

The United Church of Mapleton



The United Church of Mapleton is a Christian fellowship of mission, worship, and faith formation dedicated to the Maple River community.

We hope you'll take time to consider the possibility of serving our church, the United Church of Mapleton. We are dually affiliated with the Mid-American Baptist Church and the United Church of Christ.

CONTACT INFORMATION

1. United Church of Mapleton

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Our Church Information

Our congregation is dually aligned with the Mid- American Baptist Church (ABC) and the United Church of Christ (UCC). We are an established church with a long history of ministry that supports the mission efforts of the ABC/UCC. Below is the Faith Statement from our Constitution:

Article III-Faith

The United Church recognizes the Bible, especially the New Testament, as the sufficient rule of faith the teachings of Jesus to be the true test of Christian fellowship, with each member, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, having the right to interpret the Bible according to the dictates of his/her own conscience. The following statement of faith, or principles, therefore, is not a test but an expression of the spirit in which the Church interprets the Word of God: "We believe in God the Creator, infinite in wisdom, goodness, and love, who is the Lord of all; in Jesus Christ God's Son, whom was sent to redeem us from sin and death, who for us and our salvation lived, died, rose again, and lives evermore; and in the Holy Spirit who through Christ reveals the will of God to us, moves in the hearts of people, and through the Gospel calls them to repentance and faith." "We believe the Church to be a spiritual fellowship of which Christ is the head, and is composed of those who through faith are the children of God. For our comfort and our faith, Christ has given to the Church the sacred ordinances/sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion." "We hold it to be the mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to all humankind, exalting the worship of the one true God and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of human kinship."

We believe that Baptism, immersion or sprinkling, shall be left to the free choice of the individual. Many members of our congregation are from religious backgrounds that traditionally employ infant baptism. Others believe that infant dedication, often using an anointing of water in the name of the Trinity, is appropriate. And still others believe in the baptism of adult believers. We have no structure in our church building for



immersion. When immersion is requested, we hold the service in another church, or in one of the many local rivers or lakes.

According to the constitution of the United Church of Mapleton, members may join by a letter of transfer from any Christian church with which they are in good standing or by profession of faith.

Current Statistics

Currently we have 112 members with an average Sunday attendance of 40 – 45 people. 40% of our members and church participants live within one mile of the church.

Another 40% live 2-10 miles from the church, with the last 20% living more than 10 miles from the United Church.

The approximate number of members by age/gender:

Age		Gender	
0-20	15	Male:	47
21-29	3	Female:	50
30-45	17		
46-55	3		
56-65	18		
66-74	19		
75-79	11		
80-89	17		
90+	3		

97% of our members are non-Hispanic White (European American) and 3% “other”.

Households	
Married with no children at home	26
Married with one or more children at home	14
Widowed living alone	10

We surveyed the employment status and found 34 were employed full-time, 5 members were employed part-time, and 49 members were retired.

Employment categories	
Farmer/farm manager	28
Clerical/office, etc.	16
Professional	14
Teacher	13
Business owner	12
Laborer	11

According to the MissionInsite Demographics for a 10-mile radius around the United Church;

- 44% of our congregation has household incomes ranging between \$50,000 - \$75,000
- 13.6% of our congregation has a household income ranging between \$35,000- \$50,000
- The remaining households have annual incomes that cross the entire spectrum (less than \$15,000 and up to \$250,000)

The United Church of Mapleton Finances

- Total 2017 budget: \$138,650
- Current 2017 expenses through September: \$75330.
- Annual mission giving: \$10,618

The United Church Foundation

Our church has a foundation with the market value of the assets of \$169,750.60. In the original Articles of Incorporation, it is clearly stated that this Foundation was set up for the purpose of supporting educational, charitable, and religious purposes within the activities of the United Church of Mapleton. No funds are to be spent on regularly budgeted operating expenses.

Requests for the earnings from these funds can be from anyone or anywhere: local organizations, United Church members, etc. Many years nothing has been disbursed. In 2011, new funds that came in that year were distributed (\$1200). In 2016 \$100,850 was disbursed to the United Church of Mapleton for their Capital Campaign Arise. This endowment of the United Church of Mapleton should last indefinitely because the principle will not be touched.

History of the United Church of Mapleton

Our Church houses a congregation that is one of the oldest in the state of Minnesota. Its first people were Congregationalists, Baptists, and Methodists. The Congregationalists date back to Reverend N. A. Hunt, who came to the Mapleton Colony in 1856 and helped organize the Sterling Congregational Church. This was the mother church of the Mapleton Congregational Church organized in Mapleton in 1882.

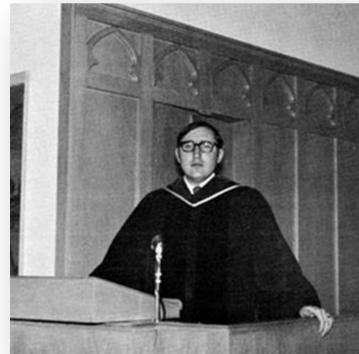
The Baptist Church organized in 1866 with but four members. Services were held in private homes, and then as the membership increased, they were held in the Troendle Hall until a new church building was completed in 1879.

There were also two Methodist churches which over the years dissolved their churches and members united with the then existing Baptist and Congregationalist churches. The Methodists were one of the earliest religious groups in the area being served by an early circuit rider.

1917 was the natal year when the two churches (Baptist and Congregationalist) in the village of Mapleton began a deep consideration as to whether two congregations of two different denominations could combine into one church. October 4th, 1918, these two groups of people, because of economic reasons and because they had a faith in something greater than their separate churches, voted to become federated.

By 1930, this federation had evolved into a unity and under the ministry Rev. Wm. Rippon, the former four congregations voted to become the United Church of Mapleton. In 1958, the church reached another milestone with the construction of a new church building.

This act, as much as any in the past, had a great impact on the uniting of the Church.



Although, without question, there have been some difficult periods in the life of this Church, it has grown in many ways until it stands as a united church with its historical roots going back to a group of people who had a vision of something that could be done for the betterment of many and for the glory of Christ. The United Church has had a long and proud heritage of united worship, broad acceptance, and diversity of members. We are proud to say that the religious diversity of our congregation has been a fundamental strength in our church. We have many families where the spouses are from differing religious backgrounds. They have found commonality in their beliefs in our church.

For many years the congregation was steeped in tradition and had many multi-generational families. In general, the church could be classified as a rural/small town church. The membership and community is predominately Caucasian and of European descent.

The United Church has been served by women and men pastors, of different ages, throughout the years. There have been two long-term pastors serving the United Church in recent years, one who served 11 years and one that served for 15 years. Subsequently, our next settled pastor abruptly left (on her own accord) to form another church in Mapleton. Some United Church members decided to join the newly formed church. After a mere 2 years of service it became clear that this pastor's fundamentalist theology didn't match that of the vast majority of the membership. As a result of this split among members (and even families in some cases), we learned a great deal about whom we were, what we believed, and what we valued in ourselves and our church.

Pastor Ashley Whittaker was our most recent settled pastor. She served with us for 4 years before accepting a calling to another church. We served as Pastor Ashley's first church.

RECENT ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF MAPLETON

The church embarked upon a **Capital Campaign (Arise)** in 2015. The monies raised were to be used to do some significant capital improvements to both the church and the parsonage.



New HVAC for both the church and the parsonage; a new steel roof for the church; new roof for the parsonage; windows and siding for



the parsonage; repair of the upstairs bathroom and complete remodel of the kitchen in the parsonage (new appliances, countertops and cabinets). In the future, the church parking lots will be resurfaced, new altar lights installed, and we have installed a large flat screen TV in the sanctuary to enhance worship services.

The church participates annually in Mapleton's **Snowflake Dazzle Celebration**. This has



enhanced the presence of the church in the community as we have taken part in the parade with a live nativity as our float. Church members implemented **Parent's Night Out** to offer child care with activities so parents can shop or relax during the holiday season. This is open to the whole community, and is advertised during the Snowflake Dazzle Parade.

Every third year, we host the **Veteran's Day Supper**. We rotate the event with the local

Catholic and Lutheran Churches of Mapleton.



The church has participated for years in **Heifer Project International**, funded from our Christmas Eve offering. With all the natural disaster taking place throughout our country and around the world, we have decided to designate the 2017 Christmas Eve offering to go to our denominations natural disaster relief efforts. The members created "Pay It Forward" for the Christmas Eve Service last year. Attendees were given a church business card and a \$10 bill explaining/asking for people to use the money to help others. The business card requested a story of how the money was used.



Bible and Brew began last spring and meets at our local restaurant. Church members, along with other community members who want to join us, gather for conversation on a variety of matters of faith, current events, or matters participants are interested in discussing.

Church members were instrumental in starting both our local food shelf (**Loaves & Fishes**) and our local **Youth Center**. We have church members serving on both of these boards.



The church's **Garden of Eatin'**, which is on the church grounds, is planted, cared for, watered and harvested by church members and provides fresh produce to the food shelf. Over 100 pounds of produce was donated in 2017.

Our church remains a sustaining force at the **Maple River Youth Center** by providing money for the rent each year. Four afternoons a week the Youth Center (located a few blocks from the high school in Mapleton) offers a place for youth to spend time doing homework, offering service to the community, creating various things and spending time in a safe, supervised environment rather than going home to empty homes.

The Tuesday Morning Group was founded by men of this church, and includes men from the surrounding area. Each week they gather for fellowship, to share in devotions, and to talk. This group has been in existence for 28 years and has proven to be a strong group that offers support to its members.

Other ministry of the church includes a group of laity who call on our elderly, shut in & those experiencing difficult times in their lives (or the lives of their loved ones). This group is the **Called to Care** group. We also have an active **Prayer Chain** that people can access via our church's website or contacting a Prayer Chain member directly.

CONGREGATIONAL STYLE INDICATOR

The following observations were made after tabulating the Congregational Style Indicator Survey:

- Our Church expects our pastor to take leadership.
- Our church seeks to avoid conflict and confrontation.
- Our church is influenced by history and tradition.
- Our church's approach to social issues is basically educational leaving actions to individual conscience.
- Our church believes that although ethical decisions do involve absolute standards, individual circumstances should be taken into consideration.
- Our church emphasizes ABC/UCC relationships locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Our church is open to and often involved in community affairs.
- Our church's ideas, plans, and decisions are made by the church council and supported by sub-committees.
- Decisions are communicated formally through worship, bulletins, and newsletters.

Our church places emphasis on giving to ABC/UCC national and world missions.

HOW OTHERS SEE US

Seven various community members were interviewed. (Local food shelf's board of directors member, guidance counselor at high school, Superintendent of Schools, Administrator of the Community Nursing Home, City Administrator, former Mapleton mayor and leader of Sertean and a board member of the Maple River Youth Center)

Some of the positive comments they made about the United Church of Mapleton:

- The United Church of Mapleton has a very important and visible role in the community due to its involvement in many community services and activities.
- The UCM played a vital role in beginning and now supporting the Youth Center.
- The UCM actively supports the local food shelf, Loaves and Fishes.
- Our building has always been open for the community to use for different community functions. (Athletic banquets, Veteran's dinners, Scottish dancing practices, a testing site for the high school, etc.)
- All of the leaders spoke of the UCM as being open and all-inclusive where everyone is welcome. We have baptisms, weddings, and funerals for anyone. Our church is ecumenically involved with other churches in Mapleton both in services and choirs. This November we hosted the community ecumenical Thanksgiving service.

Community leaders made the following suggestions:

- The Superintendent of Schools wants to work with our new minister and church in monthly meetings so our church can help the students of Maple River. He has many ideas of what we can do together to help create a community where people want to live and feels it is a mission the school and church can work towards together.
- Initiate some outreach programs for the elderly.
- Provide a welcome wagon for new-comers to the community. (We have begun a conversation about this.)
- Try to organize a Mapleton youth group and have youth mission trips.
- Continue the school “Back Pack” program

OUR CHURCH LIFE

Our church always offers Sunday School for preschoolers and elementary children, a men’s weekly prayer breakfast group, a women’s ministry group, mission involvement, and supports the local youth center and food shelf.

Our church offers a Bible and Brew group, a Bible study group, a quilting group, and community service opportunities.

In the future, we would like to have our church be open to the community for topics of interest. (Suicide prevention, creating wills, living wills, etc. as we did in the past with the topic of mental illness.)

Our church has recently become handicapped accessible due to the recent addition of an elevator.

OUR WORSHIP LIFE

Lay readers participate in the weekly worship service. Our prayer concerns come from the congregation in written form. The pastor then shares these with the congregation. We use both responsive readings and unison prayers regularly. Communion is served the first Sunday of the month. We also have it on Christmas Eve and during Holy week. When we have communion, the younger children and other adults help prepare the table. We do communion both by intinction or in the pews.

Music is an integral part of our services. We use both the organ and the piano for our hymns. Sometimes we use the guitar and computer-generated music accompaniment. One Sunday a month we have a guitar team that leads us in song. Occasionally we hear from our adult choir.

OUR COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Our church is in a town of just less than 2,000 residents with a strong Scottish heritage. Mapleton has a grocery store, hardware store, a dentist office, a medical office staffed by a PA and family practitioner (MD), and a restaurant. The Maple River School is also located in Mapleton. We are 15 miles south of Mankato, MN (population 41,044), a town with one university (MN State College), and two colleges. Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN, where the Nobel Conference is held, is approximately 45 minutes away. We are 90 miles from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester. Mayo Health System Mankato is a satellite of the Mayo Health System, Rochester. It has received recognition for its cardiology services.

Attractions in our area include:

- State and county parks (including buffalo)
- Two curling rinks
- Regional airport
- Mount Kato Ski Area
- Snowmobile trails
- Many theater opportunities
- College athletics and semi-professional baseball (Moondogs)

Three major sources of employment/income in our community:

- Agribusiness
- Education (primary and secondary for the district)
- Health Services (Community Nursing Home)

MAPLE RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Mission Statement of the Maple River School is: "We are the Maple River School District dedicated to educate and prepare each student to succeed in a changing world." The school district serves children of the United Church area. The 2015-2016 District Math and Reading test scores were all above the state average. The towns that make up the Maple River School include Mapleton, Minnesota Lake, Amboy, and Good Thunder. Please visit their web site for more information on the Maple River School district: www.ISD2135.K12.MN.US.

Congregational Responsibilities

Using our congregational survey, we were able to identify the eight most common activities for which the congregation felt responsible. They were:

1. PS010 Budget/financial management
2. PS190 Nurturing fellowship
3. PS180 Music directing/performing
4. PS030 Communication
5. PS020 Church growth
6. PS200 Planning and management
7. PS300 Visitation
8. PS120 Ecumenical cooperation and PS150 Leadership

8 Important Ministry Activities/Pastor Major Responsibilities

Our survey also identified the 8 most important ministry activities for which the Pastor should have major responsibility. We did aggregate totals for individual categories and came up with a top six!

14 times: PS130 – interpreting the faith
 PS060 – counseling

13 times: PS190 – nurturing fellowship

11 times: PS020 – church growth
 PS210 – pastoral care
 PS230 – preaching

10 times: PS030 – communication
 PS080 – education
 PS310 – worship preparation and leading

9 times: PS300 – visitation

8 times: PS120 – ecumenical coop
 PS320 – Youth ministry

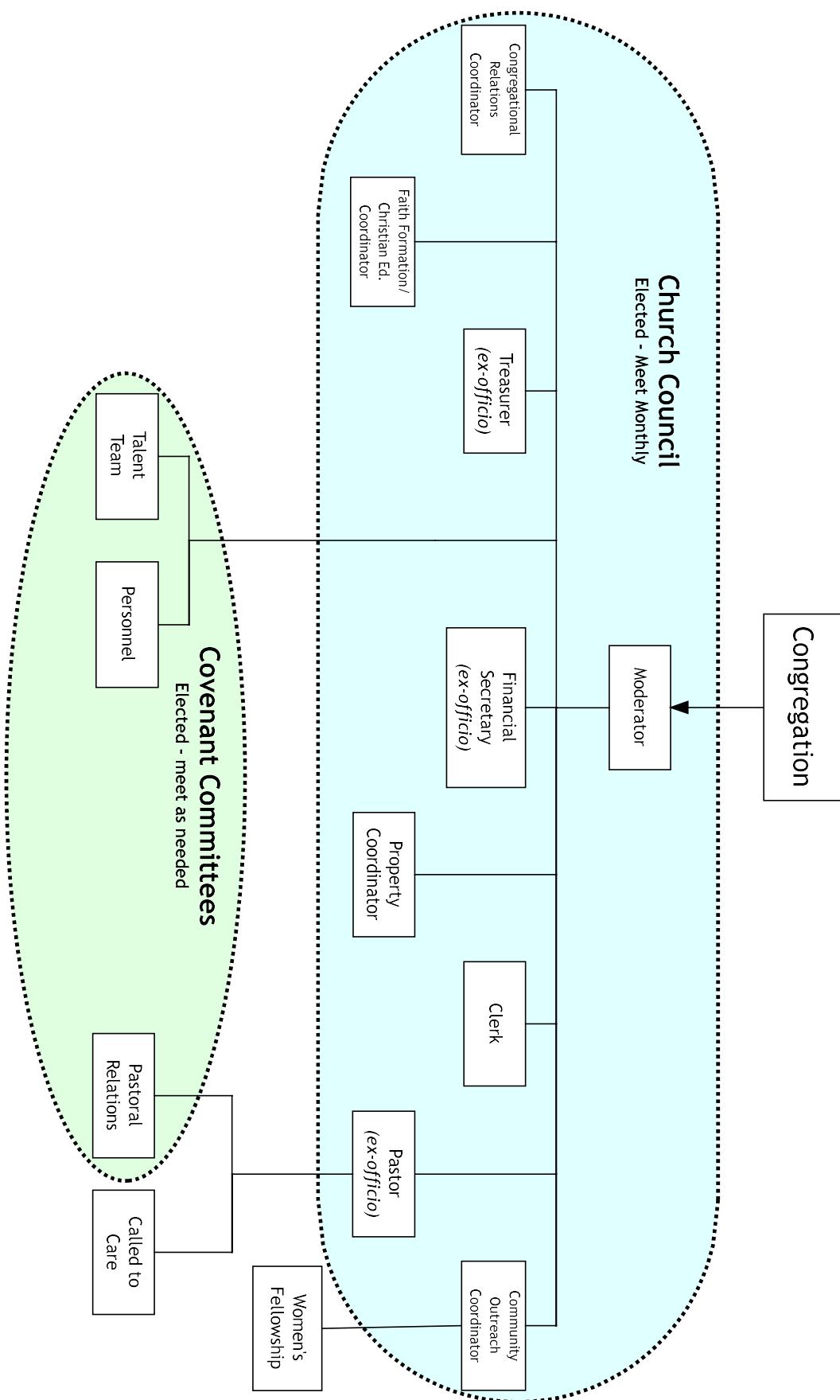
Additionally our survey identified strengths or positive qualities of our congregation.

Three of the most frequently mentioned ones are:

1. Making people feel welcome and that they belong/caring for community and fellowman
2. Accept all (open our facility to others)/open communion table
3. Cooperation with the other churches in supporting the Youth Center, and Loaves & Fishes

United Church of Mapleton Organizational Chart

Rev. 9/17



REFERENCES

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Jim Swanson (former Mapleton Mayor)
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Phone: 507-317-2399

Rev. Cindy Mueller, Intentional Interim Minister
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Phone: 507-420-9707

Compensation

This position is for a ½ time Minister.

With a housing allowance (not living in Parsonage, half rent and utilities)				
	Cash Salary	Housing Allowance	Utilities	Total
Base Salary	\$18,250.00	\$6,000.00	\$1,800.00	\$26,050.00
SS offset (7.65%)	\$1,992.83			\$1,992.83
Pension/Annuity (15%)	\$3,907.50			\$3,907.50
Health Insurance (Avg)	\$8,092.50			\$8,092.50
Life & Disability Ins (1.5%)	\$390.75			\$390.75
Dental Insurance	\$784.50			\$784.50
Continuing Education	\$500.00			\$500.00
Professional Expenses	\$500.00			\$500.00
Pastor Equity/Furnishing 4% of cash Salary	\$730.00			\$730.00
Total (housing allowance)	\$35,148.08			\$42,948.08
Mileage Reimbursement	\$2,700.00			

The package below is the **preferred package** for use of the parsonage and paid utilities. The parsonage is a newly remodeled (2017), 4 bedroom, 2 ½ bath house with an attached garage and an external double garage.

With a Parsonage (preferred package, living in parsonage with paid utilities)				
	Cash Salary	Parsonage Value	Utilities	Total
Base Salary	\$18,250.00	\$12,000.00	\$3,600.00	\$33,850.00
SS offset (7.65%)	\$2,589.53			\$2,589.53
Pension/Annuity (15%)	\$5,077.50			\$5,077.50
Health Insurance (Avg)	\$8,092.50			\$8,092.50
Life & Disability Ins (1.5%)	\$507.75			\$507.75
Dental Insurance	\$784.50			\$784.50
Continuing Education	\$500.00			\$500.00
Professional Expenses	\$500.00			\$500.00
Pastor Equity/Furnishing 4% of cash salary	\$730.00			\$730.00
Total (for parsonage)	\$37,031.78			\$40,631.78
Mileage Reimbursement	\$2,700.00			

The compensation range is \$ 34,000 - \$37,000 depending on the housing option.