

## Local Church Profile for Churches Seeking a Designated Term Pastor (DTP)

### Church Contact Information

Full Name: West Stockbridge Congregational Church, UCC  
Address: 45 Main Street, West Stockbridge, MA 01266  
Phone: (413) 232-4256  
Email: [wscongregationalchurch@gmail.com](mailto:wscongregationalchurch@gmail.com)  
Website: <https://www.weststockbridgeunitedchurchofchrist.org/>

Additional Denominational Affiliations: none

UCC Conference: Southern New England  
Association: Berkshire Association  
Area Conference Minister Name: Rev. Terry Yasuko Ogawa  
ACM email: [ogawaty@sneucc.org](mailto:ogawaty@sneucc.org)  
ACM phone: (860) 761-7192

### Position Details

*In a paragraph or two for each item, please answer the following prompts, or fill in the requested information.*

**1. Describe the ministry position for which you are seeking a pastor.**

Community involvement is very important to us. Our church is a focal point for gatherings and events. We volunteer in town organizations and celebrations which gives us an opportunity to share the love of God with our neighbors. We would like our designated pastor to partner with us to find new and dynamic ways to “bring the church to the community” using alternate worship places and creative ideas as well as traditional worship at the church. We have strived to do this is by using multiple social media outlets for virtual participation in services and as a communication tool. We have also been involved in mission work, bible study, discussion groups, progressive dinners, retreats, and vesper services. At the same time, we, like so many churches, are assessing our viability. We would like our designated pastor to help us explore new ways of building fellowship with other small churches in the area perhaps through shared services and programs. Pastoral care for all our members, especially those who are homebound, is an important aspect of our ministry and we are looking for a designated pastor who would partner with us to provide such care. We are a small but mighty congregation, open to new ideas.

**2. Name 3 core competencies that you feel you will need in your DTP.**

Creative, supportive, and community-involved

3. Position Scope: \_\_\_\_\_ Fulltime \_\_\_\_\_ ¾ time      \* ½ time      \_\_\_\_\_ ¼ time

4. Position Duration: 3 years

5. Is the DTP eligible for the settled position? \* Y \_\_\_\_\_ N

If yes, how will that be discerned? For the three-year DTP position, three annual reviews will be done in partnership with the Pastoral Relations Ministry Team. These reviews will offer feedback to the DTP and will also be presented to the church council. The council will then vote.

### **Designated Term Ministry Goals**

*The focus of a designated term ministry is to work toward the church's declared purpose for a specific season. Whereas, the purpose of an Interim Pastor is to help a congregation prepare for their next Settled Pastor, a Designated Term Pastor is called to assist the church with meeting specific goals within a specific time period. These are the most common reasons that churches choose a Designated Term Ministry.*

*1. Please choose all the reasons for choosing a DTM that applies to you.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ New ministry development, start or continuance
- \* \_\_\_\_\_ Revitalization of current ministries and church vitality
- \_\_\_\_\_ Legacy/hospice
- \* \_\_\_\_\_ Reassessment of ministry, which may include:
  - exploring merger, yoking or unification with another church
  - assessment of properties
  - Staffing restructuring
- \_\_\_\_\_ Major conflict/healing

**In a paragraph or two, explain how you discerned that a DTM was right for the church at this time.**

We were advised by our Associate Conference Minister that a Designated Term Minister would be a good fit for us at this time. We are nearing a crossroad where the viability of the church as is, comes into question. We are looking for a designated pastor who will:

- help us to find ways to build fellowship with other churches by sharing services and programs
- help us look closely at ourselves to see how to proceed into the future
- help us to delve deeper into the purpose of our church and how to exist as a faith community
- help us explore how we use our resources and talents
- explore whether the work of supporting a church building is tenable given the number of active congregants

We need someone to help us re-envision what our church can be.

2. Please explain your goals for this Designated period using the table below.

	<b>Goal:</b> with specificity, describe what you hope to accomplish during this time.	<b>Commitment:</b> describe how the congregation will prioritize and participate in reaching this goal?	<b>Assessment:</b> describe how the congregation will know the goal has been accomplished
1.	Increase community awareness of who we are and what we do, encouraging families to participate in the church and including unique worship opportunities with other area churches.	Update the church website. Continue live stream services. Increase communication with visitors by providing handouts, newsletters, and personal contact. Continue monthly meetings with Richmond and Canaan leadership.	There will be an increase in community participation and an increase in inquiries about our church. Increased collaborative events with Richmond and Canaan.
2.	Grow pastoral care through increased visitation and personal outreach, utilizing our talents and resources to enrich others.	Pastor is the leader of the pastoral care team. Church members will participate in outreach programs for families and the homebound, and will work to establish ourselves as a WISE church.	Positive response from those visited and contacted.
3.	To establish a “Church Viability Team” for looking into/studying the future possibilities for our church.	Hold monthly meetings for the purpose of exploring how able we are to work successfully while remaining solvent.	Ongoing Cost-Benefit Analysis: Do the church benefits exceed the church costs?

## Who We Are

*In a paragraph or two for each item, please provide the following.*

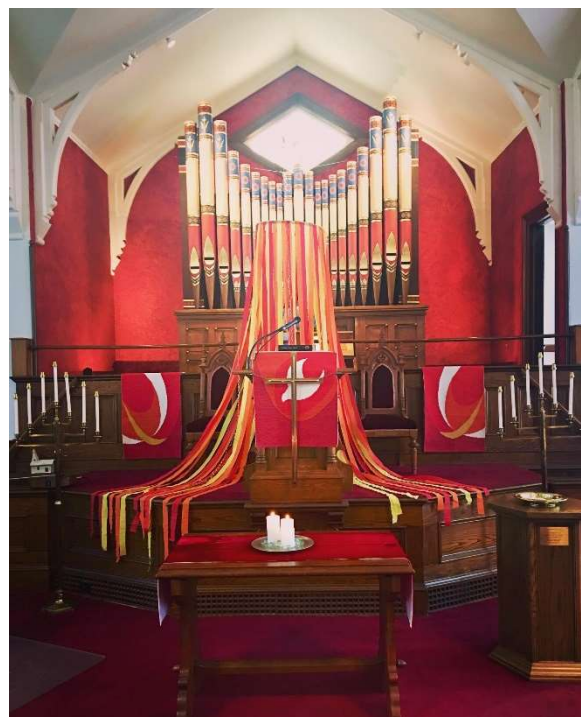
1. **Church's Mission Statement** (*or name that one needs to be developed*): To welcome and gather all people in the life, community, and fellowship of the church, and to follow God's will as it is demonstrated in the teachings of Jesus Christ.



2. **Brief Church History:** The congregation was gathered in 1774, in the West Center area, with the establishment of the town. As was typical with colonial churches, the congregation first met in private homes until the establishment of a multi-purpose town meeting house. In 1843 the congregation moved to the present Main Street location and built their first dedicated church building. The existing church, built in 1882 following a fire in the original church, is on the National Register of Historic Places. In the 1950s we joined with the United Church of Christ, the church was yoked with Canaan, NY in the 1960s, and became the first Open & Affirming congregation in Berkshire County in 2005.



The church building has a lovely sanctuary with an actively used Johnson & Sons pipe organ, Yamaha grand piano, and beautiful stained-glass windows. The fellowship space with a stage and commercial kitchen in the basement was newly renovated in 2015. All areas of the church are used for community events. The church also owns an outdoor chapel on several hillside acres, with stone walks, walls, and altar. Church



services are held there once a month, April through October. The space is also utilized for other functions, such as weddings and vesper services.

Specific missions and activities that we have are as follows:

- Helping Hands
- Bake Sales
- Appalachian Trail Ministry
- Annual Harvest Dinner
- Food Pantry Drive
- Memorial Day activities
- Halloween activities
- Annual Scholarship to graduating senior
- Pancake Breakfast
- Blanket Drive
- Gas Assistance Ministry
- Blue Christmas Service
- Interfaith Service
- St. Patrick's Day Dinner
- Monetary and in-person assistance to families in need

3. **2-3 Significant Events:**

1996 - our church building was first listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

2005 - our congregation became the first Open & Affirming congregation in Berkshire County.

4. **Church Strengths:** We are a small, close-knit congregation that cares for one another and for our beautiful worship spaces. A warm and welcoming group, we are open to new ideas to enhance worship, promote fundraising, strengthen our community, and exist into the future.
5. **Church Challenges:** We are striving to increase membership and participation in church life while remaining financially solvent. Attendance has risen lately. Finances have decreased due to the Stock Market being down, as well as having been faced with replacing our furnace.
6. **Experience of Conflict:** We called our pastor about three years ago and about two years later, our pastor was called to become a part time minister to another local church. Our pastor became involved in additional missions as well. We believed that she was overextending herself and also wanted some clarification and input on the missions our church would be involved in. Our pastor made a proposal to the council to have the help of a former interim pastor, dear to the congregation, take over some of the worship services. The council had some questions about the proposal so we set up a meeting with our pastor to discuss the questions. Our pastor felt personally attacked, withdrew her proposal and we went into mediation 2

months later. By this time, one council member had resigned and another was continuing her council duties, but was not returning to Sunday worship until she considered what the mediation resolution would be. Upon being informed of this in our first mediation session, our pastor resigned. What we have learned from this experience is that we need to clarify the roles of the council and pastor in a way that is clear. We also believe that there should be more transparency in our communications. This kind of conflict has never occurred with any other pastor or person working with the church.

1. **Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. On a scale of 1-5, where would you rank your church's level of conflict?** *2. Disagreement*  
*(Based on this work by Speed Leas 1. Problem to solve 2. Disagreement 3. Contest 4. Fight or Flight 5. Intractable)*
  
2. **Please explain why you chose this level.** We chose Level 2 – Disagreement – The issue was in our communication. We are used to resolving issues through discussions between the council and the pastor. On occasion we have used the pastoral relations committee to work through a problem. This has served us well in the past.
  
3. **Describe your congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict.** We engage our faith. We try to cooperate with each other and understand the situation of each person, which facilitates compromise and church decision-making. We follow UCC guidelines and recommendations when compromise isn't readily achieved. We engage our Pastoral Relations Committee to mediate between the pastor and members. We also use recommendations by the Area Conference Minister and the Committee on Church and Ministry.

### **Basic Church Statistics** *Yearly average*

	Church Membership	Weekly Worship Attendance	Children & Youth Participation	Adult Ed Participation
Pre-pandemic	34	15	1	6
Current year	34	15	1	6

	Income	Overall Budget	Mission Giving	Reserves & Endowment Principals
Pre-pandemic	\$80,150	\$65,672	\$893	\$441,856
Current year	\$73,728	\$73,672	\$715	\$395,412

### **Compensation**

**Total Compensation Package Amount or Range:** \$35,000-\$37,000

Package offered:  Total Package, no additional monetary benefits offered

(choose only one)    \*\_Total Package Includes Benefits (please list the benefits that are offered)

Our church traditionally pays the pastor the full lump sum in 12 equal payments and the pastor allocates the fund in agreed percentages. For example, in 2021, the pastor's salary was \$8,535 and \$20,000 for housing for tax purposes. She paid SECA 7.56% and deposited 14% into an annuity for a total of \$36,420.

Housing:

- \* Housing allowance only
- Parsonage only
- Can offer either

Please explain briefly your process in discerning your compensation.

We decided what amount the church could comfortably afford, that was also fair and competitive. Over the years we have adjusted the amount by cost-of-living increases. The amount is moderately negotiable.

+       +       +

### 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 document 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 leader for the interim time 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.

*Judith A. Harrigan*  
Signature of Search Committee Chairperson  
(typed is sufficient)

July 30, 2022  
Date