

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE
FOR LOCAL CHURCHES SEEKING NEW LEADERS

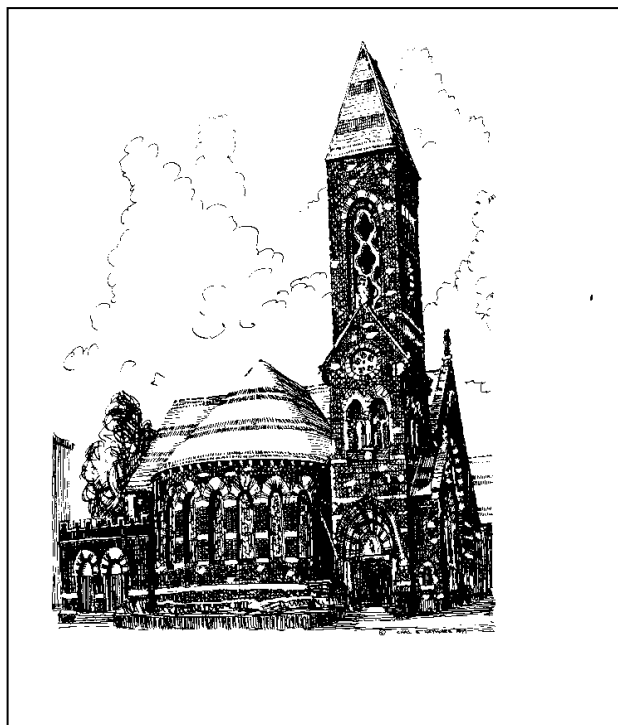
The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided 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 a suitable new pastoral team 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.

_____ *Trea Russworm* _____ (digital signature)

Signature of Search Committee Chairperson

Date 9/01/2019



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Ministry flows from mission.

A time of transition in the life of a congregation is an opportunity to gain clarity on the church's mission. The MA Conference is living into this mission "Rooted in the grace of God, the mission of the Massachusetts Conference United Church of Christ is to nurture local church vitality and the covenant among our churches to make God's love and justice real."

What is your local church's mission? (Please share your church's mission statement here or name that one needs to be developed):

*South Church is an **open and affirming, multi-racial** church set in the heart of Springfield, MA and draws members and friends from the Greater Springfield area.*

Our mission statement:

"We are an inclusive community of faith, courageously following Christ, serving our neighbors in love."

Our Open and Affirming Statement:

"We believe in a loving God, who through Jesus Christ has called us to love and affirm all God's children.

We welcome to full life and ministry all persons regardless of mental and physical ability, sexual identity, race, religious background, or economic status.

By the power of the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to respect and support gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, who have often been excluded from the life of the church.

We stand together seeking justice, healing, and wholeness of life for all, thus becoming an open and affirming congregation."

The most typical situations in which a church would seek a designated term pastor [for 2-5 years] are:

1. A church in process of major restructure, assessment of viability, physical re-location, uniting or yoking with another congregation.
2. A church coping with the aftermath of major conflict or trauma.
3. A church whose continuing viability is doubtful.
4. A church where the regular search & call process may have proved difficult due to size, geographical location, or other issues.
5. A church in process of staff reconfiguration, where a particular ministry will be staffed to maintain needed programming while the reconfiguration of responsibilities is designed and accomplished.

Our church is choosing to engage a designated term pastor at this time because we understand the work before us to be in the category of number 4 (choose the situation from the five above that best describes the work that is before the church in the present moment and describe why.)

Designated Term Ministry Pastor Goals:

With specificity and clarity, please describe what you hope to accomplish during the Designated Term Ministry Time:

1. Implement a vision for promoting church growth that includes programming for the diverse community surrounding the church.
2. In conjunction with church leadership, implement a plan to improve the image and visibility of South Church, including helping with the public image of the church as a Level 1 Sanctuary space and developing productive and reciprocal relationships with city officials.
3. Help improve our current Christian Education plan (Bible Study, etc.) for members and friends of the church.
4. Play a supportive role in the church's transition process as discernment reveals other key next steps.

In addition to these four goals for a Designated Term Pastor, we have identified some leadership qualities we are seeking:

- a dynamic preacher and speaker.
- **preferably** a bilingual pastor who is fluent in English and Spanish or who is willing to improve language skills
- possesses effective communication skills.
- skilled at pastoral care and has a compassionate bedside manner.
- has positive conflict resolution experience.
- can communicate and implement an out-of-the-box vision for promoting church growth.
- committed to helping a diverse congregation understand and act on our mission of “seeking justice, healing, and wholeness of life for all.”
- accepting of all people with different background and views.
- will provide some guidance regarding the maintenance of a historic church building.
- skilled in overseeing the duties of the church staff.
- will support our identity as a congregational church that governs collectively.
- will actively encourage everyone to participate in all aspects of church leadership and worship.

Additional Reflection on Goals and Leadership Qualities

Like a lot of churches, we are in a time of transition. As a relatively small faith community working toward creating a viable and sustainable future, we hope a new pastor will be excited about working with us through transitions as we discern some of our necessary next steps. We are currently discerning on some key issues and so we hope you will understand that this profile cannot reflect everything that we will envision for the church going forward. Nonetheless, we are excited to plan and grow.

We seek a person who is bilingual (or willing to improve Spanish speaking skills) and who will respect and complement our style of congregational governance. It is important to us that this designated term pastor celebrate with us our open and affirming status, and embrace the diverse life of our church family.

We seek a person to lead us through this designated term period that will energetically inspire and support our preaching and worship, our stewardship campaigns, our pastoral care for members and friends, and our religious education initiatives.

We seek a person who will directly work with our elected Leadership Circle and help guide us as a solid governing body. This person will foster relationships not only within our church family, but also within the local interfaith and civic networks of greater Springfield. Finally, we seek a person with significant administrative strengths to work with us to oversee our staff—which consists of a fulltime music minister, a part-time church secretary, a fulltime custodian, a part-time bookkeeper, and our coffee hour coordinator.

Please describe how you will know if these goals have been accomplished.

We will know that these goals have been achieved when: we have increased our church membership in ways that reflect the community surrounding the church; when there are new productive relationships established between the church and the city; when the Level 1 Sanctuary status has been retained; when members are able to communicate in healthy and productive ways; when there are some new initiatives in place that help improve the church's access to Christian Education.

The Leadership Circle and congregation will regularly, openly, and honestly communicate an evaluation of the above described goals with the designated term pastor.

Intro to our church:

In a paragraph or two for each item, please provide the following:

Brief History:

South Congregational Church is located in the downtown area of Springfield, Massachusetts. Springfield, is considered the third largest city in Massachusetts and the fourth largest city in New England with a present population of 155,000. South Church has an enduring and rich history. In March 1842 South Congregational Church was incorporated as the Seventh Congregational Society of Springfield in a community of 9,000 people. The Reverend Noah Porter was installed as the first minister in 1843 until leaving in 1846 to join the faculty at Yale University and later the president. Porter's replacement was The Reverend Dr. Samuel G. Buckingham who served until 1894. During this time the congregation grew from 157 to 440. During his tenure the church was noted for aiding other churches and establishing "Mission Sunday Schools." In 1874 the church moved from Bliss Street to its present location on the corner of Maple and High Streets to be closer to the city's new residential area. A local newspaper described Dr. Buckingham as the senior pastor of Springfield and the entire Connecticut Valley. He served for years on the Springfield School Board and a school was named after him in 1890.

After Dr. Buckingham's forty-seven years as minister, The Reverend Dr. Philip S. Moxom was called to serve. His greatest achievement was his leadership during the period of the late 1890s and early 1900s when Protestantism was forced to find a new faith and type of church activity compatible with more liberal interpretation of the Bible. Poor health, personal tragedy, as well as declining membership and serious budget deficits contributed to Dr. Moxom's resignation in 1915.

The fourth minister to answer the call was The Reverend James Gordon Gilkey. A growing population of Springfield gave Rev. Gilkey a base from which to attract new members. Church attendance swelled from 100 in 1917 to 1000 a decade later. Rev. Gilkey cultivated the extraordinary loyalty and cooperation of the church-people enabling a number of church's achievement. The church finances greatly improved and this permitted the church to acquire new properties, enlarge and rebuild

the auditorium and initiate the Community House program. In 1919 “The South Church Record” and the New England-wide radio broadcasting Sunday services were introduced which helped to spread South Church’s ministry. With the addition of a master organist the church became known for its beautiful music. Reverend Gilkey served the church well until his retirement in 1955.

The Reverend Dr. Frederick F. Driftmier became the fifth minister of 1,400 loyal and eager members. Under his leadership South Church became more personalized. He sent out frequent parish letters and added church greeters at the Sunday service. He involved more members in the expanded clubs, committees, church boards including a Board of Deaconesses. Dr. Driftmier was known throughout the Connecticut Valley for his energetic and dynamic Sunday morning sermons from the pulpit and the radio broadcast. He supported the ecumenical movement by getting the church involved in other churches and temples. In addition, church facilities were made available to diverse neighborhood and community groups for their activities.

In 1979 Dr. Driftmier retired and was succeeded by his associate minister, The Reverend John W. Ames. He was the first associate minister to become a senior minister. He was a caring minister providing attention for the sick, the lonely, and the families in crisis, as well as, an inspiring role model to the church youth. During his nineteen-year tenure he kept the church moving in the right direction.

The Reverend Peter E. Heinrichs, South Church’s seventh minister, was called July, 1989. During his ministry many changes took place in the life of South Church, such as dramatic shifts in the demographics of the neighborhood and religious participation in general during the 90’s, causing the congregation to reassess its faith and mission. At the end of Rev. Heinrichs’ tenure, South Church has emerged as a smaller, more diverse congregation that is committed to an urban mission. Our current membership on the books is approximately 150, but Sunday attendance averages more towards 50 members and friends. This transition finds us in a time of discernment. While we don’t yet know what the future holds for us, but we are committed to our growing diversity. One symbol of this is the “hands of many colors” image recently initiated as a symbol for our church: hands of many colors are interwoven to form a stained-glass window. The symbolism represents diversity through which shines the light of God.

After an exhausting two-and-a-half-year search (and the tenure of two recent interim ministers), Rev. Tom Gerstenlauer was selected and called to serve at South Congregation in 2014. During his tenure, South Church became more involved in the current issues surrounding immigrants in this country, and we offered our church apartment as a sanctuary to a family in need, thus placing our church in the middle of current political challenges. Rev. Gerstenlauer retired in the Spring of 2018. We continue to maintain the church as a sanctuary space.

Church Strengths:

- Open and affirming in terms of sexuality, orientation, different faiths, and abilities
- Strong community outreach and missions (South Church Cooks, Sunday Night Sanctuary, Winter Coat Program)
- A vibrant music ministry
- Church apartment that is a Level One, safe harbor sanctuary space for undocumented persons, despite external political pressure
- Willingness to respond to community needs and serve the local diverse community
- Communication skills as a congregation
- Commitment to making the church physically accessible to all, including the installation of a new elevator
- Frequent host of local community groups who need to use the church, as long as the groups are consistent with our church mission
- We value our identity as a congregational church that respects and honors collective governance.

Reflection on Church Strengths

Our open and affirming welcome is deeply important to us, and we demonstrate this by organizing church activities that bring together our members to celebrate and enjoy our diversity. Some highlights of our recent church-wide events that explore and respect our congregation's diverse cultural heritages include: marching in the local annual Gay Pride Parade; hosting Black History Month programs; offering an annual open Thanksgiving meal; organizing an annual Mardi Gras Jazz Sunday with New Orleans-style music and food; and rotating fellowship in different members' homes.

Our congregation values mission work in our local community that reflects our church's mission statement. As such, in "serving our neighbors in love," we express these values in a variety of ways. For example, South gives scholarships to high school, college and seminary students; the church staffs and financially supports South Church Cooks, which serves meals on location, supports Open Pantry, and partners with Loaves and Fishes (an independent soup kitchen service). We also provide monthly meals for an offsite food ministry called Church Without Walls.

In other community missions, South additionally donates funds to local charitable organizations and has launched a social justice initiative. Through our Deacon's Fund, members help other members and friends in times of financial distress. A number of ministry initiatives have been explored in the past few years as a result of a Leadership Retreat South held a few summers ago, led by Beverly Prestwood Taylor. These initiatives included the Pray-Trust-Build group, The Social Justice Task Force, Greening the Church, and Mentoring programs.

We are a very social congregation, and we enjoy our Advent and Lenten mid-week Rejoice Nights, which includes a community meal and study program. Every Sunday we also enjoy our welcoming coffee hour. Church families participate in outings to local sports and cultural events, and more. As a church we seek to grow and improve our worship lives. We nurture our members and friends with Fall /Spring bible studies, and have introduced a series of Women's Spirituality programs led by one of our seminarians. We have active Prayer Shawl and Quilting Ministries that meet every week; these ministries create much-needed items for people in need.

One significant highlight of our church is our music program. Since we strongly value our music program, we support a full-time Director of Music Ministries who is the organist/pianist and director of a semi-professional adult choir. The music on any given Sunday is varied and can include classical sacred, traditional, contemporary gospel, contemporary praise and, global music. Alternative worship experiences have focused on contemporary music styles and, while there is no alternative worship service being offered at present, we are blending those styles into the main service whenever possible. There have been opportunities for enhanced musical presentations in worship on our popular Jazz Sundays and other occasions, such as World Communion Sunday, Reformation, Christmas, Easter and Memorial Day weekend. Other highlights of our music ministry include: Springfield Central Cultural District; an annual Halloween Concert for the community at large; and a noontime music series featuring local music leading up to Christmas. Moving forward with our music ministry, we would like to renew our youth and hand bell choir.

Finally, we have an endowment that has kept us strong through tough economic times, enabling us to keep supporting our music and mission programs. We take seriously our stewardship of these funds to protect the future of our church.

Significant Events: See church history.

Church Challenges:

- As we are located in an area with predominantly Spanish speakers, we have a strong need for a bilingual pastor or who is willing to work on communication across cultures
- We have had difficulty navigating the external pressure and publicity that comes from sticking to our open and affirming and safe harbor values and policies; there are unique challenges of “serving our neighbors in love” in these ways
- We have had some internal conflict in the church related to the church’s traditional past and the church’s current social progressiveness
- Church growth and an “aging out” population; we have pressing need to attract younger congregants
- The size and age of an historic building presents us with many structural challenges
- Security and safety of an urban church location

Reflection on Church Challenges:

As an urban church in a city that faces many challenges, the language barriers between congregation and the surrounding community makes it difficult to fully realize our mission statement and goals. Therefore, we have realized the importance of a multi-lingual leadership and the pressing need for at least a bilingual pastor.

Regarding the clash between tradition and progressiveness, we are struggling with maintaining a balance that meets the needs of both older and newer congregants. For example, the nature of these tensions can, generally, be summarized as follows: the church’s physical location in a city with a changing and economically-challenged demographic; the changing in worship style to a less formal structure; the church’s commitment to an organizational structure that prioritizes a laity leadership over pastoral governance; and a recent transition to greater transparency regarding all levels of leadership and finances. While our pews are occupied with diverse members and friends, our leadership and our worship style does not yet fully reflect this richness.

We have a strong need for improving Christian Education outside of regular church meetings and Sunday service.

While our endowment has been a great blessing, the endowment is also a challenge to manage in ways that are consistent with our values, as it impedes current financial growth through stewardship and pledging goals. Further, the endowment impacts a willingness for volunteer staffing of ministries and general mission-giving.

We have a beautiful stone church with two stunning stained-glass windows. In the past ten years, we have invested literally millions in the structural repairs of our building in two major areas, with another MAJOR repair challenge pending in the near future.

Finally, South Church, like many other churches, is constantly looking at new and creative ways to get the word out about who we are and what we have to offer. Members have worked tirelessly to get more coverage for us in the local paper and other news media. These are good starts, but we know more needs to be done to attract new membership.

Is there unresolved Conflict in Church? ___**XX**___ Yes ___ No

Level of Conflict in Your Church (Low 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 High): _____ **1** _____

(As identified by Speed Leas, in a Leadership Magazine article in 1989:

1. **“We have problems to solve, but we can do it!”**
2. “We’re not communicating. There seems to be a low level of trust...but we are talking!

3. The focus has changed to “winners/losers!” Emotions are escalating. Some folks are leaving. At this level it is wise to seek outside help!
4. The goal is “divorce,” and getting people to quit. There are active attempts to manipulate or sabotage processes. Open communication is not being practiced.
5. Not only wanting others to leave, but seeking to hurt others in revenge!

****Please note that these numbers do not accurately describe our church’s level of conflict. We report some conflict (see our discussion of the challenges) but we are communicating and the trust level is not necessarily “low.” We have had recent successes with open communication.**

Was the previous leader a contributor to the conflict? _____ **XX** Yes _____ No

If yes, please explain: _____ We are searching for a pastor who can openly communicate with all sides when conflict arises. We think an awareness around when the pastor needs to push and lead or when the pastor needs to work with others in a secondary role will be helpful. _____

What has the congregation and leadership learned about its role in the creation and resolution of the conflict? Some progress along these lines has been made, and currently new officers of the church are in place.

BASIC STATISTICS:

#Church Members	Average Worship Attendance	CE Participation	Adult Ed Participation
176	56	3	N/A

2017-18 Income	2017-2018 Budget	2017-2018 UCC Mission Giving	Reserves & Endowments	Compensation being offered
73,751	558,402.00	11,000	6,143,439.75	The total annual compensation package will be commensurate with experience and UCC guidelines for a fulltime position and church of this size.

Generally, the starting place of negotiation for the Compensation Package offered to the Designated Term Pastor is the same as that of the most recent pastor.

Cash Salary offered: ___*The total annual compensation package will be commensurate with experience and UCC guidelines for a fulltime position and church of this size. The cash salary and housing allowance range for a church of this size published by MAUCC is: \$47,150 -- \$73,083. Additionally, benefits will be included. Specific details will be negotiated as a part of the selection process.*

Conference Compensation Guidelines (salary range): ___*see range listed above*

Housing

- ___ * Housing allowance only \$ _____
- ___ * Parsonage only
- ___ * would offer either
- ___ * Pension Contribution (14% of Base Salary plus housing)
- ___ * Social Security Allowance
- ___ * Health Insurance ___ Individual ___ Family
- ___ * Dental Insurance ___ Individual ___ Family
- ___ * Vacation (4 weeks per year for full time)
- ___ * Meetings
- ___ * Business Mileage Reimbursed (IRS Rate)

One time Criminal Background Check fee of \$140 reimbursed to the Designated Term Pastor.

Covenant/Contract will be for: **36 months**.

Is this full time or part time? **fulltime**

The Designated Term Pastor will be selected by: **The candidate will be recommended to the Leadership Circle by the search team, and since the DTP may one day become the settled pastor, the congregation will vote on them.**

+ + +

Once a Designated Term Pastor has been chosen and a covenant has been signed, please forward the following documents to the Framingham Office – One Badger Road, Framingham, MA 01702

- Copies of the Interim Covenant/Contract
- Documents outlining the conditions for terminating the covenant/contract.

It is customary that the church or Designated Term Ministry Pastor may terminate the contract only after 60 days notice of such intent.

Associate Conference Minister:	Rev. Jill Graham
Phone	(413) 441-1618
Email	grahamj@macucc.org
Cell Phone	

Once a Designated Term Ministry Pastor has been chosen and a covenant has been signed, please forward the following documents to the Framingham Office –

- Copies of the *Designated Term Ministry Pastor* Covenant/Contract
- Documents outlining the conditions for terminating the covenant/contract.

Suggested Supplemental Materials to send to a candidate:

1. Newsletter
2. Worship bulletin

3. Annual Report

Position Listing for the National UCC Employment Opportunities:

(In 2000 characters of less, please describe your church and your goals for the Designated Term Ministry. This will be posted on our National UCC website for up to one month.)

The mission statement for South Congregational Church is: “We are an inclusive community of faith, courageously following Christ, serving our neighbors in love.”

We are an open and affirming, multi-racial church set in the heart of Springfield, MA. The church draws members and friends from the Greater Springfield area. We have 176 members. Our church is located in a historic building that has the capacity for up to 800 people.

Our Goals during the designated term ministry time:

1. Implement a vision for promoting church growth that includes programming for the diverse community surrounding the church.
2. In conjunction with church leadership, implement a plan to improve the image and visibility of South Church, including helping with the public image of the church as a Level 1 Sanctuary space and developing productive and reciprocal relationships with city officials.
3. Help improve our current Christian Education plan (Bible Study, etc.) for members and friends of the church.
4. Play a supportive role in the church’s transition process as discernment reveals other key next steps.

In addition to these four goals for a Designated Term Pastor, we have identified some leadership qualities we are seeking:

- a dynamic preacher and speaker.
- **preferably** a bilingual pastor who is fluent in English and Spanish or who is willing to improve language skills
- possesses effective communication skills.
- skilled at pastoral care and has a compassionate bedside manner.
- has positive conflict resolution experience.
- can communicate and implement an out-of-the-box vision for promoting church growth.
- committed to helping a diverse congregation understand and act on our mission of “seeking justice, healing, and wholeness of life for all.”
- accepting of all people with different background and views.
- will provide some guidance regarding the maintenance of a historic church building.
- skilled in overseeing the duties of the church staff.
- will support our identity as a congregational church that governs collectively.
- will actively encourage everyone to participate in all aspects of church leadership and worship.