

Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Who
are
we

Who
is our
neighbor

Who is
God
calling us
to become

?

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

MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

University Congregational United Church of Christ

4515 16th Ave NE

Seattle, Washington 98105-4201

Minister of Worship and Care

Pacific Northwest Conference

[May 29, 2022]

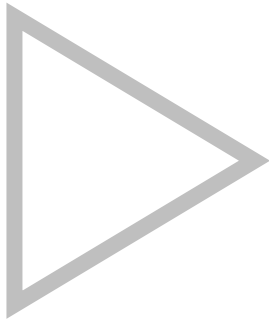
LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- 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: University Congregational United Church of Christ

Street address: 4515 16th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98115-4201

Supplemental web links:

Church Web Pages: www.universityucc.org

www.universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister

Facebook: @UCUCCSeattle

Twitter: @UCUCCSeattle

YouTube: UniversityCongregationalUCCSeattle

Additional ecumenical affiliations:

Pastor Steve Jerbi is affiliated with the ELCA through his dual standing

Pastor Steve Jerbi is also affiliated with the Poor People's Campaign

Church Council of Greater Seattle

Faith Action Network (statewide multifaith advocacy and action)

Conference: Pacific Northwest Conference

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:

Rev. Mike Denton, Conference Minister

mike@pncucc.org

206-725-8383, extension 102

Summary Ministry Description:

We are a healthy and faithful congregation at a transformational point, responding to a new calling on several fronts:

- As a committed social- and environmental-justice church seeking to similarly strengthen and innovate our internal ministries of care and spiritual growth
- As a historically rooted church now envisioning a dynamic future marked by both digital and in-person worship and fellowship
- As a progressive, risk-taking church where declining attendance and pledging units are compelling us to seek out the progressive meaning of “evangelism”
- As an overwhelmingly white church learning how to de-center whiteness, welcome diversity, and prioritize racial justice

This is our work to do, and the pastor we find to partner with us and the Leadership Team will bring the qualities to best support it: a listening, nurturing, and humble heart; experience collaborating with congregants for vital and effective Parish and Pastoral care ministries; familiarity with and excitement about the innovative technologies that can be deployed to evolve online worship, fellowship, and administration; and an ability to foster connections both within our walls and into the wider world.

Photographs:



What we value about living in our area:

People who live in Seattle are urban dwellers who value both the cultural and social amenities offered by this lively city and appreciate its proximity to mountains, water, and outstanding natural settings, including beautiful city parks. We appreciate a varied arts scene, professional sports teams, and a robust economy. We enjoy our proximity to the University of Washington and other educational institutions.

Current size of membership:

767 (as of 12/31/2021)

Languages used in ministry:

Our worship services and meetings are conducted in English, which is the first language of most people who attend our church. We often include other languages in our music and hymn singing.

Position Title:

Minister of Worship and Care

Position Duration:

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

Compensation Level:

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

Our church supports three co-equal pastors in a team ministry: a non-hierarchical “flat leadership” model that is unusual in a pastoral context but faithful to our congregational identity as a worship community with Jesus at the head. Together the three ministers make up the Leadership Team. The position that is the subject of this search is the Minister of Worship and Care, which has broad responsibility for the Ministry of Music & Worship and for the Ministry of Calling, Engagement & Community. The Minister of Worship and Care is joined on the Leadership Team by the Minister of Outreach and Christian Formation, and the Minister of Vision and Stewardship. (These portfolio designations represent a change from how they’re currently divided among the pastors. This change will go into effect upon hiring of the new settled minister.) Each member of the Leadership Team thus functions as “lead pastor” within their own portfolio of responsibilities and “supporting pastor” in relation to their colleagues’ portfolios of responsibilities, within relationships governed by collegiality and trust. The specific roles of each minister, an overview of the overall responsibilities of Leadership Team, and the job description for this post are included under “Additional Resources” at www.universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister.

All members of the Leadership Team share these duties:

- Nurturing a healthy spiritual life, individually and together
- Bringing awareness of their own identities (racial, cultural, sexual, etc.) and implicit biases to the teamwork and common purpose of the Leadership Team and church family
- Preaching (equally divided among the three pastors)
- Providing listening, counseling, and compassionate pastoral care with a variety of congregants in diverse settings including church, home, hospital, long-term care, etc.
- Working collaboratively and collegially within the Leadership Team, sharing responsibility for its healthy connection and function
- Exercising responsibility, leadership, and authority within their designated portfolio while supporting and participating in their co-pastors’ portfolio ministries
- Supporting the church’s missions and ministries; officiating at weddings and funerals for participants in our church community; being a ministerial presence at church events
- Communicating in a timely and effective manner to individuals and to the congregation
- Developing and supporting church lay leadership
- Collaborating with lay leadership to develop specific goals and outcomes related to the minister’s specific areas of portfolio ministry
- Maintaining accountability to the congregation through the Church Council, Personnel Committee, and Leadership Parish Relations Committee

The Minister of Worship and Care also has duties that are specific to their portfolio:

- Leading and supporting the congregational care ministry of UCUC:
 - Providing and expanding opportunities to help congregants experience love of God, love of neighbor, and love of self through spiritual practices, acts of service, and mutually supportive fellowship
 - Helping to inspire and organize people for their callings to volunteer ministry
 - Facilitating the creation of entry points to deeper engagement and community (e.g., small groups)
 - Innovating the systems of care that can connect us when we're gathering in different ways than ever before
- Creating opportunities outside our walls to meet people where they are and welcome them to join us.
- Leading the planning and organization of worship and music to enhance the spiritual experience of congregants to connect with the Divine. This involves working with ministerial colleagues, staff, the Director of Music, the Artist-in-Residence, and lay members. Planning is both short-term and long-term, encompassing the church year, the liturgical seasons, and individual worship services.
- Managing the production of online worship. This job will require a blend of technological knowledge with spiritual vision and creativity and will be done with the support of lay volunteers, the Director of Music, and/or contract staff.
- Supervising program staff for Music & Worship and Calling, Engagement & Community ministries including hiring, training, direction, and adherence to the policies and procedures in the UCUC Personnel Handbook.
- Leading the visioning and goal setting for Worship & Music and Calling, Engagement & Community ministries' programming in line with articulated UCUC priorities, and support implementation of goals as approved by Council.
- Direct supervision of:
 - Director of Music
 - Worship Assistant
 - Video Editor
 - Parish Care Coordinator
- Liaising with several of the church's lay groups:
 - Worship & Music Committee and subgroups
 - Calling, Engagement & Community Committee and subgroups
 - The Church Council representatives from Worship & Music and Calling, Engagement & Community ministries
 - A/V Team

Core Competencies:

The congregation expects each of the ministers on the Leadership Team to have the following core competencies:

- Humility, encouragement, insightful listening, a pastor's heart
- Thoughtful, inspiring, pastoral, and prophetic preaching and teaching skills
- Understanding of how race impacts community and its dynamic within a multiracial Leadership Team like ours
- Dedication to the success of the team ministry model, fostering teamwork and emphasizing collaboration over ego
- The ability to speak straightforwardly and honestly, naming tough truths with respect and love
- Self-motivation, accountability, openness to input, and responsiveness to others
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Effective and supportive supervisory skills
- Commitment to promoting a work/church environment that is actively engaged in dismantling institutional racism, white supremacy, gender bias, and other injustices
- The ability to interpret, articulate, and promote the congregation's overall mission, vision, and goals within areas of assigned responsibility

For this particular position of Minister of Worship and Care, the congregation expects the following additional core competencies:

- Genuine enjoyment in connecting with people and the interpersonal warmth to create a welcoming church environment, inviting all into a community that ministers to one another
- The skills needed to engage people with one another in fellowship, to support people in finding their call, and to build and maintain systems of pastoral and congregational care
- Theological strength (we do not use a lectionary but develop in-house thematic preaching series)
- The organization to hold the many moving parts of worship; the creativity to plan dynamic and engaging worship experiences; the agility to pivot in the face of change
- The communication, administrative, and organizational skills needed to plan and create multiple worship services within a team of staff, laypersons, children and youth, and co-pastors
- Tech experience with (or at least general understanding of) video production and editing and an ease with digital procedures, along with sincere delight in the creative possibilities that online worship affords (additional information on tech requirements provided later in the document)
- Understanding of what musicians and artists need to do their best work

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis:

Starting compensation will range from \$70,000 to \$95,000 per year depending upon experience.

Compensation:

- A portion of the compensation for pastors is set aside as a housing allowance for tax purposes. The amount is approved annually by the Church Council.
- Self-Employment Tax Reimbursement (equal to 7.65% of Salary + Housing)

Benefits:

- Retirement contribution to UCC Pension Board annuity at 14% of salary
- Sick Leave accruing at one workday for each month of service, to a maximum amount of 40 workdays
- Vacation: 25 days/year, including three to five Sundays
- Individual health insurance through Kaiser Permanente HMO, or UCC Plan B. If not already on a UCC plan, the individual must qualify for the plan.
- Life and Disability Insurance and Benefits
- Washington State Paid Family Medical Leave

Paid Sabbatical

Three months of sabbatical leave is provided after every five years. Compensation is at full-time rate, with medical benefits.

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

Our church does not provide a parsonage or other residence for ministers. A portion of the compensation for pastors is set aside as a housing allowance, for tax purposes. The amount is approved annually by the Church Council. Pastors may receive reimbursement for relocation expenses with approval by the Church Council. Pastors may receive a housing support loan with approval by the Church Council.

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

Although we are learning new ways of conducting online meetings during the pandemic, which we assume will continue beyond the crisis, we highly value in-person connections and want our new minister to live near us. We have recently launched a hybrid worship model—offering both masked in-

person services and online worship—and are proceeding cautiously in accordance with state and local health officials’ recommendations.

We do expect that our new minister will live somewhere within the greater Seattle area. The cost of housing in the Seattle area is high, and traffic can be difficult, with intra-city commute times approaching 45 minutes or more during rush hour (pre-COVID). That said, a new stop on the Seattle Link Light Rail transit system has recently opened just three blocks from church, transforming accessibility to points across the city and (in time) beyond.

State any incentives: None

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

Professional and peer support includes the UCC Communities of Practice at the Conference Level, and Lectionary Study Groups.

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

We are seeking a full-time minister.

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

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

- Innovating and facilitating the continued faithful evolution of worship, working in collaboration with co-leaders and laypersons to blend in-person worship with a continuing online worship presence in which both are progressive, engaging, meaningful, inspiring, and varied.
- Innovating and facilitating the ministry of parish care in our midst, working in collaboration with the Parish Care Coordinator, co-leaders, and laypersons to:
 - expand opportunities for congregants to experience love of God, love of neighbor, and love of self through spiritual practices, acts of service, and mutually supportive fellowship.
 - inspire and organize people for their calling to volunteer ministries.

- facilitate the creation of entry points to deeper engagement (small groups, etc.).
- innovate the systems of care that can connect us when we're gathering in different ways than ever before.
- To share our joyful Christian community and to bolster our declining numbers, working with the congregation to identify and live into an "evangelism" that is faithful to our progressive ideals, radical hospitality, and non-creedal openness.

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

- In facilitating Worship, a primary interface with the outside world, this pastor will most directly impact how the wider world sees and understands us.
- This pastor will help us live into our commitment to making connections with life beyond our congregation, helping us to make connections and extend invitations to come find a home within our church family.
- This pastor will be honored in their need to pursue their sacred passions, recognizing that they can be used to represent the church on a wider, regional or national scale.

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

In the weekly bulletin we highlight four core values: Racial Justice, Creation Justice, Open and Affirming, and a family-friendly intergenerational church. We seek a Leadership Team member who shares these foundational values and will support us in these efforts. All staff participate in ongoing anti-bias and anti-racism training, with specific attention to how it relates to their roles.

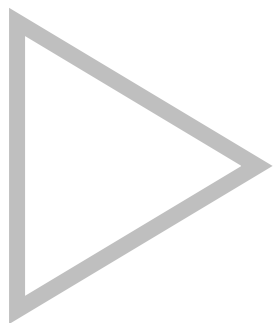
Based on what you have learned about who your church is, who your church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, describe four areas of excellence from *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry* that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's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

This UCC document can be found at www.universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister under "Additional Resources." We have selected these four areas:

1. Caring for all Creation

2. Strengthening Interpersonal Assets
3. Building Transformational Leadership Skills
4. Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions

2. 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?

In the early 2000s we created a Covenant to guide our congregational life. This statement has been revised more than once since its adoption (most recently in 2018), as we are a living congregation, always growing and changing, never finished or static. We believe that God is Still Speaking. Our Covenant, as well as the process by which it has evolved, is foundational to our identity as a congregation. In each Sunday worship service (whether online or in person), we affirm it together:

God of Providence and Grace, in a spirit of memory, thanksgiving, and hope:

We covenant with You and with one another

To seek and respond to Your word and will, made known and to be made known;
To worship You in unity and diversity, welcoming everyone;
To live responsibly within Your creation, sharing with gratitude the gifts we are given;
To care for and pray for each other, in trials of the spirit and in times of joy;
To encourage each other in the growth of our minds and spirits;
To promote Your reign of justice and peace, meeting hate with reconciling love; and
To reject the false gods of society, proclaiming the gospel of Jesus.

May God help us and be with us. Amen.

The cover of our worship service bulletin each Sunday confirms our living intention, that we are “journeying together on God’s transformative adventure, following the path of Love and Justice as revealed by Jesus.”

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

We explain how our church has followed the path of Jesus, as we interpret that in our Covenant, in Section 3. Much of what we have done in the past—both to be good neighbors to our community/world and to nurture ourselves as a church family—continues to be key to our vision of what God is calling us to be.

In this section, we highlight aspects of our ongoing church life and ministry that are foremost in our minds as we think about our future as a congregation. Some of the actions or topics below reflect long-standing church practices for which we have a deep and continuing commitment. Others are more recent actions we have taken or prioritized to pursue in the future. Together, we see them as our collective action to pursue love and justice as a community, and we affirm that “God is still speaking” in both our new endeavors and our long-standing programs.

Love and Justice Ministries and Actions with the Wider Community

We engage in the Seattle community and the world, seeking to be agents of love and justice. A few key examples of this are:

- Actions to stem the destructive tide of climate change have been a concern and priority in our community for more than 20 years. Since the formation of “Sacred Earth Matters,” an action team within our congregation, we have continually educated ourselves and have taken action on these issues. We have installed solar panels on our roof and embraced eco-friendly building policies and practices. In 2019, we amended our investment policies to exclude carbon-based investments. We invite the congregation to consider donations to effective external organizations.
- In 2015-2016, we formed a Racial Justice Action Team and began formulating specific plans to offer educational activities and engage small groups with issues of racial justice. In a 2019 congregational meeting devoted to this issue, we declared ourselves called to become a Racial Justice Church. The vote was preceded by a worship service led by youth who strongly urged the congregation to take action on racial justice. In this declaration, we acknowledged that “there are many ways in which we, as a congregation, take part in the systemic racism that exists in our society and our church. We affirm that as people of faith and followers of Jesus, we are called to work in our understanding of systemic racism, and to work in ways both in and outside the church to change those systems

and ourselves. We acknowledge that while our journey in this work has begun, many steps are still to be taken. We are called to take strides in self-awareness, in community learning, and to be a voice with others in witness to our faith.”(The full text of this resolution is available at www.universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister, under “Additional Resources.”)

- We believe that our building and spaces can provide important benefit to the wider community. As such, we have hosted more frequently during the pandemic a program (Teen Feed) that provides meals for youth and young adults without housing in our community; we redeveloped one of our church parking lots into nonprofit affordable housing; and we have repeatedly given use of our largest parking lot to Tent City, an organization that sponsors an encampment of people without permanent homes. We continue seeking ways to help people find stable housing in our community.

Living our Faith and Nurturing Our Church Community and Each Other

- Over the past 10 years, worship has become increasingly creative and accessible, connecting congregants in new ways. We had intended to create online worship opportunities prior to the pandemic’s urgent imperative, and were able to quickly adjust to a digital format in early 2020. This has been centrally important to maintaining connections, for worship and for the many other ongoing, essential aspects of congregational life. We realize that enabling remote participation will be increasingly important, and we are committed to continue offering digital worship opportunities for the foreseeable future. We resumed in-person worship in addition to online worship in fall 2021. A big challenge and opportunity will be to implement this “both/and” approach to worship. Worship is also a place to explore and live up to our other commitments and areas of concern. For example, to intentionally support the gifts and talents of Black worship leaders, we invited and paid stipends to Black clergy and musicians to lead us in worship during the 2021 Black History Month. We are routinely reminded of our commitments to racial justice, environmental justice, and social justice through the experience of worship.
- There has been for some time a persistent call for greater interpersonal connections within the congregation. Then came the pandemic, which brought social distancing and online worship, further interfering with our sense of community and connection. Opportunities to connect in person are resuming, but with varying levels of comfort and ability among congregants. With our usual methods for caring for each other and our neighbors disrupted, we are open in a new way to innovative ideas for care and community building. To meet this call, we continue to experiment with offering a variety of opportunities for connection and relationship-building. There are annual retreats for men and for women and a week-long all-church camp in the summer. An active prayer group and a Bible study group meet weekly. Before the pandemic, there was a community breakfast served before worship where all were welcome, inviting free-will donation, which may yet resume. There have been several book clubs, where the entire congregation is invited to read a book and meet in small groups with a facilitator from the congregation to guide the discussion. We created Mix-Sups, dinner groups that rotated hosts, and we have continued these online during the pandemic. Many older members of the congregation have moved to senior community settings,

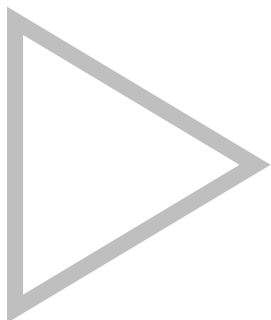
where UCUC congregants enrich their relationships and have remotely attended worship. Still, we hear expressions of need for building supportive relationships within the congregation, and we are convinced that more work is needed.

- Since 2016, the congregation has experienced substantial change. Over a few short years, three long-time members of the Leadership Team have left and we have had two interim ministers. The pandemic with its personal losses has added to our sense of disconnection. We are grieving. We will look to our new Minister of Calling, Engagement & Community to walk with the congregation as we continue to process our grief in our community of faith.
- Our membership is slowly shrinking and, on average, aging. The median age of our membership in 2019 was 64, increased from 55 in 2007, and our membership has declined about 10% between 2010 and 2020. Our pledging units have decreased from 443 in 2009 to 295 in 2022, a 33% drop. While our pledging units have decreased, the amount of the average pledge has increased, so our budget has grown overall. While these changes are common across mainline Protestant churches, we recognize them as key immediate and long-term challenges that we must meet. We confirm this as an ongoing “front-burner” issue for Church Council and congregational consideration and action. For that reason, Church Council formed the Futures Task Force in 2019, to assess the current state of the church and project a pathway forward. Our response to the FTF report has been interrupted by the COVID pandemic, and it is now becoming possible to give attention to the report and the challenges it addresses.
- Considering our church’s team leadership model, we are committed to the ideal that God alone is the head of the church. Therefore, all three clergy members hold an equal share of responsibility and accountability. Each minister holds a defined role with specific primary responsibilities, but the structure is essentially flat. Despite the distinctions between roles, there are some areas of church life that do not fall neatly into one area or another, and there is constant need for coordination within the team. Additionally, the Leadership Team reflects the diversity we embrace as a congregation and is currently multiracial. Both these realities reflect our deepest values at UCUC *and* bring complexities. Conflicts are inevitable. Thus it is critical that each member of the Leadership Team be aware of the ways privilege—of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, etc.—play out in group dynamics. Every member of the Leadership Team must be willing to engage in respectful, productive debate and discussion with each other; able to listen deeply and lovingly to each other; and ready to speak up on what they believe to be important, especially within their own area of primary responsibility. This is valuable work, but it takes effort.
- We have a robust ministry for children, youth, and families. Programming includes Sunday morning Youth Group meetings for both high school and middle school youth before the service, and Sunday School for elementary youth with childcare for younger children during the service. It also includes a Youth Retreat, a Families’ Retreat (except during the pandemic), and organized opportunities for playdates and meet-ups throughout the year. There are also several

intergenerational events, including the all-church camp in the summer and the Advent Workshop (where everyone can create Christmas-related crafts and decorate cookies together).

The above are good reflections of our most important growing edges as a church. They fit into a context of an active, seeking congregation with many deep, long-standing friendships and many other programs and activities. A fuller description of who we are today is given in the next section.

3. WHO ARE WE NOW?



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

a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

1. Congregation’s life of faith
2. Strengths and positive qualities of our congregation
3. What worship is like when we gather
4. Our educational/faith formation vision
5. How our congregation is organized for ministry
6. Our actions to respond to the emerging COVID crisis
7. How many hours are spent in meetings?
8. Can you provide the next minister with copies of documents?

b. 11-YEAR REPORT

c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Introduction

Demographics

d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

1. Participation
2. Ordained members
3. Retired ministers
4. Current staff
5. Reflection

e. CHURCH FINANCES

f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

1. Three significant happenings
2. Specific Change
3. Conflict
4. Ministerial history
5. Relations between ministers and congregation
- 6-8. Ministerial issues

3.d. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

3.a.1 Describe your congregation's life of faith.

At every Sunday worship service, several statements, both written and declared aloud, describe our congregation's vision for our life of faith together:

- **Covenantal community:** More than 15 years ago, we created a congregational Covenant. It articulates our values and commitments and is an integral part of our worship every Sunday. The Covenant articulates how this faith community intends to "seek," "worship," "live," "care for," "encourage," "promote justice and peace," and "proclaim the gospel." We take seriously our commitment to be a covenantal, rather than credal, community. Many people within our community say this Covenant by heart, and it continually informs individuals' thoughts and actions. (Please see our congregation's Covenant at the start of Section 2).
- **Welcoming:** We begin each service with the words "*Whether you come today believing, seeking, or doubting, you are welcome here,*" emphasizing the non-judgmental welcome we strive to extend to all as well as an openness to many views of God and Jesus. As an Open and Affirming congregation, we celebrate our diversity in religious background, gender, sexual orientation, age, race, and abilities. Additionally, we are committed to using gender-neutral language when referring to God, or to balance references to Father God with references to Mother God, etc.
- **God is still speaking:** The congregation has a history of considering the social challenges of the day and listening for God's voice in how we should respond to those challenges. Once a decision has been made, the congregation sticks with the commitments made. Examples include welcoming LGBTQIA people to the congregation, hiring the first gay couple as ministers in 1994, becoming a Racial Justice Church, assisting the unhoused by opening our parking lot and showering facilities for tent cities, hosting Teen Feed in the church, and providing frequent staffing.

After the Bible reading each Sunday, the lectors say:

For the Word of God in scripture

For the Word of God among us

For the Word of God within us

Thanks be to God.

This articulates the congregation's view that God is *still* speaking.

The congregation's life of faith is lived out in many ways, including individual spiritual practices, communal participation in congregation ministries, participation in caring for one another, worshipping together, and social and racial justice advocacy.

3.a.2 Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation

- **Continuous Searching and Taking Risks:** The congregation has a history of continually searching for better understanding/better solutions, taking risks, and experimenting with new efforts. Sometimes change is accomplished quickly, sometimes over time with a period of discernment, and sometimes the experiments don't work but lessons are learned. Some examples:
 - Voting to become a Racial Justice Church in August 2019, which calls us to the long-term commitment of dismantling white supremacy culture.
 - Having a flat-leadership model. There is no senior minister at the church, rather three co-equal ministers. This is described in greater detail further in this section.
 - Hiring the first gay couple as mainline Protestant Co-Ministers in 1994.
 - Providing seed money and administrative support for Gathering Ground, an alternative worship experience. Gathering Ground is now a separate 501c3 charitable entity, partially supported by the congregation.
 - In the last capital campaign, we took the unusual step of including an endowment for the Love & Justice Ministry to provide support of outside nonprofit groups that support the Ministry's goals. This reflects our congregation's emphasis on wanting to partner with and *continually* support groups outside our walls.
 - Taking the initiative and risk of providing scholarship support to enable families to attend the week-long Seabeck summer camp, a long-time congregational tradition, when attendance declined around 2010. The experiment was a huge success and revived Seabeck camp.
- **Active membership base:** We have a very active membership base, willing to give of their many-faceted skills in assisting the congregation. Volunteers provide liturgical art, assist with administrative needs, provide medical expertise advising on our Covid response, do video editing, share their musical gifts, and many other things.

Many of the initiatives we have pursued arose from members with ideas large and small. Some examples of these initiatives include:

- In 2019, the youth group requested a "Black Lives Matter" banner outside the church. This led the congregation to adopt a resolution to become a Racial Justice Church. This also helped to broaden a continuing education and reflection process for the congregation on racial justice matters.
- A small group of members began preparing breakfasts before the 9:00 am Christian Education hour as a way to encourage community, especially for families with young children and youth. This became very popular and allowed the congregation

a way to welcome people from outside the congregation.

- For many years a group of lay leaders led a Jesus Study group. From this group a lecture series began. Progressive Christian speakers were welcomed to the church and Seattle faith community, for challenging and thought-provoking weekend lectures and workshops.
- **Financial resources:** Many of our members are blessed with a relatively high level of educational and financial resources and generously give of their time, talents, and financial resources. For example, the support for social and racial justice causes outside the church is significant. (See pages 52-57 of the 129th Annual Report, available at: <https://www.universityucc.org/resources/>.)

3.a.3 Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

From March 2020 to September 2021, COVID paused our in-person worship and we, like so many other congregations, quickly learned how to do online worship. Our worship services continue to evolve as we emerge from the COVID shut-down, and we now offer multiple service formats. Since we restarted in-person services in September 2021, we have offered *both* in-person and online services. We expect that both online and in-person worship will continue into the future. The online service is streamed at 5:00 PM each Sunday on YouTube and Facebook. It is a vespers-style service and is described at the end of this section. Starting January 2022, the Sunday services have also been available to watch live on Zoom. The online service is described at the end of this section.

Designing Worship Services

Worship series are developed by the Leadership Team six to 12 months in advance, at periodic worship retreats. Once the series are envisioned, the Music Director and Artist-in-Residence find musical, visual, dance, and other artistic expressions of the themes, working with lay members and the pastors in a collaborative process. Musical responses and the liturgical arts are woven throughout worship.

We do not follow a lectionary for Scripture. We follow the seasons of the church year. We celebrate Communion by intinction, coming forward to receive, and usually on the first Sunday of each month. We celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism in services throughout the year.

In the traditional in-person service, the order of worship is provided in a paper bulletin (with a digital version linked via QR code posted on the sanctuary door). The bulletin also contains announcements of events and initiatives. Image projection is used in the sanctuary at the discretion of the pastors. A recent article in the church weekly newsletter by Pastor Steve Jerbi, discussing the collaborative

approach to worship, can be found at universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister, in the “Additional Resources” section.

Liturgical Arts

We are drawn to diverse images and expressions of the sacred. Liturgical arts are of growing importance to us. As seasons and themes of worship change, the hangings, images, and paraments in the sanctuary change as well. In the summer of 2018, a Liturgical Arts Endowment was established to provide sustainable funding for visual, dance, written, and other expressive arts. The University UCC Artist-in-Residence (a volunteer position) coordinates the artwork in the sanctuary and works with the Creativity Council for the Liturgical Arts to implement the themes of the worship series. Artwork that enhances our spaces often involves a participatory component where members of the congregation contribute images or parts of the whole.

Including Children in Worship

One important component of worship is welcoming and including families and their children. An elementary-age child typically brings in the light and lights the candles, then leads the Call to Worship. (To early 2022, this is currently done by pre-recorded video. When children are vaccinated, we hope to once again include this at in-person worship.) At the end of the service, the same child is part of the recessional, as they carry the light out of the sanctuary and into the world.

Chancel Choir, Other Performance Ensembles, and Soloists

Our Chancel Choir of 50+ voices anchors congregational singing and provides an anthem and an offertory for most services. The choir sings, on average, three Sundays per month and takes the summer off. Other musicians participate during the summer and at other times. This music is provided by soloists or small ensembles, typically made up of congregation members and their friends, and also includes outside musicians and groups. In addition to the Chancel Choir, organized music groups include an occasional women’s choir (Viriditas), a children’s choir, Bell Choir, and various small ensembles. During the time when services were solely digital, the choir anthems were recorded individually and then merged together by the choir director. This has been a very time-consuming process. The choir has cautiously resumed in-person performances, with singer’s masks and other risk-reduction protocols.

Our organist/ keyboardist provides inspiring accompaniment and helps to bridge the various sections of the service. Music selections vary widely, from classical to modern in a variety of styles. Care is taken

when using multi-cultural and world music to do so in a way that respects the culture of origin. We typically sing two or three hymns and several short songs as we transition from one section of worship to the next. The Chancel Choir has resumed meeting weekly in person for rehearsals.

Our in-person worship generally, but not always, follows this format:

Musical Prelude

Welcome

Bringing in the Light and Call to Worship

Land Acknowledgement

Church blessings and celebrations

Time of Reconciliation and Forgiveness

Anthem

Engaging and Listening for the Word

The Scripture of the day (read by lay leaders)

Sermon (rotated among the 3 ministers)

Responding to the Word: Prayers of the People and Pastoral Prayer

Offerings for the Mission of God's Church

Stewardship moment by a member

Unison sharing of our Covenant

Passing of the Peace

Benediction

Communion is offered the first Sunday of each month

The current worship bulletin is available to view at

<https://www.universityucc.org/next-sunday>

Online Worship

Our congregation has found that online worship services have expanded our reach to those in the local area who can't make the journey to attend worship, those who have moved away from the area, and those who need to worship at another time during the week. Our church has invested in technology to help broadcast and record our worship services. Our current online worship offers two ways to participate: a livestream of our 10 AM in-person service via Zoom and a livestream of an evening online-only vespers service at 5 PM on Sundays. Our 10 AM worship service is livestreamed via Zoom and broadcast to different spaces within the church building. We have a second worship service at 5 PM on Sundays which is an evening vespers service; this evening worship broadcasts on our [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#). Pastors welcome online worshipers in the chat. Online worshipers are encouraged to greet each other and connect via chat and to "like" the video. The 5 PM livestream is a broadcast of a video that mixes pieces curated for the online worship and the liturgy and sermon recorded from the morning's in-person worship. The online worship contains similar components as in-person worship, including the participation of the congregation. Congregational announcements and photos are shared at the beginning and end of the video. Congregants are encouraged to share their talents through sending in photos and videos to participate in the online worship, such as videos of communion, children bringing in the light for the beginning of worship, and musical contributions from musicians and singers from far and wide.

3.a.4 Describe the educational program/faith formation vision of your church

Our church offers a robust Christian formation program led by a Director of Children, Youth and Families Ministry.

Our faith formation program begins at birth for our littlest ones.

This means regular care from familiar volunteers and paid caregivers during worship, meetings, and events. Parents of our littlest ones are supported in their parenting journey through fellowship, pastoral care, and gatherings. Our elementary program picks up as our littlest ones begin formal schooling. Children are invited to attend Sunday School during worship or to remain in the pew. Each time we gather for worship, an elementary-age child carries the light in and out and leads the congregation in the Call to Worship. Beyond Sunday morning, there are a variety of events offered for families to connect. All congregational events, programs, and worship times are open to the entire age spectrum. Children are welcomed and included in all aspects of the life of our church.

Our youth program is well established.

A foundational piece of our youth ministry program is Youth Group. Each Sunday, 6th-8th grade and 9th-12th grade youth gather before worship for learning, fun, and community. After, youth are encouraged to go to worship. Youth sit in the "youth pew(s)" or with their families. Some lead worship or are called towards caring and educational ministries with babies to elementary-age children.

Beyond Sunday mornings, youth and their families participate in our offerings of service, learning, connection, and fellowship. We offer three to six retreats each school year and two mission trips each summer. Every year we offer *Our Whole Lives, Sexuality and our Faith*, alternating between grades 7 - 8 and 10 - 12. Confirmation class takes place for grades 8 and 9 every other year. Pastoral staff partner with the youth program, creating meaningful connections. Once a year, our youth lead the congregation in Youth Worship, planning and leading the entire worship service.

Youth have been instrumental in our movement toward greater justice, inclusion, and radical welcome. For example, youth crafted and pushed for our church to adopt a racial justice statement. In all that we offer, we aim to give youth the opportunity to support one another in their journeys, as well as experience and share God's love. Pastoral staff and consistent volunteer leadership provide connection, nurture, and safety as youth grow into their God-given gifts.

We also offer a few events for all families. Most recently we offered an all-family retreat in the fall, and we have done other fellowship events. We also work together to create the curriculum for Seabeck, our all-church summer camp in July.

Adult Education at UCUC

The commitment and covenant to encourage one another to grow in mind and spirit is one we live out in a variety of ways within UCUC programming. A church committee plans and coordinates the Lecture Series. Other activities and programs are developed and coordinated by staff and laypeople on an as-needed basis. Below is a sampling of recent offerings.

- **Visiting Theologian Rev. Dr. Yolanda Norton:** Christian Formation, the Lecture Series, and Worship and Music collaborated to welcome Rev. Norton as our visiting theologian for 2021-2022. Rev. Norton has preached, taught Womanist and Liberation theology, and led an ongoing discussion of *The Color Purple*. We hosted the digital version of the Beyoncé Mass, a womanist worship service to foster empowering conversations about justice, and then collaborated with several regional religious organizations to support it in person this May.

- **Where can we find hope in a year such as this?** A four-part lecture series was sponsored by the UCUCCLecture Series in 2020. Each evening consisted of a speaker presentation, dialogue with a pastor, and audience Q&A. The four speaker conversations were recorded and posted online for viewing by a wider audience. This was the latest offering of the Lecture Series which started in 2007 and has brought over 30 different speakers to UCUCCL, including Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan.
- **Weekly Bible Study via Zoom:** A weekly Bible study is attended by more than 30 people.
- The Play, “**May’s Vote**” was brought to the congregation and community via Zoom.
- **Women’s Retreat:** Held yearly
- **Men’s Retreat:** Held yearly
- **Racial Justice Book Club:** *My Grandmother’s Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts*, by Resmaa Menakem
- **The “Breath, Poem, Prayer” series on Facebook, led by the Leadership Team**
- **Academically accredited classes** offered in collaboration with Pacific School of Religion
- **Pilgrimage to Island of Iona:** A group of UCUCCL members is planning a week on Iona in late summer 2022, with pastoral leadership.
- **Earthkeeping led by David Roon at Seabeck Family Camp 2020:** Discussion of environmental issues from a Christian theological perspective
- **Indigenous and Settler Relationships to Land and Place** led by Dina Gillio-Whitaker at Seabeck Family Camp 2021

In 2017, UCUCCL helped launch [Gathering Ground](#), an independent program described as “a collaboration of people who learn and act together on the path to meaning.” Activities are designed to create space for shared activity and reflection. Gathering Ground finished its fifth year in 2021 with 26 days of programming and 150 participants. While UCUCCL provided start-up funding for this ministry, the church will provide the final funding dedicated to the ministry from the 2013 Imagine Capital Campaign, while continuing to provide support in the form of institutional help (fiscal management, nonprofit status, physical storage, staff support); contract with Beth Amsbary (Convener); a dedicated clergy liaison; and congregational encouragement to support this independent ministry.

3.a.5 Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

In the Congregationalist tradition from which UCUCCL springs, each congregation independently manages its own affairs. Therefore, the government of this church is vested in its members who, as the congregation, exercise the right of control in all its affairs. The Church Council serves as the interim governing body of the church between meetings of the congregation. The mission of the congregation

is carried out by committees within each of five related ministry areas. The Ministries report to the Council.

These five ministries are made up of committees and action teams that share common purposes. For each Ministry, a Ministry Liaison attends Church Council. A designated member of the Leadership Team works with each Ministry. A church structure diagram can be found at www.universityucc.org/resources.

Church Council: The Council includes the four church officers (Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Secretary, Treasurer), a representative from each of the five ministry areas, a Racial Justice representative, and two at-large members. The three pastors and the Director of Finance and Operations attend the meetings as non-voting, ex-officio members. Council has a number of standing committees. Council meetings are open to any congregant or friend of the congregation who wishes to attend.

Worship & Music Ministry: Committees are Worship & Music Committee, and Creativity Council for the Liturgical Arts. All of the elements that go into building and preparing for our worship services are the responsibility of this ministry. The Worship and Music committee attends to the service itself. Action teams take responsibility for ushering, serving communion, recruiting liturgists, and preparing the worship space. Many people participate in the Chancel Choir, the Children's Choir, and a wide variety of music groups. The Creativity Council works to integrate the arts into worship. Pages 62-66 of the 129th Annual Report (2021) provide an overview of the Ministry activities.

Calling, Engagement, & Community Ministry: Committees are Welcome Committee, Engagement Committee, and Parish Care Committee. These committees welcome newcomers, help people identify and live into their call, and enable the congregation to live out our covenant to "Care for and pray for each other in trials of the spirit and in times of joy." Detail on the ministry activities can be found on pages 47-49 of the 129th Annual Report (2021).

Love & Justice Ministry: Committees are Covenant Partners (an oversight committee with roughly 20 Action Teams), and Superfluity (details below). The 20 Love and Justice Action Teams are made up of two to 30 people and cover areas as diverse as racial justice, action to address homelessness, Earth justice, gun violence prevention, and others. In addition, we participate in the work of several nonprofit organizations, including the Child Learning and Care Center which is housed in our

building. A huge annual rummage, plant, and collectibles sale, called Superfluity, is also part of this ministry. This sale raises \$30,000 or more a year, dedicated to support local nonprofit organizations. Pages 50-61 of the 129th Annual Report (2021) provide more detail on the Ministry activities.

Christian Education & Spiritual Growth Ministry: Committees are Adult Christian Education Committee, Children's Ministry Committee, Youth Ministry Committee, Swanson Committee, Seabeck Committee, and Lecture Series. This ministry covers the ways that we seek to support each other in the growth of our minds and spirits. It encompasses the Christian Formation ministry with programs for children and youth, Adult Education, the Lecture Series, Seabeck All-Church Camp and the Scheyer Library. Pages 34-42 of the 129th Annual Report (2021) detail the Ministry activities.

Stewardship & Administration Ministry: Committees are Facilities & Equipment Committee, Personnel Committee, Stewardship & Finance Committee, and Investment Committee. This ministry tends to the financial and business needs of the church. See pages 43-46 of the 129th Annual Report (2021) for the Ministry activities.

Committees that report directly to Council include the **Leadership Parish Relations Committee (LPRC)**, which serves as a place where pastors can talk in a safe space about the challenges they face in their relationships with the congregation, and also discuss relationship concerns brought up by congregation members. This committee meets monthly and is made up of the Leadership Team and six lay members. Other committees that report directly to Council include the **Racial Justice Steering Committee, Budget Committee, and Pledge Campaign.**

3.a.6 Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?

During the COVID-19 pandemic (especially at the beginning), decisions regarding access to our building, online worship, and health and safety issues had to be made quickly. Staff in the office, including clergy, communicated with each other by email and phone and brought laypeople into the decision-making circle to participate as needed.

Worship leaders pivoted quickly to creating a weekly online worship service, and they experimented, listened to feedback, and continuously improved with each week's worship. With the help of volunteer

video editors and a paid video editor, the worship became a well-produced and spiritually moving blend of contributions from the clergy, congregants, guest preachers, and guest musicians. Our Music Director and choir created choral performances which blended voices and music recorded separately.

Once we began weekly online worship services, staff and lay leaders continued to explore new ways to retain our sense of “being church together.” We celebrated the service of our departing Music Director with a car parade. Our youth group adapted their fellowship time to an online format. We added informal Zoom meetings to connect after worship, Covenant Care circles that met on Zoom, phone-tree check-in calls to the whole congregation, and more frequent email newsletters to help people stay connected. Our lay leadership learned how to lead Zoom meetings and worked to bring church retreats, committee meetings, and other connection opportunities online. We appointed volunteer “tech deacons” and Zoom coaches and provided some members with devices to help them stay connected.

As our building continued to be used by childcare programs, the University District Youth Center, and Teen Feed, our dedicated staff made it safe to do so with increased attention to health and safety. The University District Youth Center, which uses the church’s Gold House property, expanded into the south end of the main building to continue their programs with increased physical distancing. The Teen Feed program, which uses our church kitchen, moved to a take-out model for providing meals to teens experiencing homelessness. We increased our support of the program by upping their kitchen usage from three to six nights a week.

Through quick action from church leadership and members, our church was able to apply for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and was granted a loan which has helped us to continue to support our clergy and staff through the financial stress of COVID-19. We have now met the terms of the loan. We also solicited special pandemic support financial gifts from the congregation to support ministry and help meet urgent needs of the congregation.

3.a.7 When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?

Pastors Amy and Steve report that roughly 50 – 60 hours per month are spent in meetings. In addition, there are quick phone check-in conversations. There is also a significant amount of administrative time spent making sure that lay-led activities are on track. With recent staff turnover, administrative time has been higher than it might have been in the past.

3.a.8 Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws, and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance?

The organization structure and annual report are available online at: www.universityucc.org/resources.

3.b. 11-YEAR REPORT

The 11-Year Report reflects a steady decrease in attendance and pledging units. This trend has been counterbalanced by increasing pledges per family unit. The net effect has been an increasing trend of total dollars pledged.

While our congregation remains a deeply spiritual and committed body, we are concerned about both the drop in attendance and the decrease in the number of pledging units. We recognize that this has been the trend among mainline Protestant churches across the United States. The Church Council is aware of the increasing financial and membership challenges and is committed to addressing them.

We are determined to remain a vibrant and healthy church committed to being a beacon for those seeking a meaningful spiritual life and a justice-oriented community. The 11-Year report can be found at www.universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister.org in the "Additional Resources" section.

3.c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Introduction

Prior to March 2020, which marked the beginning of the UCUC pivot in response to COVID, detailed Sunday worship attendance data were collected. Standard practice was for service attendees to sign pew pads, whose information was entered into a searchable database. The demographic data below, from 2020 data, reflect pre-COVID times and were relatively stable until March of that year.

With the onset of COVID in March 2020, UCUC abruptly transitioned away from in-person worship services, gatherings, and meetings to conducting almost all church activities online. As such, we no longer had available Sunday morning worship service attendance data to give us accurate participation numbers. We do know that between March 2020 and August 2021, Sunday morning viewership for our weekly online services drew a reasonably steady 60% of what pre-COVID in-person attendance had

customarily been, but we have no idea how many household participants watched, how many times they watched, etc.

Starting in August 2021, UCUCC returned to in-person Sunday morning services, but because some in our midst were ineligible for vaccines it was clear to UCUCC leadership that ending all online worship opportunities would not accord with our faith commitment to radical welcome. It was decided that we would merge footage recorded during the morning services with pre-recorded content to produce a similar, but separate online worship service that would go live Sunday evenings. Thus began our “hybrid worship” model.

As the Fall of 2021 gave way to the Winter of Omicron, with its heightened transmissibility, we settled into three options for participating in Sunday services: (1) in-person in the UCUCC building while fully masked, (2) via live, real-time-only feed over the internet of the in-person service, and (3) via viewing at any time of the pre-recorded service that is first available each Sunday evening. We gather as church differently—first because of Covid and now as a result of re-examining how we want to increase options for coming together. We will likely never go back to where we were before COVID. God is still speaking, and in so many ways we have found ourselves called to listen then act accordingly.

3.c.1. Membership

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	767	
Number of active non-members:	95	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	862	

3.c.2 Number of total members by age: ***2019 NUMBERS***

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>
0 (not eligible)	8*	29	61	50	86	126	164	155	Yes**

*Many youth age 12-17 do not separately join the church as individuals and therefore aren't included in these numbers

**These numbers reflect the 679 church members for whom we had age data in 2019

3.c.3 Percentage of total participants who have been in the church: ***2019 NUMBERS***

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	73%	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	17%	
Less than 5 years:	10%	

3.c.4 Percentage of adults in various household types:

The church does not have this data.

3.c.5 Education level of adult participants by percentage:

We cannot quantify this, but we can generally say that most adults have a college degree, and many have advanced degrees.

3.c.6 Percentage of adults in various employment types:

We cannot quantify this, but those below retirement age are generally employed.

3.c.7 Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

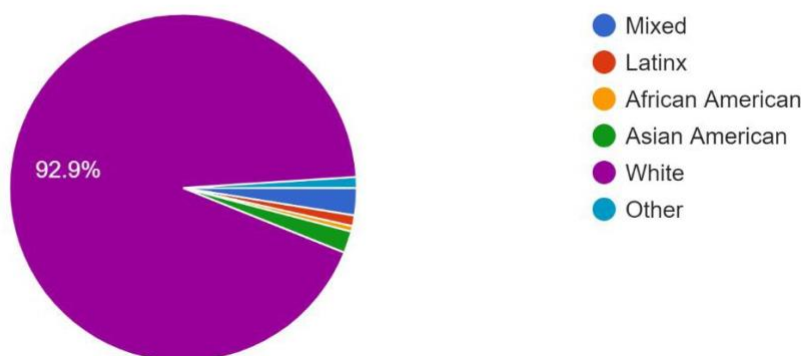
The full gamut of occupations is represented in our congregation, from artists and nonprofit workers to attorneys and tech industry professionals and beyond. In general, the “vibe” is white-collar and relatively affluent, with a significant sector of retired folks.

3.c.8 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?

2019 responses

How do you describe your race?

198 responses



3.c.9 Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one on the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)? Please note the date. Comment after the exercise:

Central to UCUC's idea of itself has long been its sincere desire to welcome worshipers who are diverse in race, sexual orientation, age, ability, etc. Most recently, a major congregational focus has been our identity as an overwhelmingly white congregation. We did not have the awareness of how our biases and lack of vision caused damage and hurt to people of color. As these hurts and biases surfaced, we began to look at their impact on our multiracial Leadership Team and staff, our congregation, and the wider community.

This has led to a far deeper study of race, racism, and racial justice than we have ever had before. A workshop entitled “Racial Justice as a Spiritual Imperative” triggered an ever-expanding set of efforts. Small group discussions were formed to discuss texts like UCC’s *White Privilege—Let’s Talk*, and books like Ijeoma Oluo’s *So You Want to Talk about Race?* Several sessions of our annual church summer camp have addressed racial justice. These efforts, along with a strong push from the youth group, led to the church’s decision in August of 2019 to become a Racial Justice Church.

Since that time, the Church Council has added a major statement of racial justice commitment to its current goals, has undertaken several sessions of self-study, and has added a seat for a racial justice representative. All cohorts of our Christian formation programs, from children to adults, are incorporating racial justice curricula. We have partnered with racial consultants to help us understand our journey into racial awareness, including one who has guided several cohorts of congregants in a study of our individual and congregational needs, strengths, and weaknesses, called the Intercultural Development Inventory. We have called as our theologian-in-residence the Womanist theologian, Reverend Dr. Yolanda Norton, who is helping us in many ways to clear our vision in the area of race.

In our worship services, the clergy bring focus, depth, and passion about issues of racial justice in a way of which there have always been glimmers, but now there is a steady glow. That is a start. At the same time, we acknowledge that changing the white-centered culture which has guided our church is a journey that brings discomfort and disagreement. It is a journey that will not happen overnight.

3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

2019 NUMBERS

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? (list any and all worship planners, such as lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)
Adult Groups or Classes	105	Clergy and volunteer committees
Baptisms (<i>number last year</i>)	9	Parents and clergy
Children's Groups or Classes	Weekly 50 participants (23 children birth-K, 27 children grades 1-5)	Children's Ministry Director
Sunday before Christmas	368	
Christmas Eve	Traditionally we've held three services on Christmas Eve: at 5 PM (our "Everyone's Pageant"), 8 PM (service of Lessons and Carols with brass), and 11 PM (traditional candlelight service). All are well attended; attendees are not counted.	
Easter Worship (two services)	580	
Churchwide Meals (3-4 per year)	110 per event	Action teams of laity working with church staff
Small Group Meals (an annual program called Mix-Sups brings groups of eight people together (Jan-April) for rotating potluck dinners in members' homes)	65	Planned by volunteers with support from Parish Care staff person; implemented by participants

Choirs and Music Groups	130	Music Director, Worship & Music Committee
Church-based Bible Study (weekly)	30	Minister
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	Served monthly	Worship & Music Committee, ministers
Community Meals (through Teen Feed, which occurs two or three times per week in partnership with other organizations)	40-60 participants each week	Community groups working with church staff and volunteers
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	3 confirmands; 3-5 participants	Ministers and confirmands
Drama or Dance Program	3-5 events per year	Creativity Council for the Liturgical Arts, working with ministers
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	12	Ministers working with volunteers (receptions) and choir members
Intergenerational Groups (we serve pay-as-able breakfast in the lounge every Sunday except in summer)	30-45	Breakfast planned and cooked by a team of 8-10 volunteers
Outdoor Worship	2-3 times per year	At family camp and various retreats
Prayer or Meditation Groups (we have an established Prayer Chain that operates via email with 55 members; since the COVID-19 pandemic, we have also established a private Facebook Prayer group)	Around 100 in all groups	Ministers, lay volunteers
Public Advocacy Work	15-20 events per year	Action teams of volunteers with the Love & Justice Ministry

Retreats (held annually) Leadership (open invitation); Youth (various configurations); Senior, Children and Families, Women, and Men	300 participants (estimate)	Clergy and staff, with lay volunteers
Mission Trips (two per year for youth, split between middle and high school)	60 (estimated)	Youth Ministries Director with youth and lay volunteers
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community Our Lecture Series (est. 2007) brings leading Christian and non-Christian thinkers together to explore what it means to be Christian today. Gathering Ground offers non-traditional worship and spirituality to participants in the community	Lecture Series: 150 for Friday evening lectures, 35 in all-day Saturday classes Gathering Ground: 50 repeat attendees	The Lecture Series is a self-sustaining program run by volunteers with one part-time staff person receiving a stipend. Gathering Ground is supported by UCUC (pastor liaison) and run by one part-time staff person and volunteers.
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	15	Clergy and couple involved
Worship (time slot: 10:00-11:15 AM)	272	Clergy, Music Director, Staff
Worship (time slot: 5:00-6:00 PM)	Numbers not currently available	Clergy, Staff
Young Adult Groups or Classes	4-5 gatherings per year	Clergy with support from volunteers
Youth Groups or Classes	Weekly 53 participants	Youth Ministries Coordinator with youth and parent input
Other: Seabeck Family Camp	Annually, for 5 days	Family camp committee of lay volunteers plus outside speaker

Superfluity: an annual rummage sale that raises \$30,000+ for area nonprofits	100+	Planning, sorting, setup, and the sale itself are done by lay volunteers with support from staff
---	------	--

3.d.2 List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (i.e., serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e., serving in a ministry beyond a congregation).

We have no ministers serving in Four-Way Covenants. We have three ministers who regularly participate in our services as “Covenant Partners.” They are listed in the chart below.

Name	Covenant?	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired?
Debra Jarvis	Three-way	Covenant Partner	Serves as chaplain at the University of Washington Medical Center; Writer-in-Residence; contributes liturgy and monthly blog post; serves communion.	No
Bruce Wilson	Three-way	Covenant Partner	Serves as a mental health counselor in private practice; works with the Braxton Institute for Resilience, Sustainability, and Joy; works with Youth Group retreats; serves communion.	No
Jennifer Butner	Three-way	Covenant Partner	Spiritual director and photographer; served as Interim Children’s Ministry Director; contributes monthly blog post; serves communion.	No

3.d.3 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:

Rev. Gail Crouch retired as a pastor of UCUCS at the end of 1999. She returned as a member in 2006. Within the congregation she is active as a member of Sacred Earth Matters, our environmental group. She has also been involved with our Racial Justice work and the Emergence Team.

Rev. Bob Anderson retired as a pastor of UCUCS in the 1980s. He is still on our membership rolls but generally attends church on Guemes Island in northern Puget Sound. He occasionally attends worship and participates in summer camp and the senior retreat.

We have over 10 members of our congregation (often Associate Members) who are retired ministers. They participate in the life of the congregation in the same ways as other members, without significant “ministerial” roles. Due to space constraints and privacy issues, we have not provided their names here.

3.d.4 List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff.

The role of Head of Staff is shared by all three ministers. Note that the ministerial portfolios will change on arrival of the new settled minister.

Staff Position	Hours	Supervised by	Tenure
Minister of Vision and Stewardship	Full time	Church Council	12 years
Minister of Worship and Christian Formation	Full time	Church Council	1 year
Bridge Minister of Care and Outreach	Full time	Church Council	Under 1 year
Director of Finance and Operations	Full time	Minister of Vision and Stewardship	2 years
Bookkeeper	Full time	Director of Finance and Operations	7 years

Assistant Bookkeeper	5 hours/wk.	Director of Finance and Operations	1 year
Communications and Lay Ministry Coordinator	35 hours/wk.	Director of Finance and Operations	11 years
Office Coordinator	Full time	Communications Coordinator, Bookkeeper	Under 1 year
Facilities Manager	Full time	Director of Finance and Operations	4 years
Weekend/Swing Custodian	16-25 hrs/wk.	Facilities Manager	18 years
Evening Custodian	Full time	Facilities Manager	2 years
Daytime Custodian	Full time	Facilities Manager	5 years
Director of Youth and Family Ministries	35 hours/wk.	Minister of Outreach and Christian Formation	15 years
Children's Ministry Coordinator	30 hours/wk.	Minister of Outreach and Christian Formation	Under 1 year
Youth Intern	10 hours/wk.	Director of Youth and Family Ministries	Under 1 year
Nursery Care Coordinator	5 hours/wk.	Director of Youth and Family Ministries	15 years
Early Childhood Specialist	2 hours/wk.	Director of Youth and Family Ministries	Open position
Worship Assistant	10 hours/wk.	Minister of Worship and Care	23 years
Video Editor	5 hours/wk.	Minister of Worship and Care	1.5 years
Music Director	25 hours/wk.	Minister of Worship and	1.5 years

		Care	
Organist	10 hours/wk.	Music Director	13 years
Parish Care Coordinator	10 hours/wk.	Minister of Worship and Care	7 years

3.d.5 Reflection

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

We are an action-oriented congregation, composed of mostly well-educated, upper-middle-class professionals who believe they can make a difference in our world following the teachings of Jesus. We are an aging congregation (majority baby boomers), heading into a demographic bulge where many are likely to need care. We are increasingly aware that we are an overwhelmingly white congregation, which in conjunction with our relative affluence reflects a strong white-dominant culture and bias, which we have recently begun to understand and work intentionally to confront and transform.

Three-fourths of our members have been with us for over a decade, so we see many familiar faces when we gather, although we are delighted to welcome new people to engage with us. Over the past 10 years, worship attendance has declined by 25% (pre-pandemic) and over the past 13 years, household giving units have declined 33%. However, total dollars pledged have increased each year. With these financial changes, there has been no decline in social justice engagement or options for congregational connection and worship opportunities.

The activities of our church have been predominantly generated "from the bottom up" by small groups or even individuals and for the most part have not arisen from any strategic planning process. We are seeking to strike more of a balance between being open to the Spirit moving among us and being planning-based, to enhance effectiveness and impact with the time, talent, and treasure resources we have available. This is sometimes a difficult balance to meet with a highly educated, self-directed congregation.

Finally, after a long period of clergy stability, the past five years have seen a higher-than-usual attrition and retirement of much-loved clergy and staff. This turnover, combined with the pandemic and other

world events, has brought the congregation to a place of some grief as we process transition and seek new ways to be community.

3.e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

The 2022 budget can be found at www.universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister under “Additional Resources.” The 2021 annual report can be found at www.universityucc.org/resources.

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

Source (from 2021 financials)	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$1,243,144
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>)	\$ 109,847
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”</i>)	\$ 0
Fundraising Events	\$ included below
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$ 0
Grants	\$ 0
Rentals of Church Building	\$ 108,004
Rentals of Church Parsonage	N/A
Support from Related Organizations (<i>e.g., Women’s Group</i>)	\$ 0

Transfers from Special Accounts	\$ 0
Other (specify): General fund interest, fund raising, and miscellaneous	\$ 23,560
TOTAL	\$1,484,555

In addition, non-general endowment funds, where use is limited to defined purposes, provide approximately \$200,000 per year.

Revenue Projections

Offerings	\$ 1,297,096
Facilities Use	\$ 123,000
Endowment Revenue	\$ 113,496
Other Revenue	\$ 15,000
Total Revenues	\$ 1,548,592

Expenditures Budget

Christian Education	\$ 7,250
Love and Justice, Outreach	\$ 142,400
Calling and Engagement	\$ 11,550
Worship and Music	\$ 12,850
Personnel	\$ 1,041,178
Facilities and Equipment	\$ 227,905
Stewardship and Finance	\$ 105,459
Total Expenditures	\$ 1,548,592

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

The 2022 budget for Leadership Staff (ministerial) is \$379,133; this includes salaries, benefits, and related taxes but not non-salary items such as continuing education costs. The total budgeted expenses for 2022 are \$1,548,592. Leadership staff budget is 24.5% of the total budgeted expenses.

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? (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 operating budget, what is that percentage? (recommended 10%) Our Church's Wider Mission is a line item on our annual general fund budget, approved by the congregation. For 2022, the support level is \$75,000, which is 4.8% of the operating budget.

What is the church's current indebtedness?

The church has no debt.

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.

We have no building campaign underway or planned at this point.

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2012-2016	Imagine! Campaign	\$3,000,000	\$2,979,081	See below

The Campaign was called “Imagine!” and the goal was to raise \$3 million for various building improvements and mission projects. At the end of the official campaign period, we had raised almost \$2.5 million (\$2,483,936 to be exact). Through additional solicitation, we eventually raised a total of \$2,979,081. In 2019, a donation of \$250,000 was given to provide air conditioning in the staff offices.

Projects completed with the money raised included new windows for energy conservation, stained glass repairs in sanctuary and chapel, chancel organ renovation and repair, renovation of the sanctuary to improve acoustics and install a new sound and projection system, installation of a T-coil hearing assistance system in the sanctuary, new sound system in our fellowship hall, solar panels on the roof, improved access into and within the building, sliding entry door and access panels for restroom doors, replacement of water pipes, new website, directional signs, air conditioning of staff offices, delayed maintenance projects, electrical upgrades, exterior cleaning and sealing, resealing and restriping parking lots, replacement of two air handlers, construction of safer attic access, and other improvements. The maintenance reserve fund was also allocated \$138,000.

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

No campaign is underway or anticipated at this time.

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

From the “Imagine!” Capital Campaign, \$400,000 in funds were given to the Love and Justice Endowment, along with other Love & Justice projects detailed below.

Does your church have an endowment?

Yes

What is the market value of the assets?

Market value of the total endowment as of 12/31/2021 is \$7,371,248

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

Funds are drawn annually, 5% of 12-quarter average.

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

5% both last year and five years ago

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

Only the 5% draw

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

Indefinitely

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

Since implementing our Total Return Policy in about 2000, we have drawn only the 5% of the 12-quarter moving average, never more. Policy allows up to a 7% draw with Church Council approval, but the extra 2% has never been drawn.

Other Assets

The church has additional operating funds from Revolving accounts, Restricted accounts and Undesignated reserves. Revolving accounts are funds designated for specific activities. Restricted accounts represent funds disbursed from endowments with restricted uses.

Revolving accounts	\$ 670,301
Restricted accounts	\$ 513,268
<u>Undesignated reserves</u>	<u>\$ 41,466</u>
Total additional operating funds	\$1,225,035

Investments (other than endowment):

None

Does your church have a parsonage?

No

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

Our church building at 4515 16th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98105

County assessors appraised value: \$12,652,900

Lin House (used by local nonprofit to house teens exiting foster care)

7025 16th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98115

County assessors appraised value: \$699,000

Gold House (used by local nonprofit to provide services to homeless teens)

4516 15th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98105

County assessors appraised value: \$1,667,500

Parking lot at 4500 15th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98105

County assessors appraised value: \$5,308,500

Parking lot at 4516 16th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98105

County assessors appraised value: \$3,628,800

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

None

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

All spaces in the church building are wheelchair accessible, enabled by street-level entry, ramps, and elevator. There are accessible restrooms on each floor. However, not every room in the church is easily

used by those in wheelchairs, particularly the two kitchens. Additionally, there is a T-coil hearing assistance system embedded in the floor of our sanctuary to provide an audio signal to hearing-impaired congregants who use ADA compliant assistive hearing devices.

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

The budget is put together each year by a committee with representatives from the various ministries and committees, and with the support of our Director of Finance and Operations. Our Stewardship and Finance Committee, with staff support, is responsible for establishing revenue projections. The budget is approved first by the Church Council, and ultimately by the congregation in a congregational meeting in November.

The annual budget process is viewed as a spiritual and philosophical exercise that provides an opportunity each year for us to question how we are living out our values and priorities. The budgeting process takes place toward the end of our annual stewardship campaign (October- November) and concludes before Advent. In general, it accurately reflects our priorities.

In past years, a balanced budget has been approved for the new year. For the 2022 budget, pledges did not achieve the budgeted amount. In order to provide a 5% cost of living increase for all church staff, a deficit budget was approved by Council. A committee was appointed by Council to identify sources of funds from reserves and restricted funds to meet the 2022 budget deficit. This, along with decreasing pledging units and five successive years of deficit budget to actual variance, has given some cause for concern. Council is aware of the increasing financial challenges and is committed to addressing them.

The most current annual budget can be found at www.universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister under "Additional Resources."

3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

3.f.1 Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.

Significant happenings:

- In the early 1990s we became an Open and Affirming Church, and we were the first mainline Protestant church in the US to call a gay couple as ministers in a job-share.
- In 1996, the church voted on a team-structured ministry, and the role of “senior minister” was discontinued.
- We recognized the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to re-examine what it means to be church and how we are church to each other and the world around us. This significant happening is ongoing, but it is important to acknowledge that emergence from this pandemic will not be simply a return to the way things were before March 2020.

Most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years:

Declaring that we identify as a Racial Justice Church in August 2019 qualifies as the most important event in the last ten years. This resolution, passed by the congregation, is available at www.universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister under “Additional Resources.”

3.f.2 Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.

In managing our response to the pandemic, the congregation, staff, and leadership have implemented changes and updates that impacted every aspect of church life. As a congregation we have handled the pandemic-caused changes better than probably any of us guessed we could have.

The changes resulting from the pandemic continue to the present. As a congregation we are now at a point where we can start to reflect on how the pandemic has changed the ways we gather, interact, worship together, and reach out to our community. This reflection has just begun.

Many of these changes and updates have been described throughout the profile, but some highlights include:

- **Worship:** Pivoting to online worship and then, as vaccinations allowed, offering multiple worship formats. Volunteer “Tech Deacons” to assist online viewers with technical issues. Updating visual and sound systems for livestreaming. Hiring a part-time editor to provide an online version of the church service.
- **Music:** Merging individual choir voices to provide Sunday anthems online—a Herculean task.
- **Facility:** Updating air filtration and air flow systems in the building for a healthier indoor environment. Keeping the building available to provide “to-go” meals seven days a week for homeless youth.
- **Church Life:** Volunteers called all church members and friends on a quarterly basis to check in and pass on any prayer concerns. Advent and Lenten Home Kits were offered for family special crafts and reflections.

- **Outreach:** Funds were allocated for additional donations in the community for the increased needs caused by the pandemic. Participated in Seattle Street Sink program, providing portable handwashing station near the church.
- **Meetings and retreats:** Offered Zoom access for many committee meetings, youth gatherings, retreats, speakers, etc. This kept the lifeblood of the church flowing.
- **Seabeck Summer Camp:** Offered a digital summer all-church camp, Seabeck, twice!
- **Expert medical guidance on gathering:** Put together a committee of members with expertise in communicable diseases to advise on policies for gathering in the church building.
- **Payroll:** Participated in the Payroll Protection Plan to cover salaries during the pandemic.
- **Youth Mission Trips:** Instead of summer mission trips, a digital Service Camp was offered focusing on kindness, empathy, and community action.

3.f.3 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.

Effectiveness of Team Ministry

As a church led by three co-equal pastors and attended by a large congregation, we recognize that conflict is inevitable, and we believe that building in structure for managing conflict in respectful, functional ways is our responsibility as a Christian community.

A recent experience of this conflict emerged upon the resignation of Pastor Peter Ilgenfritz at the end of 2018, after 25 years of service. At this transition point, the Church Council formed a Futures Task Force (FTF) to recommend next steps. The committee identified concerns around the effectiveness of our team ministry. Consultants working with our Leadership Team over the last 15 years have consistently identified three concerns with team ministry:

- Lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibilities
- Lack of ability to define performance goals and enforce accountability
- Inefficiency and a lack of strategic planning and vision

The FTF submitted a proposed change in leadership structure to Church Council to address these concerns, which included recommendation of a more traditional Senior Minister role. The task force was not unanimous in support of the proposal, and a subset of FTF members submitted a dissenting opinion. The Church Council did not approve the recommendations and, because of the critical nature of this work, formed another committee to continue working.

After much additional work, the new committee unanimously submitted a proposal to Church Council, supporting a Team Ministry with supervision shared by Council, Personnel, and the Leadership Parish Relations Committee. The committee also proposed solutions to the three concerns noted above. Personnel, Leadership Parish Relations Committee, and Council continue work on clarifying and implementing solutions.

This has been difficult work, and it highlights how some congregational decisions are made: with much discussion and deliberation, consensus building, and prayerful discernment; sometimes messy and painful and sometimes slowly with stops and starts along the way.

Our values and practices around conflict are largely unstated and informal, but they show up as a fairly consistent part of our institutional culture, namely:

- On important questions a clear (though not always unanimous) consensus is sought. In the team ministry discussion, the Council decided ahead of a vote that they wanted a 75% majority in order to pass the recommended structure. The initial vote was over 50%, but less than 75%.
- When consensus is not reached, a genuine effort is made, especially by leadership, to fully understand the minority opinion and revise the recommendations. This leads to slow decision making and more meetings—but also to those in the minority being truly heard and understood, and hopefully, a better solution found.
- Leadership, both lay and ministers, go out of their way to talk individually with those in the minority and discuss the values and hopes that are behind the minority opinion. Sometimes this understanding leads to new and different solutions. Further work on clarifying solutions revealed important work to be done on the way that racial dynamics and unexamined bias have impacted the relationships within the Leadership Team and between the Leadership Team and the congregation.
- Once a decision is arrived at, an effort is made by leadership for the group to come together in unity, supporting the decision made. A reminder is given that we become better for hearing dissenting voices and acting on the message they bring.
- In this congregation with many highly educated, successful, knowledgeable people, who care very deeply about the mission and work being done, there is ample room for upset and dissension. This continues to be a challenge in many areas of church life. A genuine effort is made by leadership to minimize this dissension as much as possible. When it was decided to continue with the team ministry model, a few of the congregation disagreed with the decision strongly enough that they left the congregation.

The Futures Task Force Report can be found at www.universityucc.org/Resources. The Staffing Proposal can be found at www.universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister.

3.f.4. Ministerial History (include all previous ministerial staff for the past 30 years)

Minister's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Bert Rutan	8 years	Yes
Paul Flucke	9 years	No
Gail Crouch	15 years	Yes
David Grishaw-Jones	3 years	Yes
Donald Mackenzie	14 years	Yes
David Shull	12 years	Yes
Peter Ilgenfritz	25 years	Yes
Catherine Foote	20 years	Yes

3.f.5 Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

Much of what is presented here is discussed more fully elsewhere in the profile, but these are some of important points.

We are a strong Christian community with deep roots and a history of standing up and saying 'yes' to challenges. Our foundation is a laity that is committed to the vision and work of the church with a high level of involvement beyond Sunday worship. We value connections across generations and have developed programs and traditions that keep them strong. The relationships we have within our community help support and strengthen us as we carry our work out into the wider world.

We are also a community in deep transition and experiencing grief. The loss of key leadership members, both pastoral and lay, has shaken us. The process of grieving those losses was then

interrupted by the Covid pandemic which itself brought on additional losses we could not always share. While the church did amazing work in at creating new ways for us to connect during the lockdown and now our emergence, there is still much pastoral care work to be done. We are a congregation that has gained and shared strength in faith and works through face-to-face connections and we are still finding our way in this new world landscape.

The congregation and our Leadership Team have had a good relationship, and the long tenure of previous leadership members speaks to this. We are committed to the 'flat' leadership model that has been developed and used in multiple places throughout the church, and we are excited to see how our current ministry profiles will develop over time. The LPRC (Leadership Parish Relations Committee), which provides a safe and confidential space where differences can be aired and worked through, is an important component in keeping these relationships strong.

As a predominantly white church with a multiracial Leadership Team and staff, the realities of racial bias and systemic racism cannot be ignored. Even as a congregation which values diversity, social equality, and justice, we are learning that bias exists, and we are often unaware. The work of recognizing bias and overcoming it has begun, but we have a lot yet to learn.

3.f.6 Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?

Yes, in the early 1990's one of our ministers was involved in an affair with a parishioner. When this information became public within the congregation, he resigned.

3.f.7 Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

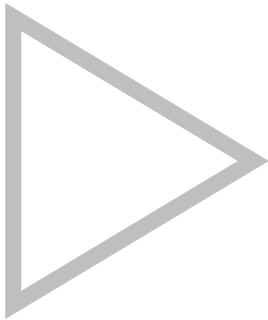
No

3.f.8 Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

No

4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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



- a. COMMUNITY VISION
 - 1. Service and advocacy
 - 2. Wider UCC
 - 3. Areas of Emphasis
 - 4. Reflection
 - 5. Ecumenical Activities
 - 6. Mission vs. actual
 - 7. Time expectations
- b. MISSION InSite
 - 1. Comment
 - 2. Internal demographics comparison
 - 3. Shaping ministry
 - 4. Community Image
 - 5. Why did members become involved?

4a. COMMUNITY VISION

4.a.1 How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?

Reaching out in service and advocacy is at the center of the life of this church, and most of the work the congregation does toward social justice is organized by the Love & Justice Ministry. Their mission: “To empower the congregation and its individual members to live out our covenant to promote God’s reign of justice and peace in the world.” The priorities that guided their work in 2020-2021 were: Economic justice, racial justice, dignity, equity and belonging (LGBTQIA and immigration justice, for example), environmental justice, and peace-making and reconciliation (including inter-religious relationships).

Much of the outreach activity is performed by “action teams,” small groups that have a passion for this outreach work. To fulfill the mission of “empowerment,” the Love and Justice Committee meets with

action team members to provide support. This support includes lending an ear for hearing about the team's goals and dreams, encouraging collaboration between outreach/action teams, providing funding for small projects, and helping to discern answers for questions about policies and procedures.

In March 2022, UCUC was officially designated a Creation Justice Church of the UCC. Work on issues of environmental justice and climate change began at UCUC in 2001. In 2006 the church became a "Greening Congregation" through a program offered by Earth Ministry. The UCC designation of Creation Justice Church, first made available in 2021, is an important milestone, reflecting decades of committed work by UCUC members toward environmental justice.

Some examples of significant events and accomplishments from the 2020-2021 year:

- In the 2020-2021 church year, the congregation gave outside agencies and special projects roughly \$33,000 from the operating budget, \$30,000 from the Love & Justice endowment, \$19,000 from combined Operating and Love & Justice funds, \$80,000 from special offerings, and \$15,000 from Superfluity (Rummage Sale) sales. In that year, \$75,000 went to Our Church's Wider Mission and \$26,000 to Childcare Scholarships (Source: pages 54-61 of 129th Annual Report, 2021)
- Gifting substantial funds to BIPOC groups
- Continuing Teen Feed meals at the church
- Hosting a homeless encampment in the church parking lot
- Financial support of emergency feeding programs
- Special offerings that went to a variety of organizations
- Climate change advocacy with the state legislature.
- Continued partnership with Mwanzo, which focuses on community development and education in Rabuor Village, Kenya.
- Collaborating with the Racial Justice Committee in both funding decisions and advocacy

The Love and Justice Committee hopes to continue to explore ways to collaborate with the Calling, Engagement, & Community Ministry. Understanding how new members would like to explore their call and passions around service and advocacy is critical to expanding and deepening our congregation's commitment to "Love and Justice." We are always interested in learning more about

what members are already involved in, and what educational opportunities we could provide to inspire our members and friends to action.

4.a.2 Describe your congregation's participation in meetings, relationships, and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ

In the Pacific Northwest Conference, several of our members are involved with conference committees. One member, Hillary Coleman, is the current Conference Moderator and has also been a Synod delegate. Our Leadership Team members have served on conference committees and boards over the years. Several members have also participated in activities at our camps. Page 67 of the Annual Report lists UCUCC members and friends serving the wider UCC or Ecumenical settings. The 129th Annual Report (2021) is available at www.universityucc.org/Resources.

4.a.3 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. Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

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

4.a.4 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?

Most of the designations above are relevant and important to our church. The ones we've checked are initiatives we have specifically borrowed the UCC verbiage to describe. For example, we identify strongly with the "God is Still Speaking" campaign and use that phrase in our statements and liturgies. (One of the sentences in our Covenant reads "To seek and respond to Your word and will, made known and to be made known.") We also use the identifier Racial Justice Church—an initiative which, though not among the formal UCC designations listed above, has been advanced in our church by anti-racism materials developed by the national UCUC.

4.a.5 Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional).

We are members of the Church Council of Greater Seattle, and Faith Action Network (statewide multifaith advocacy and action). Page 67 of the Annual Report lists UCUC members and friends serving the wider UCC or Ecumenical settings. The 129th Annual Report (2021) is available at www.universityucc.org/resources.

4.a.6 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.

The activities we are involved in are an accurate reflection of our church Covenant. We spend time within our own walls learning about and reflecting on mission-related activities (e.g., homelessness, gun violence, earth stewardship/justice, and racial justice), and we follow that up with personal, political, and collective action. This includes hosting encampments, engaging in political action, gathering signatures for initiatives, and advocating for change.

4.a.7 Reflect on the scope of work assigned to your pastor(s). How is their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time?

The position of Minister of Worship and Care is especially vulnerable to being focused solely inside the church walls. The Leadership Team has noted this and expressed encouragement and support for involvement outside the congregation, whether with community ministry or ministry on behalf of the wider church. While community involvement is not included in the position description, involvement in the wider community that aligns with the values of the church is supported by the congregation.

4b. MISSION InSite

The Mission InSite report, also called the QuickInsite Report, is available at www.universityucc.org/seeking-new-minister

4.b.1 Comment on your congregation's Mission InSite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown?

- Population within five miles is expected to grow moderately, which could be a church-growth opportunity.
- The population of school-age children is expected to significantly increase, and we are well positioned for this with our robust elementary and youth programs. In general, our multifaceted programming positions us well for the expected growth in most age groups.
- The area's very high average level of educational achievement tracks well with our existing congregation and our theologically and socially progressive characteristics.
- The area's relatively high median family income tracks the makeup of our congregation.
- While our five-mile neighborhood has relatively low poverty rates, there are nonetheless opportunities for us to help address the impacts of income inequality in our mission work locally as well as in the wider area.
- Our immediate neighborhood has slightly higher ethnic and racial minority composition than our congregation.
- Note: A significant percentage of members live more than five miles from the church.

4.b.2 How do your congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects?

Our congregation is much older and wealthier, on average, than the residents of the immediately adjacent University District, also known as the U-District. There are few adults ages 18-35 in the congregation compared to the surrounding neighborhood. Although we are located directly across the street from the University of Washington's Seattle campus, we have no specific outreach programs for students or staff affiliated with the UW. Attempts to initiate programs for students have met with limited success. This is a situation that many in our congregation view as a missed opportunity, but we have not yet found the key to unlocking it.

Our congregation is also much whiter and less racially and ethnically diverse than our surrounding neighborhood.

With our focus on justice issues, being known as a welcoming congregation, and having a children and youth education program that embraces inclusive values, we draw members and friends from far away.

4.b.3 How are the demographics of the community currently shaping ministry, or not?

Seattle's history of racial covenants and "red-lining," income inequality, and the high cost of housing have impacted the racial demographics of Seattle's neighborhoods and the surrounding region. The high cost of housing and growing income inequality in Seattle have increased the need for affordable housing and services to those without stable housing.

Seattle's U-District has a high concentration of homeless youth. Our church's Teen Feed program provides meals for them several nights a week. One of the houses established by our former housing association was dedicated to youth who aged out of the foster care system. Our church also provides space for the University District Youth Center (which supports homeless youth) as well as an alternative school for Seattle Public Schools students.

In keeping with our Racial Justice Church designation, we are working towards being a church that supports racial justice, and we aim to be a just employer. Our Church Council, clergy, and staff continue their learning about systemic racism and ways to counter biases with the help of diversity consultants. Our Racial Justice Activist Team continue their work as activist allies.

4.b.4 What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

Its long and high-profile history as a pillar of social justice in the Pacific Northwest has given University Congregational United Church of Christ a reputation as an engaged community whose members care deeply about issues of social and environmental justice. Seattle’s activist community appreciates our support of immigrant rights and social justice concerns. We have been described as a beacon of hope in challenging times.

Our longtime commitment to and affirmation of LGBTQIA persons is well known in Seattle and beyond. Community leaders describe us having a strong passion and commitment to children and youth and appreciate the mission-oriented organizations we welcome into our facility. In more recent times, community members know and appreciate our hosting of homeless tent city encampments—something we have done six times over the last 10 years.

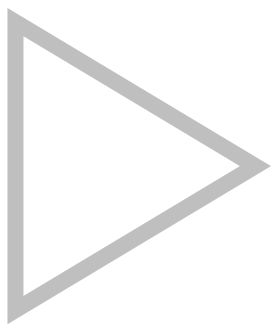
4.b.5 What do new people in the church say when asked what got them involved?

Our high-profile commitment to gay rights, environmental justice, housing people experiencing homelessness, and more recently racial justice have given UCUC a strong regional reputation for social justice. Our lecture series raises that profile and brings many with existing interests in theology and social issues into our orbit. Our vibrant Christian education programming for children and youth is another major draw.

Once here, newcomers often cite inspired preaching and worship, high-quality music, and vibrant liturgical arts as characteristics that inspired them to become a part of our community. Some report that they felt a spirit of deep inclusion and “radical welcome” when they entered our church for the first time. Others—including many with histories of repressive religious upbringings—a report feeling comforted both by our openness and the fact that we adhere to a covenant rather than a creed.

Many of the “seekers” who join us report that they find within our walls a significant sense of Christian community and connection to God.

5. REFERENCES



Name up to three people who have agreed to serve as phone and written references. Advise the three references: “The contact information you provide may be shared publicly. Please use contact information that you feel comfortable giving to candidates so they can reach you with their questions.”

Make sure they are not members of your church but are persons who know your church well enough to be helpful to candidates seeking more information. Request a letter from each reference in answer to the four prompts below. Attach the letters (up to three) as desired.

References are attached at the end of this document.

REFERENCE 1

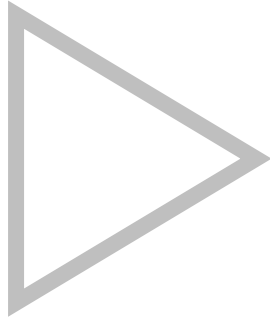
Michael Ramos, Executive Director, Church Council of Greater Seattle
(206) 525-1213, mramos@thechurchcouncil.org
Local ecumenical church community and advocacy association

REFERENCE 2

Phillip Peters, Director of Programs, Teen Feed
(812) 325-8968, phillip@teenfeed.org
Nonprofit organization that uses the church’s kitchen and volunteer support to provide meals for young people experiencing homelessness

REFERENCE 3

Wendy Blight, Interim Director of Operations and Finance at UCUC
(425) 213-9313, blightwk@hotmail.com
Wendy has filled numerous interim staff vacancies at UCUC over the past five+ years.



6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

6a. CLOSING PRAYER

Love and justice are not two.
Without inner change, there can be no outer change.
Without collective change, no change matters.

Rev. angel Kyodo williams
Zen Priest and Activist

Two are better than one ... a threefold cord is not quickly broken.
Ecclesiastes 4:9, 12

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.

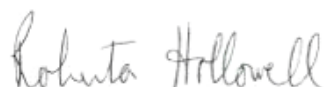
As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending a suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about 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.

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

The UCUC Council appointed a Pastoral Search Committee. The ten members have experience across the ministries of the congregation. In writing the profile, this committee has interviewed congregants, current and former UCUC pastors, and staff members, and has drawn from their own personal and group experience.

Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:



05/16/2022

Roberta Hollowell, Co-Chair

(Date)



05/16/2022

Royce Morrison, Co-Chair

(Date)

6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment: This church is currently in good standing with the Pacific Northwest Conference.

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

Staff Comment: To the best of my knowledge, this information is accurate and true.

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

Staff Comment: To the best of my knowledge, this information is accurate and true.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:



Name / Title: Mike Denton

Email: mike@pncucc.org

Phone: 206-725-8383 ext. 102

Date: 5/29/22



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



March 7, 2022

RE: University Congregational Church

Dear Friend:

The Church Council of Greater Seattle is very pleased to recommend University Congregational Church as a wonderful community for personal and societal transformation. The Church Council celebrates 103 years of ministry, working with many congregations in King and South Snohomish Counties, to strengthen the vitality of congregations, unite them in faith-driven action, and to sow the seeds of Beloved Community rooted in justice and practiced in love. University Congregational has been exceptional in its collaboration with the Church Council and as a beacon of hope in extremely demanding times.

University Congregational Church puts its faith into practice. The church has played a pivotal role in the establishment of and sustenance for our accompaniment program for immigrants and refugees. The congregation co-convenes the U-District Hub, bringing nine interfaith communities together to plan and coordinate immigrant support on a monthly basis.

We have witnessed the congregation's courageous and committed hosting of Tent City 3, a self-organized encampment of people experiencing homelessness. As a result of this experience, we have joined together in advocacy toward a budget in the City of Seattle that helps to support these types of encampments and provide more resources for shelter and permanent housing.

While the pandemic has affected our ability as faith organizations to gather in person, the Church Council partnered previously with University Congregational Church in their hosting of what was our principal conference of the year, Weaving Our Strengths, which provided tools for spiritually-grounded, social justice action for 200 people each year. Their hospitality, volunteers, and insightful and supportive staff made this event a tremendous success.

The church is in the process of moving from learning about racial justice to becoming an anti-racist congregation. This means grappling with the challenges of dismantling white supremacy as part of mainline churches that so often reflect the dominant culture. I am confident that with the spiritual depth and strong democratic, relational basis for ministry that UCUEC represents the next stages of transformational growth for the congregation will be exciting for the city.

The Church Council has been a frequent co-conspirator with University Congregational Church for its community-oriented forums, conferences, and concerts over the years. Rather than focusing

4820 S. Morgan St., PO Box 18467, Seattle, WA 98118 | 206-525-1213 | info@thechurchcouncil.org | www.thechurchcouncil.org

inward, these events have had a galvanizing effect toward strengthening social and economic justice work in congregations and communities around the region.

My experience of University Congregational UCC over the years has been a warm, inclusive community that seeks to evolve in spiritual, family, and justice offerings, with many members taking ownership as leaders.

I look forward to working with future ministerial leadership in the congregation and for the Church Council and UCUC to do the work that God calls us to for such a time as this.

I can be reached by e-mail at mramos@thechurchcouncil.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Ramos".

Michael Ramos
Executive Director
Church Council of Greater Seattle

March 14, 2022



To Whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of the University Congregational Church and their extraordinary partnership with Teen Feed, the nonprofit where I work as Director of Programs. Our organizations have worked together for many years. When I started at Teen Feed four years ago, the relationship was already very strong and supportive. At that time we hosted three of our seven weekly dinners for unhoused youth and young adults in the church space.

The staff of the church, from the admin team, to the office regulars, to the facilities staff, always had our back and looked out for us. There was never any question about our use of the church space, access to the building for supply management, use of multiple closets and rooms as needed, etc. The team onsite was always helpful and accommodating to our program. Even as some staff members came and went in the natural flow of turnover, we were always treated with respect and given priority.

Then, in 2020, the real challenge began. As the pandemic hit, our programs had to be totally reimagined. Our dinner went to a fully to-go model, and this presented huge challenges in terms of supplies and resources. The church, without missing a beat, opened up to let us serve all seven nights a week from their space, granting us extra storage space onsite as we began acquiring mountains of PPE and to-go containers. The staff were remarkable about making sure we could always come and go when needed during such a massive disruption.

As the pandemic evolved, the church continued to prioritize our needs. We are back three nights a week at the University Lutheran Church, and still doing the other four nights at Congregational. No matter the ups and downs of this time, the church has always been a warm and welcoming home to our community. I am particularly proud that the church, through signage, values, and their own hires, has made it clear that BIPOC and LGBT folks are welcome. Our guest community notices this and appreciates the safe space provided by the church, as do our staff and volunteers.

Although much of the world is changing, whether it be politics, pandemics, or policies that impact the unhoused community, one thing has remained steady for Teen Feed. We are warmly welcomed in the space of this church. We are always considered when changes are made. We are always communicated with and shown respect. No matter what comes next in the world, we are confident that the University Congregational Church and Teen Feed will take on the challenges together.

I fully and strongly recommend this institution for any qualified and passionate candidate looking to join their team. I would be pleased to speak more with any applicant who would like a deeper understanding of our partnership and the work we see the church doing every day in the U District. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Phillip Peters
Director of Programs, Teen Feed
He/Him Pronouns
phillip@teenfeed.org
812-325-8968

Wendy Blight
Profile Reference for Settled Pastor
March 25, 2022

There are many words that can describe University Congregational Church. I'm going to focus on two that come to the top of my mind: "vibrant" and "caring".

When I enter the church on Sunday mornings or when I attend one of the many church activities, the energy among the people is palpable. That energy creates a warm and inviting atmosphere in which to worship, engage in social justice advocacy, learn, and have fun. There are several parts to this vibrancy. Worship is thoughtfully designed but also open to what the spirit might bring to the service. That openness is enhanced by movement and musical arts along with liturgical visual arts that usually involve the entire sanctuary space. There is intention about who participates in leading worship, what voices are heard and what words are spoken. Far from being simply consumers of the worship liturgy, UCUCF folks engage in the worship experience. The Congregational Covenant that is read at the end of each service is memorized by most. Many of the phrases within it are lifted up at church meetings and other settings. It is a lived statement of vision and mission for the church and its members.

UCUCF has also remained vibrant over the years in its approach to what comes next. The pandemic has demanded that worship and church programs adapt and change. To its credit, with foresight and an investment in financial resources, the church has added high quality A/V equipment to several of its larger meeting rooms to accommodate hybrid activities. This is in keeping with the church's forward-looking stance and its ability time and again to creatively embrace the future that God has in store.

UCUCF is also a caring church. People are kind to one another and to the staff. They are grateful, patient and forgiving. Alongside that, there is some pressure to do a task well, meet deadlines, and be thoroughly prepared before a meeting or before embarking on a new program. The heartwarming surprise is that when an expectation is not met, there is grace.

Another way that UCUCF shows it cares is through its social justice advocacy work. Church members and clergy believe in justice for all people, with an emphasis on those who have been traditionally pushed to the side. In recent years, the church has focused on anti-racism work and climate justice, but the justice focus goes back decades. UCUCF members are not so much sandwich makers as sign carriers, letter writers and policy advocates at all levels of society. Church members tend to be highly educated and involved; they know how to put pressure on white supremacist systems and create change, and they do it.

Church members and clergy care for the families and children of the church. After much discernment, the church decided years ago to make family ministry a priority and adjust worship and programming to reflect that priority. Children became worship leaders, the liturgy was changed to incorporate young people, even noisy toddlers and their families participate. The Youth Program is excellent and provides a place where youth learn to treat each other with respect, honor each other's stories, and discern God's call on their lives.

A clergy person who is called to UCUCF will find a church that is alive and ready for the challenges that every mainline Christian church faces today. UCUCF will be a wonderful place to participate in God's unfolding future.

Pastoral Search Committee note: Wendy Blight is the Interim Director of Operations and Finance at UCUCF. She is filling in while the Director of Operations and Finance is on maternity leave. Wendy has filled in as interim for numerous staff positions at the church over the past 5+ years. Wendy may be reached at blightwk@hotmail.com or 425-213-9313.