

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

North Church
OF PORTSMOUTH

*North Church of Portsmouth, United Church of Christ, an Open and Affirming Church, invites
you to worship, fellowship and mission.*



Listing information:

North Church of Portsmouth

2 Congress St.

Portsmouth, NH 03801

Weblinks: <http://www.northchurchportsmouth.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/northchurchportsmouth>

Conference/Association: NHCUCC Rockingham

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? Yes

Current size of membership: 114 (May 2021)

Languages used in ministry (other than English): None

Position Title: Pastor/Reverend

Position Duration: Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister becomes a member of the congregation.

Compensation Level: Full time

Search Committee Leadership

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Conference/Association Staff Person Assisting Our Church:

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Summary Ministry Description:

Over the past few years, we have experienced many changes within North Church. We have been transitioning activities and meetings from our parish house and holding year-round services and events at our historic sanctuary in the Market Square of Portsmouth.

Recently, in addition to our ongoing mission work, we have expanded our horizons with new events. We hosted a concert series with well-known acoustic/folk artists, mindfulness and jazz meditations, coffee "on the bricks" of Market Square, steeple tours of our historical building, and participation in town events such as Children's Day and parades.

March of 2020 ushered in a prolonged pause in response to the pandemic. This year has been a learning experience for everyone as we did our best to connect our congregation virtually via Facebook live and Zoom gatherings. Many of our members have diligently tried to keep our connections open and morale high.

This year marks the 350th anniversary of our organization as North Church of Portsmouth. Honoring our traditions and distinguished history is an integral part of who we are as a congregation. In celebration of this milestone, this October, we will kick off a series of events on our history and faith with notable speakers throughout the spring of 2022 focused on economic, racial, and environmental justice.

What and Who do we need?

We seek someone to provide leadership in our faith journey. We hope our new pastor will help to bolster North Church's commitment to our love of neighbor, children, and creation. We are looking for someone that will connect with and nurture our members and engage the community with a willingness and energy to navigate this time of transition with us.

Portsmouth is a vibrant and diverse community. Social and environmental justice is a point of focus for the majority of individuals and businesses. Many see our soaring steeple as a steadfast pillar of the town. Our Market Square sanctuary is the iconic structure that graces many advertisements, paintings, and pictures associated with Portsmouth. However, many Seacoast residents are unaware that we are a vibrant, functioning church and not just a historical landmark. We endeavor to change that by inviting others to join us for both virtual and in-person worship. With the leadership of our new pastor, we will continue implementing new ways to strengthen connections with our local community, welcome new members, and create new concepts for cherished traditions. Historically, North Church was a community meeting place in Portsmouth. We are reviving that tradition to use our building not only for worship but also in collaboration with local social service and mission groups, youth, neighboring churches, and local artists.

In collaboration with our Director of Music Ministry, we seek someone having an appreciation for music in all of its diverse forms with the ability to rejoice in a sacred hymn, choral prayer, instrumental accompaniment, or new age rock tune.

While music is but one part of our service, we think it will serve as a bridge, helping people grow in their faith and feel welcome in our church family. We believe a varied expression of music is essential in inviting youth and members seeking a balance between the traditional and modern.

What we value about living in our area:

Location, Location, Location: It is a pleasure to experience the history of Portsmouth. Everywhere you turn, monuments, buildings, and parks each have a story to tell. Strawberry Banke Museum, Prescott Park, churches, gardens, and historically preserved houses, just to name a few! The Seacoast area provides diverse options for healthcare, community services, employment, and both large and small retail establishments.

Exploring New England: In the spring and summer, the Seacoast region provides numerous outdoor activities to enjoy, such as hiking, boating, kayaking, bicycling, or walks on the beach with the ocean breeze. Autumn and winter bring striking jewel tones to our leaves and skiers to our mountains. Unique regions and major cities like Boston and Portland, Maine are all within a couple of hours; the options for exploring are endless.

Dining - Music - Art: Portsmouth is home to some of the best seafood and cuisine in the nation. Many restaurants create their menu from locally and sustainably sourced meat and produce. Farmers' markets are abundant sources of local produce and handmade items. For many years all forms of music and art have contributed to the visceral history of our city. Portsmouth is home to skilled artisans, craftsmen, and musicians, as well as a hub for leading speakers, performers, and comedians from our nation and around the world.

Scope of Work

Full-time pastoral position

- Prepares and leads Sunday worship
- Ministers effectively to people whether in times of crisis or not
- Effective in planning and leading worship
- Builds a sense of fellowship among the people with whom they work
- Maintains confidentiality
- Works regularly at bringing new members into the church
- Is an effective leader when working with children and youth

Faith formation and vitality

- Identifies helpful resources and opportunities of which laypeople can take advantage
- Is a person of faith, a compassionate and caring person, and is accepting of people with diverse views

Community engagement

- Visits shut-ins, and those who are in nursing homes or are hospitalized
- Officiates at weddings and funerals
- Is active in ecumenical relationships and encourages the church to participate in the same
- Regularly encourages people to join in UCC activities and Our Church's Wider Mission

Compensation and Support

Benefits: Salary plus Benefits

In addition to the base salary North Church offers its Senior Minister the following benefits:

- Vacation (4 weeks to start)
- Maternity/Paternity leave
- UCC retirement annuity
- UCC life and disability insurance benefits
- UCC health benefits
- UCC dental benefits
- Social security/Medicare offset
- Continuing education support
- Sabbatical leave

Other ministerial supports include travel reimbursement, meeting expenses, books, periodicals, and initial moving expense allowance.

What is the expected living situation for your next minister :

North Church has a parsonage on Spinney Road in Portsmouth, adjacent to the current Parish House. The house sits on a large wooded lot in a residential neighborhood. The kitchen and two bathrooms were recently updated.

North Church believes that the parsonage is the optimum living situation for the minister because of the relatively high cost of housing in Portsmouth. Portsmouth is a highly desirable community on the New Hampshire seacoast, which has impacted recent real estate prices and rents.

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

The expectation is that the minister would live in the community and work at the Church downtown. The downtown church is about a mile from the parsonage, a pleasant walk or short commute.

State any incentives: N/A

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

The New Hampshire UCC Conference supports ministers in the State as described on the website (www.nhcucc.org). Under 'caring for clergy,' ministers will find links to descriptions of three essential resources: Clergy Convocation, Pastoral Leadership Development Groups, and the Newly Called Support Group. Each of these offers meaningful collegial connections and peer support. In addition, the same 'caring for clergy' lists available financial resources the Conference offers to our ministers.

While these are conference-based peer and professional sources of support, there are also Portsmouth-based collegial gatherings and peer group support. Portsmouth has an active "Portsmouth Ministerium," which includes organizations of all faiths and frequently meets to collaborate on community projects, community church services, and share ideas and support. Our departing minister served as the chair of this group.

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

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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

Our congregation is seeking a compassionate, confident, energetic leader who is comfortable guiding members through the transition of one pastor to another while we also steadily shift all activity to our Market Square location.

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

We at North Church are looking forward to working with our new pastor to strengthen connections with our local community, welcome new members, and create new concepts for cherished traditions. We hope to use our building not only for worship but in collaboration with local mission groups, youth, neighboring churches, and local artists.

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 that your next minister should display to equip the congregation's ministry in these areas:

- **Is an effective preacher** – Being able to plan and lead worship to which members can relate and be an influential source of faith.
- **Works regularly at bringing new members into the church** – Builds a sense of fellowship among the congregation and broader community—actively contributing ideas to grow membership and expand youth participation.
- **Is a compassionate and caring person** – Possesses the ability to minister to people in crises and everyday life; and accepts people with diverse views.
- **Provides pastoral support to people in hospitals, nursing homes, and those confined to their homes** - Is comfortable visiting congregants unable to attend in-person programs.

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?

With leadership that encourages our efforts, we strive to *grow* our church family by:

- respecting and accepting people with diverse views,
- increasing multi-generational and intergenerational parish life activities,
- addressing worship and programs for our church family across all age groups,
- and always relating our faith to our daily lives.

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

Our congregation has been blessed with three properties-- the Market Square Sanctuary, the Spinney Road Parish House, and the nearby parsonage. Over the recent decades, decisions have been made to maintain all three; *however*, in the past 18 months, we have been working toward our future at Market Square, which is where our sanctuary has been since 1712, with the present building having been built on the same site in 1855. This is a significant shift in our focus moving forward--celebrating our central location and increasing our community presence beyond our open doors on Sunday mornings.

A pre-COVID initiative, the Soul Cafe, was spurred on by our departing pastor. We hosted a concert series with well-known acoustic/folk artists, mindfulness, and jazz meditations. Events and announcements were created on social media, town calendars, and flyers placed with local businesses and outside our buildings. Tickets were available for purchase, and our doors opened to the community at large.

A novel floor plan was implemented to accommodate the Soul Cafe and other alternative worship and gathering options. Several rows of pews were removed from the front portion of the sanctuary, and moveable risers, round tables, and chairs were purchased and put in place as needed. This "first step" allowed our church family to envision a Sanctuary that can accommodate multiple functions throughout the week.

WHO ARE WE NOW?

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

Describe your congregation's life of faith:

Our North Church Covenant reflects our relationship with the "word and will of God," witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit's guidance and empowerment.

More recently, our covenant as an open and affirming congregation reaffirms our support and openness to people of any race, creed, color, age, gender identity and gender expression, sexual orientation, economic status, marital status, physical, emotional, mental capacity, and those in relationships recognized under God's law.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation:

Our church family has an ongoing tradition of supporting our community through Soup Kitchen teams and collecting for our local shelter (Cross Roads House), food pantry (Gather), and the Seafarer's Friend mission.

Our Parish House has been available for Scouting programs, AARP tax assistance, Red Cross blood drives, and other community programs. Our congregation participates in broader community events such as Portsmouth PRIDE, First Night, Children's Day, and Market Square Day.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers:

Over the years, our congregation has taken advantage of our Market Square Sanctuary, Parish House, and outdoor space for worship. Our worship tends toward the traditional, with ample opportunities for special music, youth-led services, and a few "out-of-the-box" activities. Choir, bell choir, and guest musicians enhance our services. The revamped sanctuary layout lends itself to innovative programming.

During the Covid months, services were live-streamed via Facebook and posted for viewing after the service. We hope that our technology capability (human and hardware) can continue this program for those who can not attend services in person.

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

- Preschoolers have shown positive reactions to the *Heart Shapers* curriculum.
- School-age participants' reactions to the traditional *Feasting On the Word* were not as enthusiastic. However, they enjoyed participating in group and congregational activities.
- Confirmation classes--generally every two years-- vary in size. Most recently, six confirmands took this faith journey.
- At this time, there is no programming specifically targeting high schoolers or young adults.
- Adult programs include book discussion groups and seasonal readings and meditations. Choir and bell choir provide another unique activity for participants' faith journey through music.

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?
- When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?
- Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example, when a crisis or disaster occurred.
- How was that accomplished?
- Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure by-laws and annual report to further explain the church's activity and governance patterns?

The church by-laws control the North Church governance structure. The church's governing body is our seven-member (including the minister) Cabinet. The Cabinet is led by the Church moderator, who the members of the Cabinet elect. Committees oversee and support specific aspects of our church life. Committee members are nominated and approved by a vote of the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

Diaconate	Parish Life	Missions	Stewardship
Personnel	Membership	Music	Finance

In addition to the committee members, the Clerk, Treasurer, and Delegates to NHUCC are also elected. The Cabinet also has the power to appoint subcommittees to assist it with various issues. Examples of these committees include the property committee and the facilities evaluation committee.

Monthly Cabinet and Diaconate meetings are 1-½ to 2 hours in duration. Other committee meetings vary in length depending on the current agenda.

Our congregation gathers for round-table deliberations before significant issues are decided. The thoughtful discussion allows members to learn about the issue, pose questions, and, when appropriate, challenge long-held traditions that may not serve our future direction. Final decisions on important issues are voted upon at the Annual Meeting or at Special meetings at other times of the year.

Covid shutdowns required a quick response in order to support the congregation and stay connected. Within a week, in coordination with each other, the minister and Cabinet established an online avenue for worship, connection and support, and donations.

(Our Annual Report is available on request.)

11-YEAR REPORT

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS



Church#: 441450

Assoc: 508 Schedule: 0 North Congregational UCC Portsmouth NH 03801

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2010	257	100	31	0	0	0	9	26	-35
2011	252	85	31	0	1	4	10	0	-5
2012	252	76	19	3	0	10	9	4	0
2013	252	76	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	237	73	42	0	0	0	4	11	-15
2015	228	68	38	0	0	0	9	0	-9
2016	224	61	35	5	1	0	9	1	-4
2017	223	60	5	0	0	4	5	0	-1
2018	228	58	8	0	4	4	3	0	5
2019	234	64	6	6	0	0	0	0	6
2020	116	64	6	0	0	0	3	0	-3

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2010	\$290,420	\$0	\$7,250	\$8,719	\$15,969	\$1,500	\$17,469	2.50	\$307,889	\$130,912
2011	\$308,679	\$0	\$8,457	\$3,833	\$12,290	\$560	\$12,850	2.74	\$321,529	\$133,258
2012	\$293,979	\$0	\$8,664	\$2,768	\$11,432	\$590	\$12,022	2.95	\$306,001	\$129,822
2013	\$293,979	\$0	\$8,699	\$4,988	\$13,687	\$0	\$13,687	2.96	\$307,666	\$0
2014	\$309,581	\$0	\$9,416	\$1,485	\$10,901	\$7,651	\$18,552	3.04	\$328,133	\$145,252
2015	\$303,246	\$0	\$7,942	\$20	\$7,962	\$5,950	\$13,912	2.62	\$317,158	\$131,709
2016	\$330,316	\$0	\$9,185	\$2,996	\$12,181	\$600	\$12,781	2.78	\$343,097	\$93,392
2017	\$362,758	\$0	\$8,333	\$5,806	\$14,139	\$1,145	\$15,284	2.30	\$378,042	\$117,703
2018	\$300,645	\$0	\$9,848	\$9,090	\$18,938	\$6,755	\$25,693	3.28	\$326,338	\$122,910
2019	\$340,654	\$0	\$8,488	\$9,490	\$17,978	\$3,022	\$21,000	2.49	\$361,654	\$104,586
2020	\$306,743	\$0	\$9,050	\$8,513	\$17,563	\$0	\$17,563	2.95	\$324,306	\$120,652

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2015-2020	-49.12	-5.88	-84.21	0.00	-66.67	1.15	120.59	2.25
2010-2020	-54.86	-36.00	-80.65	0.00	-91.43	5.62	9.98	5.33

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	114	
Number of active non-members:	4	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	118	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	82%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	8%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Less than 5 years:	9%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	9%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Joint household with minors:	12%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Single adults age 35-65:	9%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Joint household with no minors:	44%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Single adults over 65:	26%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	33%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
College:	32%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Graduate School:	21%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Specialty Training:	4%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other: In high school or college:	9%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	31%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Adults who are retired:	61%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Adults who are not fully employed:	7%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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>
	6	5	1	4	11	22	30	39	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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

Education, law, insurance, construction, accounting, retail, research, vehicle repair, human resources, maintenance, technology, and design are some of our congregation's occupations or former occupations.

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?

97% of the members of the congregation are white; 2% are Asian.

Ethnic diversity in our church is as reflected by our local population, though we define our broader diversity as reflected in our open and affirming covenant.

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one soon?

In 2014, the membership voted to become an open and affirming congregation.

Participation and Staffing

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings?
<u>Adult Groups or Classes</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's book group • Men's breakfast group • North Church Women 	12 8 25	Chairperson Group facilitator NCW chair
Baptisms (<i>number last year</i>)	1	(2019 numbers due to CoVID, no baptisms performed in 2020)
Children's Groups or Classes	0	
Christmas Eve Easter Worship	215 104 148	6 pm Christmas Eve service 11 pm Christmas Eve service Easter service (2019 numbers due to CoVID, no Easter or Christmas in-person services performed in 2020)
<u>Church-wide Meal</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shrove Tuesday • Stewardship potluck • Round table potluck 	30 40 30	Parish Life Board Stewardship Board Cabinet
<u>Choirs & Music Groups</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choir • Bell Choir 	10 12	Director of Music
Church-based Bible Study	10 (Lenten Study)	Pastor
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	59	(2019 numbers) Served monthly
<u>Community Meals</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The soup kitchen at the Salvation Army (monthly) 	5	Mission Board
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	6	(2019 numbers due to CoVID, no confirmations performed in 2020)
Drama or Dance Program	N/A	
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	3	(2019 numbers due to CoVID, no funerals performed in 2020)
Intergenerational Groups	0	
Outdoor Worship	30	Summer/fall during CoVID

Prayer or Meditation Groups	0	
Public Advocacy Work	0	
Retreats	0	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	N/A	
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	0 3 5	(2019) (2018) (2017)
Worship (10:00am)	50	
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	
Youth Groups or Classes	0	
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHUCC Horton Center • Lenten Bible study • Toasting Thursdays 	6 8 online	Summer camp Pastor (ways to meet during CoVID)

Additional comments: Some activities of North Church, such as the Men's breakfast group, Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, and North Church Women, have a long history and are beloved among the members. Other activities such as outdoor worship and Toasting Thursdays are more recent and in response to shut down due to Covid.

Many in our congregation have a long history with North Church. We are tight-knit but welcoming to visitors and guest participants and would love new members.

With our small congregation, though we would love to expand our opportunities for participation, it is difficult sometimes to find that critical mass to make a program successful. Areas that indicate zero (0) participants are opportunities for gathering that we have offered in the past and would like to pursue. Still, we also need to be mindful of our congregation size.

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers.

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
N/A				

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: N/A

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

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part-time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for the current person in this position
Director of Music	No	part-time	Pastor	14 years
Office Administrator	No	part-time	Pastor	3 ½ years

REFLECTION:

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

Reflecting on our congregational demographics and activities, it is clear that our ministry must nurture our current congregants while also building our church and membership. Our current congregation is open and accepting of all people and would love to attract a more diverse demographic on all fronts. Our congregation is passionate about our current programming and hopes to continue providing activities and opportunities for more church and community members to get involved inside and outside our church. Our hope to consolidate in the downtown facility was done intentionally to be more present in the community and better serve its residents' needs.

CHURCH FINANCES

SOURCE (Jul 2020-Jun 2021 Actuals)	AMOUNT
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$112,404
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	\$ 6,450
Endowment Draw (beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal")	\$ 120,000
Fundraising Events	\$
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose (organ repair fund)	\$ 35,000
Grants	\$
Rentals of Church Building	\$ -800
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$
Support from Related Organizations (e.g., Women's Group)	\$1548.00
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$
Other (specify):	\$ 559
Other (specify):	\$
TOTAL	\$ 275,161

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): P&L will be attached as soon as the final totals are completed.

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

2020-2021

	Budgeted	Actual
Ministerial Support	\$116,575.10	\$115,267.00
Total expenses*	\$310,280,48	\$291,802
Percentage	37.5%	39.5%

*Actual total expenses reflect activity changes related to Covid 19

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?

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

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

The OCWM is determined as part of the budgeting process each year by the Finance Committee and the Cabinet.

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: 0

Reason for debt: N/A

Are capital and other payments current? N/A

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including its projected start/end date 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
2006-2007	Rebuild the steeple and rehab the downtown facility	\$500,000	\$550,000	The Congress Street facility required a significant reconstruction of the steeple, internal support, basement, and roof. The community also raised \$1,000,000 to support this effort because of the importance of the building to the city.

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
N/A				

Does the church have an endowment? Yes

What is the market value of the assets? (As of June 2021)

Consolidated funds: \$1,924,250.00

Restricted funds: \$203,741.00

Total: \$2,127,991.00

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

Funds are routinely drawn to support operating funds and occasionally for special projects. For example, we designate special funds for youth, scholarships, flowers, capital improvements, etc.

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

Year	2016	2021
Withdraw	\$193,000*	\$130,000
% Rate of draw	8.5%	6.1%

* \$100,000 of the money withdrawn in 2016 was for one-time capital expenditure for a new parish house boiler,

Describe the draw on the endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years:

We have been withdrawing money from our trust funds to meet the church's operating expenses. That amount was \$130,000 for 2021 (see above). In 2016 the amount was \$93,000 for operations and \$100,000 for a new fuel-efficient boiler for the parish house. Our funds have been invested primarily with the UCC investment program, which has been very effective over this period in helping us maintain our trust funds. The total trust funds were \$2,280,219 in 2016 and are currently \$2,127,991.

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

With no changes to the endowment, it will last 9-10 years. However, with the changes proposed below, the endowment will be extended significantly beyond that point (see below). During the past five years, the church has withdrawn between \$176,000 and \$203,000 to support the annual budget.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

In 2018, the church Cabinet recognized that we could no longer sustain the same budget with the declining church membership and rising costs as we have had in the past. As a result, we established a subcommittee to review our financial situation and recommend unbiased solutions concerning our three properties. In January 2020, the congregation accepted the committee's report, which suggested that the church would best meet the long-term mission of the church by consolidating operations at the historic Market Square facility.

The recommended consolidation will allow for the sale of the parish house, which will significantly reduce operating costs, resulting in a significant increase in funds for future operations, upgrades, and modifications to the Market Square facility.

The church recently completed a legal process to secure a clear title for the parish house that will allow the church to take the steps necessary to reduce our costs and secure our future.

In 2020, the Cabinet and Finance Committee also evaluated the staff and made adjustments in hours and costs to help reduce our budget. This action further reduced the draw on the trust funds.

A broader base of membership will also help to increase financial support through pledging.

Other Assets: N/A

Reserves (savings): N/A

Investments (other than endowment): N/A

Does your church have a parsonage? Yes

The fair market rental value of the parsonage: unknown

How is the parsonage used? For use by the minister and their family.

Street / City / State / Zip: Spinney Road, Portsmouth NH 03801

Finished square footage: 2129 sq ft

Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms: 3 bedrooms 2 baths

Assessed real estate value: N/A

Available for minister residence: Yes

Expected minister residence: Yes

Condition of structure, systems, and appliances:

The parsonage has been recently renovated with a new kitchen, two bathrooms, and a new roof

Who is responsible for the review and needed repairs on the parsonage? The Properties committee.

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

Market Square facility: An 1855 historic structure in the middle of Portsmouth. With approximately 13,910 sq ft of space, including a balcony and basement, it will hold around 450 people as currently configured. It went through a significant refurbishment in 2006-2007.

Spinney Road Parish House: Built-in 1962, it has 15,352 sq ft of space. The building has classrooms, a fellowship hall, and a kitchen. The building also has a chapel that seats approximately 75 people. There is an administrative office and a minister's office. The building will soon require significant maintenance. The heating system was recently upgraded to improve efficiency.

Parsonage: The parsonage was renovated 3.5 years ago. The kitchen, both bathrooms, and roof were redone. At that time, the interior of the house was also repainted.



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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

The Market Square worship space and bathroom facilities are wheelchair accessible. In 2007 the sanctuary was modified to accommodate wheelchair seating. There is a wheelchair ramp and access to the sanctuary.

Reflection:

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

Each spring, the church approves a new budget for the next fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). The finance committee initiates the process and coordinates with other committees and the Cabinet. Ultimately, the Cabinet reviews and approves the budget before presenting it to the congregation for a vote at the Annual meeting.

In 2020, the Cabinet, in coordination with the minister, made the difficult but necessary decision to change the staff hours and reduce personnel costs. This action minimized expenditures and kept the staffing levels in line with the size of the congregation.

In 2019, The Cabinet initiated a study of our facilities and costs to determine the best use of our buildings. As part of that study, the subcommittee assessed where North Church could better serve the community and expand its mission in Portsmouth. The consolidation to our Market Square sanctuary and budgetary changes will significantly reduce overall costs, allow the church to continue ongoing programs, and stay consistent with our mission.

The church in 2020 also applied for and received a matching grant from the State of New Hampshire, Land and Community Heritage Program (LCHIP) to provide preliminary plans for facility upgrades in the Market Square facility. These upgrades will accommodate our congregation for the move downtown. The results of that study should be complete this fall (2021).

The potential sale of the parish house property would provide funds for the upgrades to the Market Square facility, replenish the trust funds, and decrease annual expenses. This process will allow the church to prepare for future challenges. The congregation will be voting on this overall plan this fall (2021). Thus, we are looking for a pastor who will guide us on this exciting new venture in the history of North Church.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

- North Church was founded in 1671; the current sanctuary was constructed in 1855 of brick on a granite foundation as a replacement for the 1712 wood-frame meeting house that had provided for religious services and town meetings.
- Notable members over the years include General William Whipple, signer of the Declaration of Independence; John Langdon, signer of the US Constitution; and Daniel Webster. Notable worshippers include John Paul Jones and President George Washington.
- In 1957, North Church became a member of the United Church of Christ
- In 2014, the membership voted to become an Open and Affirming congregation

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

In 2005, the church embarked upon a capital campaign to rebuild the steeple. The North Church congregation raised one-third of the \$1.5 million capital required to rebuild the steeple, while the community came up with the remaining two-thirds of the money. North Church members and community members teamed up to preserve the building, which carries value as a place of worship to its members and as a historical landmark for The City of Portsmouth. During 2006-2007 the construction was undertaken along with other repairs, including a new roof, painting, and internal upgrades.

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's by-laws provide for a personnel committee that reviews job descriptions, participates in personnel reviews, and mediates staff issues. This committee also has been utilized to resolve significant personnel problems. The personnel committee revised the personnel procedures and job descriptions in 2018.

The church does not have specific procedures for dealing with overall conflict. However, North Church values the diversity of thought and ideas and welcomes discussion on our mission, faith, and practice. Congregational and committee meetings are open, quarterly updates are scheduled, and special forums are always welcome.

Ministerial History

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Frank Newsome	4	Y
Carolyn Keilig (interim)	2	Y
Dawn A Shippee	15	Y
Reva B Karstens (interim)	1	Y
Donald F Jennings (interim)	2	Y
Anthony E Acheson	1/2	?
Richard B Haines (interim)	2	?
John C Lombard	13	Y

Any policies/protocols?

Our church employs standard protocols such as meetings, subcommittee research, monthly newsletter, and Cabinet leadership to remain transparent in our operations and maintain open communications. Our by-laws also prescribe for regular round table discussions.

Our congregation has recently considered consolidating worship and operations from our current use of both the Parish House and Market Square building to only using our downtown sanctuary, helping us manage finances and our mission. Although it has been discussed numerous times, this consolidation process has taken

many years to receive serious consideration. As might be expected, there were strong feelings on both sides as to whether such a consolidation should occur and which building should remain as the North Church's place of worship. Through protocols such as church meetings, round table discussions, subcommittee research groups, and Cabinet guidance, decisions are being made and are setting the current course of action. We are currently navigating this journey and feel confident that as we continue to rely on open communication and mutual respect for all opinions expressed, we will resolve any conflict resulting in a stronger, more united congregation.

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

North Church members count on our ministers for leadership and guidance and regard them with respect. We are a congregation with longstanding traditions, which means we often need time to process and incorporate new ideas. We know as New Englanders, we tend to be more reserved and value our privacy. However, we are working on reaching out to each other in times of both hardship and everyday interactions.

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

Yes. Ask us.

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Not to the best of our knowledge

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

Not to the best of our knowledge

WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

Community Vision

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

We partner with local non-profits like Gather (food pantry) and Cross Roads House (homeless shelter & services) throughout the year. We have incorporated food drives into our Thanksgiving and Christmas services and help many seacoast families in need get prepared for the school year by donating backpacks and school supplies. Each year we host a giving tree during the Christmas season to provide gifts to nursing home residents, participate in the Seacoast Area Crop Walk for Hunger and prepare "ditty" bags for Seafarer's Friend (a mission to assist the crew of ships that dock in Portsmouth while on months-long voyages).

The children of North Church have helped support families overseas through Rogers Mission and raise money throughout the year to send farm animals and clean water to many impoverished countries.

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

- We have/had church members serve on NH Conference committee
- We have/had church members regularly participating in Conference events i.e., Prepared To Serve, AUCE (Association of United Church Educators) gatherings, Annual Meetings, Rockingham County Assoc. Meetings.
- The past moderator has served as NH Conference delegate to General Synod 31 & 32.
- Past and present ministers have participated in Clergy Convocation and other pastoral Conference events.
- We will have Rev. Traci Blackmon from the National UCC as one of several guest speakers on Faithful Action Ministries of Environmental, Economic, and Racial Justice as part of our 350th Anniversary Celebration this coming fall and spring.

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.

- Accessible to All (A2A)
- Creation Justice
- Economic Justice
- Faithful and Welcoming
- God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
- Border and Immigrant Justice
- Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)
- Just Peace
- Global Mission Church
- Open and Affirming (ONA)
- WISE Congregation for Mental Health
- Other UCC designations:
- Designations from other denominations
- 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?

Even though we have a huge heart, our membership is small; we hope to work toward some of these new UCC strategies in the future as our congregation becomes more settled and resumes activities.

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

The Portsmouth Ministerium (the local interfaith organization), ecumenical Thanksgiving services, Martin Luther King Day services

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:

"We, the members of the North Congregational Church family, a loving and compassionate people of faith, gathered to worship God, accept our responsibility to seek justice for all God's people. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we resolve to share the Word of God with all those seeking spiritual growth. Following Christ's teachings and example, we accept and embrace the challenge of a changing church community, nation, and world as we strive to live out our faith.

We, the members of North Church of Portsmouth, welcome all people to be faithful followers of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We believe we should reach out and be open to all people. Therefore, this Open and Affirming statement expresses that which is accepted by our congregation. The first [commandment] is... "You shall love The Lord your God with all your soul, and with all your mind, with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31).

Therefore, we work together to support our members, the community, and those seeking a place in God's family with the understanding that each is unique. We welcome people of any race, creed, color, age, gender identity, and gender expression, sexual orientation, economic status, marital status, physical, emotional, mental capacity, and those in relationships recognized under God's law."

Our steeple is the iconic symbol of Portsmouth. As a church family, we don't take this lightly.

Our mission statement states that we "accept our responsibility to seek justice for all God's people." As such, we partner with our local food pantry and homeless shelter, collecting food and supplies as needed. Every month, we host a meatball dinner at the local soup kitchen. We incorporate food drives into our Thanksgiving and Christmas services. We also help Seacoast families by donating backpacks and school supplies, and at Christmastime, we host a giving tree. Each year, we send a church team to participate in the Seacoast Area Crop Walk for Hunger. Our church school collects money to support families in impoverished countries by funding farm animals and clean water. We partner with Marondera church in Zimbabwe, holding them in our hearts and lifting them in prayer as we walk in faith together.

We state that we "resolve to share the Word of God with all those seeking spiritual growth." In all that we do, our intention is to expand our presence in the community and share the Word of God. Our current transition to move our operations to the Market Square building is being done in the hope of resetting our financial foundation and facilitating a known presence in the community so that North Church is a comfortable place of worship for all.

We say that we "accept and embrace the challenge of a changing church community, nation, and world as we strive to live out our faith." Further, our mission statement states that we "believe that we should reach out and be open to all people." We are an Open and Affirming congregation, and our Open and Affirming covenant is incorporated into our mission statement. We endeavor to be a part of the many celebrations in our local community and give support where needed. We have celebrated alongside many from the LGBTQ+ community at the annual Portsmouth PRIDE event, where we ran a booth, gave out free popcorn, and were able to connect and extend an invitation to members of our community. During the annual Children's Day downtown, we open our sanctuary doors to families of the Seacoast and create crafts with the kids that stop by and hold scavenger hunts throughout the day. We opened our doors during the annual Halloween parade, handed out popcorn, and welcomed visitors into the sanctuary for themed musical vignettes. We started the Soul Cafe music series, opening up the church to the community to listen to folk/acoustic artists.

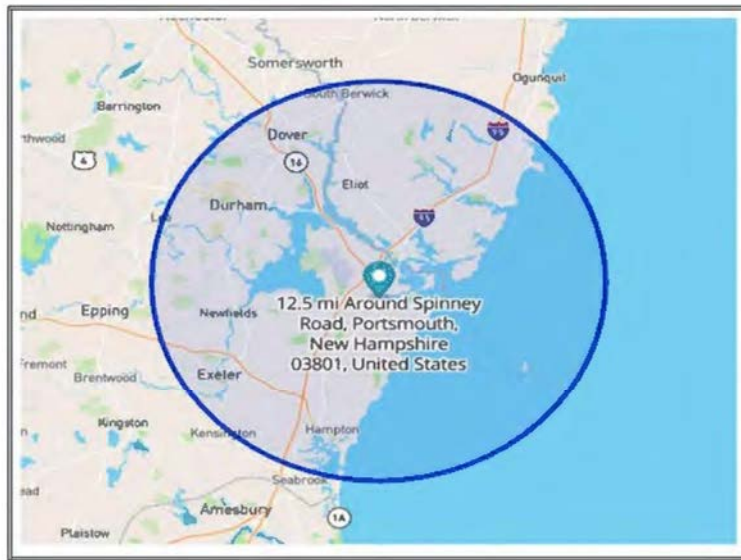
Our Cabinet, Diaconate, Parish Life, Membership, Missions, Stewardship, Music, and Finance committees help us work toward fulfilling the principles of our mission statement.

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

Portsmouth is a close-knit community with diverse faith. Our departing pastor currently is the chair of the Portsmouth Ministerium interfaith community council and has reinforced our relationships with other faith groups in the community. We would like to see continued collaboration with other local churches and maintain a relationship with their spiritual leaders.

MissionInsite

THE STUDY AREA



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

Retirees and the elderly continue to make up a large percentage of our church community. This trend will continue as members age or become confined to their homes, like in this past year (2020). We must find a way of welcoming younger families, youth, and those who endeavor to seek the support of a church family no matter who they are or where they are on their faith journey.

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 church's internal demographics reflect some aspects of the Seacoast region in that members are predominantly white, retired, or semi-retired professionals and skilled tradespeople. The majority of our membership has a high degree of education and is married or widowed. The surrounding populace consists of retirees, families, or soon-to-be empty nesters, college-bound or career-orientated individuals, and those who maintain second residences and have their primary residence in a different location within NH or another state.

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

We acknowledge the diversity in age, culture, customs, and belief systems in our Seacoast community. A shift towards theological and spiritual exploration has been taking shape on a local and national level for several years now. These changes in mindset have magnified a gap between generations and led to a generalized disinterest in the traditional church structure.

For many, there is a desire to build relationships within a local church community at a set place and time while also having the choice of virtual worship. An online presence is a highly desired component in this age of mobile communication and is necessary for those confined to their homes.

While our congregation's worship traditions and physical gathering are crucial in forming connections and being present with our faith and community, evolving and blending these vital elements with technology and current perspectives presently shaping the ministry's future.

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

"In the last few years, the congregation has done food drives with Gather, helped raise money for Gather, had events where Gather was the beneficiary, and invited us in to talk and educate the youth with regard to food insecurity. For us, fostering a community which believes in helping those in need is a cornerstone of North Church's role in our community. Through their actions, we see first-hand how they bring education and awareness to their congregation and how the congregation steps up and supports our efforts. We benefit here at Gather, but we also see them helping other non-profits in our community, showing how they really do support some of the most basic needs of people...food, shelter, emotional and physical support, and more."

Seneca Adam Bernard

Associate Executive Director - Gather

"The multitude of news photos, videos, art, and 'selfies' attest to the special place the church holds as the iconic center of Portsmouth. Its members are working to create additional uses for the building as the Square has become an increasingly busy restaurant, retail, condo, and office location. To that end, usage is being offered for meetings and programs that will complement the vibrancy of this historic and cultural district."

Don Tirabassi

Former Director of the Music Hall

"In my dealings with the North Church, I have found everyone to be warm and friendly. In my capacity as the scoutmaster for the local scout troop, my dealings with the ministry have been coordinating our meetings and even a few sleepovers. There has never been any hesitation in accommodating us."

George C. Pappas

Scoutmaster

Troop 164

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

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we have not seen new members participating in service. We plan on reopening in-person services in September 2021 as well as improving our virtual presence. We will remain diligent in making sure those that choose to join us in our missions feel welcome and included within our church community.

StoryView

Significant Demographic Indicators of the Study Area's Story

1	Population Change In the 10 year future, how is the population in this area expected to change? <small>(See the Population Theme)</small>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Significant Decline</td> <td>Moderate Decline</td> <td>Little Change</td> <td>Moderate Growth</td> <td>Significant Growth</td> </tr> </table>	Significant Decline	Moderate Decline	Little Change	Moderate Growth	Significant Growth
Significant Decline	Moderate Decline	Little Change	Moderate Growth	Significant Growth			
2	Household Change In the 10 year future, how are the households in this area expected to change? <small>(See Households Theme)</small>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Significant Decline</td> <td>Moderate Decline</td> <td>Little Change</td> <td>Moderate Increase</td> <td>Significant Increase</td> </tr> </table>	Significant Decline	Moderate Decline	Little Change	Moderate Increase	Significant Increase
Significant Decline	Moderate Decline	Little Change	Moderate Increase	Significant Increase			
3	Families with Children Compared to the state, are families with children more or less likely to live in two parent households? <small>(See Families Theme)</small>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Significantly Less</td> <td>Somewhat Less</td> <td>About the Same</td> <td>Somewhat More</td> <td>Significantly More</td> </tr> </table>	Significantly Less	Somewhat Less	About the Same	Somewhat More	Significantly More
Significantly Less	Somewhat Less	About the Same	Somewhat More	Significantly More			
4	Adult Educational Attainment For this area, what is the general level of education of the adults 25 and older? <small>(See the People Theme)</small>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Very Low</td> <td>Low</td> <td>Mixed</td> <td>High</td> <td>Very High</td> </tr> </table>	Very Low	Low	Mixed	High	Very High
Very Low	Low	Mixed	High	Very High			
5	Community Diversity Index How diverse is the racial/ethnic mix of this area? <small>(See the Diversity Theme)</small>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Very Homogeneous</td> <td>Homogeneous</td> <td>Moderately Diverse</td> <td>Very Diverse</td> <td>Extremely Diverse</td> </tr> </table>	Very Homogeneous	Homogeneous	Moderately Diverse	Very Diverse	Extremely Diverse
Very Homogeneous	Homogeneous	Moderately Diverse	Very Diverse	Extremely Diverse			
6	Median Family Income How does the median family income compare to the state for this area? <small>(See the Income Theme)</small>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Significantly Less</td> <td>Somewhat Less</td> <td>About the Same</td> <td>Somewhat Greater</td> <td>Significantly Greater</td> </tr> </table>	Significantly Less	Somewhat Less	About the Same	Somewhat Greater	Significantly Greater
Significantly Less	Somewhat Less	About the Same	Somewhat Greater	Significantly Greater			
7	Poverty Compared to the state, are the number of families in poverty above or below the state average? <small>(See the Families Theme)</small>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Significantly Below</td> <td>Somewhat Below</td> <td>About the Same</td> <td>Somewhat Above</td> <td>Significantly Above</td> </tr> </table>	Significantly Below	Somewhat Below	About the Same	Somewhat Above	Significantly Above
Significantly Below	Somewhat Below	About the Same	Somewhat Above	Significantly Above			
8	Blue to White Collar Occupations On a continuum between blue collar and white collar occupations, where does this area fall? <small>(See the Work Theme)</small>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Very Blue Collar</td> <td>Somewhat Blue</td> <td>Closely Split</td> <td>Somewhat White</td> <td>Very White Collar</td> </tr> </table>	Very Blue Collar	Somewhat Blue	Closely Split	Somewhat White	Very White Collar
Very Blue Collar	Somewhat Blue	Closely Split	Somewhat White	Very White Collar			
9	Largest Racial/Ethnic Group In this area, which racial/ethnic group is the largest percentage of the population? <small>(See the Diversity Theme)</small>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Asian (NH)</td> <td>Black/African American (NH)</td> <td>White (NH)</td> <td>Hispanic or Latino</td> <td>Pac Is/Amer Ind/Other</td> </tr> </table>	Asian (NH)	Black/African American (NH)	White (NH)	Hispanic or Latino	Pac Is/Amer Ind/Other
Asian (NH)	Black/African American (NH)	White (NH)	Hispanic or Latino	Pac Is/Amer Ind/Other			

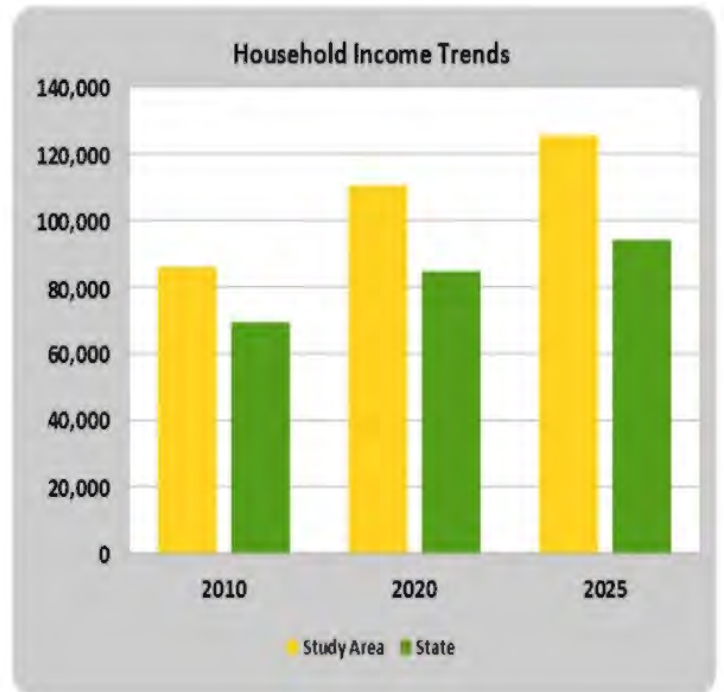
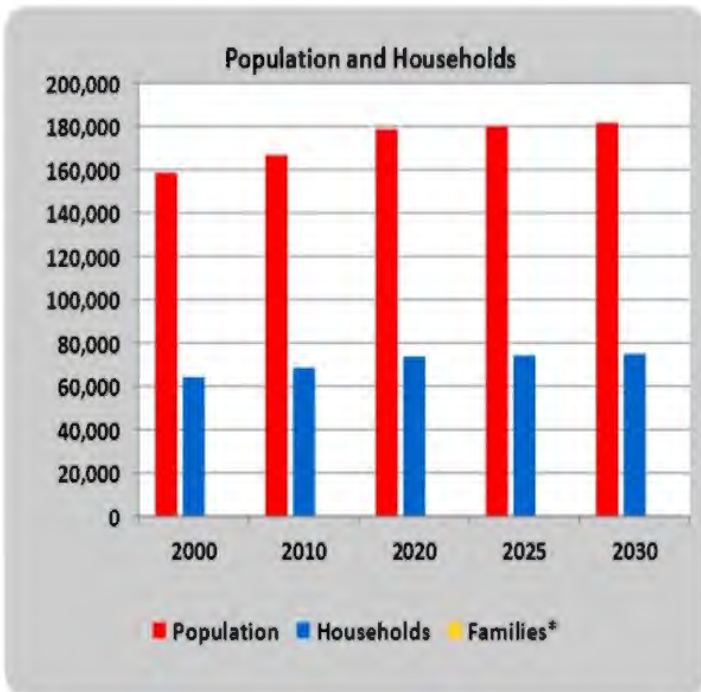
TrendView

Significant Demographic Estimates and Projections

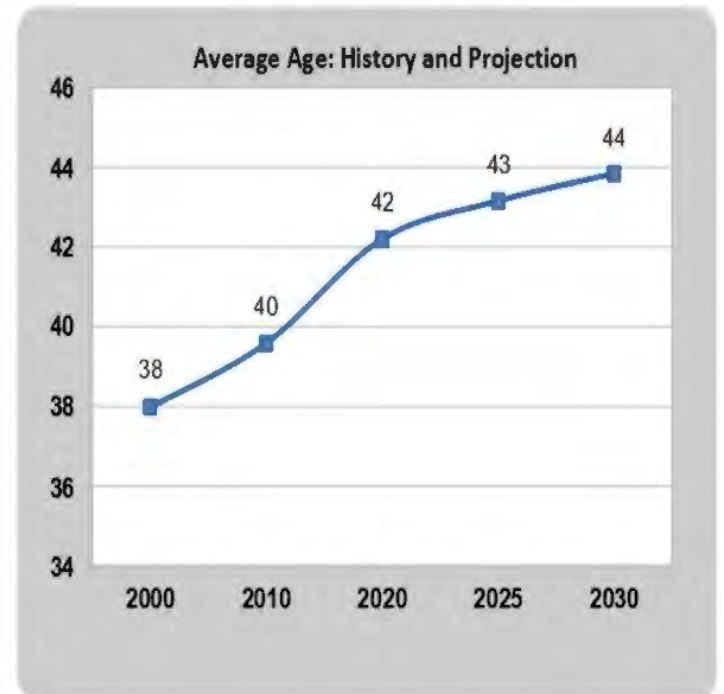
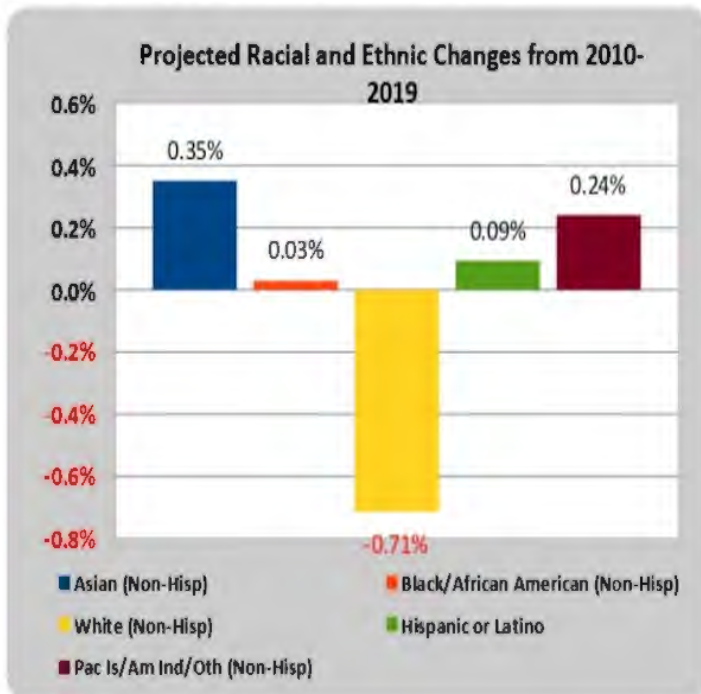
Prepared for: New Hampshire Conference, UCC

Study Area: 12.5 mi Around Spinney Road, Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801, United States

Base State: ME, NH
Date of Report: 6/17/2021



NOTE: Family Household data is not projected out 10 years.



ThemeView

Demographic Descriptions of the Study Area

Prepared for: New Hampshire Conference, UCC

Study Area: 12.5 mi Around Spinney Road, Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801, United States

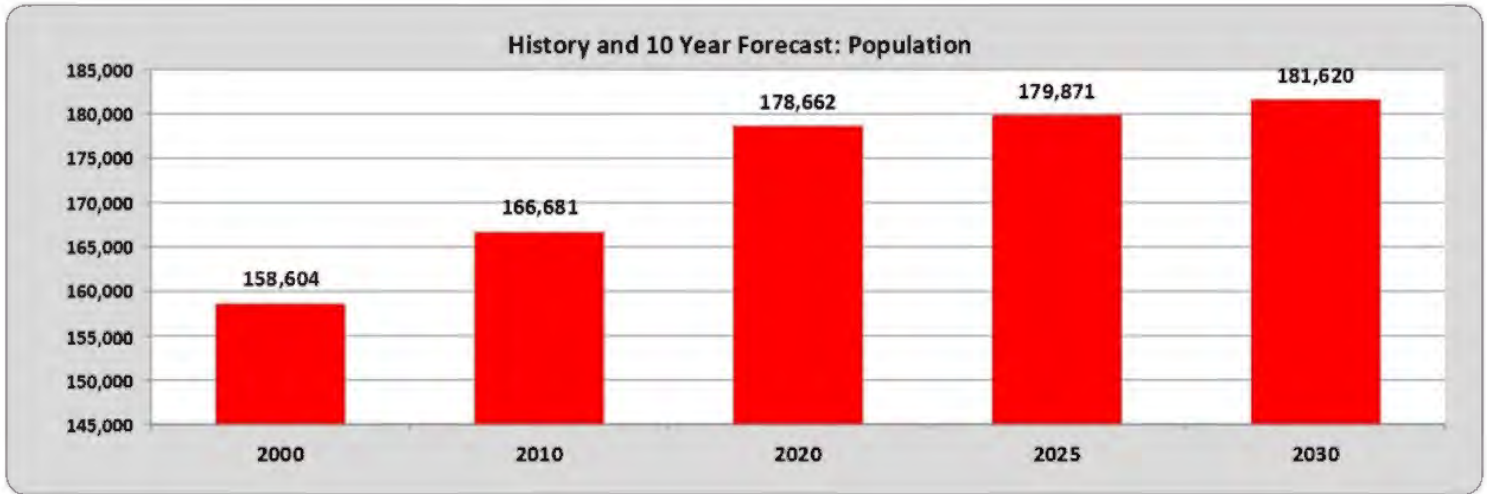
Base State: ME,NH

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People and Change

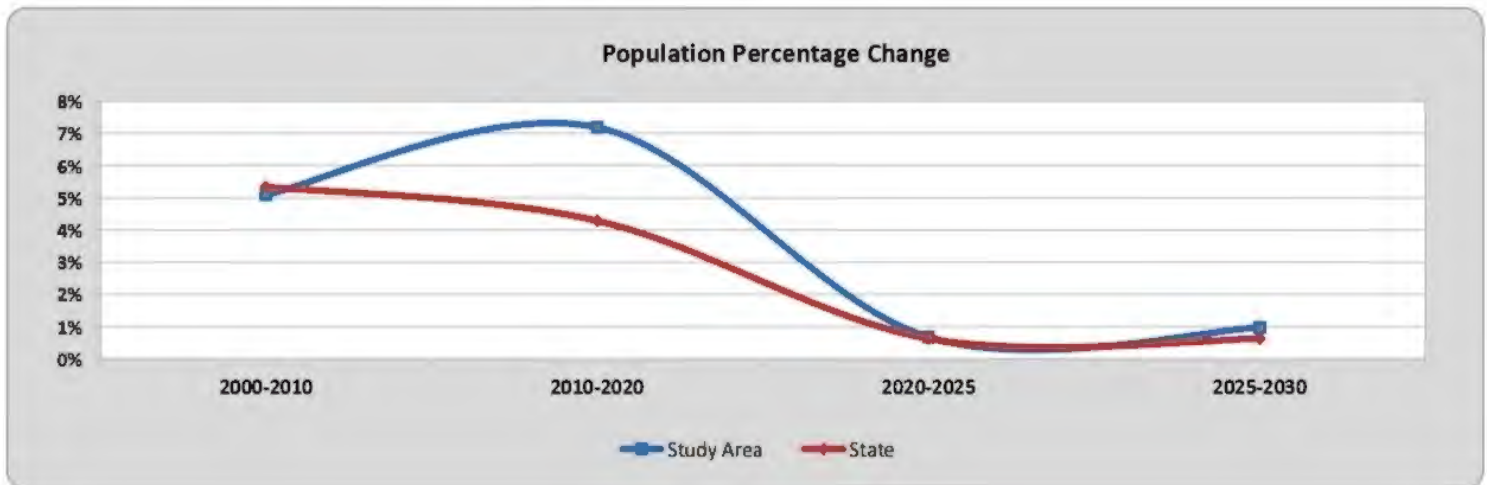
Population is the most basic demographic characteristic. It indicates how many persons reside within an area and how that total changes over time, including a current estimate and, 5 and 10 year forecast.

Population History with 5 and 10 Year Projected Change



Population Trends	2000	2010	2020	2025	2030
Study Area Population	158,604	166,681	178,662	179,871	181,620
Population Change		8,077	11,981	1,209	1,749
Percent Change		5.09%	7.19%	0.68%	0.97%
State Population	2,510,703	2,644,831	2,758,194	2,775,527	2,792,866
Population Change		134,128	113,363	17,333	17,339
Percent Change		5.34%	4.29%	0.63%	0.62%

Projected Percentage Population Change: Comparison of Study Area to State



REFERENCES

Don Tirabassi

271 Lafayette Road, Portsmouth, NH 03801

603-436-9352 * dftirabassi@gmail.com

As a resident since 1992, I'm known to church members through my work as a performing arts presenter and a former director of The Music Hall. I've collaborated on several events in the sanctuary and discussed ideas for possible future arts use with church leadership.

This congregation for many years has provided inclusive and creative worship services. Along with engaging liturgy and music, its members work with the UCC to provide social outreach programs here and abroad. For others in the community, the historic building has its own secular, cultural and spiritual resonance. No site in Portsmouth has witnessed more peace rallies, political speeches, and social justice demonstrations than its front plaza facing Market Square. North Church has welcomed countless people; transients, tourists, and locals, and provided spiritual care, material assistance, or just a bird's eye view from the steeple! The congregation is warm and welcoming to all.

The multitude of news photos, videos, art, and 'selfies' attest to the special place the church holds as the iconic center of Portsmouth. Its members are working to create additional uses for the building as the Square has become an increasingly busy restaurant, retail, condo, and office location. To that end, usage is being offered for meetings and programs that will complement the vibrancy of this historic and cultural district. Over the past several years, the church has initiated a series of 'Soul Café' concerts that have introduced musicians from all over the country to audiences who may not have been inside the church or had a chance to socialize with its pastor and members. I have produced a two-actor performance of a C.S. Lewis Narnia story as artistic outreach to families with young children. This process will continue along with other space improvements as the pandemic ends.

I presented the noted British actor Gerald Charles Dickens' solo performance of his great-great grandfather's 'A Christmas Carol,' and he said that the warmth of the audience here, the splendid acoustics, and the intimacy of the sanctuary made North Church his favorite venue in the United States."



July 7, 2021

North Church
355 Spinney Rd
Portsmouth, NH 03801

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of North Church as you search for a new Pastor. Gather has had the opportunity to collaborate with North Church in many ways over the years, and your support of us is invaluable.

In the last few years, the congregation has done food drives with Gather, helped raise money for Gather, had events where Gather was the beneficiary, and invited us in to talk and educate the youth with regard to food insecurity. For us, fostering a community which believes in helping those in need is a cornerstone of North Church’s role in our community. Through their actions, we see first-hand how they bring education and awareness to their congregation, and how the congregation steps up and supports our efforts. We benefit here at Gather, but we also see them helping other non-profits in our community, showing how they really do support some of the most basic needs of people...food, shelter, emotional and physical support and more.

I have had the wonderful opportunity to come into a class and worked with students on “What is food insecurity”. Organized as part of a larger curriculum, I got to see the role the congregants play in shaping the next generation, and instilling a sense of Community Support. I’ve also been invited to a concert series where we were the beneficiaries, but also we were invited to educate those in attendance of what we do, and how the audience could support our efforts, much like North Church does.

As part of our community, Gather is grateful for the efforts of North Church and supports their search for a new Pastor.

Seneca Adam Bernard
Associate Executive Director
sbernard@gathernh.org
603.436.0641

Deb Anthony <i>Executive Director</i>	Scott McKee <i>President</i>	Justin Jarvis <i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Members</i> Rob Gibbons Christopher Shaw Anne Holliday Elise Ringgenberg	<i>Members</i> Shaun Mathews Danny Edgecomb Greg Carroll Dane Peters
Tim Winters <i>President Emeritus</i>	Margaret Witham <i>Vice President</i>	Joanne Burke <i>Secretary</i>		

*Gather is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
210 West Road, Unit 210, Portsmouth, NH 03801*

George C. Pappas

Scoutmaster

Troop 164

603-682-5773

chip.pappas@olivedevelopment.com

Our troop is sponsored by the North Church

Describe some areas of strength in this church's ministry.

In my dealings with the North Church, I have found everyone to be warm and friendly. In my capacity as the scoutmaster for the local scout troop, my dealings with the ministry have been coordinating our meetings and even a few sleepovers. There has never been any hesitation in accommodating us.

Describe some areas for improvement in this church's ministry.

I do not have any insight into areas where the ministry can improve.

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church's ministry.

At different times in our troop's history, we've had scouts that needed financial help to pay for camp. On these occasions, there have been groups within the church that have supported our scouts.

Closing Prayer

Lord, bring us a person who follows your direction.

Give us someone who is a great leader with a passion for preaching your word, relating to our members, visitors, and community, nurturing and growing our congregation, lifting our presence in the Seacoast community, and supporting our mission.

Bring us someone with wisdom and discernment to guide us through our period of transition and into the future beyond.

Give our new minister and their family a love for the Seacoast, North Church, and our community.

We understand that a new pastor always means changes. Help us to be prepared to change and grow with graciousness and unity so we can be the church You have called us to be.

Help us to receive our new pastor and their family with deep love and renewed commitment. Help our new pastor and their family to experience this love, feeling welcome and a part of our community.

Together, grant us a powerful sense of revival and spiritual awakening as we move into the future.

In all this, we ask your will be done. Amen.

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 covenantal partners openly share vital information. To that end, we attest that we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church to the best of our abilities. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with 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.

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

Mary Louise Brozena

David Greer

Christine Groleau

Peter Kinner

Marcia Leach

Samantha Pizz

Nichole Prince

Mark Shaw

Mark Shaw Jr.

Douglass Woodward

Co-chairs: Nichole Prince and Samantha Pizz

Chaplain: Mark Shaw

Secretary: Christine Groleau

Corresponding Secretary: Peter Kinner

Signed:

Nichole Prince
4102 Mead Hill Rd
Newmarket, NH 03857
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Dover, NH 03820
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VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

The congregation is currently in good standing with the association / conference named. **Staff Comment:** The Congregation is in good standing with the Rockingham Association of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ.

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

Staff Comment: The Ministerial history information has been presented accurately and completely.

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

Staff Comment: To the best of my knowledge, the church's financial information has been presented clearly and thoroughly.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: Richard N. Slater

Name / Title: Richard N. Slater, Associate Conference Minister

Email: rslater@nhcucc.org

Phone: 603.715.9525

Date: September 7, 2021

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



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