

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

(SHORT FORM)

Community United Church of Christ, Fresno

5550 N Fresno St

Fresno CA 93710

Intentional Interim Pastor

Northern California Nevada Conference, UCC

Sequoia Association

Validation Date: July 22, 2026

Church Contact Information

(559) 435-2690 (Church office, Mon-Thurs., 9am-2pm)

office@communityucc.com

www.communityucc-fresno.org

Listing Information

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:

Rev. Dr. Davena L. Creer-Jones, Conference Minister

Email: davena@ncncucc.org

Phone: (510) 359-7208

Tuesday-Friday, 8-5

MeLinda LaViene, CMA

Email: melinda@ncncucc.org

Phone: (510) 247-8990

Office Hours Monday-Friday, 8-5

What do we value about living in our area?

We value our location in California's Central Valley, strategically situated halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles and within easy reach of the Sierra Nevada mountains and the Pacific coast. Our region's culturally diverse population, vibrant arts community, and mild winters contribute to a dynamic environment that supports both professional growth and quality of life.

Current size of membership:

132 (85-90 active participants)

Average in person attendance:

58

Does your church hold virtual worship services?

Our in-person worship services are viewable live on Facebook, and afterwards on YouTube.

Languages used in ministry:

English

Position Title:

Intentional Interim Minister

Position Duration:

Serve approximately 18 months to no longer than two years.

Compensation Level

½ Time (approximately 20-22 hours/week)

\$51,789, which will vary based on experience and education. This amount does not include health insurance, which is to be determined. Sabbatical and professional development time will be negotiated.

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

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Scope of Work

- Listen attentively to the needs of the congregation, fostering an environment where individual voices are heard and valued in discerning church decisions, questions, and concerns. Identify and share helpful resources and opportunities, empowering members to engage with them in ways that strengthen the church's longevity and vitality.
- Worship leadership, in collaboration with the Worship Planning team, the Transitional Ministry Coordinator, and musicians for preaching, offering prayers, service preparation, etc.
- Pastoral care, in collaboration with lay people (especially those who are sick, elderly, or grieving)

- Spiritual guidance to individuals and families navigating life transitions. Encourage theological reflection and spiritual growth across all age groups, and in all they do.
- Participate in church council meetings and strategic planning sessions. Communicate regularly with leadership regarding congregational needs and progress.
- Weddings and funerals for participants in the worshipping community
- Serve as a resource for the work of the church, including the Mixed-Use process
- Guide specific tasks to which the congregation is committed, such as those related to the Mixed-Use project, the Search Committee, or congregational revitalization.

Compensation and Support

Total Base Salary, half-time Interim position: \$ 51,789

(Determined by Conference guidelines. Pastoral candidate will determine their Housing Allowance portion of the Total Base Salary. Experience and Education points are set at a maximum of 15, which matches our previous settled pastor's.)

Social Security Offset: \$ 3962

Total Direct Compensation: \$ 55,751

Customary Benefit:

- Minister and family health plan

Standard Benefits:

- Retirement Annuity @ 14%
- Life and Disability Insurance @ 1.5 %
- Criminal Background Check reimbursement

Entitlements:

- Days off per week: 4
- Annual Leave: 25 working days
- Holidays: 12 Government holidays, plus 3 floating (Good Friday, Easter, Christmas)
- Lifelong Learning Leave: one week/year
- Sick Leave: 12 working days per 12 months

Professional Expenses:

- Mobile Phone reimbursement, \$50/month
- Professional expense account, mileage reimbursement, Wider Church participation, etc.

Who is God Calling Us to Become?

God is calling us to downsize our physical footprint and upsize our community outreach...and we are acting on this. We have defined our vision: a "Mixed-Use" change to our land, to include apartments,

worship/community space and possibly retail. In 2026 we identified a developer and are now in talks about what might be done. (See more details in the Historical section.)

11-Year Report

The 11-Year Report is no longer available, according to our Conference office. The Yearbook Reports from 2023 and 2024 reflect steady membership, finances, and congregational engagement.

Congregation Demographics

Description of those who participate in your church.

Number of active members: 87

Number of active non-members: 6

Total of church participants: 93

Are these numbers estimates? No

Describe the total participation of the church.

Membership 5 years ago: 187

Membership 10 years ago: 166

Weekly adult education attendance, if any: 15

Youth ministry attendance, if any: 5-10

Are these numbers estimates? No

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

More than 10 years: 62%

Less than 10, more than 5 years: 19%

Less than 5 years: 19%

Are these numbers estimates? No

Number of total participants by age:

0-11 11

12-17 5

18-24 6

25-34 5

35-44 15

45-54 9

55-64 9

65-74 28

75+ 14

Are these numbers estimates: yes

Staff and Volunteer Leadership

List of all current staff, and whether paid staff or volunteer:

Position	Reports To	Compensated Y/N	Hours per Week	Length in Position
Church Administrator	Exec Team/Pastor	Yes	24	33 yrs
Transitional Ministry Coordinator	Exec Team/Pastor	Yes	10	8 months
Bookkeeper	Treasurer	Yes	8	10 yrs
Nursery Assistant	Faith Ed	Yes	2	5 yrs
Minister of Music	Exec Team/Pastor	Yes	4	12 yrs
AV Tech (4)	Worship Team	No	1-1.5	Varying timeframe
Church Council	Congregation	No	varies	Varying timeframe

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

At CUCC we aim to uplift all members of our congregation both in leadership and ministry roles. There are several support systems in place to help aid in this effort, ranging from our devoted church Administrator to our Church Council. For example, for the past five years, our church Administrator has been the only staff person who works on-site during the week, Mon.-Thurs. She communicates with the pastor (our last pastor worked mostly remotely, one day on-site), the congregation (during office hours), the renters, and the contract evening janitorial service. She responds to building issues, such as plumbing problems, HVAC malfunctions, etc., reporting to and communicating with the Moderator and Executive Team on church matters. Our bookkeeper makes sure staff and bills are paid, taxes filed, etc. We also have a Pastoral Relations Team that meets periodically to support the pastor.

With these roles, CUCC centers its ministry on advocacy for the marginalized, social justice, community connectivity and political awareness, keeping God at the center of everything we do; but our ministry does not end at the pastoral level. Within our congregation are many individuals who willingly preach messages they feel called to do when able. This means when breaks occur for our pastor, there are people who can get plugged in, leaving no scrambling for pulpit-fill.

We rent our two buildings seven days a week, to local missional organizations who need space. Thus, being a responsive landlord has evolved into being part of our ministry, as our dependency on rental income has increased.

Church Finances

Current Annual Income sources (as of FY ending June 30, 2025):

Congregation:	\$145,589	Estimates of Giving, loose offerings
Faith Education:	\$ 5,000	Planned transfer from FE's restricted acct, to cover part of Administrator
From renters	\$ 42,306	Head Start preschool, Sat. afternoon church, Yoga Center, AA groups
From fundraisers	\$ 3,981	various teams, committees offer drawings through the year
Total	\$196,876	

Current Annual Expenses (for most recent fiscal year):

\$ 206,164

Most recent church budget, for current year, and Annual Treasurer's Report for previous year:

[Budget Adopted 2025-26-SF.pdf.xlsx](#)

[Treasurer's Report run 6-16-25 for Annual Report](#)

(If the above documents can't be seen, please email sarahfey@mac.com who will send them to you.)

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

No

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered?

We pay \$100 a month to OCWM when we pay our monthly bills.

Total amount of loan debt:

\$0

Are capital and other payments current?

Yes

Does the church currently have any endowments? What are the values?

General Memorial Fund	\$	46,124
Pitman Scholarship		18,715

Donaldson Music Fund	26,020
Ministrare Fund	33,532
Bettenhausen Christian Ed Fund	203,998
Long Term Fund	2,249
Kitchen Fund	9,000
Total	\$ 339,637

Capital Campaigns

No capital campaigns are planned currently, due to potential changes to property if the Mixed-Use project goes forward.

Does the church have a parsonage?

No

Accessibility features of our building(s):

Property (parking lot, office, meeting rooms, social hall) is flat, except for the sanctuary. Within the sanctuary the entrance and narthex are at ground level, but there is a gradual slope down to the front. Three steps go up to the chancel, which is at ground level. The chancel can be accessed through the office.

We have a large accessible, non-gendered bathroom, besides the traditional girls' and boys' bathrooms.

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs:

Almost all our property is accessible to wheelchairs, except for the movement from the chancel to the base of the seating area of the sanctuary.

Historical Information

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

Current history:

Our previous minister had a vision of how our church could help our community and help sustain our church's financial future. So, in June 2023, CUCC voted to move towards converting our property from "church" use to apartments/church/retail – "Mixed Use" – with a land-lease agreement from a future developer. An active committee has been working with moving this vision forward. In 2026 a developer was found, but with proposed changes. Negotiations are proceeding, with changes coming back to the congregation as they arise.

If redevelopment occurs, then in time (possibly in five years or so) our church buildings would be dismantled and new buildings constructed. At that time our worship would need to be temporarily moved, office

relocated, and storage found, etc. However, if the congregation decides not to proceed with this land redevelopment project, then CUCC will need to discern our next steps.

Past history:

In 2007, Zion Congregational Church in Fresno closed their doors, and joined with us, College Community Congregational Church. In 2015, we changed our name to Community United Church of Christ, to better reflect the merger.

In 1998, our church voted to become Open and Affirming. We became a Just Peace church in 2016. In June 2022, we adopted the WISE Covenant and are currently working through the certification steps.

Ministerial History (past 30 years)

Julia Penner-Zook	2020-2025
Ara Guekguezian, Interim	2018-2020
Christopher Breedlove	2011-2018
Robin Carlson, Commissioned	
Minister, Faith Education	2012-2022
Karen O'Connell, Interim	2011-2011
Diane Christopherson, Interim	2009-2011
David Schlicher	2004-2009
Lucretia Parks, Interim	2001-2004
Marcia Free	2000-2001
Robert Baker, Interim	1998-1999
Gail McDougale, Co-Pastor	1987-1998
David H Brown, Co-Pastor	1986-1997

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

Yes

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?

Yes

Community Vision

Describe how the relationships and activities of our congregation have extended outward in service and advocacy.

In our quest to fulfill the congregation's mission to respect all human persons and to continue to advocate and fight for justice and equality for all, members of the Missions and Social Justice (MSJ) team are at the forefront of the congregation in planning and implementing several initiatives. Among them are the following:

Systemic Racism

With a goal to promote better understanding about race and racism, and to facilitate dialogues where we listen mindfully to one another and to our stories, beginning in 2018, we engaged the congregation in many activities. These included small group discussions with guided questions designed to elicit an examination of challenges presented by racism, and to propose actions in which the congregation could engage to alleviate, if not eliminate, those challenges.

In 2021, members of MSJ and the pastors participated in the UCC Northern California Nevada Conference conversations on racism.

Members of community groups and city officials were invited to meet with the congregation virtually and in person. These included the President of the Fresno chapter of the NAACP (2021), representatives of the Islamic Cultural Center (2021), and a Fresno City Councilman (2022). These conversations aided in erasing many stereotypes of various groups and raised awareness of the relationship between Fresno's police and their treatment of people of color.

Ongoing ministry with the LGBTQ+ community

Community United Church of Christ has long been a visible and vocal presence for love and inclusion in the Fresno community. We take seriously our call to extend God's unconditional welcome beyond our church walls.

One of the most vibrant expressions of this is our ongoing ministry with the LGBTQ+ community.

Each year, we proudly march in the Fresno Pride Parade, walking side by side with our LGBTQ+ siblings to witness publicly that God's love knows no bounds. At the Pride Festival, our booth is a place of hospitality and hope, where visitors can ask questions, share their stories, and experience what it means to be truly welcomed by an Open and Affirming congregation.

Beyond public events, we strive to provide a spiritual home for those who have been wounded or excluded by the church. Within our sanctuary, LGBTQ+ individuals and families can safely explore their relations with God, worship authentically, and rediscover a sense of belonging. Many have shared that Community UCC has helped them reconnect not only with their faith, but with themselves.

Support for a Syrian Refugee Family

We worked with Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM) to identify a second Syrian refugee family in Fresno for whom we provided some support, beginning in 2018. Some team members, the Interim Pastor, and members of the congregation visited the family regularly and helped in placing the daughters in school and attending to other identified needs. Furniture was provided by members of the congregation, and

the family was invited to participate in some activities, including speaking to the congregation. This was made into a moving video, which told the story of the family.

Team members stayed in close contact with the family and kept us abreast of their activities and needs. Money raised for a special offering went to help defray the cost of the oldest daughter's books when she began college.

We helped the family move into better living facilities, and members of the MSJ team continued to tutor the second youngest child and intervened with the Fresno Unified School District to provide better learning environments for two of the children. In 2022, when the father obtained a job, and the family indicated that they were ready to be on their own, we discontinued our support.

Serving the Underserved

We continue to implement our goal of providing service to underserved populations by contributing to food and housing, assisting with funding, and providing volunteers. Activities include serving at Poverello House, collecting food for the food pantry, collecting toiletries for women inmates, and special offerings which provide funding for transportation for homeless persons. In addition, donations of personal care items were made to the women of Naomi House, a shelter for women and children (2021).

We have developed a relationship with Robinson Elementary School near us, holding clothing and school supply drives and buying gifts for some children at Christmas. In addition, some members of the Team and other members of the congregation who have received training serve as literacy mentors at Robinson Elementary School.

WISE

In our journey to become a WISE congregation, a WISE Committee was formed and worked with members of the UCC Mental Health Network.

We educated ourselves about the broad spectrum of mental illness and other disorders. Toward that end, in 2022, the WISE Committee conducted book discussions of the book *Blessed are the Crazy*. It also made four videos of members of the congregation giving their perspectives on mental illness. In 2022, working in concert with Worship Planning, several short videos were added to the end of the Sunday service. In several of her sermons, the Pastor addressed the issues involved.

This education continued with testimonials of congregation members sharing their struggles with mental illness, and a clinical psychologist providing clinical perspectives.

As we continued our education, in 2022, ten members of our congregation participated in a full-day training on Mental Health First Aid with Susan Bechara of Comprehensive Behavioral Service and are now certified in Mental Health First Aid USA. We plan to offer this training to a larger number of congregants in 2026.

Care for our Environment

CUCC demonstrated environmental awareness by installing the first rooftop solar panels on a church in Fresno and later by removing our front lawn and installing xeriscape landscaping.

What are the partnerships (Just World Covenants) our congregation has formally adopted?

Open and Affirming

WISE congregation

Just Peace

References

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Closing Prayer

Holy one, let this Profile speak to a pastor who feels a call to serve our small but vibrant congregation. We confess we don't listen enough for your whispers of spirit. Guide us in faith as we step into our future and out to our community.

Statement of Consent

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?
Treasurer, Moderator, members of Council and the Pastor Search Committee
2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile: none