concert quarterly, hosted Hindu dance event.

This is What We Did! climate group founded by church members and sponsored by the church works for climate causes and has run many trainings on climate conversations.

Fiscal sponsor for Showing Up for Racial Justice Santa Clara County (SURJ SCC)

The church acts as a place of refreshment and support for members who are very involved in activism. Members are very active in Afro-Rising, Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), League of Women Voters, National Association of Mental Illness (NAMI), the Rapid Response Network, San Jose Peace & Justice Center, started This is What We Did!, active in Working Class Studies Association and unions. We participate in the CROP Walk and NAMI walk.

We strive to foster a community where everyone feels a sense of belonging. We honor that Jesus called us to walk alongside our siblings and neighbors on the margins. As Carrie Newcomer's song states "There is room at the table for everyone." (See attachment.)

It is clear that our work with RCSJ is transformational. Members find stable living situations and some flourish. Our county-wide work with SURJ has borne fruit in creating and supporting alternatives to calling the police in a mental health crisis. One group met with county officials to see that board and care homes are investigated and improved. On a global level, we've been involved in peace work and support for Gaza through the San Jose Peace Center.

Describe your congregation's participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ (association / conference / national setting).

Members have attended DOC events (Women's retreats, conferences, training) but are open to being more involved in UCC regional and conference activities.

Check all of the following "statements of witness" that apply to your UCC faith community. (Find more information on these statements at ucc.org.)

Accessible to All (A2A)

[Is Your Congregation Ready to Explore Accessible to All \(A2A\)? - United Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries](#)

Creation Justice

[Creation Justice Covenant - United Church of Christ](#)

Economic Justice

[Economic Justice - United Church of Christ](#)

Faithful and Welcoming

[About - Faithful and Welcoming Churches](#)

- [God Is Still Speaking \(GISS\)](#)
- [We Listen for a Still-speaking God – United Church of Christ](#)
- [Immigrant Welcoming](#)
- [Immigrant Welcoming Congregations – United Church of Christ](#)
- [Inter-cultural/Multi-racial \(I'M\)](#)
- [Multi-Racial Multi-Cultural Church – United Church of Christ](#)
- [Just Peace](#) [Just Peace – United Church of Christ](#)
- [Global Mission Church](#)
- [GM_UCC_Booklet_final](#)
- [Open and Affirming \(ONA\)](#)
- [Open and Affirming in the UCC – United Church of Christ](#)
- [WISE Congregation for Mental Health](#)
- [United Church of Christ Mental Health Network – Working to reduce stigma & promote the inclusion of people with mental health challenges and neurodiversity.](#)
- Other UCC designations:
- Other similar designations in affiliated denominations
- None

We contribute annually to the DOC Global Missions fund, which collaborates with UCC Global Missions. We have not formally adopted any of these statements, but the ones we marked resonate with our congregation and reflect our congregational vision:

“We are a people in recovery from and resistance to the dominant culture and acknowledge our need for community and support on that journey. Our vision is one of building the common good in this place, on our streets, and in this life.” (From our mission statement, see below.)

Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?

These statements are amazing. Working toward them is a strong option because they reflect our community so well. They could be useful to educate us more in these areas and would be a vehicle to let others know where we stand.

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

We are a member of PACT and Santa Clara Faith-based Affordable Housing Cohort Group. We align with and collaborate with local congregations for special events: St. Paul's Methodist & Grace Baptist for Ash Wednesday, Lenten series and Maundy Thursday. We have held writing events with a former Unitarian minister. We hosted Father Gregory Boyle's visit with our neighbor Catholic Social Services.

If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.

See our "mission" statement below. Our vision and commitments:

Urban Sanctuary is a boldly progressive spiritual community rooted in the Christian tradition.

We seek to be a safe place to explore beliefs and practices with freedom, a place where questions are encouraged and where valued Wisdom traditions co-exist to enrich each other.

We are a people in recovery from and resistance to the dominant culture and acknowledge our need for community and support on that journey.

Our vision is one of building the common good in this place, on our streets, and in this life.

We welcome all to join us in a shared life centered in our core commitments:

Build Healing Community

especially with those living on the margins

Learn and Grow

through reflective and experiential practices

Engage the Arts

through creative expressions of our stories, symbols and meanings

Activism

to humbly and boldly be a witness for justice

We are in pretty good balance. Governance & building maintenance take time. But our priority is building supportive community so we can grow in faith, get refreshed at church and carry on our ministries in the community.

How is the minister's community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time?

The community ministry is folded into the church because of all we are involved in beyond our doors.

MissionInSite

Comment on your congregation's MissionInSite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown?

[Community Insights for Churches & Faith-Based Orgs | MissionInSite](#)

We have not utilized this tool.

How do your congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects?

See comment below.

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

It is estimated there are at least 6500 people unhoused in San Jose California. The homeless demographic of our community certainly shapes our community and our ministry.

Every age group is represented downtown with 20–35-year-olds forming the largest group at 38%. This is in part because San Jose State University is right downtown. This demographic is not shaping our ministry. We are an elderly church overall, like many main line churches. This does not match the demographic of downtown or global San Jose.

Currently, our members come from all over the city with about 20% living downtown.

We are a majority White congregation, not matching the diversity of San Jose.

Recent census of San Jose showed the following percentages: "Hispanic" – 31%, White - 24% Asian (We have large Vietnamese population) – 38%, Black – 2%.

Of our 47 active participants we show the following percentages: 10% Latinx, 8% Asian, 2 % Pacific Islander, 2: Native American, 6% Black, 72% White.

There is huge wealth disparity in downtown San Jose, where current statistics place 34% of the population downtown earning 100,000 or more, but overall downtown is the second poorest neighborhood in San Jose.

In summary, the folks who worship and fellowship at Urban Sanctuary have made an intentional decision to come to a downtown urban church that prioritizes walking with our neighbors and siblings who have been marginalized by economic and racist systems.

Sources:

<https://statisticalatlas.com/neighborhood/California/San-Jose/Downtown/Age-and-Sex>
The Annual Pain Index: [2025 SVPI Corrected Annual Report.pdf](#)

What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

For being authentic and activist and great music. Passersby often like our mural: Jesus was an Agitator.

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

Some come from Recovery Cafe next door because they know others who have come.

One came because she loved the Listening Circles we had during Covid. One person came because she felt we were less cliquish, and we embraced her activism.

Most knew someone already in the church. They stayed because they felt accepted just the way they were, no judgement. Some found a role for themselves in literary, artistic-oriented after sessions. Some came because of the Minister and her sermons, others because of our community's inclusivity and informality. You don't have to dress up. People who continued felt embraced.

REFERENCES

Name up to three people who have agreed to serve as phone and written references. Make sure they are not members of your church but are persons who know your church well enough to be helpful to candidates seeking more information. Request a letter from each reference in answer to the four prompts below. Attach the letters (up to three) as desired.

REFERENCE 1 Steven Monhollen

Retired as Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Leadership, Lexington Theological Seminary, Lexington, Kentucky.

A Disciples of Christ minister with dual standing in the UCC.

970-573-8045 Stevenmonhollen@gmail.com

Provides pulpit supply and attends special events. Involved with Recovery Café, San Jose. Friend of the church and Recovery Café.

REFERENCE 2 Rev Nicole Lamarche

Pastor; Community United Church of Christ, Boulder Colorado

303 499 9119 revlamarche@gmail.com

Planted the UCC start-up Silicon Valley Progressive Faith Community (SVPFC). Nicole was part of the Disciples of Christ's First Christian Church San Jose (FCC) and SVPFC coming together to worship together for several years before merging as one congregation in Fall 2019. She left to pastor another church before we officially merged.

REFERENCE 3 Rev. Jennifer Goto

Pastor Pacific Grove, First UMC Pacific Grove California

408 665-6380 jennifergotto@att.net

Pastored downtown church in San Jose for many years. Very familiar with FCC, Urban Sanctuary and Recovery Café San Jose.

Name / Position / Setting

(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)

PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES

Describe some areas of strength in this church's ministry.

Describe some areas for improvement in this church's ministry.

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church's ministry.

Anything else you wish to share.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

CLOSING PRAYER

Include here any prayer or dream for the minister you imagine journeying toward you... a poem, for example, or a Scripture passage or a piece of music that is meaningful to your Search Committee:

God of promises

Sometimes we wait generations

for the dawn from on high;

sometimes only years

We wait for justice and hope and light and

kindness

to mingle in the tangle of our days

And we age while we hope

So may we age and hope

with tenderness and truth

because you are tender and true

even though we sometimes wonder.

Padraig O Tuama

Prayer of Thomas Merton:

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me.

I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact

that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I

believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that

desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know

nothing about it. Therefore, I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in

the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave

me to face my perils alone.

Carrie Newcomer Song: Room at the Table

[VERSE 1]

Let our hearts not be hardened to those living on the margins

There is room at the table for everyone

This is where it all begins, this is how we gather in

is room at the table for everyone

[VERSE 2]

Too long we have wandered, burdened and undone

But there is room at the table for everyone

Let us sing the new world in, this is how it all begins

There is room at the table for everyone

[CHORUS]

There is room for us all

And no gift is too small

There is room at the table for everyone

There's enough if we share

Come on pull up a chair

There is room at the table for everyone

[VERSE 3]

No matter who you are, no matter where you're from

There is room at the table for everyone

Here and now we can be the beloved community

There is room at the table for everyone

Matthew 25: 34-40

³⁴⁻³⁶ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Enter, you who are blessed by my Father!

Take what's coming to you in this kingdom. It's been ready for you since the world's foundation. And here's why:

I was hungry and you fed me,

I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,

I was homeless and you gave me a room,

I was shivering and you gave me clothes,

I was sick and you stopped to visit,

I was in prison and you came to me.'

³⁷⁻⁴⁰ "Then those 'sheep' are going to say, 'Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?' Then the King will say, 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me, you did it to me.'

Also attached: 2025 Budget and a note on the history of Recovery Café San Jose and the Center for Arts, spirituality and Activism

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

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

7. 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.*)

The Pastoral Search Committee (Lita Kurth, Deborah St. Julien, Bob Smay, Kevin Haley, Diane Holt, Delfina Callaway, Toni Gutierrez, Elizabeth Agramont-Justiniano.
The Financial Secretary - Virginia Farley, The Finance Committee

Additional comments for interpreting the profile

Signed: Deborah St Julien

Co-President Urban Sanctuary San Jose Board of Directors

Co-chair Search Committee

Sept 24, 2025

VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

The congregation is currently in good standing with the association / conference named.

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

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

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:

Name / Title:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

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

"Jesus answered them, 'Have faith in God!'" – Mark 11:22

Urban Sanctuary San Jose, Recovery Café San Jose, the Center for Arts, Spirituality and Activism for UCC Profile

A. Mission and Vision Statement

Urban Sanctuary San Jose is a boldly progressive spiritual community rooted in the Christian tradition. We seek to be a safe place to explore beliefs and practices with freedom, a place where questions are encouraged and where valued Wisdom traditions co-exist to enrich each other.

We are a people in recovery from and resistance to the dominant culture and acknowledge our need for community and support on that journey. Our vision is one of building the common good in this place, on our streets, and in this life.

We welcome all to join us in a shared life centered in our core commitments:

Build Healing Community - Especially with those living on the margins

Learn and Grow - Through reflective and experiential practices

Engage the Arts - Through creative expressions of our stories, symbols and meanings

Activism - To humbly and boldly be a witness for justice

B. Two significant ministries First Christian Church San Jose (which subsequently became Urban Sanctuary San Jose, a through a merger with a startup UCC congregation, Silicon Valley Progressive Faith Community) have been involved in founding are **Recovery Cafe San Jose (RCSJ)** and the **Center for Arts Spirituality, & Activism (CASA)**.

Recovery Cafe San Jose (primarily from RCSJ website <https://recoverycafesj.org/>)

How it all began...

The people of **First Christian Church (FCC)** spent many years sharing meals and providing housing for people who live on the streets in downtown San José. As the years went by, many remained stuck, living on the streets, unable to navigate their way out from under the forces of substance abuse and mental illness. FCC decided that its building, which is in a remarkable location in downtown San José, should be used to provide recovery services to all people, without regard to religious preference.

In the search to address this need, a group of people connected with old friends who had started The Recovery Café in Seattle. One of the prime goals of Recovery Cafe was to give homeless folks in recovery a sober and supportive place to grow and reconnect with society during the day. At the Café, friends and mentors who support your dreams, not your old habits. It is a place where they can share meals, attend Recovery Circles, take classes, create art, and volunteer to work. At Recovery Café people are able to gain leadership and work readiness by practicing healthy behaviors with new friends.

With guidance and training from the Seattle team, Recovery Café San Jose was founded as an independent, non-sectarian, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. **We opened our doors in San Jose on April 1, 2014**, and began building this supportive community, offering Group Meals, Recovery Circles, and daily programming.

In 2015 we launched our School for Recovery, offering in-depth classes in recovery/addiction, life skills, inner healing, and healthy living.

In 2017 we underwent a major renovation of our program space at First Christian Church (now Urban Sanctuary), and re-opened in January 2018 with a greatly expanded capacity in our new commercial kitchen and coffee bar, and updated and improved classrooms and Cafe space.

With this increased capacity, we grew our membership by nearly 50% and launched our Job Skills Training Program, giving members the chance to train alongside our chefs and baristas, receive one-on-one career coaching, and get their ServSafe certification; a first step toward employment in food services.

Our programs help our members reach their personal goals, such as family reunification, and gaining – and maintaining – housing and employment, as well as emotional stability.

We are currently open on Monday through Friday 10:00-4:00.

New Member Introduction sessions take place each Monday at 10:30 am – Please arrive at 10:00 to sign-in and get breakfast, and plan to stay till 11:30 am.



Comments: RCSJ has become an independent non-profit 501c3 service provider. Urban Sanctuary continues to lease the space to RCSJ for below market value. A member of Urban Sanctuary sits on RCSJ's Board of Directors. Some Urban Sanctuary members are volunteers, members of RCSJ and/or financial supporters of RCSJ. The organizations are strongly connected to each other. RCSJ's success is a priority for Urban Sanctuary.

The Center for Arts Spirituality, & Activism (CASA).

In 2022, the pastor and the congregation began visioning around creating a ministry that would build relationships among other artists, activists/organizers and spiritual leaders and connect with community organizing partners.

In 2023 this vision evolved from one of hiring a ½ time artist/organizer to build the program, to expanding our ½ pastor to ¾ time, and asking her to focus ¼ of her time on CASA.

We hope to build out support programs that address the burn-out people are feeling in our current political climate. These offerings will overlap in the areas of arts, activism and spirituality.

The activities of the Center have evolved. Here are some of the current existing and emerging [partnerships and programs.

Activism:

- Showing Up for Racial Justice Santa Clara County (SURJ SCC)
2-3 meetings per month onsite.
Urban Sanctuary (UrSa) is SURJ SCC's fiscal sponsor. This allows SURJ to fundraise & write grants under Urban Sanctuary's (UrSa) umbrella. SURJ rents space at a low rate, & contracts with UrSa's bookkeeper. SURJ uses Sanctuary space to sponsor films and large trainings – like the Rapid Response Legal Observer Training.
- Community Living Coalition – advocacy and organizing by affected folks for oversight of Board & Care homes has planning meetings at UrSa. This group was started by a member.
- Change the Story – churches working with young adult activists of color. CASA coordinates two weekend launch sessions a year.
- This is What We Did! Climate activism group founded by UrSa Members. Our Pastor is on their board.
- UrSa has been the site of pre-City Hall Preparations, rallies and post-City Hall respite. UrSa has provided refreshments for activists who may be at City Hall waiting to speak for hours.



- UrSa collaborated with SURJ SCC and the Amah Mutsun Tribal band. Their tribal leader came to worship and led a healing ritual in front of City Hall. (See above) We participated in the efforts to stop a gravel pit from being built on their sacred land.
- Sponsored two wellness retreats for leaders of BIPOC led justice groups in 2025.
- Sponsored ACLU and Silicon Valley Debug meeting about legislation protecting family members when their loved ones are arrested.
- Participated in a Voter Engagement block party.

Spirituality:

- Ignatian Spirituality Project/ Spiritual Reflection Group for those who've experienced homelessness or are doing recovery work – meets weekly and offers two annual retreats. Has expanded to RCSJ.

- Beginning to educate congregational members to be leaders of Clearness Circles (after Parker Palmer). We hope to offer this service to the community.

Arts:

- Soulful Sundays – quarterly. In the summer we are part of the SJ Jazz Fest.
- Hindu Dance Festival – once a year.
- Sponsored a Gospel Sunday Music Concert.
- Have hosted theater and films.
- In the past we co-sponsored quarterly arts events with the Compassionate Communities. This is on hiatus.

Rev. Nicole Lamarche, Pastor
Community United Church of Christ; Boulder, Colorado
revlamarche@gmail.com; 510-520-4011

Dear Prospective Pastor,

In the fall of 2010, compelled to plant a new congregation truly focused on doing what Jesus did, I got off the traditional ministry track and went on a spiritual adventure that included hosting events, volunteering, organizing, networking all over the South Bay to build a new church. Eventually we were a little band of progressive seekers looking for a place to worship and around 2014 we connected with the beautiful people of the First Christian Church of San Jose and later we found a home there. We began worshiping together on Sunday mornings, working for more equitable San Jose together, doing book studies and other gatherings as a whole group. It was clear that we had so much in common and that our love of justice and Jesus, organizing and empowering people on the margins was enough to continue doing more collaboratively and to explore uniting in what would become Urban Sanctuary San Jose. During that time right along with downtown enduring significant changes, so was Recovery Café San Jose. The fellowship hall was transformed, the programming expanded and it was clear that there were ways in which the church and the community of Recovery Café could not just co-exist, but co-curate a most amazing space for healing and hope. With churches dying rapidly, churches like Urban Sanctuary San Jose need to survive! It is a special community, existing in defiance of some of the culture around it. It is an interesting infusion of innovation and tradition, healing across myriad spiritual expressions, while still being rooted in ancient Christian practices as well as modern ways of living out Jesus' teachings in this time.

Over the years, even though lots of change, including what was required to endure the pandemic and forging new ground with an ever-evolving relationship with Recovery Café, the congregation has a steady size and a mighty spirit, continuing to add new members over the last few years. Like most mainline churches the membership is continues to be people over 50 with a few younger folks scattered in the mix, but there is always potential to tap into other demographics. What makes this church such a powerful place for healing for is that about 1/3 of the congregation is from Recovery Café. Having had the chance to share the journey with the people there during my ministry in San Jose was a true privilege and the coming together of our two communities taught me a lot about what it looks like to build and grow a church that is truly Jesusy! One of the most complicated dynamics to navigate in faith communities is class and Urban Sanctuary San Jose is doing that, while deepening what it means to be inclusive. This is important, especially in a time like this. Urban Sanctuary San Jose is among the churches that serve as a refuge from the hierarchy of American capitalism, offering a sacred space for all people to explore and feel empowered on the spiritual journey and the journey of life.

Feel free to reach out if you have any questions I may be able to help you with,

Rev. Nicole Lamarche

Rev. Dr. Steven Monhollen
1657 Fairorchard Avenue
San Jose, CA 95125
stevenmonhollen@gmail.com; 970-573-8045

September 17, 2025

Dear Ministerial Candidate,

Thank you for spending time pondering how a small congregation next to City Hall can have such promise and perhaps include you as its next pastoral leader.

I have been connected with Urban Sanctuary and its predecessor, First Christian Church, for over thirty years through friendships and, during the last five years, volunteer involvement as a friend of the congregation.

Urban Sanctuary is addressing significant maintenance issues concerning finances, building care, and building use. In my experience, when a church has a strong sense of meaning, it engages maintenance issues with a spirit of purpose. Urban Sanctuary is that church. The gifted leadership anticipates needs and responds to them from the perspective of the church's mission.

I think that the culture of Urban Sanctuary is a contrast with the dominant society in the way the blues are a contrast with pop music. The blues tell a certain truth about life, however difficult it may be, and one feels more deeply connected to oneself and the community as a result. Pop music often sugarcoats life and is less able to address deep needs. Because it embodies a blues spirit, Urban Sanctuary is both a journey inward (for example, replenishing the spirits of those who do such things as witness ICE roundups) and a journey outward (advocating in the city for people on the margins).

One treasure of this inward and outward journey at Urban Sanctuary is the music director, Neil McPherson, who is a professional musician. He plays a broad range of musical styles and brings a creative and caring presence. He is able to draw other musicians together for special programs like Soulful Sundays. In addition, Ryan Trujillo, who handles tech responsibilities, is a gifted musician who involves his combo in worship.

Another treasure of Urban Sanctuary is the wealth of insight about care that many members bring as a result of their experience in recovery programs. The leadership gives lavish permission for members to express the depth of their exploration through poetry, reflection, music, and art.

My wife, Jeanne Farrington, and I marvel at the genuine welcoming spirit at Urban Sanctuary. One November, we attended a writer's workshop at the church with various members. Our purpose was to reflect on Luke 2:8-20 (the appearance of the shepherds at the manger) and write about something from the reading that caught our imagination. As a result, people wrote poetry and reflections that then became a part of the Christmas Eve service. Jeanne and I found this to be a deeply welcoming experience.

I hope that this reference will add to your insights about Urban Sanctuary. I would be happy to speak with you as well if you have questions.

Traveling mercies to you as you ponder how you may be drawn to this treasure of a congregation.

With hope,

Rev. Dr. Steven Monhollen
Friend of Urban Sanctuary
Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Leadership
Lexington Theological Seminary
Lexington, Kentucky

**Urban Sanctuary San Jose Budget
As of July 31st, 2025**

	Actual July '25	Actual Through July '25	Budget Through July '25	Budget 2025	Over/Under Budget YTD
Offerings	9,521.72	38,243.95	42,000.00	72,000.00	-3,756.05
Building Use	5,709.00	35,959.00	40,250.00	69,000.00	-4,291.00
Utilities reimb RCSJ	2,384.69	18,850.74	18,666.67	32,000.00	184.07
Parking Lot	3,900.00	24,800.00	27,300.00	46,800.00	-2,500.00
LOP-WOE Campaign	5,397.70	26,487.70	17,821.42	30,551.00	8,666.28
Total General Fund/Budgeted Income	26,913.11	144,341.39	146,038.08	250,351.00	-1,696.69

Budgeted Expense

Pastor Compensation (incl benefits)	6,700.75	44,594.34	45,373.42	77,783.00	-779.08
Payroll Expense	4,068.29	31,839.03	33,765.67	57,884.00	-1,926.64
Staff Appreciation		76.75	291.67	500.00	-214.92
Guest Speakers	150.00	500.00	875.00	1,500.00	-375.00
Musicians	1,050.00	10,100.00	10,325.00	17,700.00	-225.00
Worship & Education	124.00	511.37	816.67	1,400.00	-305.30
Fellowship	146.95	300.43	294.00	504.00	6.43
Administration	525.57	2,063.69	2,333.33	4,000.00	-269.64
Cleaning supplies	99.68	217.19	291.67	500.00	-74.48
Maintenance - Long Term			0.00		7,724.00
Maintenance - Annual	490.00	9,249.02	4,375.00	7,500.00	4,874.02
Utilities	3,575.44	23,730.68	23,333.33	40,000.00	397.35
Outreach Ministries	350.00	2,450.00	1,750.00	3,000.00	700.00
Publicity & Social Media	106.50	1,608.00	1,166.67	2,000.00	441.33
Real Estate Taxes		3,412.21	4,958.33	8,500.00	-1,546.12
Insurance & Fees	4,377.74	12,212.17	9,916.67	17,000.00	2,295.50
Travel & Meetings		50.00	116.67	200.00	-66.67
Total Budgeted Expenses	21,764.92	142,914.88	139,983.08	239,971.00	2,931.80
Budgeted Net Income/Loss	5,148.19	1,426.51	6,055.00	10,380.00	-4,628.49