

INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE



Who is
God
calling us
to
become?

The new Local Church Profile is not just for congregations in search of a pastor. *All* congregations are encouraged to engage in its process of discovery every 3-5 years. The UCC Local Church Profile reflects valuable data, assesses ministry, clarifies change, and helps advance the calling of the congregation. Not just to be completed by a search committee – the more participation, the better!

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

United Protestant Church
Duluth, MN

Part-Time Settled Pastor

Minnesota Conference, United Church of Christ

April 15, 2021

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

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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)*

LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: United Protestant Church

Street address: 830 88th Ave West, Duluth, MN 55808

Supplemental web links: <http://www.unitedprotestantchurch.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/UnitedProtestantChurch/>

(218) 626-2570

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

Rev. Cindy Mueller

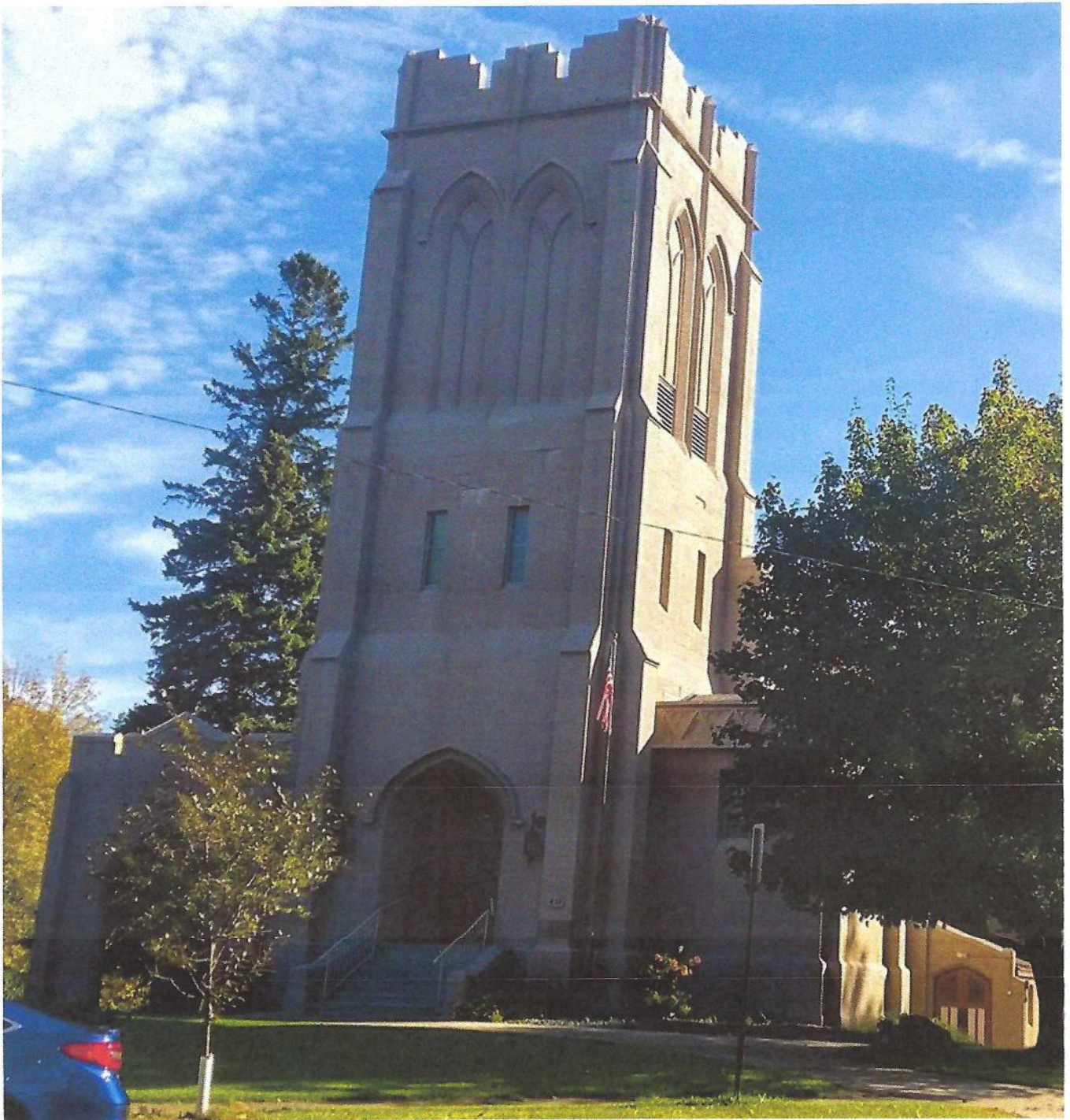
Steward of Search and Call & Congregational Legacy Planning

763-439-3952

cindym@uccmn.org

Summary Ministry Description:

Our church is currently at a low point in congregation size. We are focused strongly on growth and involvement in the community in the years to come. We are seeking a leader with a passion for community outreach and possible background in turn-around churches.





What we value about living in our area (2 – 3 sentences):
*Morgan Park is a quiet neighborhood with a strong sense of community spirit and history.
Many of our church families have roots in the community.*

Current size of membership:

Approx 50

Languages used in ministry:

English-only

Position Title:

Part-Time Settled 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:

½ Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

SCOPE OF WORK

Responsibilities will include community outreach, weekly services, hospital and homebound visits as appropriate, funerals or weddings for congregants, and regular office hours. We are actively trying to grow our congregation; responsibilities and compensation may be revisited in the future as a result.

Core Competencies:

Community-Minded

Revitalizing

Uniting

COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis

\$25,000-\$27,000 starting salary

Benefits:

Salary includes Optional Housing Allowance

What is the expected living situation for your next minister

Open

State any incentives:

Compensation and hours commensurate with church growth

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

Western (Duluth) Clergy Group, as well as two other UCC Churches in Duluth.

A larger group of UCC ministers in the region also meet/network regularly.

The church also has a long-standing, close relationship with a retired local chaplain who assists with things like pulpit supply.

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

Our church has called pastors to only part time call for many years. We have always worked around this with no significant issues. Our congregation is very understanding of other commitments, and because we are a small group, the additional demands on the pastor's time are limited and flexible. Many responsibilities (eg home visits) are also shared with deacons and other laypeople.

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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

Bring additional community members into a healthy relationship with Christ, offer value to the communities of which we are a part, and revitalize the existing congregation.

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

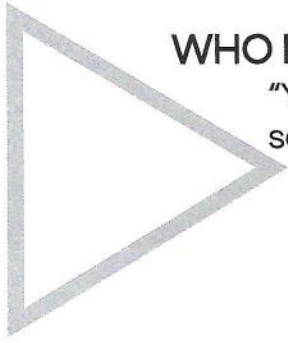
UP Church has been a part of the Morgan Park community for over a hundred years. We are excited to bring new ideas and energy into the community and fresh passion into our outreach efforts. It is important to our congregation that we be visible in the community, so we are seeking a pastor that is comfortable meeting new people and participating in local events.

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 an English-only congregation in a historically blue-collar, caucasian area of German/Nordic descent. However, the indigenous population in the neighborhood has grown, so awareness of that culture may be beneficial, though not required.

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.

- *EXHIBITING A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION AND ONGOING SPIRITUAL PRACTICE*
- *ENGAGING SACRED STORIES AND TRADITIONS*
- *STRENGTHENING INTER- AND INTRA- PERSONAL ASSETS*
- *CARING FOR ALL CREATION*



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)

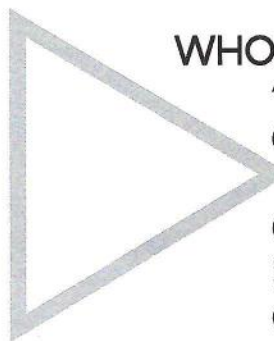
Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

A strong & vibrant church in the western end of Duluth & a resource for the community.

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

As a small church that has experienced decline in recent years, we are in a position where we seek to become more an active part of the community, rather than a separate entity. To that end (pre-covid), we began hosting weekly community dinners, opening our space for use by groups such as AA, local fund-raising organizations, a free lunch program, and community exercise programs. We would like to continue and expand upon those beginnings, becoming a source of value to all people in our local area.

Vision Statement: The United Protestant Church aspires to be a vibrant Christian congregation that is sustainable and welcoming to all, putting its faith into practice through its outreach activities. The church strives to be the center of the community's mind, body and spirit through its ministries and the programs it offers.



WHO ARE WE NOW?

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

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

11-YEAR REPORT

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

CHURCH FINANCES

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation's life of faith.

UPC tends to be a traditional but welcoming church. We practice monthly communion. We refer frequently in services to God the Father and enjoy sermons based firmly in the scriptures with modern applications. We strive to be welcoming and loving in all our interactions.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

Supportive, involved, extremely caring and welcoming, community-oriented

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Worship takes place in the church, incorporating some call and response and a lot of music, based on a selection of scripture and the lessons therein. Ideally, a sermon is both educational and engaging. We are currently posting all services online for those who are unable to gather in person.

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

While we host a weekly bible study, we do not have a formalized youth program at this time, though we have in the past and look forward to growing this ministry in particular.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

Our church decisions are made by a joint council of Trustees and Diaconate meeting monthly. The executive committee makes decisions as necessary in between. Committees are filled and run by volunteers who feel called to be involved in them. (With covid, many meetings have been canceled or delayed where possible, with decision making moved to calls and email)

- When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?
The Council meeting is usually approx 2 hours each month.
- Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?

Our members are great at stepping forward in times of need. The executive committee makes formal decisions when needed.

- Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance?

Yes

11-YEAR REPORT

None

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	40	x
Number of active non-members:	15	x
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	55	x

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	50%	x
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	10%	x
Less than 5 years:	40%	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>
3	2	2	5	4	12	10	12	3	x

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:	5%	x
Single adults age 35-65:	15%	x
Joint household with no minors:	50%	x
Single adults over 65:	25%	x

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	20%	x
College:	40%	x
Graduate School:	10%	x
Specialty Training:	30%	x
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	30%	x
Adults who are retired:	60%	x
Adults who are not fully employed:	10%	x

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

We have a wide range from professional to labor/manufacturing.

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?

Our congregation is largely Caucasian (Nordic and Germanic/Slovenian). Our congregation is more diverse in their professional lives and political leanings.

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one on the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)?

Please note the date. Comment after the exercise:

Not at this time, though we are not opposed to doing so in the future

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation. (*Pre-Covid estimates*)

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i>
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	0	
Children's Groups or Classes	4	Lay Leaders
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	40	Pastor.
Church-wide Meals	40	Lay Leaders
Choirs and Music Groups	5	Lay Leaders
Church-based Bible Study	8	Pastor
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	30, monthly	Pastor & Lay People
Community Meals	>75	Lay Leaders & Committees
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>	0	Pastor
Funerals <i>(number last year)</i>	~5	Pastor & Family
Outdoor Worship	1 Sunday Service	Pastor
Weddings <i>(number last year)</i>	1	Pastor/Secretary
Worship (time slot: 10:30)	25 per week + online	Pastor

Additional comments:

Not listed: community groups such as AA, exercise programs, etc

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? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)

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:

We have two Pastors Emeritus whose role is minimal

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
Secretary		Part Time		10 years
Pianist		Contract		8 years
Organist		Volunteer		10 years

We are a small group, and as such, are self-organizing.

REFLECTION

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

We have a small congregation with highly involved members, but we do not have enough people and resources to offer the extent of groups and educational opportunities we might like.

CHURCH FINANCES

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

NOTE: these are from the anticipated budget, rather than actual income, since Covid has greatly impacted attendance and giving, as well as our ability to host events.

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$ 51,000
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	\$ 10,000
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$ 4,000
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$0
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$0
Support from Related Organizations (<i>e.g. Women's Group</i>)	\$200
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$0
Other (specify):	\$
Other (specify):	\$
TOTAL	\$ 65,500

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

Apprx \$65,500

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

apprx 50%

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

No

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Church currently has mortgage of approx. \$53,000 stemming from a large building project to update/repair the tower several years ago.

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.

In the next calendar year, we are looking at updates to some plumbing, as well as some roof repairs. These are in early stages and have not had budgets or timelines prepared.

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

n/a

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

n/a

Does your church have an endowment?

No.

Other Assets

Does your church have a parsonage?

No

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

Church - Beautiful, historic building in the gothic style. Built in 1921. Beautiful original stained glass and woodwork. Recently refurbished original doors. Cozy parking lot. Large lawn with mature trees and gardens. Small amount of undeveloped real estate.

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

None

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? (worship space, pulpit, fellowship space, facilities, etc.)

The building is not wheelchair accessible, though our parking and outdoor space is handicap accessible.

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

The church and its congregation make a small amount of resources do a lot of work. We are happy to discuss particulars of the church's finances in more depth with serious candidates upon request.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation.

- *100th anniversary (of the congregation)! - A long history in a community that saw a decline after the close of the plants. The church building turns 100 this year.*
- *Church experienced a dire schism in 1990s, from which we never fully recovered.*
- *Reverend Bennet Years - Rarely has a single pastor had such a profound and lasting effect on a community. Rev Bennett served our church in the 1970s and is still fondly remembered by many. During this time, church and community involvement were at an all-time high.*

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

The church has become more community-oriented and less insulated, seeing some changes in active membership as a result.

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 church does not have a formalized conflict resolution policy. In cases of discord, the church leadership, sometimes including the pastor, work with the participants to open communication and reach a resolution.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev Paul Van Antwerp	3	Y (at the time)
Rev Jon Blevins	5	Y (after hire)
Rev Dr Peter Bagley	10	Y (at the time)
Rev Phil Garrison	3	Y (at the time)
Rev Virginia Pych	3	Y (at the time)
Rev Ernie Strandberg	7	Y (at the time)
Rev Curtis Demars-Johnson	5	Y (at the time)

Rev Gordon Bennett	10	Y (at the time)
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Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

The congregation is happy to allow the pastor to take a strong leadership and guidance role. We are happiest with a pastor that has a close and warm relationship with the congregation.

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

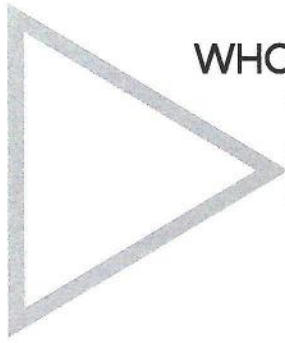
Yes - Virginia Pych

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



WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

COMMUNITY VISION

MISSION InSite

COMMUNITY VISION

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

Annually, we host a number of events including a 5k, spaghetti dinner, concert, Halloween carnival, and more. The church is available for rental including weddings, funerals, showers, etc. In the past, we were able to offer Ruby's Pantry to the community monthly, which had a very high participation rate. Unfortunately, this opportunity is no longer available. In more recent years, we have hosted an AA group, as well as a free lunch program and some community exercise programs. We also (outside of covid), host a weekly community meal, welcoming anyone who cares to attend. This is outdoors in the summer, with yard games and socializing.

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

Church representatives and pastors have infrequently attended UCC gatherings.

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.)

UPC has not formally considered identifying the church with any of the listed statements.

Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

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

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?

Possibly

Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities.

In the past, we have hosted an ecumenical service with local Catholic and Protestant groups. We have also been involved in joint ministry efforts, with the former Catholic congregation in our neighborhood.

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.

We do not have a mission statement currently.

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?

We would like community ministry to be a large focus for the pastor.

MISSION InSite

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

N/A

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?

Our congregation's makeup is similar to surrounding neighbors with a skew towards older members. In the immediate neighborhood, the community has a lower average income and rate of home-ownership than the congregation in general. There is new housing (96 townhome-style units) being built in the neighborhood, which will likely attract mid-income renters. This will trend towards younger and older residents, rather than large families.

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

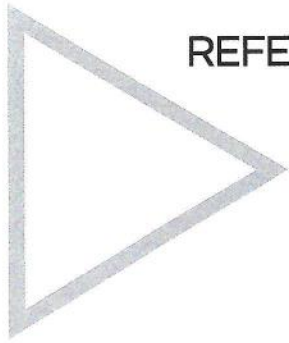
Aside from the food ministry, the demographics of the immediate neighborhood have not had great effect on the ministry, in the past. We are willing to be adaptable to the needs of the community moving forward.

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

Our church is known for our many community events, a long history in the area, a beautiful building, and an exceptionally warm and enthusiastic welcome.

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

Many of our new members were first attracted by the community meals, allowing them to get to know the congregation and pastor in a low pressure and informal setting. Other new members have a family history in the neighborhood which led them to our church. We've also had participation from local Catholics whose church was recently closed. Our members have had long standing relationships with many of them, which made UPC a welcoming alternative.



REFERENCES

REFERENCE 1

Rev. Sara A. Lund
Retired Chaplain, UCC
218-724-0661 (home)
sealund55@gmail.com
Pulpit Supply at UPC since 2012

March 23, 2021

To Prospective Pastoral Candidates for United Protestant Church, Morgan Park, MN:

Since March 2012 I have provided intermittent pulpit supply for this congregation, both during previous pastoral searches and for vacation replacement. Over the years I have also officiated at one wedding and five funerals/memorial services. Starting in February 2021 I have been doing regular pulpit supply with some pastoral care. These experiences have helped me know congregation members in a deeper way than Sunday pulpit supply allows.

This congregation has always given me a warm reception. They are a small group, but they convey love and concern for one another and know each other well. They express a desire for the church not only to survive, but to grow. The congregation has a core of individuals who are dedicated to its future wellbeing. I attended United Protestant's 100th anniversary celebration back in September 2017. Many participated both from the current congregation, as well as from the community and denomination. The service testified to their hope and anticipation for the future.

This has been a challenging year for every congregation, as Covid-19 has necessitated many changes. After a period of providing video services last spring, UPC reopened in the summer for worship. The services are still videoed and posted to their Face Book page. The large size of the sanctuary makes distancing possible. Attendees remain masked with only the person speaking or singing removing his or her mask. Coffee hour and other social gatherings have been suspended. Two other issues beyond Covid-19 that I am aware of include the financial strain of maintaining the building, and the challenge of attracting new families when programming is limited due to congregational size and small number of children currently.

I have found the congregation open to suggestions and willing to be flexible about service details. In early February when temperatures outside were bitterly cold, they were fine with my suggestion to video the services in advance so their members could stay home. This showed particular concern for their elderly members. Another example of flexibility is that I suggested one Sunday morning that the hymns needed someone at the microphone for the video to pick up the words. A member simply came forward and sang all the music as soloist. When she was not there one week, another member came forward and sang from the microphone. One woman plays beautiful,

spontaneous piano solos whenever she is able to be at church. This is a good indication of how comfortable they are with one another and how valuable they feel their gifts are.

Grace and peace in Christ,

Sara

REFERENCE 2

Jon Blevins
Former Pastor at United Protestant Church
218-213-4918
jonablevins@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern:

United Protestant Church in Morgan Park (UPC) is a small but vibrant congregation in one of Duluth's most underserved neighborhoods. The need in the community is great and UPC has a long history of working to meet those needs.

Morgan Park itself is considered a "food desert," a community separated from access to fresh and/or healthy foods. Originally built to house the workers and management of the US Steel plant, Morgan Park persists as a community with both a strong, close-knit core of former steel workers' families and an increasing transient population of young working families and renters drawn by affordable housing.

For this reason, UPC has long been engaged in food-related services in the Morgan Park community and an active part of community life and affairs. One of my first experiences with UPC was serving alongside its membership at Ruby's Pantry in the Morgan Park neighborhood. As one of the host congregations, UPC members were responsible not only for organization and labor in providing food to hundreds of needy families, but also comprised the directory board in charge of administration, finance, and logistics. UPC currently stands alone as the sole mainline Christian congregation in the neighborhood and the only congregation historically rooted in the community.

Comprised primarily of relations and friends of former steel workers, all with deep roots in the community, the membership of UPC ardently desire that the institution and history of their congregation be preserved. To that end, they have sometimes struggled to attract and engage newcomers to Morgan Park.

The need is great, the opportunities plentiful, and the people willing.

In Christ,
Jon

REFERENCE 3

Linda Bray
Organist
218-626-7195

March 23, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I write this reference letter for United Protestant Church in Duluth, Minnesota. As a beautiful presence at the gate of the Morgan Park community, its strong history is honored and celebrated throughout the area. I have enormous respect for this congregation and for its ministry.

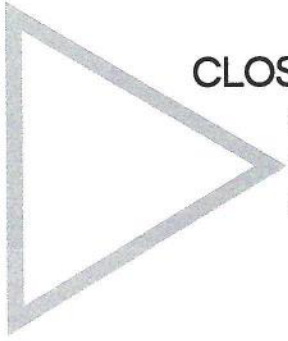
Being a church organist for over fifty years, I have worked with dozens of churches. I consider United Protestant Church to be one of the best practitioners of its faith. Under the leadership of different ministers, the congregation has remained welcoming to everyone. Members of the congregation approach visitors in a way that make them feel safe, unlike other churches where I have observed not one person acknowledging a newcomer's presence. United Protestant Church members sincerely help create a sense of belonging. No one is turned away. They are a living testament to the power of love and acceptance in this diverse world.

Music is an area of strength in this church's ministry. The building has outstanding acoustics. Musicians feel safe singing and playing instruments there. The church kindly exchanged my Sunday music services for the opportunity to provide organ lessons for an aspiring young woman. In November 2020, the congregation supported the acquisition of a beautiful Rodgers organ. As part of its outreach ministry, a touring band of four women playing kantele (the Finnish national instrument) brought music and culture to the area.

United Protestant Church demonstrated its commitment to service during the COVID-19 pandemic. They kept in touch through weekly newsletters, service recordings, sermon scripts, and ongoing availability. Church musicians were invited to add live music to the service recordings. COVID-19 protocols were carefully followed while keeping the members involved. This is a great church looking for a passionate minister to continue its ministry of love.

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions. Thank you. Sincerely,

Linda Bray



CLOSING THOUGHTS

CLOSING PRAYER

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

CLOSING PRAYER/HYMN

It Only Takes a Spark:

It only takes a spark, to get a fire going
And soon all those around, can warm up in glowing
That's how it is with God's love
Once you've experienced it
You spread his love to everyone;
You want to pass it on

What a wondrous time is spring, when all the trees are budding
The birds begin to sing, the flowers start their blooming
That's how it is with God's love
Once you've experienced it
You want to sing, it's fresh like spring
You want to pass it on

I wish for you my friend, this happiness that I have found
You can depend on him, it matters not where you are bound
I'll shout it from the mountain top
I want the world to know, the Lord of love has come to me
I want to pass it on

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? *(for example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.)*
Search and Call Committee
2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment:

As a conference, we look forward to a close relationship with the incoming pastor. There is a cluster ministerial meeting in Duluth that is open and welcoming toward the clergy that serve in the area. We would love to develop a closer relationship with the congregation and we join them in anticipation for this new chapter in their ministry.

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

Staff Comment:

I agree with this statement.

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

Staff Comment:

I agree with this statement.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: *Rev. Sheresa Simpson-Rice*

Name / Title: Rev. Sheresa Simpson-Rice, Assoc. Conference Minister

Email: Sheresar@uccmn.org

Phone: 717-318-6865

Date: April 15, 2021

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

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

