



**UNITED
CHURCH**
OF GAINESVILLE

Church Profile

Minister for Justice and Development

The United Church of Gainesville has gathered for more than 60 years as a community committed “to worship God, however known.” We continue to be a theologically open congregation that honors diverse beliefs and facilitates relationships across differences. Our community seeks to weave our commitments to inclusion and compassion into the spiritual life of the congregation as we work for meaningful change in our neighborhood, city, and the wider world.

We invite you to learn more about the position of Minister for Justice and Development. This role reflects our commitment to shared leadership and thoughtful governance, as we continue discerning who we are becoming and how we are called to live out our mission in the years ahead.

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UCG Church Compact

We join as a spiritual community in this compact:

To worship God, however known,

To welcome into our church those of differing understanding and theological opinion,

To learn from our religious heritage, yet to grow by seeking new dimensions of truth.

To follow, even imperfectly, the way of Jesus in personal involvement with each other,

And, strengthened by this bond, to act in Christian concern for the welfare of all people.



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Position Posting /Job Description

Minister for Justice and Development (Co-Pastor)

The United Church of Gainesville is a vibrant, progressive, and theologically open congregation of the United Church of Christ, seeking to call a Minister for Justice and Development to serve as Co-Pastor, in shared and equal leadership with our current minister.

We understand ministry as a covenantal and collaborative endeavor. We are seeking a pastor who is excited to build together—to contribute in meaningful ways to the life of the church, to our wider community, and to the ongoing discernment of who we are becoming.

UCG strives to be a home for religious openness, grounded in progressive Christian theology, deep care for one another, and a sustained commitment to justice, compassion, and creativity.

Shared Ministry and Co-Pastor Model

The Minister for Justice and Development will serve alongside the current minister, the Minister for Spiritual Curiosity and Programs, as a co-pastor at equal level, sharing authority, responsibility, and accountability for the life of the church. While each pastor will have distinct areas of primary responsibility, both are expected to work collaboratively, communicate openly, and engage in ongoing co-creation of shared ministry.

Both pastors share primary responsibility for:

- Worship leadership and preaching
- Pastoral care
- Staff evaluation (with each co-pastor directly/operationally supervising specific staff)
- Participation in the Pastoral Parish Relations Committee
- Leadership within Church Council and Council Executive Committee

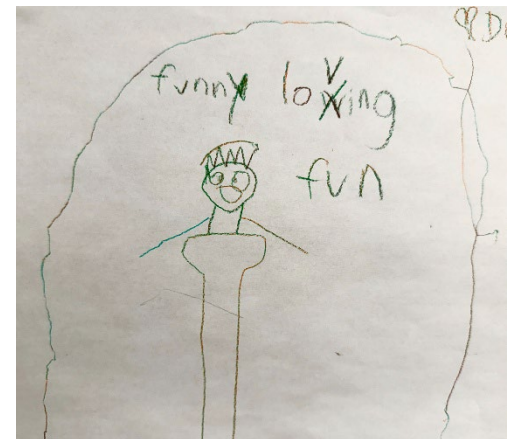
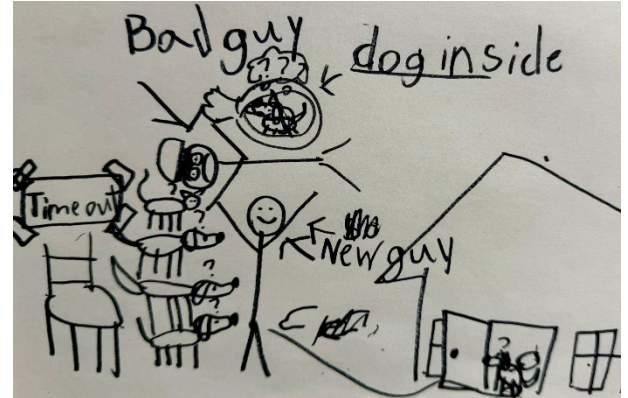
We value flexibility, communication, and mutual trust, and recognize that shared ministry evolves over time. We expect our co-pastors to shape their shared ministry through ongoing conversation and discernment. Recognizing the importance of a strong pastoral partnership, the church will provide dedicated retreat time (one week) for the co-pastor dyad to define their working relationship, with provision for ongoing consultation or coaching as needed. The established Co-Pastor will step back from primary worship leadership and pastoral care for a mutually agreed upon time to allow the newly called minister time to become established in the community.

Primary Areas of Responsibility

While ministry is shared, with opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership across all dimensions of church life, the Minister for Justice and Development will have primary responsibility in the following areas:

Justice, Outreach, and Community Engagement

- Provide vision and leadership for the church's justice ministries and related committees (including racial justice, open and affirming [LGBTQIA+ ministry], feeding programs, immigrant support, creation care/climate justice)
- Cultivate and sustain relationships with community organizations and partners aligned with UCG's commitments to racial, environmental, economic, gender, sexuality, and social justice
- Encourage justice work that is theologically grounded, relational, and responsive to community needs
- Support the integration of justice commitments into worship, education, and the spiritual life of the congregation



Development, Advancement, and Membership Outreach

- Provide leadership for development and advancement efforts in collaboration with lay leaders and staff
- Frame stewardship and generosity as expressions of faith, relationship, and shared mission
- Support sustainable funding for the church's ministries and long-term vitality
- Work with the Board of Business and Endowment to align financial resources with mission and values
- Collaborate on strategic communications and outreach efforts to help new and prospective members discover UCG by connecting community members with the church's unique culture, values, and offerings—especially those who share UCG's values and commitments but may not yet know that such a spiritual community exists here



FIGURE 1 – OUR CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS OF OUR FUTURE MINISTER'S QUALITIES

Governance, Administration, and Organizational Leadership

- Serve as liaison to the Board of Business, Endowment, and Membership
- Participate fully in Church Council and other leadership bodies as part of the co-pastor team
- Supervise relevant staff with clarity, consistency, and care, including effective communication, coaching, and evaluation
- Bring strong administrative and organizational skills, maintaining clear procedures, sound business practices, and healthy systems that support the life and mission of the church
- Work collaboratively with staff and lay leaders to foster a culture of collaboration, accountability, transparency, and compassion in all areas of church operations

Qualities We Seek

We are seeking a pastor who:

- Provides strong worship leadership and the ability to deliver sermons that engage people from diverse theological perspectives
- Has understanding of and comfort with progressive Christian theology and UCC polity
- Brings passion, imagination, and resilience to justice-centered ministry
- Is skilled at developing and maintaining appropriate relationships with co-pastor, staff, and members of the congregation and the community
- Embraces sharing leadership in a co-pastor model
- Can organize members of the congregation and community partners to inspire acts of justice and compassion
- Approaches development and stewardship as relationship-building and storytelling rather than transactional fundraising
- Has a demonstrated track record of healthy staff supervision, including the ability to coach, direct, and evaluate staff effectively and compassionately
- Brings strong administrative and organizational leadership skills, and values clear processes and good governance
- Values reflection, humor, humility, and ongoing learning

Care for Our Ministers

The UCG is committed to healthy, sustainable ministry. We support our pastors in:

- One week of study leave and financially supported continuing education
- Regular days off and 3 weeks of vacation time
- Preserving time and attention for family, friendships, and life beyond the church
- Following their passions and gifts in ways that enrich both their lives and the congregation.

Organization & Structure

Ministerial Model

The United Church of Gainesville has transitioned organically from a traditional senior and two associate model to a collaborative, co-minister leadership structure. Following the retirement of our third minister and a thoughtful review of our financial sustainability, the congregation shifted to a two-minister model in 2023. We worked to refine and clarify this model with our current interim minister, settled minister, and church leadership. We also enjoy support from two part-time ministers and two emeritus ministers, who are listed as staff on our website.

Currently, our Minister and Interim Minister share leadership responsibilities in partnership with the Church Council. Both ministers have distinctly designed and outlined lanes of work. There are clearly defined and complementary areas of focus, allowing for collaboration while maintaining clarity in decision-making and accountability.

Category	Minister for Justice & Development	Minister for Spiritual Curiosity & Programs
Primary Focus	Justice, outreach, development, stewardship	Spiritual curiosity and exploration, intergenerational program leadership
Oversight of Boards	Boards of Administration and Outreach	Boards of Education and Inreach
Staff Supervision	Staff related to justice, finance, and operations	Staff related to music, children, worship, and pastoral care
Worship	Shared preaching; justice integration	Shared preaching; creative and intergenerational worship
Pastoral Care	Shared with other clergy and Kairos	Shared with other clergy and Kairos

FIGURE 2 - DISTINCT LANES OF WORK FOR CO-MINISTER TEAM

Lay Church Leadership

The Church Council, as defined in our bylaws, meets monthly to govern on behalf of the congregation. Representing our boards and committees, and including members-at-large, the moderator(s), moderator(s)-elect, and the clerk, the Council provides strategic oversight and direction for the church’s mission and ministries. Day-to-day operations are carried out by our ministers, staff, and part-time ministerial support team. Moderators and the council executive board work as strategic partners with the ministers to lead church visioning and large-scale planning.

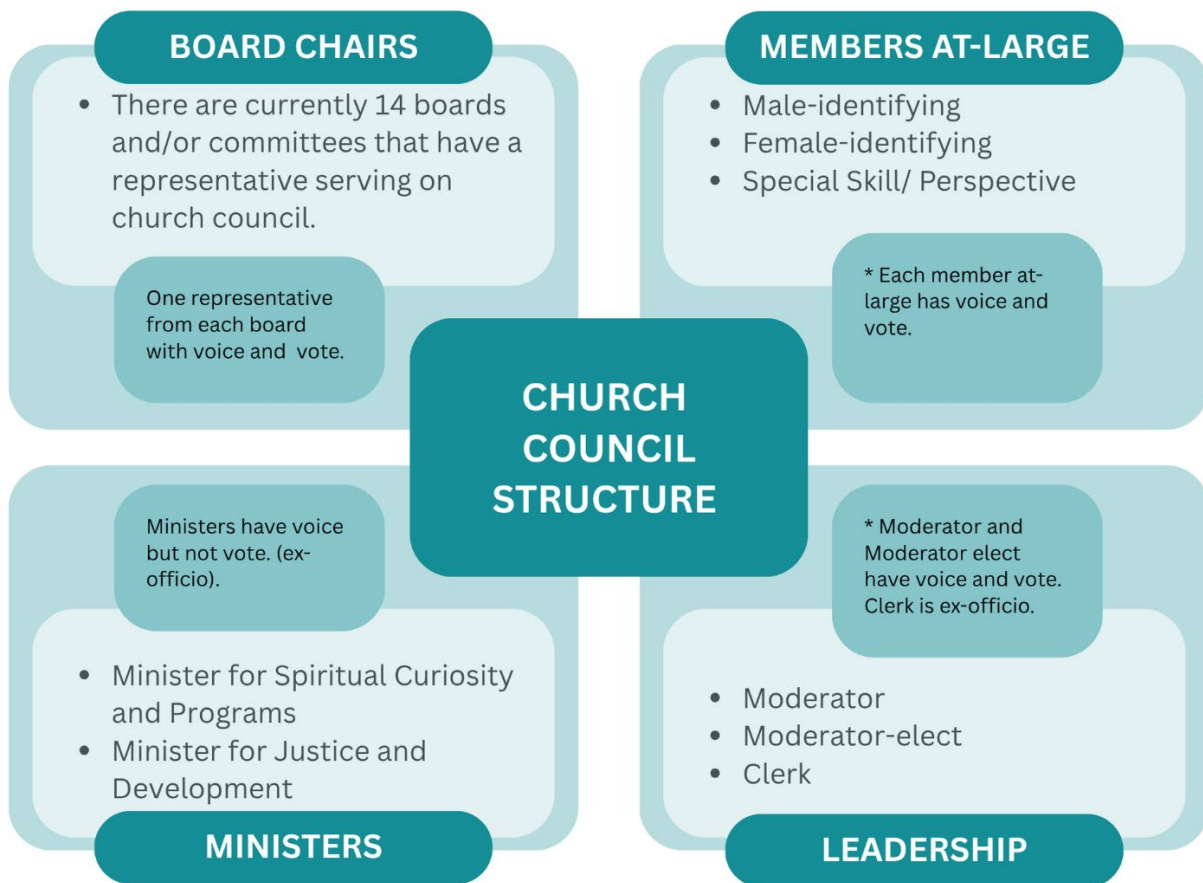


FIGURE 3 - CHURCH COUNCIL STRUCTURE AND VOTING MEMBERS

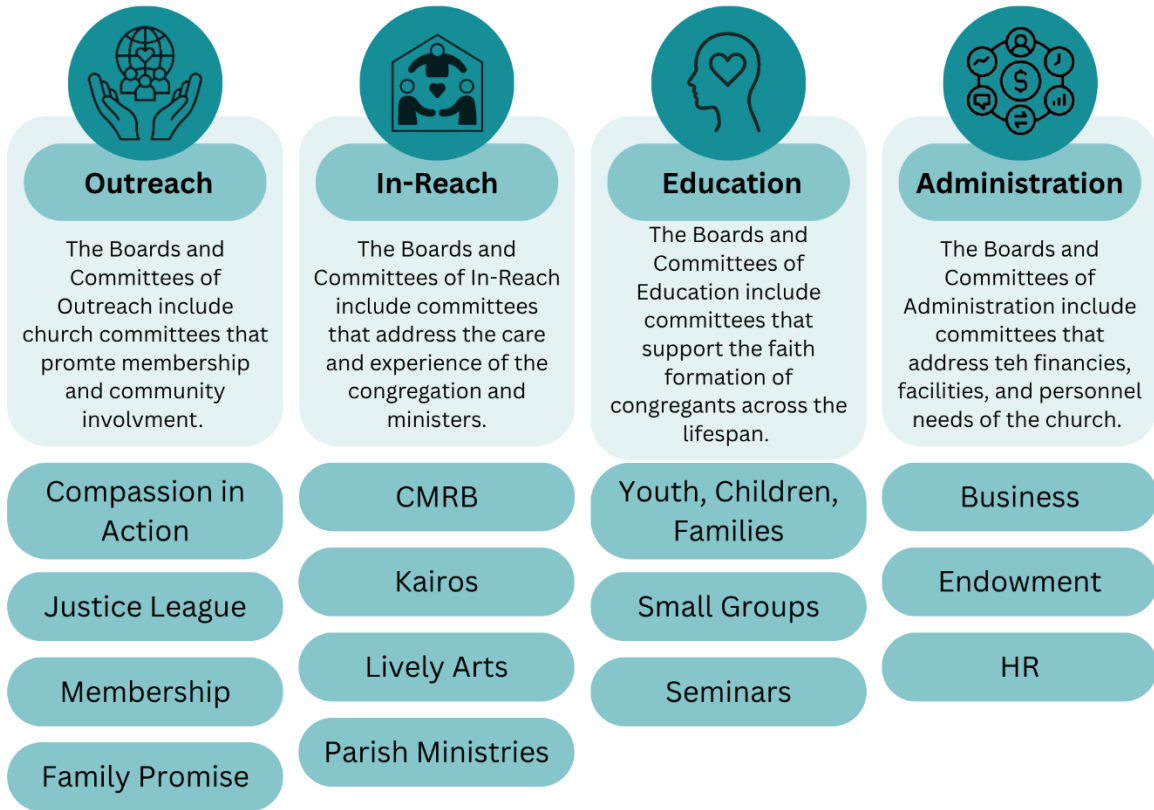


FIGURE 4 - CATEGORIES OF LEADERSHIP BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Visioning and leadership flow from the congregation through established channels including by-laws defined board & committees. All these board and committee chairs sit on church council as voting members alongside members at large, the moderators, and the clerk. Ministers attend and support church council meetings. More detailed and logistical planning occurs within council executive meetings, where the ministers and moderators alongside members-at-large work to support the larger workings of the church. Creative and collaborative leadership is the heart of our approach to congregational life.

Office Staff

UCG is supported by a dynamic and beloved office and programming staff, including a Director of Church Operations, Director of Programming, Director of Music, and Director of Children’s Ministry. The staff is further supported by two part-time ministers who assist with pastoral care, worship and music coordination as requested, while emeriti ministers offer guidance and support in accordance with their covenant with the congregation. In addition, a dedicated team of nursery and childcare aides supports the thriving Kids United program. Recently, the church launched a youth job training program, employing more than 10 teens from the congregation to assist with facility, office, and programming needs, as well as rental operations. This initiative reflects a commitment to engaging youth while providing meaningful, hands-on work experience.

Currently, the Church office staffing structure is in transition following the opening of two positions. Both departures reflect positive growth and new opportunities for the individuals involved; however, the resulting vacancies have proven challenging to fill. In response, the ministers, moderators, and Church Council have approved the creation of an Executive Director role to provide cohesive oversight of office operations, staff coordination, accounts receivable, and communications. This position effectively integrates the responsibilities of the Office Manager, Church Accountant, and other organizational and supervisory tasks into a single, streamlined leadership role. The Executive Director will report to the Minister of Justice and Development, as reflected in the organizational chart below.

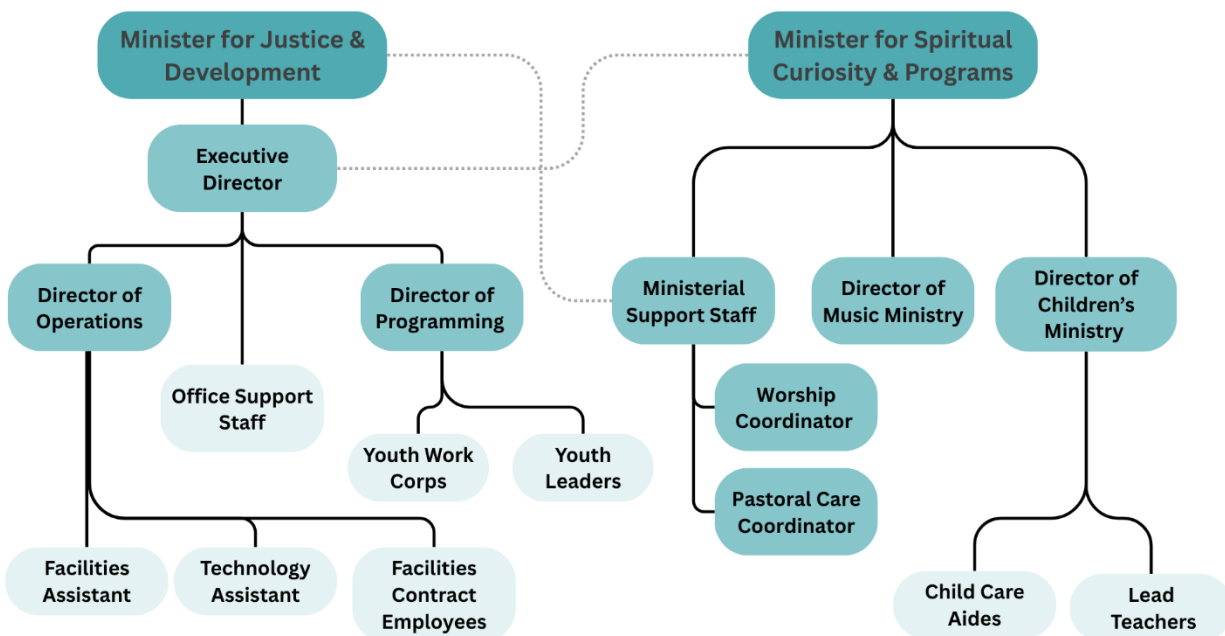


FIGURE 5 - ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR CO-MINISTER LEADERSHIP

Church Overview

The United Church of Gainesville (UCG) is a vibrant, progressive community rooted in love, inclusion, and spiritual curiosity. For more than 60 years, we have gathered as a spiritual community committed “to worship God, however known.” That simple promise from our Church Compact shapes who we are. We come from many religious backgrounds and hold a wide range of theological perspectives. Yet we are united in our desire to seek truth together. We believe faith can be found in many places—through art and activism, study and service, sanctuary and nature, quiet prayer and joyful celebration.

UCG is both a spiritual home and a community of purpose—nurturing children and youth, supporting one another through life’s challenges, and working for justice in the wider world. Loving, generous, and forward-looking, we are a congregation where diverse beliefs are honored, deep relationships are formed, and faith is lived out together. We value the human diversity each individual brings, including racial identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, differing ability, and varied religious backgrounds.

We recognize that we gather on the ancestral lands of the Timucua, Seminole, and all other Native and Indigenous peoples who cared for this land long before us. We honor their enduring connection to this place and commit ourselves to respecting and learning from their histories and contributions.



Our History

The United Church of Gainesville was founded in 1964, when a small, passionate, and curious group of Gainesville residents imagined a church willing to engage social, political, and spiritual questions. In a still-segregated North Florida, they placed an invitation in the University of Florida student newspaper, *The Alligator*, and gathered at the Reitz Union at the University of Florida, beginning what would become a vibrant, progressive congregation. In 1965, the church formally organized, wrote and adopted its

Church Compact, and called its first pastor, choosing to affiliate with the United Church of Christ. Since moving to our current campus in 1976, UCG has grown in both space and spirit, building our sanctuary in 1992 and expanding our education and fellowship areas to support a thriving, multigenerational community.

Throughout our history, UCG has sought to unite worship with social justice. In 1992, we became an Open and Affirming congregation, publicly committing to the full inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in all areas of church life—an identity that remains central to who we are. In 2023, we received the designation as a Creation Justice Church in the United Church of Christ. As we approach our 60th anniversary, we continue to be a community rooted in love, spiritual curiosity, and courageous witness—seeking leaders who will help us build on this legacy of faith, inclusion, and service.

Ministerial History

The United Church of Gainesville has been blessed by the steady leadership of several long-tenured ministers whose ministries have shaped the life and character of our congregation. In 1974, UCG called Larry Reimer, who, alongside his wife Sandy, served the church faithfully for more than three decades. During that time, Sandy pursued her own call to ministry, was ordained, and joined the ministerial staff. They both served until their shared retirement in 2010. Today, both Larry and Sandy continue their relationship with UCG as Ministers Emeriti, offering their presence and care in ways that honor the leadership of current ministers while remaining deeply connected to the congregation they served for so many years. They and the church remain faithful to a written covenant that outlines and maintains clear boundaries of relationship.

UCG has also been enriched by the ministry of Andy Bachmann, who served as Associate Minister from 2003 to 2022. Throughout his nearly twenty years on staff, Andy balanced his ministry at UCG with leadership at his family's Camp Highlands for Boys in Wisconsin, serving the congregation for ten months each year while dedicating summers to the camp. Upon his retirement, Andy worked thoughtfully with the Congregational Ministry Review Board to establish a clear and healthy transition plan, stepping away fully before returning to congregational life with well-defined expectations. In retirement, he has modeled gracious boundaries—offering support when invited and allowing current ministers the space and authority to lead with clarity and confidence.

In addition to these three ministers who retired from service to UCG, eight other ministers now call UCG their church home. From diverse backgrounds and faith communities, these ministers joined us after they had retired from their church careers or have careers separate from the church and have not had a call with UCG. When invited, these experienced clergy offer their gifts in preaching, pastoral care, and occasional administrative support. Together, they demonstrate a collaborative spirit and a deep respect for clear roles and healthy boundaries, strengthening the fabric of congregational life while supporting the leadership of those currently called to serve.

Ministers in UCG Congregation

Current Ministers

Rev. Dr. Talia Raymond, Minister for Spiritual Curiosity and Programs

Rev. Dr. Donna Schaper, Interim Minister

Members in Discernment

Lindsey Telg

Shelby Hall

Part-time Ministers on Staff

Rev. Ellen Ribe, Pastoral Care Coordinator

Rev. Chad McGinnis, Worship Coordinator

Retired Ordained Ministers in the Congregation

Rev. Daniel Webster, Disciples of Christ

Rev. David Aune, United Church of Christ

Rev. Fred Gregory, Presbyterian (USA)

Rev. Tony Miller, Presbyterian (USA)

Rev. Maureen Killoran, Unitarian Universalist

Ordained Ministers in the Congregation Serving Other Calls

Rev. Amy Rixx, Hospice Chaplin

Previous UCG Ministers

Rev. Bromleigh McClenaghan (2020-2024)

Rev. Andy Bachmann (2003-2022) - Congregation member under covenant. *

Rev. Shelly Wilson (2013-2019)

Rev. Vince Amlin (2009-2017)

Rev. Larry Reimer (1974-2012) - Minister Emeritus*

Rev. Sandy Reimer (1986-2012) - Minister Emerita*

Rev. Ken Stokes (1966-1973)

*These former UCG ministers are current members of the UCG congregation and participate in church life guided by a covenant.

Church Health

Membership and Attendance

The United Church of Gainesville is a vibrant congregation of approximately 600 members, offering a warm and inclusive community for people of all ages and backgrounds. Our Sunday morning worship at 10 AM regularly draws 175–295 in person and 28–62 online, reflecting steady engagement and a meaningful spiritual experience for attendees. In 2025, we joyfully welcomed 24 new members.

Our congregation brings together a diverse mix of life experiences and perspectives:

- Education: Education: 88% have completed college, and 70% hold graduate degrees
- Household incomes: Most members earn between \$50,000–\$150,000 annually.
- Disability & health: 13% of members live with a disability or chronic health condition.
- LGBTQ+ inclusion: 7% identify as LGBTQ+, 83% as heterosexual, and 1% prefer not to categorize.

We celebrate a range of ages:

- Over 80: 14%
- Ages 66–80: 48%
- Ages 51–65: 20%
- Ages 26–50: 10%
- Ages 19–25: 2%
- Ages 14-18: 6%

A majority of members (71%) have been part of our community for more than 10 years, demonstrating deep roots and commitment, while we continue to welcome and nurture new members of all ages.

TABLE 1 - MEMBERSHIP METRICS 2023-2025

Metric	2023	2024	2025
# of Members	608	575*	599
# of Members on Boards and Committees		~200	~225
New Members	24	20	24
# of Pledging Units	313 Avg: \$2,705.82/pp	268 Average: \$3,060.96/pp	285 Avg: \$2,887.07/pp
Average Worship Attendance	188	217	230

Financial Health

The United Church of Gainesville enjoys strong financial health as a result of careful stewardship, providing a stable foundation for ministry and growth. The church has consistently met its budgetary goals, ending 2025 with a surplus and stable capital reserves. In addition, UCG maintains a modest endowment fund that supports special initiatives and projects and promotes financial sustainability for future generations. Annual budgets are carefully planned to support ministers, staff, and programs while maintaining facilities and prudent investments, including excess funds in federal interest-tied securities. Transparent reporting and close collaboration among the Board of Business, staff, and committees ensure that financial resources are managed responsibly, allowing the congregation to pursue meaningful ministry initiatives, outreach programs, and leadership transitions with confidence.

**United Church of Gainesville
For Calendar Year 2026**

Giving	866,674	Insurance - General	48,571
Rental & Parking Revenue	90,500	Bank & Direct Deposit Fees	10,000
Grants and Reserve Funds	23,000	Supplies/Copying/Postage/Printing	22,950
Interest	8,029	Publicity/Help Wanted Ads	2,000
Total Revenue	988,203	Denominational/Enlistment/Copyright	2,150
Ministers	217,481	Telephone/Internet/Technology	42,500
Administration	138,624	Training/Publications/Business Exps	9,300
Children and Youth	128,397	Total Operating	137,471
Other Staff	55,720	Adult Programs	750
Benefits	175,348	Children and Youth Programs	11,800
Total Cost of People	715,570	Justice and Community Programs	4,000
Mortgage	7,922	Miscellaneous Others	950
Utilities	23,000	Total Program/Mission	17,500
Maintenance/Custodial	46,700	Council and Denomination	28,040
Total Space	77,622	Ministerial Search & Transition	12,000
		Total Other	40,040
		Total Expenses	988,203
		Revenue Over/(Under) Expenses	(0)

FIGURE 6 - UCG PROJECTED BUDGET 2026

Congregational Wellbeing

The congregation has proven recently that it is committed to resolving conflicts and promoting unity. In the spring of 2024, the United Church of Gainesville faced a challenging period following a planned staff restructuring that unsettled a segment of the congregation. Tensions and disagreements grew, including calls for answers and discussions about the Coordinating minister's future with the church. In response, church leadership formed a committee called the Pathfinders to explore constructive ways forward and minimize further stress on the congregation.

Over three months, the Pathfinders gathered information, deliberated, and produced a report with detailed recommendations and action steps for the Church Council to address the issues and guide the congregation toward a productive path. The Coordinating minister chose to resign and leave the congregation. The Pathfinder committee did not recommend or advocate for that path forward.

After the resignation, the congregation called an interim minister to assist with ministerial duties, the challenges of the transition, and to continue to help UCG to discern a healthy path to the future. During the past year, UCG, in partnership with our interim minister and with guidance from Convergence Consulting, has worked intentionally to move forward while acknowledging the disruption and harm caused during the challenging period.

Among the steps we have taken:

- We have written and adopted a behavioral covenant to guide interactions within the congregation.
- We have hired an experienced interim minister to support healing and reconciliation.
- We have carefully reviewed our search processes, clarifying the ministerial structure and job description to ensure transparency and understanding before entering a settled minister search.

This work is deliberate and sometimes difficult, but we are fully committed to it. Our hope is to offer our new minister a foundation of honesty, clarity, and support as they begin their relationship with our congregation.

Behavioral Covenant

In this covenant, we draw inspiration from our church compact "to follow, even imperfectly, the way of Jesus in personal involvement with each other" by promising to:

- Treat each other with love, kindness and compassion.
- Be supportive, welcoming and inclusive.
- Listen to the words, ideas and feedback of others attentively and with a curious mind.
- Speak only from our own experience, using "I" statements whenever possible.
- Discuss, debate and disagree in an open and respectful manner.
- Express our feelings honestly and respond to one another with patience and a desire to understand, recognizing that others may be experiencing difficulties that are unknown to anyone else.
- When conflict happens, remember to pause if triggered, assume the best intentions of each other, invite more information, respond with respect and refrain from negative judgment.
- Take personal responsibility for our actions and seek repair and reconciliation when we harm others.

Sunday Worship

At the United Church of Gainesville, Sunday worship is engaging, varied, and deeply multisensory. Our services include music, readings, meditation, prayer, and reflections from both ministers and congregants. Our motto—“It’s not like this every Sunday”—celebrates our commitment to dynamic, meaningful, thought-provoking, and inspiring worship.

Some Sundays, fairies dance down the aisle; other Sundays, it could be members dressed as banned “books” marching in protest. Some Sundays, our teens share stories from their work in communities near and far. Sometimes we hear from leaders of other faith traditions or from members sharing their own journeys. Music fills our sanctuary, from solo performances to our homegrown bluegrass ensemble (featuring our treasurer!) to the meditative tones of hand pans and Native American flutes. We read to children, quote beloved poets like our patron saint Mary Oliver, and listen deeply to fresh perspectives on familiar themes. Our choir is a strong inspiring aspect of our worship with appearances several times a month and a spectacular tradition of sharing Lessons and Carols with us annually.

Our theology is grounded in inclusivity and spiritual exploration. We worship God, however known, and honor a diversity of theological perspectives. We speak of the sacred with loving, inclusive language—Holy One, Holy Spirit, God of hope—and embrace anyone who resonates with our church compact, which emphasizes learning, growth, and service to others. At UCG, we make space for everyone to feel welcome.

We celebrate Christian holidays and sacraments in creative and meaningful ways that seek to be accessible to all, offer baptism for all ages, and provide opportunities for both adults and adolescents to grow spiritually. At UCG, you will find a vibrant community that values diversity, encourages reflection, and inspires action—a place where all are welcome to explore faith on their own journey.



Programming and Community Work

Fellowship and Learning

At the United Church of Gainesville, there's a place for everyone to connect, grow, and belong. From Small Groups and Seminars to our Friendship Group and seasonal retreats, we offer opportunities to explore faith, build friendships, and make a difference—no matter your age or interest.

Small Groups

UCG's Small Groups offer a diverse range of opportunities for spiritual exploration, personal enrichment, and fellowship. With over 50 groups to choose from there's something for everyone. Offered twice a year, these small groups provide a welcoming space to deepen your faith, build friendships, and explore new interests. Some popular groups include meet ups at local breweries, opportunities to paddle our local rivers, a weekly Sangha, book clubs galore, a Ukulele club, full moon fire circles, hikes, mending groups, and so much more. Our congregation's creativity is only matched by our desire to connect with one another.

Seminars

UCG Seminars offer a dynamic series of discussions and presentations featuring a range of topics from spirituality and ethics to climate action and social justice initiatives. With engaging speakers and interactive discussions, these seminars provide a chance to deepen understanding, connect with the community, and explore issues that matter. Seminars are offered from 11:30am-12:30pm on most Sunday mornings and childcare is provided.

Friendship group

The Friendship Group at UCG is a welcoming space for teens and adults with differing/varied intellectual and developmental abilities to connect, share, and fully participate in the life of our church. Through spiritual discussions, social gatherings, and outreach activities, members build meaningful relationships in a caring and supportive environment. Friendship Group fosters a sense of belonging and encourages each member's unique contributions to our community.



Retreats

UCG offers three annual retreats that bring members together to deepen our connections. In the fall, male-identifying members head to the historic Camp Weed in Live Oak, FL for the Men’s Retreat, where workshops, ritual, and fellowship create space to build relationships and support one another. In early spring, female-identifying members gather at the Women’s Retreat at the same beautiful location, enjoying small-group discussions, shared activities, and reflective exercises that help attendees slow down and reconnect. Finally, in late spring/early summer, the whole congregation—kids, teens, adults, and retirees—travels to Warren Willis Camp in Fruitland, FL for a weekend full of laughter, learning, and community.

TABLE 2 - RETREAT ATTENDANCE TRENDS 2023-2025

	2023	2024	2025
All Church Retreat Attendance	135	118	124
Women’s Retreat Attendance	44	61	55
Men’s Retreat Attendance	16	32	43



Youth & Families Ministry

At UCG, families are valued in every aspect of church life. Our youth engage in local and national service projects, social justice initiatives, and community outreach. People of all ages lead worship services, provide music, and serve our community. The Board of Children, Youth, and Families creates opportunities for families and church members to connect, learn, and grow.

Kids United

Kids United is UCG's program for our youngest learners. Children explore spiritual themes through hands-on activities that connect to the worship service. Afterward, they enjoy supervised play, crafts, and games—providing a fun and safe space to grow spiritually while caregivers attend other church programs or socialize with the community.



Middle School Together

Middle School Together blends spiritual discussion, service projects, and team-building activities. Through games, discussions, and outreach, middle schoolers explore their faith, build friendships, and develop leadership and empathy in a welcoming and fun environment. Confirmation is offered on alternate years.



Youth United

Youth United creates a vibrant spiritual community for high schoolers. Youth participate in discussions, games, service projects, and team-building activities. Annual events like the Mystery Trip weekend and Work Tour offer opportunities for adventure, outreach, and bonding, helping young people form lasting connections and a sense of purpose. This past summer, 31 youth travelled to Washington DC to volunteer at the World Pride celebrations and work with local non-profits. In summer 2026, youth will travel to North Carolina to work on rehabilitation from Hurricane Helene.



Our Whole Lives (OWL)

OWL is UCG's comprehensive sexuality education program for all ages, from kindergarten through older adults. Age-appropriate classes help participants make informed, value-based decisions about sexual health and relationships, all within a safe, supportive environment.

Mission Driven Community Aid

At UCG, faith comes alive through action. Our congregation believes that serving others is a powerful expression of love and justice. Through hands-on initiatives, educational programs, and community partnerships, we work locally while striving for systemic and cultural change. Members have countless ways to get involved, allowing them to live out their convictions in meaningful, communal ways.

Open and Affirming (ONA)

Being Open and Affirming at UCG isn't just a label—it's a lived practice. Everyone, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression, is welcomed into every corner of our church life and leadership. The ONA committee offers a range of opportunities to connect, celebrate, and support LGBTQ+ individuals and families, from community gatherings and educational workshops to advocacy and shared worship experiences. Through these efforts, our members create a church culture that is affirming, inclusive, and loving, every single day.

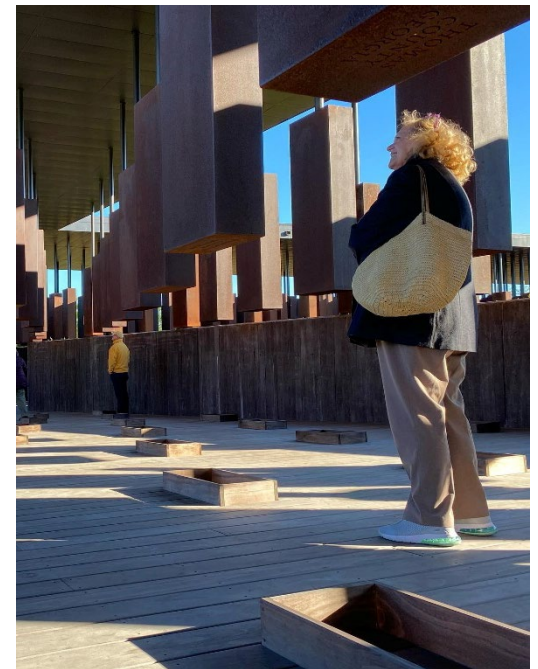


Racial Justice

The Racial Justice Committee invites members to examine their beliefs, learn about systemic racism, and take tangible steps toward being anti-racist. Through workshops, community dialogues, and partnerships with local organizations, we work to dismantle inequities in our city. Guided by spiritual practices like reflection, discernment, and self-care, committee members find ways to turn learning into action—whether advocating for fair policies, mentoring youth, or supporting local justice initiatives.

Creation Care and Climate Justice

Our Creation Care and Climate Justice initiatives reflect a deep respect for God's creation. By promoting environmental stewardship and climate action, we live the principle of "think globally, act locally." Members participate in hands-on activities like community cleanups, educational events, and advocacy campaigns. In 2023, UCG was recognized as a Creation Justice Church, a testament to our commitment to protecting the planet for future generations.



Compassion in Action

Compassion in Action is where the heart of UCG reaches into the community. Whether collecting essential goods, providing financial assistance, or partnering with local nonprofits, members step forward to meet real needs. Through these efforts, we share love in practical, tangible ways.

Food 4 Kids

One of our most visible programs is Food 4 Kids, which provides weekend meals for children at a local elementary school whose families face food insecurity. Every Friday, children leave school with a reusable bag filled with nourishing food, ensuring they return home with meals for the weekend. Recently, over 200 children have participated each year.



Immigration Justice

The Immigrant Justice team members stand in solidarity with immigrant neighbors through support and advocacy. Through Shelter in the Storm, a program for hurricane relief for families affected by deportation, and through partnerships with local immigrant rights organizations, we provide food and accompaniment during times of uncertainty. Our 70-person volunteer team also brings public witness to this work through community events and local advocacy. We host conversations on detention and deportation in Alachua County and remain committed to pursuing just and compassionate policies.



Campus & Facilities

Located in the University Park neighborhood near the University of Florida, the United Church of Gainesville (UCG) sits on 2.3 acres of wooded property, offering a serene and welcoming environment for members and visitors alike. The campus is designed to support worship, learning, and community engagement, featuring a Sanctuary, Chapel, Office Building, Education Wing, and versatile meeting spaces.

Campus Spaces



- **Sanctuary & Chapel** – A 300-seat Sanctuary filled with natural light and large windows, designed for worship, concerts, and community events. The Chapel is adjacent to the Sanctuary, tucked next to the Memory Garden, and provides an intimate setting for small-group gatherings and reflection.
- **Fellowship Hall** – A 1,650 sq. ft. space seating up to 230 people, ideal for seminars, meetings, community events, and rentals. A moveable divider wall allows for Reimer Hall and West Wing to be used as one larger room.
- **West Wing Meeting Room** – A 1,147 sq. ft. room accommodating up to 169 people, used for youth events, church meetings, and rentals.
- **Seminar Rooms** – Two 256 sq. ft. rooms, the Sunroom and Parlor, each seating up to 20 people, perfect for small meetings, classes, or discussion groups.
- **Kitchen & Meeting Area** – A 396 sq. ft. kitchen with seating for 15–20, equipped with a functional cooking space for church events (not certified for commercial use).
- **Youth Room** – A 644 sq. ft. renovated space with sectional sofas, folding chairs, and tables, offering a casual environment for youth programming; accessible via stairs.
- **Education Wing** – An area housing a nursery and an activity room for Kid’s United programming, with an adjacent playground and outdoor space.
- **Office Building** – Dedicated administrative space supporting church operations and campus management.
- **Memory Garden** – A landscaped area with benches for meditation and small gatherings.

Gainesville and Surrounding Areas

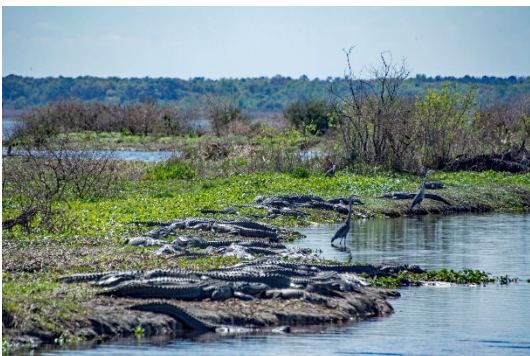
Where Nature & Culture Meet



In the heart of North Central Florida, Gainesville is home to inquisitive minds, engaged neighbors, and a culture that values both learning and living well. Anchored by the nationally respected University of Florida and the region’s leading healthcare system, UF Health Shands Hospital, the community brings together educators, medical professionals, artists, entrepreneurs, students, families, and retirees. Gainesville’s culture is intellectually curious and civically engaged, yet relaxed and relational. Surrounding towns like High Springs, Micanopy, and Newberry add their own character and charm, creating a region that feels both expansive and deeply connected—an ideal setting for creative, collaborative leadership.



Here, the outdoors isn’t separate from life; it’s woven into it. North Florida’s more than 1,000 freshwater springs flow at a steady 72 degrees year-round, inviting residents to float, paddle, and simply breathe. Weekends might include spotting bison and wild horses at Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park, biking beneath a canopy of trees along the Gainesville-Hawthorne State Trail, or exploring one of the county’s eight state parks. The rhythm of the natural world—rivers, trails, wetlands, wide skies—creates space for reflection, restoration, and joy.



Creativity pulses through Gainesville in ways both playful and profound. You might find yourself at a stirring live performance at the historic Hippodrome Theatre, an orchestral evening at the

Curtis M. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, or wandering the galleries of the Harn Museum of Art. The Cade Museum for Creativity and Invention sparks imagination, while downtown murals, ArtWalks, and welcoming restaurants invite conversation and connection. There is also a vibrant scene of local art, music, storytelling, and more, which many UCG members contribute to regularly. Gainesville is thoughtful and rooted but imaginative place where diverse voices are heard, fresh ideas are welcomed, and community life feels authentic and alive.

References

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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 people seeking a ministry position.

List of people who contributed to the creation of the profile:

- Search Committee
- Ministers
- Office Staff
- Youth & Children
- Congregation via Chalk Talks and Seminars and Board & Committee visits



6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment: Yes

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

Staff Comment: Yes

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

Staff Comment: Yes

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: 

Name / Title: Rev. Latrell Harrison | Associate Conference Minister of Search and Call, Clergy Care

Email: lharrison@uccfla.org

Phone: 689-500-7386

Date: April 10, 2026