

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHURCH PROFILE



First Congregational United Church of Christ
Corning, New York

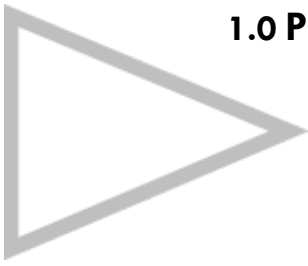
Three Quarter-Time Pastor
New York Conference, Susquehanna Association

[Validation Date]

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



1.0 POSITION POSTING

1.1 LISTING INFORMATION

1.2 SCOPE OF WORK

1.3 COMPENSATION & SUPPORT

1.4 WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

1.1 LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: First Congregational United Church of Christ

Street address: 171 West Pulteney Street, Corning, NY 14830

Web link: www.corningucc.org

Additional ecumenical affiliations

- Corning Area Clergy Group (first Wednesday Pastor's lunch)
- Emanuel Lutheran partnership for summer worship and community garden
- Jazz Sunday before Lent at Christ Episcopal Church
- Southern Tier Interfaith Coalition

Conference: New York

Association: Susquehanna

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person (Name, Title, Phone, Email):

Rev. Dr. Marsha Williams

Associate Conference Minister for Clergy and Authorized Ministry Concerns

315-446-3073 | mwilliams@uccny.org

Summary Ministry Description:

We continue our journey with a basic premise that "wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." We are looking for a pastor who approaches pastoring with humility and humor. We look forward to relevant, inspirational and faith-enhancing sermons that will nurture the spiritual and "church family" needs of all who attend. We pray for a pastor who will help us expand our outreach, mission and faith formation. Finally, in spite of the rather long list above, we are really not looking for a Superhero ~ simply a caring and compassionate person with an unmistakable love for God who enjoys greeting each day with a smile.

Photographs:

Pentecost Sunday 2019 in the sanctuary.



Pentecost Sunday 2020 over Zoom



Youth Sunday May 2019



What we value about living in our area:

Corning is a wonderful, healthy place to live, located in the southern tier of the beautiful Finger Lakes region of New York. Simply Google corningfingerlakes.com or urbancorning.com and see why our town is known as The Crystal City and "The Most Fun Small Town in America." Corning offers a rich diversity of opportunities for anyone to be engaged in the community and surrounding region. As home to the Corning Museum of Glass, the Rockwell Museum and easy access to lakes, rivers, hiking trails, wineries ~ this is not only a vibrant vacation destination, Corning is a great place to live. The presence of the world headquarters of Corning, Inc adds an international flavor and enhances our community life.

The congregation of FCUCC is made up of people who appreciate the beautiful region we live in and the community of people who call it home. We are grateful for the natural wonders of landscape, climate and water that surround us. Many of us came here for work but find ourselves deeply engaged with a community rich in history and diverse in its make-up. Because of the influence of Corning Incorporated, resources and amenities make Corning and surrounding communities an attractive area to raise a family. This region still faces challenges for those less fortunate and our church is dedicated to being a resource to everyone.

Current size of membership:

121 (paid Members from 11 Year Report).

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

Currently only English.

Position Title:

Pastor.

Position Duration:

Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister moves church membership to the congregation and moves standing to related association.

Compensation Level:

$\frac{3}{4}$ Time.

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes.

1.2 SCOPE OF WORK

In covenant with First Congregational United Church of Christ Corning, the Pastor serves as leader, guide, supporter, and resource to strengthen the life and work of the church and the ministry of all. The pastor provides spiritual and liturgical leadership and development through weekly worship, pastoral care and other opportunities for spiritual nurturing, and oversees the general well-being and ongoing development of the congregation. This is a three-quarter time position with commensurate responsibilities.

Core Competencies:

Our new pastor is an energetic, approachable and humble member of our community. He/She helps us to spread the good news of the Bible by leading inspired, relevant worship, and by demonstrating empathetic care of others in our church and the wider Corning community.

1.3 COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary

Total compensation package will range from low \$60's to low \$70's based on education and experience. Compensation package includes: salary and housing allowance (\$40,000-\$46,000); medical/dental/disability insurance, pension and professional expenses (\$20,000-\$25,000).

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

Pastor is expected to find and maintain their own personal living situation.

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

We hope that the pastor will choose to reside in relative close proximity or easy commute to Corning. Access to member homes, health care facilities and community groups is of great importance.

Spousal/partner job search assistance provided upon request.

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

Communities of Practice

Rev. Dr. Marsha Williams in the conference office

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

Job description attached Appendix A.

Ideally we would like a $\frac{3}{4}$ time pastor to be with us year round. We would consider discussing the alternative of a schedule more akin to a teacher's calendar where there are a number of adjacent weeks off of work.

1.4 WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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

- Re-open worship and our building safely.
- Continue remote participation in worship (Zoom or other).
- Enjoy fellowship with each other and extend our welcome to others.
- Restart faith formation for youth and adults.
- Explore new directions for discipleship as the Spirit and community lead us.
- Honor existing traditions while also trying new things.

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

- Promote and encourage current mission objectives. Help us to reimagine our mission goals. *See Appendices F and G for 2019 and 2020 mission objectives.*
- Support, advise and mentor church members' community activities, encourage involvement. Join in support of community activities. "Show up" - presence is appreciated. Interpret mission and community involvement through the lens of faith.
- Connect community involvement to our faith fellowship.

Our congregation is full of "doers" who volunteer in the community and the church. We have some creative ideas about how to bring our faith into the world. We are looking for a pastor who will encourage us and support us in our outreach. We do not expect the pastor to lead all missions but to be a part of the team.

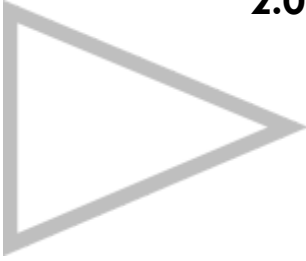
Specify language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling.

We are looking for a Minister who can celebrate the cultural, social and economic diversity of our community.

- Corning Incorporated, the largest local employer, has a distinctive and strong corporate culture that is felt locally. The company values a diversity of employees and sees diversity of thought as key to their history of innovation.
- For a small community, we have a large and diverse international population.
- The church has several members who are LGBTQ or who have LGBTQ family and friends.

Based on what you have learned about who your church is, who your church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, describe four areas of excellence from *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry* that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

- Engaging Sacred Stories and Tradition - preaching based on the Bible and other sacred stories, faith formation across generations
- Strengthening Inter- and Intra-personal Assets - living in relationships of covenantal accountability, demonstrating excellent communication skills, exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity
- Working Together for Justice and Mercy - practicing radical hospitality, identifying and working to overcome explicit and implicit bias, building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence
- Caring for All Creation - attending to one's own spiritual and pastoral care, providing hope and healing to a hurting world, nurturing care and compassion for God's creation



2.0 WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

God is calling us to become a stronger and more visible example of love in action; a place where anyone and everyone feels and experiences community; a place of deep, meaningful spiritual community; a place where the collective goal is love and to help each other; a place to learn about and remember Jesus Christ; a place to gather to worship God and seek direction, as individuals and as a congregation.

God is calling our congregation to be a unique beacon in our community by welcoming ALL people, not just those who look and act like us, to our sanctuary; to feed the poor, clothe the naked, heal the sick, and lift up the downtrodden; to be a place of worship for people who have not found, or do not have, a spiritual home; to welcome, nurture, learn, love and grow together; to be a community where people feel safe to be who they are, where we come together to be grounded in a changing world.

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

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic we have had worship via Zoom and started limited in-person worship July 26. We are planning to continue with both.

Our history has been to have a full time pastor and to contribute generously to all 5 for 5 ministries especially OCWM. It has been painful for long time members to see declining membership, budget and OCWM giving. We would like to grow our membership, increase our giving and to be able to eventually support a full-time pastor.

3.0 WHO ARE WE NOW?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

3.1 CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

3.2 11-YEAR REPORT

3.3 CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

3.4 PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

3.5 CHURCH FINANCES

3.6 HISTORICAL INFORMATION

3.1 CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation’s life of faith.

As our mission statement says, we believe that we are all made in the image of God and are called by Jesus to love each other as we are loved by God.

People are welcomed into our congregation with the words “With joy, we celebrate this day with you! We pledge our support and our prayers to you on this day when you join this family of God. We promise to share our faith journey with you in service and in love, and seek to actively hear Jesus Christ in your lives. May blessings and peace be upon you, now and forevermore. We promise you our continuing friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God’s knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.”

God is described in our worship services as “God”, “heavenly father”, “holy God”, “creator of the universe”, and occasionally “mother/father God”. More and more emphasis is being placed on a “creator” and “continually creating” presence.

Many of our congregation believe that the Holy Spirit is evident in the ways we respond to the needs of others. We are a caring congregation that tries, even in this time of pandemic, to reach out to others – both in our congregation and in the greater Corning community.

In 2020 we prepared a new survey for this profile; here are the results:

- Confirmed the conclusions of our larger survey in 2018 that our top priorities are engaging sermons and worship, congregational care and faith formation.
- Listed top attributes desired in a new pastor - flexible leadership skills, strong communication skills, intelligence with a strong education and a sense of humor.

- Highlighted the importance of a strong and open pastor/congregation relationship. We believe that a pastor needs a supportive, safe place to confidentially air concerns and questions; and that the congregation needs a clear and confidential way to express concerns.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

We have a strong history of celebrating our musical gifts within worship but also as a gift to our community. In addition to our Chancel Choir and Bell Choir, we have hosted 1-3 outside musical groups in our building for weekly rehearsals. Several of these groups have performed regularly in worship or at church events. We host the Blair - Bigler - Perry Concert Series, an annual musical performance offered to the community through generous donations and bequests. We retain a paid musical staff when other similar churches have turned to volunteers.

We strive to be a place where all are welcomed and accepted. We have taken to heart the mantra of “wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here” and we will keep walking on that journey.

We have a core team of volunteer leaders who have adapted to our smaller numbers by making administrative and leadership processes more streamlined through the use of technology and the minimization of overhead. The process has taken several years but we have clarified how decisions get made and communicated, fine-tuned roles and responsibilities, and focused on our top priorities as a church. Our financial structure and processes have been rationalized and are more transparent. This overhaul of our decades-old way of doing things reflects our willingness to try new things.

We have an easily accessible facility that is utilized and enjoyed by many community groups.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Upon entering our sanctuary, one is greeted at the door, usually by two ushers, who distribute programs, answer questions, and assure that everyone knows they are welcome. The sanctuary building is an A-frame with a tall ceiling, low key lighting, and features polished wood and pews with new comfortable light blue upholstery from the recent capital campaign. The raised chancel features the pulpit, lectern, communion table, choir

loft and pipe organ. High above an altar table is a skylight that streams sunlight onto a 20 foot cross that tapers elegantly - a focal point for the congregation. In the back of the church is a large wall of magnificent stained glass actually created by an artist member of the congregation.

Church service begins with the ringing of the church bell and an announcement that is central to our philosophy declaring, “Whoever you are, wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.” Traditional hymns are sung including an anthem by the choir which often feels inspired by the Holy Spirit. An outstanding bell choir performs regularly, and on several Sundays a year, a brass band is featured. Greatly loved is our children’s sermon affectionately called “Kinder Tinder,” and our “Passing of the Peace” is at times so enthusiastic the choir must patiently wait for the congregation to return to their seats before singing the anthem. Volunteer lay persons read scripture, and the emphasis of the service is on community, communal and personal prayer, and a non-literalist Biblically based sermon.

We bring our celebrations and concerns before each other and God as a highlight of our worship. We don’t just speak names but we identify ourselves and give the story of our prayer request in personal terms. By speaking these details in front of the full congregation we increase our empathy and communion with each other.

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

Accomplishments

- Sunday School - PreK – 2nd grade, 3rd-5th grade, and 6th – 8th grade. We have had only one teacher per class but all have served very faithfully.
- Our small group of adults work well together
 - Sunday School Coordinator: Judy Graf
 - Sunday School Teachers: Chris Wilken, Judy Graf, Laurelyn Simmons
 - Youth Group (God Squad) Leaders: Josh and Chris Wilken
 - Middle School and High School Sunday School
 - Sunday Morning Childcare: high school seniors recruited by Laurelyn Simmons
 - Christmas Pageant: Nicolette Wagoner and Jill VanDewoestine

- Hanging of the Greens, featuring dinner and a carol and lesson service led by God Squad (Middle and High School Youth Group)
- The “instant” Christmas pageant was well-received 12/17, with assists from Bob Walker, Gary McCaslin, and Mike Flanagan.
- Easter egg hunt was held on Palm Sunday, assisted by older youth.
- God Squad and some of the younger kids led worship, including communion, on 6/2. A full slate of Sunday School teachers was recruited for the 2019-2020 season after the service!

Concerns

- We need a leader for adult Faith Formation
- We have not offered adult education programs other than with other congregations.
- We have not designed any summer programs, VBS or other

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

The organization of our **ministry** has changed as over the past 4 years we have restructured our governance. It was clear that the same people were serving on several boards, requiring many meetings each month. These new groups and their functions, as well as their specific work in 2018 are outlined in Appendices B and C: *Our Ministry Plan and Program Review from June 2019 and TBD 2020*. The Administrative Board meets monthly and the Ministry Teams usually send an individual to the Administrative Board meetings and then meet as little or as often as they feel necessary. Many of the decisions of the Ministry Teams are made on the phone or via email. Communication between teams is informal – sometimes during lunch after church - and communication to the congregation is done by announcements on Sundays, brief summaries in our weekly bulletin, and articles in our monthly newsletter.

As part of our new governance structure, our decision-making is less formal. We try to use consensus rather than formal rules of order. This seems to be working well given the size of our church. There is always encouragement for any church member to start a new project if we have let something slide or if they would like to see a particular subject covered. For example, several members organized a series of discussions on Islam. This is a congregation of “doers”, as evidenced by the many outside charities on which many members serve as workers and board members.

Our **mission** work is done by several different groups:

Women's Fellowship organizes and manages an angel tree to provide Christmas gifts for needy children plus they make and collect mittens and hats for one of our schools. They also write notes to shut-ins or people going through hospitalization.

Our Family Life (2 people plus recruits) team creates different occasions for fellowship – dinners, outings, hikes. They support weekly lunches for the congregation following worship and organize small group dinners. They also work with Women's Fellowship and a Called to Care team to keep track of parishioners needing visits or phone calls of support.

Our Mission Team supports the 5 for 5 offerings by announcing and explaining them in the newsletter and in church. They also select 5 charities (usually local) per year to promote. Offerings for these charities vary between \$150 and \$500 and are not part of our budget. The mission team coordinates (shops, cooks and serves) 2 dinners per year for the local Salvation Army. In addition, they bring in a speaker (sometimes from Global Ministries, sometimes from a local charity) to share their experiences over coffee and snacks.

3.2 11-YEAR REPORT

(This 11-Year Report was developed with the help of the conference staff, UCC Data Hub, and MissionInsite.)

year	members	weekly attendance	faith formation	confirmation	confession	transfer/reaffirm	death/transfer out	other losses	member net +/-
2009	151	79	26	0	5	4	8	0	1
2010	143	82	34	0	6	4	9	9	-8
2011	143	79	39	0	4	0	4	0	0
2012	148	83	47	6	4	0	5	0	5
2013	148	83	47	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	148	83	47	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	149	69	54	0	0	3	2	0	1
2016	149	69	54	0	0	0	0	0	0
2017	149	69	54	0	0	0	0	0	0
2018	121	61	36	5	1	0	3	20	-17*
2019	121	61	36	0	0	4	4	0	0

*result of database clean up removing long inactive individuals.

year	current expenses	capital payments	basic support	other ucc	total ocwm	other gifts	wider mission	basic support %	total expenditures	pledges and offerings
2009	\$155,182	\$0	\$14,000	\$1,196	\$15,196	\$4,450	\$19,646	9.02	\$174,828	\$149,837
2010	\$80,408	\$0	\$14,000	\$2,754	\$16,754	\$3,400	\$20,154	17.41	\$100,562	\$160,956
2011	\$139,920	\$0	\$15,443	\$1,524	\$16,967	\$6,683	\$23,650	11.04	\$163,570	\$171,037
2012	\$164,810	\$0	\$17,034	\$1,709	\$18,743	\$3,900	\$22,643	11.97	\$164,981	\$152,843
2013	\$164,310	\$0	\$14,797	\$1,265	\$16,053	0	\$16,053	10.40	\$158,391	\$156,482
2014	\$159,843	\$75,930	\$15,648	\$1,830	\$17,487	0	\$17,478	10.99	\$159,816	\$162,589
2015	\$177,594	\$53,331	\$15,168	\$849	\$16,017	0	\$16,017	9.34	\$292,054	\$160,395
2016	\$170,911	\$62,892	\$16,040	\$1,120	\$17,160	0	\$17,160	9.88	\$179,586	\$185,839
2017	\$161,702	\$25,504	\$15,168	\$1,250	\$16,418	0	\$16,418	9.34	\$178,844	\$169,649
2018	\$138,998	\$12,381	\$3,000	\$1,890	\$4,890	0	\$4,890	2.16	\$143,884	\$146,062
2019	\$109,886	\$19,286	\$4,000	\$1,634	\$5,634	0	\$5,634	3.64	\$115,520	\$140,966

3.3 CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	80	yes
Number of active non-members:	7	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	87	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	70%	x
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	10%	x
Less than 5 years:	20%	x

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
4	5	0	0	9	4	11	27	20	

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	5%	x
Joint household with minors:	15%	x
Single adults age 35-65:	5%	x
Joint household with no minors:	55%	x
Single adults over 65:	20%	x

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	95%	x
College:	85%	x
Graduate School:	40%	x
Specialty Training:		
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	25%	x
Adults who are retired:	65%	x
Adults who are not fully employed:	10%	x

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

Teachers and College Professors, Nurses, College Professors, Engineers, Corporate Professionals, Corning Inc. employees.

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

Mono-cultural, but of a very diverse faith/spiritual background.

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one in the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)? Please note the date. Comment after the exercise:

In April 2013 conversations were held with the result of becoming an Open and Affirming congregation. This was approved April 28, 2013.

3.4 PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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

Ways of Gathering	Estimated attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings?
Adult Groups or Classes	10-12	weekly women’s fellowship
Baptisms (<i>number last year</i>)	0	
Children’s Groups or Classes	2 groups of 4-6	Sundays during church

Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	150	
Lenten Celebration	200	Multi-denominational Lenten gathering
Church-wide Meals	60	“coffee hour” full lunch meal served after every service by dedicated church members. 2-3 potlucks each year
Choirs and Music Groups	20-25	Choir and Bell Choir each led by a dedicated director/musician/vocalist
Church-based Bible Study	0	
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	60	monthly (1st Sunday)
Community Meals	2-3/year	Mission Outreach
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	0	
Drama or Dance Program	n/a	
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	4	
Intergenerational Groups	0	
Outdoor Worship	0	
Prayer or Meditation Groups	0	
Public Advocacy Work	0	
Retreats	0	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	0	
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	0	
Worship (time slot: 10:00)	40	
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	
Youth Groups or Classes	yes	God Squad teen group
Other	15-20	weekly “covid” Zoom fellowship

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

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant?	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)	
Gary McCaslin	no	active participant of the congregation	Can provide pulpit supply as needed	yes (ABC)	Friendly & experienced, will provide as little or as much support a new pastor would request
Jennifer Long	no			no	Pastor at local Lutheran Congregation, maintains UCC affiliation through us, will be a great ecumenical partner
Rev. Gary Brown	no			yes (UCC)	Retired from CT to Upstate NY, attends First Presbyterian in Bath, maintains UCC affiliation through us

If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation - none

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

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Administrative Assistant	no	part time	Personnel / Pastor	since 2013
Choir Director	no	salaried	Personnel / Pastor	since 2017
Bell Choir Director	no	salaried	Personnel / Pastor	since 2009
Organist	no	salaried Sept-June	Personnel / Pastor	since 2005
Nursery Care	no	2 hrs/wk Sept-June	Personnel / Pastor	since 2019

REFLECTION

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

The congregation is open and welcoming. We come from a variety of backgrounds. We have a need for growth. One area we are lacking is adult faith formation.

A plan to bring younger people into our church is needed. We have a deficit in the 20 -30 age range.

We are an alive, exciting faith community that is open to new ideas and actions to enhance our strong traditions.

3.5 CHURCH FINANCES

Current annual income (dollars used during most recent fiscal year, 2019)

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$114,405
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>)	\$0
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”</i>)	\$0
Fundraising Events	\$5020
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$ see “other” below
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building (donations for building use)	\$1140
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$NA
Support from Related Organizations (<i>e.g. Women’s Group</i>)	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$0
Other (specify): Memorial Fund	\$1083
Other: Money Market Interest	\$780

Other: Receptions Fund	\$250
Other: Lewis Fund	\$1000
Other: Pre-Paid 2020 Pledges	\$35,050
Other: CD Interest	\$1659
TOTAL	\$190,387

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

2019 Budget was \$141,754.50. However, due to six-month pastoral vacancy, actual expenses were \$109,885.81

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

27% for 2019, but we had not retained an interim pastor for 6 months, so it would have been 54%

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

Not in recent times, and never according to historical records.

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? (indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year)

Yes

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

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

The church had been donating to OCWM based on a percentage which, for many years was close to or more than 10%. In 2018, we needed to reduce our OCWM from \$15,168 to \$3000 to balance the budget. Since then, we have brought the OCWM line item up to \$4000.

What is the church’s current indebtedness?

\$0.00

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2014 to 2019	To modernize our building with construction and maintenance upgrades to better meet the needs of our congregation and community	\$ unspecified	\$251,791.36	replace flat roof remodel kitchen replace windows replace sidewalks replace flooring accessibility projects replace pew cushions build outdoor patio repave parking lot

Here is the financial summary for our 2014 to 2019 capital campaign:

Year	Spend
2014	\$75,930
2015	\$53,331
2016	\$62,892
2017	\$24,503
2018	\$12,381
2019	\$19,286
2020	\$1,175

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe: none planned.

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

Our mission was to make our church building a more welcoming, modern facility that meets the needs of our congregation as well as the many community groups that use our building. We believe this has been accomplished.

Does your church have an endowment?

An endowment Fund was established in 1979. Since 1993, the principal of this fund has been used only for a pastor's mortgage and the principal with interest has been repaid. In May 2017, the remaining balance of \$25,028.74 in the Endowment Fund was invested in five CD's in a ladder so that every year, a CD would mature enabling the church to use those funds or reinvest them for additional time.

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$

Total reserves as of year end 2019 were \$51,919.83.

Investments (other than endowment):

About \$75,000 of designated funds have been invested in CD's to gain as much interest as is prudent. Since one CD matures each year, the church has the opportunity to use those funds for their designated purposes, if needed. Otherwise, the CD rolls over to a 5-year CD.

Does your church have a parsonage?

No.

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

The church at 171 West Pulteney Street in Corning, NY is our only property. It is an estimated 3/4 acres on a corner lot in town. The sanctuary is a large A-frame with an accessible Fellowship Hall attached. We have a spacious and accessible parking lot on the property. A small old cemetery and a small garage are also on the property.

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:

None.

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

FCUCC is a “modern” building and generally quite accessible. There is, however, currently no accessibility to the chancel which includes the altar, choir, pulpit and organ.

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

A major portion of our mission and ministry has focused on maintaining the church building for our use as well as the use of the community. Since this is a relatively new building, it does not require great expense for upkeep. It is “right-sized”, versatile and not a “money pit”. We are one of the few Corning churches that is fully accessible, has a spacious parking lot, and has both small and large meeting rooms plus a full kitchen. We make our building available free of charge to non-commercial organizations with diverse interests such as sobriety, aging, music, mental health, and many others. Our recent capital campaign was successful in completing needed updates and repairs so we could continue that ministry.

A major budget change made in the last few years was to reduce the pastor’s position from full time to three-quarters time. This was made in response to reductions in our annual giving that resulted from older members leaving the area or passing away, as well as some members’ discontent with our previous pastor’s performance resulted in them reducing their pledges. Some of these have returned to prior levels and some have been permanent.

Our budgeting process is done annually, with Ministry Teams making recommendations to finance for program spend, and the Personnel team recommending salaries. In the fall, we hold a stewardship campaign. Once pledges are in, the Finance team looks at projected income vs. outlay and creates a budget. Shortfalls in pledges vs. operating expenses are filled in with a combination of fundraising and cash from reserves. If income exceeds pledges or expenses are lower than expenses then we use less reserve money. We have never adopted a deficit budget and have never ended a year “in the red” due to the thorough and thoughtful budget process and the availability of reserves.

Our 2020 income has been resilient to the COVID crisis so far, and we do have cash reserves that can help carry us through temporary budget problems. We do not feel confident enough in our future income to hire a full-time pastor at this time, without substantially increasing attendance and therefore donations.

3.6 HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

On June 23, 1972 Hurricane Agnes caused massive flooding in our area. Many parishioners' homes were devastated and the church had eight feet of water throughout. During the summer of 1972, church services were abbreviated with those attending wearing scrubbing clothes and sitting on folding chairs in Fellowship Hall. After services (as well as during the week), all who could helped with cleaning and repairing the church. The flood and its aftermath brought a true spirit of unity to the congregation, as well as to the city of Corning and its environs.

In 2012 the current Board of Deacons began review of the UCC Open and Affirming (ONA) curriculum. Subsequently, the subject was taken to the congregation as a whole and, as true congregationalists, we began a thorough discussion of the matter. After hearing all viewpoints a vote was taken and we became an Open and Affirming congregation on April 28, 2013. One couple left the church and a single individual left but soon returned. The little rainbow flag on our sign out front is a reminder that all are welcome.

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

1. Governance structure change

In 2014, the church started the process of revamping our governance structure to bring it in line with our church's size and priorities. Even though our membership rolls had shrunk from the 300+ range in the 1950's to the 150 range, our leadership structure remained based on large boards and committees, requiring over 50 positions to fully staff each year. Our Nominations process had become increasingly difficult as most members were uninterested in spending hours in meetings. Many activities were done because "we've always done this," and not because the activity was integral to our mission and vision.

In June of 2016, the congregation approved the study team and the process. We began work on a Ministry Plan that would help us align our programs to the priorities of the

congregation, and interviewed leaders in other churches who had undergone similar transitions.

In June of 2017, the congregation voted to approve a two-year evaluation of the new governance structure, which re-cast our boards and committees as Ministry Teams, led by 1-3 people, who would solicit short-term volunteers for specific projects and only have standing meetings if they desired. We also formed an Administrative Board (Board) of 7-9 people who would lead the financial, personnel, and governance role for the business affairs of the church. The pastor is a member of the Board. The Ministry Teams and Board meet monthly to coordinate schedules and address cross-team business. We strive to make decisions by consensus instead of voting.

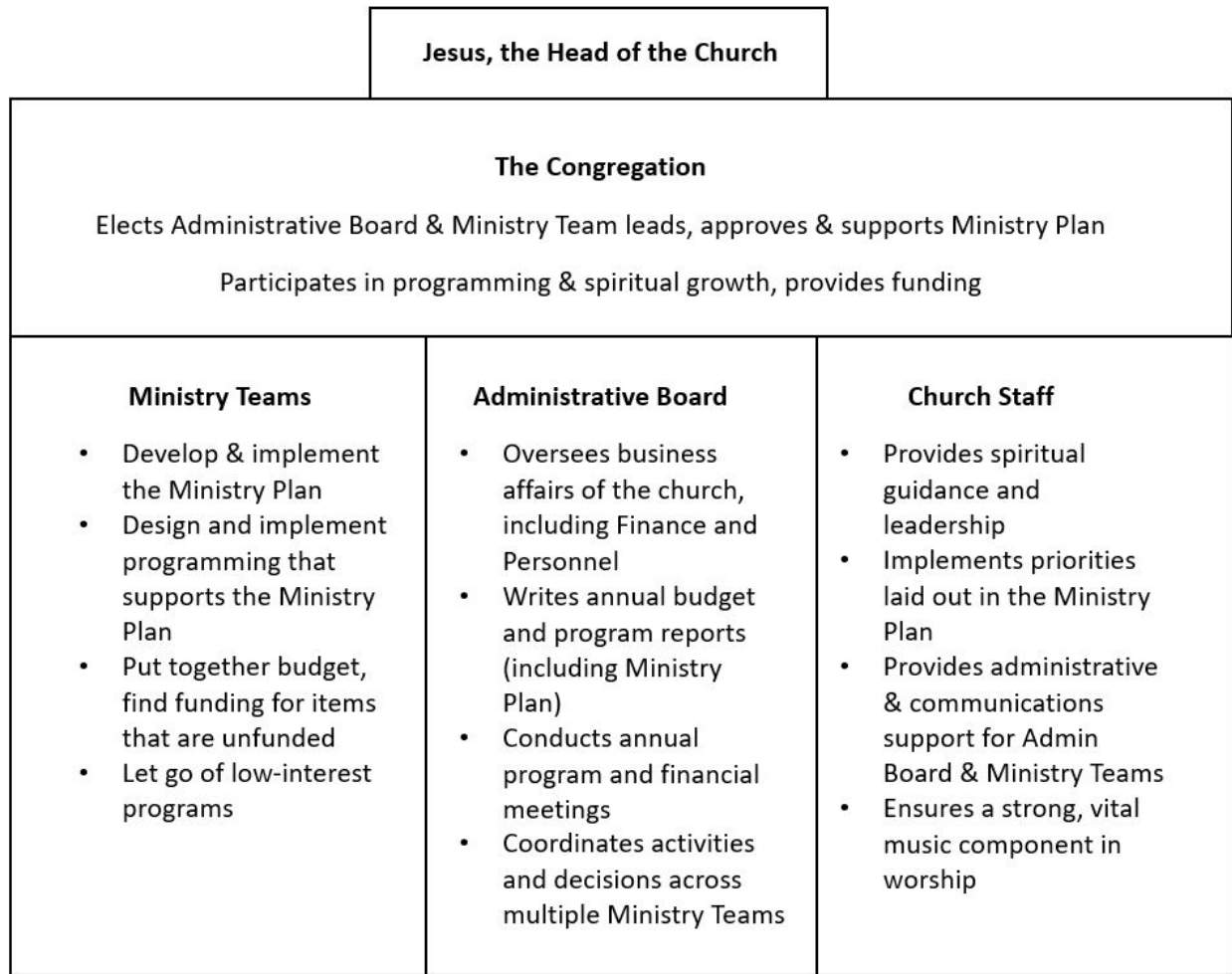
We separated our Annual Meeting into a Budget meeting (held in January, to review and approve the financial plan) and a Program meeting (held in June, to review and approve the Ministry Plan and Slate) to more appropriately mirror our annual cycles.

It took some adjustments, but our two-year evaluation period was concluded in June 2019, when we voted to continue the new governance structure. We still have to revise and ratify the By-Laws to match the new structure. The COVID-19 situation delayed progress but the 2020 Ministry Plan was adopted on October 4, 2020.

Overall, we have achieved a structure that supports:

- Opportunities to nourish spirituality/**expand faith** exploration
- Opportunities to **serve community** and/or grow in mission
- **Appropriate stewardship** of physical & financial resources
- More **opportunities for participation** in church activities
- **Greater level of independent leadership, while maintaining the Congregational philosophy**

First Congregational United Church of Christ structure diagram:



2. COVID adaptations

In March as New York State began its COVID-19 response, we scrambled to maintain the personal connections that we value so much in our church. Our last in-person worship on March 15 was quite emotional as we realized that we would have to pull back from our building and traditions. After worship that Sunday, we decided to hold live video-conference worship services via Zoom, which started the following Sunday on March 22. Our interim pastor, Rev. David Ashby, figured out the technology from his home in Dundee, while others connected via PC, smartphone, or landline. Communication was initially difficult, especially for our congregants without email or computers. We experimented with Facebook Live along with Zoom for a few Sundays but the Facebook technology was too cumbersome. But after a few Sundays, a steady group of 30-40 were attending Zoom worship, including congregants who hadn't been

attending live services because of distance or health reasons. There has been a bonding and warmth to these services as we all connect weekly with each other. We re-established our lay liturgists to lead the opening prayers and read Bible verses. Our choir director and organist have provided hymns and service music, recorded ahead of time. Our choir director has also pivoted to become our music and digital worship coordinator. Rather than providing pre-recorded sermons or links to other churches, we have stayed committed to a live community experience on Sunday mornings. We are now holding worship services which successfully combine in-person attendees with others joining simultaneously via Zoom.

Outside of worship, our church activities have continued nearly as usual. We nominated and launched our Search Committee and continued our governance meetings. Pledged giving has continued so our finances are in decent shape. Our community garden beds have been planted and maintained to provide produce to local food pantries. We provided meals for the Salvation Army one Sunday night as scheduled, with pre-made meals rather than dinner prepared at the Citadel. Instead of fellowship opportunities such as our regular after-church meal, we have had weekly Zoom drop-in sessions that have been well-attended and appreciated. We have also had home deliveries of soup to persons with health conditions or who were isolated. We established a discretionary fund to provide assistance for individuals who might be facing challenges at this time. Our monthly newsletter has continued to be published, and our annual Scholarship awards have been given. We have also chartered a re-opening committee to specifically work with staff and the many community groups who use our church building to follow government and conference guidelines. And we are imagining ways our newly-developed skills can be used to continue our mission and vision beyond just dealing with a pandemic. For example, how can we make our video worship capabilities useful to community groups? How can we use our online presence to reach out to more people?

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

The most recent conflict in our church involved our last full-time pastor. After nearly seven years with us, and leading us through several accomplishments, including ONA and a major capital campaign, a significant portion of our congregation became dissatisfied with performance. Members were looking for inspirational sermons and there were other factors as well. This was a gradual change, not a sudden one. It resulted in the loss of several members as well as pledge revenue. Due to these losses and also difficulty

in filling leadership roles in the church, we researched and voted on a new streamlined governance structure and also modified the pastor position to three-quarter time. Factors in the pastor deciding to leave were the move to a 3/4 position and the unrest within parts of the congregation. There were personal factors involved as well – returning to a home state to be close to a sibling’s family and a recently widowed father as well as length of tenure at our church. We held constructive two-way transition meetings and provided insight to be helpful in the pastor’s next assignment.

Experiencing the gradual dissatisfaction and divisiveness was hurtful and sad for all of us. We felt that we were a better church than that. A survey that was taken gave us some insight as to what changes might be needed. One change that stands out is an improved process for early and ongoing feedback versus our existing Pastoral Relations process. Our interim pastor has agreed to assist in shaping this process and then being part of it so it will be in place and refined prior to the new pastor’s arrival. Our objective would be to have constructive two-way dialogue starting early that continues as we all grow to know each other.

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

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Revs. Curtis & Kathleen Ackley	Jan. 1988 – Aug. 1995	Yes
Rev. Christyann Maxfield, Interim Pastor	Sept. 1997 – Dec. 1998	Yes
Rev. Virginia Deneka, Associate Pastor	Sept 1997 - Dec 2000	Yes
Rev. John Vertigan	Apr. 1996 – Dec. 2002	Yes
Rev. David Dik, Interim Pastor	Jan. 2003 - April 2004	Yes
Rev. Bonnie Stagg	May 2004 – Dec. 2006	Yes
Rev. David Ashby, Interim Pastor	2007 – 2009	No
Rev. Marraine Kettell	Apr. 2010 – Oct. 2018	Yes
Rev. J.K. Boodley, Sabbatical Pastor	Apr. 2016 – Aug. 2016	Yes
Rev. David Ashby, Interim Pastor	July 2019 - present	No

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

We have learned that the congregation and pastor sink, swim or flourish together. We have a history of second career pastors who are pastoring their first church. They bring great drive and enthusiasm and often will be learning the mechanics of successful solo pastoring while learning about our congregation and community. As mentioned earlier, we are starting to work with our interim pastor on how our congregation and pastor can partner to ensure there is helpful continuous two-way feedback. We are committed to doing better on this in the future.

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

Fifteen years ago a pastor while making some progress continued to struggle in their first leadership role. We parted ways because working with youth, smooth handling of financial matters, exhibiting openness and building trusting relationships are important to us.

Our most recent pastor brought great passion for youth and Faith Formation and did well in these areas. She struggled with some older members and some administrative functions.

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

No.

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

No.

4.0 WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

4.1 COMMUNITY VISION

4.2 MISSION InSite



4.1 COMMUNITY VISION

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

Corning UCC has long been active in our community. For example, several times a year we prepare and serve dinners at the Salvation Army. During the Christmas season we provide gifts of toys for needy children. We support and participate in the annual CROP walk for hunger relief. Our lawn has a community garden which provides vegetables for the food pantry. We offer the community a free annual concert, consisting of amateur or professional musicians, in memory and honor of past church music staff. Globally, we have traditionally been one of the most generous supporters of UCC’s OCWM (Our Church’s Wider Mission). We look forward to returning to that level.

The church building is used free of charge by many organizations, including Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings, music and library groups, and others. Last year we counted up over 5000 visits through these organizations. Our church has recently financially supported two start up organizations in our area – Bampa’s House, a new hospice house, and Potter’s Hands, a new residence which services survivors of sex trafficking from all along the east coast. We also supported Corning’s first local celebration of Pride in June 2019 with member participation and a booth.

In addition to the services the church itself provides, we are proud that a great many of our members support, actively and/or financially, the needs of the Corning Area.

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

For many years we have sent delegates to the Susquehanna association and annual New York Conferences. We have also had our youth participate in the New York State Youth Event and even one year had our youth group attend the National Youth Event in Florida.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at ucc.org.) Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible to All (A2A) | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creation Justice | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming | <input type="checkbox"/> Other UCC designations: |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> God Is Still Speaking (GISS) | <input type="checkbox"/> Designations from other denominations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Border and Immigrant Justice | <input type="checkbox"/> None |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Just Peace | |

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

While we would like to do more our leadership model relies upon lay leadership to drive projects and initiatives. So, new lay leaders would need to step forward to take on work in new areas. That said, we are hoping that our new pastor will inspire new efforts and work with us on them.

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

For the past few years members of our church as well as Emanuel Lutheran church have maintained a community garden on our property. Proceeds are donated to the nearest food pantry.

As previously mentioned, we buy, prepare and serve free dinners at the Salvation Army in Corning. We also have a Christmas tree with Salvation Army children's names and wishes and provide gifts for those children.

The annual fall CROP walk, for hunger relief, is represented by several churches in the area, including ours.

In the past few years we have worked with the nearby Lutheran church to provide casual dinners during Lent. Fellowship is followed by open discussion of a current Christian author or topics appropriate to the season.

One of our favorite interfaith events is the jazz service on the first Sunday in Lent. It is held in an Episcopal church and also is led by Congregational, Lutheran and Methodist ministers and members. A jazz band provides the music and beads and other Mardi Gras items abound.

Our church has had ties to the Southern Tier Interfaith Coalition (STIC) over a number of years. A member currently serves as the Co-Secretary. The Facebook page is here: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthernTierInterfaithCoalition/>

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

Our mission statement is: The First Congregational United Church of Christ of Corning, NY believes that we are all made in the image of God and that we are called to celebrate our God-given identities regardless of age, class, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical ability, marital status, race, ethnicity, or mental ability. As Jesus calls us to love each other as we are loved by God, we welcome, affirm and support all people into our full life and ministry. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

All that we do, as a congregation and as individual members of the church, is done with "love your neighbor" in our hearts and minds. It's what keeps us going, and, we hope, going in the right direction with the right spirit.

Reflect on the scope of work assigned to your pastor(s). How is their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time?

The pastor is primarily responsible for worship and pastoral care. A three-quarter time pastor would be welcome, but not required, to participate in activities beyond our congregation. See "scope of work," page 7, and job description (attached as Appendix A) for further detail.

4.2 MISSION InSite

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

We are a community with little population growth, above-average adult educational attainment and very little racial/ethnic diversity (92% white). Employment is about 1/3 blue collar and 2/3 white collar. Average age of the congregation is about 2 years older than that of New York and is increasing at about the same rate as NY. Our population of retired people is expected to grow 5% over the next 10 years. The largest opportunity appears to continue and increase "warm and friendly encounters." This is the number one ministry recommendation by a wide margin. Quality of sermons is #2.

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

We reflect many of the attributes of our community in that we are nearly all white, speak only English and have above average adult educational attainment. We are somewhat older than our community.

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

We are more than a neighborhood church. We draw our members from a 30 mile radius – people who are attracted to our thoughtful open-minded/open-hearted theology.

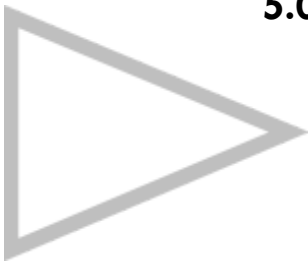
What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

Our distinctive building often comes to mind for community members – "I know your church – you go to the A-frame on Pulteney Street." Our church is centrally located, has a large off-street parking lot and has excellent accessibility. It is also easy and inexpensive to schedule a meeting in our church. Our strong music program is appreciated. Our members are known to the community for their active volunteerism.

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

They were warmly received and then were continued to be made welcome.

5.0 REFERENCES



REFERENCE 1

Dave Smith, Executive Director Corning Meals on Wheels

607-962-7985. director@corningmealsonwheels.org

Reference letter attached as Appendix D

REFERENCE 2

Rev. Jennifer Long, Pastor Emanuel Lutheran Church in Corning

607-936-4268; emanuelcorning@hotmail.com

Reference letter attached as Appendix E

REFERENCE 3

Rev. Troy Preston, Rector Christ Episcopal Church in Corning

607-769-3083. cepiscopal@yahoo.com

Reference letter attached as Appendix F

6.0 CLOSING THOUGHTS

6.1 CLOSING PRAYER

6.2 STATEMENT OF CONSENT

6.3 CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

6.1 CLOSING PRAYER

In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,

Who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways?

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,

We your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.

“Ours the Journey” In the Midst of new Dimensions - 391 NCH

6.2 STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

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

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?

The Search Committee with inputs from others including our finance team, capital campaign team, administrative teams and congregational surveys done in 2018 and 2020. Special thanks for contributions from Jill Van Dewoestine, Karen Madison, Gary McCaslin and the guidance of Interim Pastor Rev. David Ashby.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

List of Appendices:

A - Job Description FCUCCC Three-Quarter time revised 05-2020 (page 39)

[Appendix A](#)

B - Dave Smith letter of reference (page 42)

[Appendix B](#)

C - Rev. Jennifer Long letter of reference (page 44)

[Appendix C](#)

D - Rev. Troy Preston letter of reference (page 46)

[Appendix D](#)

E - Finger Lakes Region Overview (page 47)

[Appendix E](#)

F - Ministry Plan Program Report 06-2019

[Link to Report 2019](#)

G - Ministry Plan Program Report 2020

[Link to Report 2020](#)

Additional reports available upon request:

2018 Survey Summary - Survey Data Presentation 04-15-18

2020 Survey Summary - same PPT file shared with congregation

Mission InSite Report:

Executive Insight, Quick InSight and Ministry Insight Priorities

Annual Financial Report 2019

2019 Annual Report + prior Annual Reports

Signed:



11/21/2020

Bob Walker, Search Committee Chair

Date

Search Committee Members:

Clara (Star) Bright, Jan Chorazy, Eric Meek, Jill Palmer, Bob Walker, Tom Wilkinson

6.3 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: *Rev. Dr. M. E. Williams*
Name / Title: Associate Conference Minister
Email: mwilliams@uccny.org
Phone:
Date: 11/10/2020

Appendix A - Job Description

First Congregational United Church of Christ, Corning NY ¾ Time Pastor Job Description

Executive Summary

In covenant with First Congregational United Church of Christ Corning, the Pastor serves as leader, guide, supporter, and resource to strengthen the life and work of the church and the ministry of all. The pastor provides spiritual and liturgical leadership and development through weekly worship, pastoral care and other opportunities for spiritual nurturing, and oversees the general well-being and ongoing development of the congregation. This is a three-quarter time position with commensurate responsibilities.

Pastoral Responsibilities and Duties

Liturgy and Preaching - Oversees development and performance of Worship services A.

Worship

1. Lead worship approximately 85% of Sunday services per year and allow for the remaining hours to be used for congregational and denominational responsibilities. a. This allows for a minimum of 4 Sundays of paid vacation and up to 4 Sundays for sick leave, Susquehanna Association & UCC events or training that includes Sundays.
 - b. The exact structure of the ¾-time work will be arranged to best meet the needs of the Pastor & congregation.
2. Serve as staff advisor to the Worship Ministry and collaborate with them to build and carry out meaningful worship services. Work with the church staff and Worship Ministry to maintain continuity of programming and set worship schedules at least 4-6 weeks in advance.
3. Work collaboratively with the Music staff on worship music planning and the Administrative Staff on bulletin development.
4. The Pastor has freedom of the pulpit, and commits to producing sermons with solid educational, spiritual, intellectual and inspirational content.
5. Encourage active congregational participation and leadership in worship services. B.

Seasons and Special Occasions

1. Plan and lead seasonal and special worship services in collaboration with Ministries and staff. In recognition of the extra time needed to support Holy Week and Advent/Christmas season activities, Personnel will work with the Pastor to balance out the additional hours worked.
2. The Worship Ministry will coordinate with ecumenical partners on group services in our facility or elsewhere, seeking ways to leverage outside resources when available.

Appendix A - Job Description cont.

C. Rites and Sacraments

1. Perform baptisms, confirmations, weddings, funerals, memorial services and other

religious rites and sacraments.

2. In collaboration with the Worship Ministry, provide training to congregants on serving communion and assisting with other rites and sacraments.

Congregational Care

A. Help the church to be a safe, inclusive, welcoming place for worship and community. B. Work with the Church Family & Community Life Ministry and the Administrative Board to ensure pastoral care priorities are met using lay and clergy resources. Communicate coverage plans with the congregation.

C. Celebrate and walk with people in diversity.

D. Provide an open and engaging environment where members, friends and staff can express themselves.

Programs and Administration

A. Participate as an ex officio member of the Administrative Board, offering ideas, support, wisdom and vision. Stay informed of the work of each of the Ministries.

B. Provide oversight and coordinate with the Administrative Assistant and other staff on bulletins, newsletters, church calendar and programming. Maintain a positive work environment.

C. Contribute to church communications: emails, Facebook, website, bulletins, The Caller, and other media. Represent First Congregational UCC to the media when needed. D. Refer building use questions to the Facilities Ministry to manage the scheduling of the facility.

E. Develop proactive conflict resolution and communication practices.

Denominational and Collegial Relations

A. Leverage the resources of the Susquehanna Association and the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ as appropriate.

B. Represent the congregation to the ecumenical and interfaith communities, as appropriate and as time allows, including collaboration on programs, mission, and learning opportunities.

Congregational and Spiritual Development, Faith Formation

A. Support membership development efforts.

B. Coordinate with the Faith Formation Ministry to provide support and/or facilitate program opportunities for children, youth and adults.

Appendix A - Job Description cont.

- C. Convene and conduct, along with other congregation members, new member classes as needed. At the completion of the classes, organize and receive new members during Sunday worship services.
- D. Convene and conduct, along with Faith Formation Ministry and other congregation members, confirmation classes as needed. At the completion of the classes, assist with the recognition of confirmands during a Sunday worship service.
- E. Encourage participation in faith formation opportunities offered in the wider church community.

Accountability

- A. The Pastor is accountable to the Administrative Board and ultimately to the congregation for the successful completion of duties.
- B. The Administrative Board will work closely with the Pastor to help ensure that the priorities of the congregation are met within the parameters of a three-quarter time position. C. Abide by the church bylaws.
- D. The Pastor will live by the Ordained Ministers Code of the UCC (www.ucc.org/ministers_ordained-ministers code) and comply with the requirements of UCC Boundary Awareness Training (http://www.uccmetrosuffolk.org/our_pastors/our_pastors-boundary.htm).

Appendix B - Reference Letter D.S.



Corning Meals on Wheels, Inc.
144 Cedar Street
Corning NY 14830
(607) 962-7985

To all concerned, September 8, 2020

I am honored to be writing this letter as a reference for the First Congregational United Church of Christ of Corning (Corning UCC). The bottom line is our city is a much more compassionate and caring community because Corning UCC congregants put into action the church's mission "...to create and nurture a family to do God's work, modeling the Gospel of Jesus Christ".

I can wholeheartedly attest that Corning UCC members, without pride nor fanfare, are wonderfully generous in donating their time and talent in service to people in need.

I have the good fortune to lead Corning Meals on Wheels. We provide meals each weekday to ~150 homebound & frail seniors living the greater Corning area. When I write 'we', that includes our four staff members and 100+ volunteers each week. We could not meet the need without volunteers, and Corning UCC members lead the way. Corning UCC members volunteer in our office helping administer the program, they volunteer in our kitchen helping prepare meals, and Corning UCC members deliver meals using their own cars & fuel. Thanks to UCC's garden, the homebound seniors we serve benefit from fresh vegetables, too.

Corning UCC members volunteering with Corning Meals on Wheels in the fight against senior hunger and isolation are truly living out the church's mission. Corning UCC congregants' efforts remind me of Matthew 25:35: *"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,"*.

You will also find UCC members actively volunteering with the local food pantry, the library, a non-profit transportation provider aptly named "Faith in Action", and, I suspect, many other local non-profit human services organizations.

Appendix B - Reference Letter D.S. cont.

I have been invited to speak to the church during a moment for mission on two occasions. On my initial visit, I was immensely impressed with the warm and welcoming atmosphere of the church. On my second visit, the feeling multiplied as I was welcomed as one would welcome an old friend. My third visit to the church was for what I expected to be a somber occasion, the funeral for Barbara D., a long-time meals on wheels recipient who was also a UCC congregant. The Corning UCC church family filled the sanctuary with love for Barbara and her family! The happy stories of their friendships and fellowship flowed freely and without hesitation. To me, the individual church members' stories blended together to tell a larger story of Corning UCC, one of a compassionate church family who truly loves and cares for people.

The sense of love and caring for all, whether church member or homebound stranger in need, is a testament to Corning UCC creating and nurturing a family to do God's work, as the church mission states. Thanks to the First Congregational Church, the Corning area is a more compassionate and caring community.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at director@corningmealsonwheels.org or (607) 962-7985 to discuss my recommendation.



Sincerely,

David W. Smith
Executive Director
Corning Meals on Wheels, Inc.

Appendix C - Reference Letter J.L.

Profile Reference for First Congregational, UCC, Corning, NY—October 2020

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Jennifer Long and I've been a member at First UCC since February of 2014; I began attending with my family when we moved to Corning in December of 2013. Once there, we never went anywhere else. The congregation was very welcoming to me, as well as my husband and two teenage children (at the time). Full disclosure: I am UCC clergy myself, currently serving the local ELCA congregation as an ecumenical partner for the last four years. Between that and time serving interims or doing pulpit supply, I haven't always been a regular Sunday morning attendee since that first year, but have continued to appreciate the ministry of this congregation.

I have found youth ministry to be a particular strength at the church; my kids were very quickly included in the youth group. The commitment of the congregation showed in the resources committed to trips, including to the NYE in 2016, and to the pastor's time and energy given to the high school youth. As a parent of two newly relocated teens, I was deeply grateful for the welcome they received. A group of committed volunteers in the congregation later developed a group for middle school aged youth, which quickly flourished.

I consider the Sunday school to be a second area of strength. I had a 4th and 2nd grade niece and nephew live with me for a year which offered me a view of the program. The kids were valued and included; and clearly learned as they would often share the stories of the lessons eager after arriving home on Sunday mornings.

Ecumenical connection as a third strength at First Congregational, and this I've seen from two sides... as a congregant and as a pastor of a church with which they partner. It's been my privilege to enjoy shared services, both from the pew and pulpit, and see how willing the congregation is to engage with fellow Christians in the community. Also a shared community garden has grown from ecumenical partnering... and probably many things I haven't seen as well.

For a last strength, I'll offer community connection. The church hosted a NAMI friends and family group and then a family support group. I took part in both. The willingness of the congregation to think outside of the box in terms of outreach and the gracious and willing leadership of those who lead that class was nothing short of amazing. It was a privilege to learn in the class and then continue as a part of the support group. It is the most significant ministry experience I shared with this church.

My absence, due to work, from the daily and weekly life of the church make it a little bit harder for me to name areas of improvement. One that comes to mind is finding a place for those to be a part of the ministry of the church that come from non-traditional backgrounds. A family like ours was when we started attending: husband, wife, two kids... is pretty easy to welcome. Most congregations are ready for that. Those who come from outside that mold might find that more challenging. I also think a good 'congregational' spirit lives there, which is sometime gift, but also sometime opportunity for growth in how to think about the bigger picture.

Appendix C - Reference Letter J.L. cont.

Blessings and peace as you consider this family of faith,

Jennifer

Jennifer Long

pastorjenniferlong@gmail.com

586-727-9247

Appendix D - Reference Letter T.P.

The Rev. Troy Preston
Christ Episcopal Church
33 East First Street
Corning, NY14830
(607)937-5449

October 16, 2020

Greetings,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter about my friends at the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Corning. I first became aware of this dynamic group of faithful followers of Christ in 2016 when I was called to Christ Episcopal Church in Corning. The two churches had and continue to have a long and successful history of working together. They, along with the Methodist, Evangelical Lutheran, and other local churches, come together throughout the year for many important ecumenical initiatives.

I have personally worked beside the good people of First Congregational United Church of Christ on several ongoing ministries. These ministries include Crop Walk, Good Friday Community Service, Stations of the City, Lenten Bible Study, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper Fundraiser, Book Reviews, Corning PRIDE, and Jazz Sunday. We have worshiped together, learned together, worked together, planned together, and celebrated together. And through all of this, we have been able to build community beyond our individual walls and to truly come together. Jesus taught us that we can find encouragement along the way in the company of fellow sojourners. We can exhort one another and stir up one another toward love and good works. This is what I have found in my own relationship and my congregation's relationship with this community of believers.

With humble acts of service, profound insight, and genuine love, they meet people where they are on our mutual journey and invite them to go deeper. I believe this, combined with their open and affirming and progressive ethos, is precisely why they will continue to see the fruits of their labor. This church has solid lay leadership and I trust that with an experienced clergy leader as their partner, the future will be even brighter than the present.

The First Congregational United Church of Christ is a beacon of God's inclusive love and light in Corning and beyond. With that, many find hope where none had been apparent.

If you have any questions, please contact me at troy.preston3373@gmail.com or 607-769-3083.

Faithfully,

The Rev. Froy Preston Rector

Appendix E - Finger Lakes Region Overview



The Finger Lakes region contains 11 beautiful lakes. Seneca Lake is just 30 minutes north of Corning while Keuka Lake and Cayuga Lake are under an hour to the East and West respectively. Each lake has easy access through regional parks. The lake region is filled with fun family owned wineries and breweries. Hiking, biking, fishing and water sports are popular past times.

Corning, NY is known for being the headquarters of Corning Incorporated and the home to the world renowned Corning Museum of Glass. The Rockwell Museum of Art also resides in Corning. Other major employers in the area include the Guthrie and Arnot Ogden medical centers as well as Dresser Rand. Elmira is just a short distance away and provides access to minor league baseball and ice hockey as well as a wonderful performing arts center, The Clemens Center. The arts center is named after Samuel Clemens better known as Mark Twain. He summered in Elmira, the hometown of his wife Olivia, and is buried there. The Elmira Corning regional airport is located between these two towns. Area residents also access the airports in Rochester and Ithaca. Ithaca is home to Cornell University and Ithaca College. Other area institutions are Elmira College (the very first women's college that is now coed), Corning Community College and Mansfield University, which is just across the border in PA. Residents also take advantage of easy drives to Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, Toronto, Philadelphia, New York and Cleveland. The region provides the benefits of a larger population center with the conveniences of a smaller locale. The area is considered a beautiful affordable suburban/country setting. Here are some area links to explore:

<https://www.fingerlakeswinecountry.com/>

<https://www.visitfingerlakes.com/>

<https://www.fingerlakes.org/>

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

“Jesus answered them, ‘Have faith in God!’” – Mark 11:22

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