

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE**



**ST. JAMES UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
76 MAIN STREET  
HAMBURG, NY 14075**

**New York Conference, Western Association**

**VALIDATION DATE: 05/14/2021**

## **LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS**

**Position Posting**

**Who Is God Calling Us To Become?**

**Who Are We Now?**

**Who Is Our Neighbor?**

**References**

**Consent and Validation**

*“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.POSITION POSTING**

- a. LISTING INFORMATION
- b. SCOPE OF WORK
- c. COMPENSATION & SUPPORT
- d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

**1a. LISTING INFORMATION**

---

**Church Name:** St. James United Church of Christ  
**Street Address:** 76 Main Street  
Hamburg, NY 14075

**Supplemental web links:** <https://www.saintjamesucc.com/>

**Facebook**

**Additional ecumenical affiliations** (e.g. denominations, communions, fellowships):

Disciples of Christ

Presbyterian

Lutheran Church

Reformed Church

**Conference:** NY Conference

**Association:** Western Association

**UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:**

The Rev. Gary Ferner  
Personal Cell: 315-882-8627  
[gferner@uccny.org](mailto:gferner@uccny.org)

## **Summary Ministry Description**

### **St. James Mission Statement**

St. James is: an Open and Affirming Congregation  
Living into Christ Centered Faith  
Spreading the Friendship and Love of God  
Through Mission and Service to our wider Community.

### **St. James Vision Statement**

St. James strives: to be a spirit filled intergenerational Faith Community that is welcoming, open and affirming, and inclusive of others; to celebrate diversity by building relationships; to act in Christian compassion and point to the Love of Christ as agents of change within the wider community.

PHOTOGRAPHS

**What we value about living in our area:** The Village of Hamburg has experienced a revival over the last 20 years. Village life provides walkability to most of its amenities which includes restaurants, coffee shops, shopping, and the all-important ice cream parlors. Moving away from Hamburg, WNY region offers year-round sporting events, including, but not limited to; professional Football, hockey, baseball, Division I college sports, theater, orchestra, colleges, skiing, golf, biking fishing, boating, hiking. We are a short drive to the Chautauqua Institution. If you are still looking for more, within minutes you can be in Canada. Canada also has sports, restaurants and theater. The Shaw Festival is a huge draw enjoyed by many. There really is something here for everyone.



**Current size of membership:** We have 65 contributing or pledging units representing 131 members.

**Languages used in ministry (*other than English*):** None

**Position Title:** Sole Pastor

**Position Duration:** Settled

**Compensation:** Full Time

**Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?** Yes

## **1b. SCOPE OF WORK**

---

- Commitment to overall well-being and care of self through nurturing of own personal, spiritual, emotional, psychological, and physical wellbeing through development of appropriate self-care practices, such as setting personal boundaries, resting and sabbath, and/or pursuit of hobbies or recreational activities, etc.
- Commitment to ongoing spiritual development and formation through the spiritual practices of the faith, study of the biblical scripture, prayer, and acts of service. Stewardship of ministerial calling and vocation through ongoing study, clergy networking, and continuing education.
- Facilitation and oversight of worship services in collaborative partnership and coordination with the laity and worship team, including but not limited to sermon preparation, preaching, crafting of liturgy and bulletin, and delegation of other liturgical elements (music, sacraments, etc.).
- Effective leadership and oversight of the administration of the church and supervision of staff in collaboration with the Personnel Committee, budget oversight, nurture financial stability and stewardship in collaboration with the Generosity Team, and deepen partnership with the broader denomination as a representative of the local church through participation in wider church activities, such as conference, association, and national synod meetings.
- Facilitation of faith formation by equipping and empowering the congregation and community with opportunities for growth in (1) understanding of the biblical scriptures (2) deepening relationship with God through spiritual practices and prayer (3) formation of spiritual friendships and fellowship with others in and outside the church, and (4) acts of service and compassion as agents of change within our community and world.
- Commitment to developing and nurturing community and ecumenical partnerships across denominations and faith traditions, non-profit agencies and organizations, and other community organizations as a representative liaison and ambassador of the church in service to the community.
- Stewardship of the mission and vision of the church in collaboration with the congregation, committees, and teams of the church in the strategic development and planning of ministry and discipleship programs, opportunities for service, and fellowship, such as Christian Education (CE), fellowship potlucks, and leadership development and training.
- Collaborative partnership with the Lay Visitation Team to foster and facilitate pastoral care and counseling for the congregation and community, including but not limited to counseling, visitation, special services, weddings, funerals, and baptisms.

**Core Competencies:** List three core competencies that you imagine could be foundational in your next minister's relationship with the church.

We would like to hire a settled pastor with several core competencies. Because we have discerned a powerful mission and vision for a new season of ministry at St. James, we are interested in hiring a pastor with core competencies in strategic leadership and development, positions and mobilizes our congregation for service to the community and world, and is a compassionate and sensitive leader.

### **1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT**

---

**Salary Basis:**

**Benefits:** Salary: \$42,000.00 plus benefits

**Expected Living Situation:**

**Residential/Commuting expectations for our minister:**

Parsonage Available

**Incentives:**

Term Bonuses - 5 years / \$5,000 10 years / \$10,000

Or possible debt reduction (\$1,000/yr)

**Peer and Professional Support:**

Much peer and professional support exists for our settled pastor, such as the New York School Of Ministry (NYSOM), UCC Association and Conference, The Good Samaritan (Pastoral Counseling Services), and a network of local churches.

### **1d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?**

---

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

We are searching for a settled pastor that would partner with us in living into the mission and vision of the church. St. James is a congregation called to become agents of change within our community. Therefore, we seek a pastor that will collaborate with us in our ministry partnerships, programs, and practices such as: Tender Loving Care (TLC), Habitat for Humanity, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Family Promise of WNY, Churches in Action, Transforming Care, and our local food pantry.

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

We envision a settled pastor to be involved with other organizations in the local community. Our congregation is passionate about continuing alongside us in our ongoing engagement in service to the community. Some of our commitments to service to the community include: Souper Bowl of Caring, Angel Tree Tags, Churches in Action, and Church World Service. Some examples for continued community engagement beyond the ministries of the church include: Southtowns Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Volunteer Firefighters, PTA, etc.

**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.**

As an area of excellence, we understand that all of the Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry are competencies that all UCC clergy aspire towards, therefore we hope to learn and live into the calling to care for creation, to leadership as the priesthood of all believers, to work together for justice and mercy, and to grow into a life of discipleship in ministry together.

- (1) Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Practice** - We are seeking a pastor who is passionate in his/her/their faith and committed to ongoing spiritual growth and development. As a model for others in the congregation and community, our pastor will be committed to living into his / her / their faith through lifelong discipleship and spiritual growth. In this way, we commit to empowering our pastor with the opportunities to live into his /her/ their faith through prayer, retreats, sabbatical, and other spiritual disciplines and practices.
  
- (2) Building Transformational Leadership Skills** - We are seeking a pastor who will equip and empower us through strategic leadership skills, positioning us in service to our community. We are interested in developing the lay leadership of the church, mobilizing all of God's people in service to the church and wider community.
  
- (3) Working Together for Justice and Mercy** - We are seeking a pastor who is passionate about leading change in our world, as an embodiment and expression of his/her/their faith and partnership with God in this world. In likeness to Jesus, we seek a pastor that is committed to the work of justice and compassion in the world. As agents of change within our community, a pastor will be passionate about community education, social change, and social justice.



**(4) Caring for All Creation** - We are seeking a pastor with a passion for all of God's created world. Because God has made everything "very good" we are interested in a pastor that will be passionate about creation justice, creation care, and stewardship of God's world.

**1. 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?**

As reflected in our mission and vision statements, God is calling us to become active agents of love and light in our community. Rooted in a Christ-centered faith, we are called to spread friendship, fellowship, and love in our community through service and mission- near and far. We are a committed congregation united in mission, service, and faith. Inspired by the words of St. Francis of Assisi, in our service and mission to our community we live into the calling to: "Preach the Gospel at all times. When necessary, use words."

Ministry to older adults in church and community

Celebrate being open and affirming

Find ways to minister effectively to children and youth and families - looking for assistance in developing a strategy to achieve this

Social and environmental justice

Going out - ministry beyond the walls of the church

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

*For example, describe two experiments your congregation has initiated or engaged in the past year, what were the results and where do you see your next steps? Has your church had a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement; if so, where do you see that plan/vision taking you?*

Our congregation has been attentive to the ongoing national crisis and civil unrest. Because we believe our faith calls us to social action, we have incorporated social justice initiatives into our ongoing faith formation and development. Towards this end, we have engaged in a weekly book study that wrestles with topics related to ongoing social engagement, engaging books such as: Christ in Crisis and Native: Identity, Belonging,

and Rediscovering God. This book study meets weekly, through zoom. Even in the midst of a global pandemic, some members in the congregation participated in a Black Lives Matter Protest Rally in the spring of 2020.

Certainly Covid-19 has made us think outside the box and try new things. The congregation has adapted to shifting circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic. We have moved to online and live-streaming worship services, updated technology and equipment, and have utilized other virtual forums such as Zoom, Facebook Live, and virtual and online giving options (Amazon Smile, Vanco, etc). Some of the changes we have made in this season of ministry, through (1) adapted virtual administration of the sacrament (2) Drive-Thru Boy Scouts Food Drive (3) Online Pie Auction (4) Family Promise - Online Sign Ups (5) Lay visitation and pastoral care adaptations (6) Post-sermon Chat (online fellowship option) (7) Incorporation of pre-recorded videos into the online live streaming services, particularly during Advent.

## **2. WHO ARE WE NOW?**

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

- a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS**
- b. 11-YEAR REPORT**
- c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS**
- d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING**
- e. CHURCH FINANCES**
- f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

### **3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS**

---

**Describe your congregation’s life of faith:** St. James UCC is a family oriented, welcoming, open and affirming congregation. In our communal life and worship, God is most often described as merciful and holy. We are a congregation that follows the Church Year (but is not bound to the lectionary), and enjoys worship that is traditional with a blend of jazz music and praise choir. We celebrate communion once a month, and the elements are prepared in advance by the Worship Team.

Our order of worship is liturgical, which includes elements such as the prayer of invocation, words of welcome, call to worship, moment of offering, anthem, two scripture readings, children’s message / message for all ages, pastoral prayer, sermon, benediction, and postlude. Each week we repeat our words of welcome together (see below), which guides us in our affirmation and ongoing commitment to our identity as an Open and Affirming congregation in the United Church of Christ.

The avowed purpose of this Church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this Church and the Church Universal; to render loving service toward mankind; and to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.

Church bulletin attached.

**Words of Welcome (affirmed and reaffirmed each week within the worship service):**

Welcome to St. James, an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ, where we strive to be more fully the body of Christ. We are committed to welcoming and celebrating all people and the uniqueness we each bring. As people of faith, we boldly proclaim: Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

---

**Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation:**

St. James embodies several strengths and positive qualities such as, open-minded, service-oriented, committed, and multi-generational. We enjoy inviting the congregation to assist in leading worship together through lay participation and invite guest speakers often.

We're always coming through and going above and beyond what is expected. We are always up to whatever challenge is thrown our way. For example, we were still able to donate Angel Tag items for families in need at Christmas, despite the COVID pandemic.

Our Music program has many exciting facets: Jazz band, Praise band, soloists, talented choir director and very talented accompanist. We appreciate our music program and it is fun for all of us.

**Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers:**

At St. James, worship is intentionally Christ-centered and is centered in our sanctuary. Because we believe that God is still speaking, we enjoy sermons and biblical readings that are intentionally contextual and applicable to our times.

Coffee hour for fellowship - we like to socialize after Sunday service

**Describe the educational program/faith formation vision of your church:**

Although we currently do not have a formal Christian Education program at St. James, we are interested in engaging in discernment and implementation of a new Christian Education program for facilitation of our ongoing spiritual formation and development at St. James.

Despite not having a formal Christian Education program, a core group of people have committed to engagement in ongoing spiritual development through weekly book study. We do

use the Godly Play curriculum when we meet in person for worship. The congregation is offered an opportunity to meet for a post-sermon chat on zoom.

**Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.**

*For example, how are decisions communicated in your church? How are teams or committees organized? Where does your church struggle for vision?*

We have attached a flow chart that offers a visual representation of the governance and structure of the ministry teams and administrative committees at St. James.

**ATTACHMENT 1 – FLOW CHART**

**3b. 11-YEAR REPORT**

---

**ATTACHMENT 2 – 11 YEAR REPORT**

**3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS**

---

Survey Results

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of Active Members	125	
Number of Active Non-Members	6	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	131	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)
More than 10 years:	82%	X
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	12%	X

Less than 5 years:	6%	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>
9	9	6	8	24	11	25	16	23	X

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	6%	X
Households with minors:	25%	X
Single adults age 35-65:	9%	X
Joint households with no minors:	40%	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:	25%	X
College:	30%	X
Graduate School:	20%	X
Specialty Training	20%	X
Other (please specify):	5%	X vocational School

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	50%	X
Adults who are retired:	45%	X
Adults who are not fully employed:	5%	X

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

At St. James, members and friends of the congregation are engaged in a wide range of occupations. The breakdown of our congregation is approximately: Trade (5%) Business (10%) Clerical (5%) Professional (50%) Student (10%) and Retired (20%).

**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 ethnic heritage mix matches that of the village and town of Hamburg, NY, Some of our recent members joined because of our welcoming differently abled and minority populations.

**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 a date. Comment after the exercise.**

We are an Open and Affirming congregation, where all are welcome regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, and marital status. We continually reflect on our diversity position as a congregation so we can continue to be a welcoming place to all.

**3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING**

---

Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.

<b>Ways of Gathering</b>	<b>Estimated number of people involved in</b>	<b>Who plans each of the listed gatherings? (list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</b>

	<b>attendance</b>	
Adult Groups	5-10	Pastor / Discipleship Team
Baptisms (2)	Whole Church	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes		Discipleship Team
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	76 at each service	Worship Team, Christmas Pageant
Church-wide meals	30	Fellowship Team
Choirs and Music Groups	14 & 20	Worship Team
Church-based Bible Study		Pastor/Discipleship Team
Communion ( <u>1x /month</u> )	Whole Church	1 x's per month and festivals
Community Meals	35(+/-)	Congregation / Team-Based
Confirmation (0)	Whole Church	Pastor & mentors from congregation
Favorite / Fun Services (Rally Day, Burger Fest, Holiday Parades etc.)	50	Invitation, Discipleship Teams
Funerals (8)	Max Capacity	Pastor/Fellowship and Secretary
Intergenerational Groups	10-20	Fellowship Team
Outdoor Worship	40 (+/-)	Dunkirk and/or Chestnut Ridge/Women's Retreat/Summer Camp. Discipleship Team
Prayer or Meditation Groups		Pastor
Public Advocacy Work		Pastor and Mission Team
Retreats (WAY Retreat, Dunkirk Camps)	TBA	Association / Conference
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	N/A	
Weddings (1)	By Invitation	Pastor and organist

Worship (time slot: 10am)	52 in person & online	Worship Team / Pastor
Young Adult Groups or Classes	TBD	Discipleship/Youth Board
Youth Groups or Classes	TBD	Discipleship Team / Youth Board
Other	Capacity	Tender Loving Care Daycare
Property/Landscaping	15	Property Committee

Additional Comments: See attachment St. James Organizational Chart

<b>Staff Person / Title</b>	<b>Head of Staff?</b>	<b>Compensation</b>	<b>Reports to . . .</b>	<b>Length of Tenure</b>
Pastor Jan Hubbard - <b>Interim Pastor</b>	Yes	Full-time	Church and Ministry Committee & Council	1+ Years
Ciaran Krueger- <b>Director of Music</b>	Yes to Accompanist	Part-time	Worship Team, Senior Pastor + Personnel	5+ Years
Jonathan Rizzo - <b>Music Accompanist</b>	No	Part-time	Director of Music, Personnel, and Pastor	5+ Years
Cindy Hager- <b>Administrative Assistant</b>	No	Part-time	Personnel and Pastor	5 Years
Cathy Jackson- <b>Financial Record Keeper</b>	No	Part-time	Personnel, Pastor, and Treasurer	20+ Years
Anita Burns- <b>Custodian</b>	No	Part-time	Personnel and Pastor	Less than a year



### 3e. CHURCH FINANCE

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$91,136
Endowment Proceeds <i>(as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)</i> From community foundation, Riefler memorial fund trust & scholarship fund	\$120,448
Endowment Draw <i>(beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal")</i>	0
Fundraising Events	N/A (due to COVID)
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$1,513
Grants	\$1,500(UCC) \$21,063(PPP Loan)
Rentals of Church Building	\$19,850(TLC)
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$18,000(Parsonage) \$4,800 (Youth House)
Support from Related Organizations <i>(e.g. Women's Group)</i>	\$682 (AA/Misc hall donations)
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$
Other (specify):	\$
Other (specify):	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$146,635

*Attach the most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer's report as shared publicly with the congregation, or - if your church does not pass an annual budget-list current budgeted expenses here.*

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 41%

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church? No

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

- ❖ 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%)

Designated support through pledges, therefore it is not based upon a specific percentage of the operating budget.

What is the church's current indebtedness? \$0

Total amount of loan debt: None

Reason for debt: N/A

Are capital and other payments current? Yes

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.

N/A

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
		\$	\$	
		\$	\$	

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
		\$	\$	
		\$	\$	

**Describe the prominent mission components(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign. N/A**

**Does your church have an endowment? Yes.**

**What is the market value of the assets? \$543,974**

**Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances?**

Funds are drawn as needed / requested from the Legacy Committee.

**What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? 31%**

**Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: Up to \$25,000 per year to reduce the deficit.**

**At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? 22 years**

**Please comment on the above calculations or estimates: Assumed current interest rates vs inflation**

**Other Assets: Everything included above**

**Reserves (savings):\$0**

**Investments (other than endowment):\$0**

**Does your church have a parsonage? Yes**

**Fair market rental value of the parsonage: \$190,000-\$210,000**

**How is the parsonage used? Currently rented. Last pastor lived there.**

**Street/City/State/Zip: 83 Long Ave., Hamburg, NY 14075**

**Finished square footage: 2,280**

**Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms: 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath**

**Assessed real estate value:**

**Available for minister residence:** Yes

**Expected minister residence:** TBD upon hire

**Condition of structure systems and appliances:** Updated

**Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs** - Property Committee and Council



**Describe all buildings owned by the church:** St. James owns three buildings, which include the church building, parsonage and Mission House (Youth House). Refer to the preceding questions related to specifics of each building.

**Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:** N/A

**Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?**

All buildings owned by St. James are accessible to wheelchairs, with the parsonage as an exception. The Mission House has a new accessible ramp for entrance into the building, but does include stairs to get to the second floor. The main site of the church is accessible, with ramps and elevators, except the altar is not wheelchair accessible.

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

*For example, when was a time the church made a major budget change? How is the budgeting process done? What new ministry initiative has your church financed?*

The Budget and Finance Committee meet and review the budget. The budget is presented to the congregation for a vote each year at the Annual Meeting.

Finances relatively stable.

### **3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

---

#### **1 to 3 Significant Happenings**

1. Retirement of long-term pastor
2. Hiring of Pastor Heather
3. Open & Affirming Congregation
4. Elimination of Christian Education Director Position

#### **Specific change the church has managed**

Throughout the many years of ministry at St. James, we have managed quite a bit of change. The congregation has managed the (1) move to a dual pastorship with Rev. Bob Matlack and Pastor Alva Loose (2) the hiring of a full-time woman pastor (3) the formal process of becoming an Open and Affirming Congregation in the United Church of Christ.

#### **Congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict**

Conflict is normal and to be expected in congregations. Because of this reality, St. James has been intentional in its efforts to facilitate healthy conflict resolution within the congregation. The congregation called together a Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) to facilitate conflict resolution between the congregation and the pastor, if the need should arise. The congregation also invited Rev. Marsha Williams to lead a conflict resolution seminar to equip and empower the congregation with conflict resolution skills for use in the church. As the congregation learned from the seminar, the PRC constructed and established a Community Covenant. This covenant would foster a congregational willingness to face conflict and respond in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration. Pastoral relations committee manages conflicts between the congregation and the pastor. Also have a church covenant that helps to resolve conflicts. Respect each others' values.

The change between long term Pastor Bob Matlack and the search and call to a new pastor, led to the hiring of Pastor Heather after about 18 months. During the process of our search, Interim Pastor Alan Daly helped to establish a pastoral relations committee in order to have a better policy and practice to resolve conflicts and differences between the congregation and the pastor.

### **What have we learned?**

We are committed to strengthening the Pastoral Relations Committee.

### **Ministerial History**

The Rev. P. W. Meisenheimer (1938-1960)

The Rev. Roger Horton (1960-1984)

The Rev. Dr. Robert Matlack (1984-2012)

Pastor Alva Looze (2006-2012)

Pastor Alan Daly (Interim; 2012-2013)

The Rev. Heather Ramsey-Marbouk (2013-2019)

The Rev. Jan Hubbard (Interim; 2019-present)

### **What has the church learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:**

St. James holds fond memories of long-term pastorates, and yearns for a stable and settled pastor as we move into a new season of ministry. As reflected in our ministerial history, St. James has thrived under the leadership of settled and long-term pastorates because of the stability and security it fosters in our congregation. We have struggled as a congregation through nearly a decade of instability, change, and short term pastorates that have led to congregational anxiety and stress. Fostering hope for the future, the season(s) of transition has made it possible for the congregation to dig deep and do the difficult work of interim ministry in preparation for a settled pastor.

1. No
2. No
3. No

### **4a. COMMUNITY VISION**

---

**How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy? For example, which service activities has your church participated in this past**

**year? Where has the church participated in global connections of care and justice? What is currently transformational in your church's engagement with neighbors near or far?**

Service into the community through volunteer work and in the wider world through financial support is central to our life together at St. James. Service to our local community and wider global community is built into the rhythms of our life together. Listed are the variety of service and mission oriented partnerships, programs, and projects at St. James: Family Promise, Dunkirk Camp Scholarships and Cabin Maintenance, Heifer Project, Carly's Cents for Socks, Back to School Backpacks for Students, Hamburg Food Bank, Souper Bowl of Caring, Angel Tree, Mitten Tree, Buffalo Peace House, Journey's Unlimited, Back Bay Mission, Friends of the Night People, and Vive Shelter - Jericho Road Community Health Center, and we have participated in environmental advocacy and anti-racism advocacy (BLM Protest Rally).

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

St. James has consistently participated in the wider activities of the United Church of Christ. For many years, we attended the various retreats offered by Western Association (WAY, Regional, National Youth Events), sent delegates to association and conference meetings, and have sent delegates to the national synod.

**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 described at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).) 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming(ONA)    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming                  | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health   |
| <input checked="" 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?**

As a congregation passionate about justice initiatives, we are open to considering working towards new statements of witness in a new season of ministry. Reviewing the list of statements of witness, St. James would be most interested in working towards Creation Justice, Economic Justice, and Accessible to All (A2A). We have begun the work toward becoming a WISE congregation. These statements of witness are a reflection of the passions that are already present in the congregation.

As an Open and Affirming congregation, we have done the necessary work to live into this statement of witness. Together, we are open to the process of living into different statements of witness under the guidance of a settled pastor as it corresponds to the mission and vision of the church.

**Congregation Participation in Ecumenical and Interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local, and regional)**

As a congregation, St. James is established in partnership with various ecumenical and interfaith activities, including Family Promise of WNY and Churches in Action (CIA). We have taken trips to temples and other churches to broaden our spiritual base (10-12 people/youth).

**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 in service.**

In reflection upon our mission statement, we would gauge that an estimated percentage of our time devoted to various ministry tasks would be: mission and service (70%), governance (10%), and gathering together (20%).

**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?**

St. James has been flexible regarding the scope of the work assigned to our pastor, we are seeking a settled pastor who is willing to try new things and lead us into living into our mission and vision in service to the local and global community. It is expected that the settled pastor will be active within the community alongside the congregation in service, but is also available for pastoral needs of the congregation.

**4b. MISSION InSite**



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

Report available upon request

**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 demographics closely mirror that of the surrounding community and neighborhoods.

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

We help the hungry, homeless and addicted in our community.

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

TLC is providing great affordable daycare to the community and our youth house is open to refugees and area needs of housing. Transforming care also uses our buildings for meetings and workshops.

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

When given feedback from new attendees and members, most people state that they got involved in the church through the website, Facebook Live services, personal invitations, and music events.

## **5. REFERENCES**

## **6. CLOSING THOUGHTS**

---

- a. CLOSING PRAYER**
  - b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT**
  - c. CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION**
- 

### **6a. CLOSING PRAYER**

---

*Include here any prayer or dream for a minister you imagine journeying toward you . . . a poem, for example, or a Scripture passage or a piece of music that is meaningful to your Search Committee:*

Hymn 173 “You have come down to the Lakeshore”

Loving and Creative God, we thank you for the welcoming atmosphere and the wonderful people and friends we've met through St James United Church of Christ. We thank you God for opportunities to live out our faith and service to the community.

As we move into our future, we ask you, Loving God to reignite our passion and energy for worshipping together. Help us be a beacon in the community to those in need and for those who feel left out. Help us God, to grow as a church spiritually and in service to you. Amen.

---

## **6b. 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 a 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 and Call Committee**

Dave Marzullo (Chairperson)

John Ortner

Daniel Jackson

Sue Harrington

Jen Omphalius

Matthew Touris

Hope Schwartz

**The Church and Ministry Committee**

**Church Council**

**Subset of Whole Congregation in All Church Meetings**

**The Rev. Gary Ferner**

---

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

---

St. James UCC is an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ, where we strive to be more fully the body of Christ. We are an inclusive family that strives to welcome and celebrate all people and the uniqueness we each bring. As people of faith, we boldly proclaim: Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. Located near the shores of Lake Erie, we are a short drive from Buffalo, Canada, and Niagara Falls. There are many cultural, higher education, recreational activities, and pro sports. We are a congregation that respects each individual's differences, and embraces diversity. We are actively engaged in local and global outreach missions. Despite Covid we were able to continue our mission outreach by embracing new technology. We also provide, and hope to continue, a strong musical program for our worshippers and our local community. We are searching for a settled minister that will continue to work with us to move us in this direction.

---

**VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION**

---

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

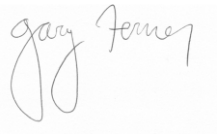
Staff Comment: Yes

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:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Ferner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "G".

Name / Title: Rev. Gary Ferner, Association Conference Minister for Search and Call

Email: [gferner@uccny.org](mailto:gferner@uccny.org)

Phone: 315-882-8627

Date: 05/14/2021

Some additional pictures.



View of congregation from balcony



Sanctuary.



Praise Band.



Jazz Band.



Organ.

**St. James United Church of Christ**

76 Main Street, Hamburg, New York  
 Rev. Janet Hubbard, Intentional Interim Pastor  
 Ciaran Krueger, Music Director Jonathan Rizzo, Accompanist  
 \*Congregation- bold print

February 14, 2021  
 Lay Reader - Deb Fenn

**Prelude**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Words of Welcome (unison)**

*Welcome to St. James, an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ, where we strive to be more fully the body of Christ. We are committed to welcoming and celebrating all people and the uniqueness we each bring. As people of faith, we boldly proclaim: Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.*

**Introit**

**\*Moment for Fellowship** - Take a moment and give a hug to your spouse, child or family member and send them the peace of Christ.

**\*Hymns of Praise** *All Who Hunger* #2126 FWS  
 (Please post your prayer requests online on facebook during this service and you will be prayed for!)

**\*Call to Worship**

L: Be still and know that God is.

P: **God was, also, in the beginning.**

L: And when all human striving has ceased, God will still be.

P: **From everlasting to everlasting, God is God, and alone is worthy to be worshiped.**

**Invocation:** We who have come to know your love, O Lord, are here to worship you. We ask your presence in every act of our lives, that we...your Church...may be confirmed in our faith, and give glory to your son Jesus Christ, *Who taught us to pray: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*

**\*Response** *All People That On Earth Do Dwell* #7 vs 1

**Scripture** Romans 15: 7-13

**Morning Offering**

**Offertory**

**\*Doxology** #780  
*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all Creatures here below; Praise God above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**Message for all Ages**

**Scripture** Luke 10: 38-42

**Sermon** The Divine Host Pastor Jan

**\*Hymn** *Lord I Want to Be a Christian* #454

**Concerns of the Church**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Response** *Every Time I Feel the Spirit* #282

**\*Closing Hymn** *Great is Your Faithfulness* #423

**\*Benediction**