

# LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



First Congregational United Church of Christ,  
Charlotte, Michigan

Minister

Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ

Validation Date: 6/7/2023

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*"We are God's Love in Action."*

# POSITION POSTING

## LISTING INFORMATION

**Church name:** First Congregational United Church of Christ (FCUCC)

**Street address:** 106 S. Bostwick St, Charlotte, MI 48813

**Supplemental web links:** <https://ucccharlotte.org>

**Conference:** Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ

**Association:** Covenant Association

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

Name: Rev. Cheryl L. Burke, M.Div., PCC (she, her, hers)

Title: Associate Conference Minister

Phone: 517-332-3511 x210 or 517-853-0199

Email: [cheryl@michucc.org](mailto:cheryl@michucc.org)

Summary Ministry Description:

"First Congregational Church will be a vibrant, thriving, and inclusive church inspiring Love in Action."

The recent process of creating our Strategic Plan initiated much in-depth discussion regarding where we are going as a church. Out of this intentional work came the above vision statement, which reflects our current thinking. With this in mind, we are continually revisiting our values and efforts so that we make all decisions through the lens of the plan according to our stated goals.

What does it look like when we get there? We will probably never "get there" because we are always looking for new ways to Be the Church for our congregation and our community.

We would love for the person who joins us as a pastor to walk along with us on our journey and offer support, encouragement, prompting, and guidance as we strive to live out our values and mission.

Photographs of our people in our spaces:



*Outdoor concert in the Congregational Commons*



*Palm Sunday worship service in the sanctuary*



### **What we value about living in our area:**

Charlotte is an active community with an evolving identity and small-town charm. Located in mid-Michigan, Charlotte is less than an hour drive to 5 larger cities, including Lansing, Grand Rapids, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo, and Jackson. Charlotte is only 12 minutes from Olivet College (Olivet, MI), a full member of the UCC Council for Higher Education, and 30 minutes from Lansing Community College and Michigan State University. Boasting 26 annual festivals, there is always something to do in our community.

**Current size of membership:**

- 151 (includes new members: 14 in 2021, 12 in 2023)

**Languages used in ministry (*other than English*):**

- none

**Position Title:**

- Pastor

**Position Duration:**

- Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry.

**Compensation Level:**

- Full Time

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

- Yes

**SCOPE OF WORK**

Using the Call Agreement Workbook, the scope of work for this full-time pastoral position includes:

- Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship including scripture study, identifying relevant contemporary readings, crafting of liturgy, overseeing bulletin production, sermon preparation, guiding lay liturgists, working with the music director to plan and coordinate music, preaching, offering of prayers, and other elements of Sunday worship
- Faith formation and vitality through prayer, Bible study, service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities, and helping lay persons utilize them
- Pastoral care in collaboration with lay people
- Weddings and funerals for participants in the worshipping community as well as being available to the wider community for funerals, weddings,

special worship programs and as a representative of the church to local organizations

- Participation in wider church activities such as Conference and Association meetings
- Counseling, listening, and referral as needed for members of the worshipping community
- Supervision of staff
- Study and prayer to increase faith and to improve skills such as leadership, teaching, and effective ministry
- Attend meetings and provide leadership as needed to church programs, in collaboration with lay leadership

### **Core Competencies:**

Our church is seeking a pastor with the following core competencies:

- Professionalism
- Hopeful vision
- Honesty
- Compassion
- Effective communication

## **COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT**

### **Salary Basis**

- \$51,747 - \$78,119 as recommended by the Michigan Conference Guidelines ([www.michucc.org](http://www.michucc.org)) for a congregation of our size and according to candidate's years of pastoral experience.

### **Benefits:**

- Salary plus Benefits

### **What is the expected living situation for your next minister?**

- We would like the minister to live nearby, preferably in Charlotte or a surrounding community, with a housing allowance, but we are open to discussion.

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

- The minister is invited to find housing wherever is preferred, whether in Charlotte or a surrounding community. The minister should expect to commute to the church for in-person work (the church office is closed on Mondays). Travel for pastoral visits to homebound or hospitalized congregants in nearby locations will be on an as-needed basis.

**State any incentives.**

- It is our intention that our new pastor feel respected, supported, and valued on their own journey of growth, and therefore will be encouraged to ask about desired incentives, which are negotiable.

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

- Association and Conference supports include: Communities of Practice, Boundary Training, Racial Justice Training, nationally known keynote speakers at Conference Annual Meetings, special seasonal programs, access to reduced rates for clergy coaching and programs by *Convergence* (formerly the Center for Progressive Renewal)

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

- While our congregation seeks a full-time minister, top candidates will be welcomed to enter into a conversation about bi-vocational employment if applicable.

## **WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?**

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

- We prayerfully seek an individual who provides inspired spiritual guidance, and who is committed to joining with the members of our congregation as we strive to model the examples and teachings of Jesus in ways that extravagantly welcome, accept, love and support all people that come among us.
- We envision that our next minister will participate in the current and future educational programs within our church to continue growing and learning in the faith as it pertains not only to biblical scholarship, but also to positive and healthy initiatives for the future of our families, our community, and our world.
- We excitedly anticipate a pastor who will support the ongoing, member-driven efforts to create church programs that connect and support all people of our community in health, in need, and in spirit.

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

- The minister we seek will be a partner with the teams of the church for engaging with the community, building relationships with other entities in town, and making connections for meaningful impacts on our world.

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

- English, modeling proper usage in written and spoken forms. (There are many current and former educators in our congregation.)
- We seek culturally-specific capacities that demonstrate understanding, or the desire to understand, the history and current challenges of minority or marginalized populations (African-American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian-American, LGBTQ+), with a commitment to life-long learning in these areas. This is an important part of our commitment to welcoming all people who seek to know the love of God.

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

- As part of the preparation of this local church profile, we conducted a survey of the congregation to share their preferences on the most important attributes of a new pastor for our church. We received 47 responses in which our congregants expressed the following 5 as the most important:
  - Inspiring speaker
  - Radically opposes bigotry, especially based on race, sexuality, orientation, gender identity, disability, and socio-economic status
  - Deals effectively with conflict
  - Supports ONA
  - Makes pastoral calls for health-related issues
  
- The **four areas of excellence** that we hope our next minister will display are (in no particular order):
  - Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice
  - Caring for all Creation
  - Participating in Theological Praxis
  - Working Together for Justice and Mercy

## **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?**

### **Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?**

We are constantly being called to become God's love in action; collaborating, supporting and seeking solutions to real-world issues in a visible and dynamic way. We are working as community builders that aim to lovingly and compassionately remove barriers, and open doors to every individual on their own life journey. We are called to expand our responsiveness to pressing societal issues through education and constructive initiatives.

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

Our church has recently developed a multi-year strategic plan (<https://ucccharlotte.org/strategic-vision/>) that articulates our mission, our vision, our values and strategic goals. Our congregation is called to reflect on this plan and develop specific actions to purposefully align with the goals of Unity, Growth, Healing, Outreach, and Sustainability. Over the last year, this strategic plan has inspired new programs for Unity and Growth (e.g. a Homecoming Picnic; successful funding of a Courage Grant from the UCC for working with local teens), Sustainability (e.g. complete review of facility and building needs, state-of-the-art marketing strategies), activities to promote Healing among our congregants (e.g. Blue Christmas service), and to augment ongoing efforts in Outreach in the areas of Missions and Social and Environmental Justice.

Please find attached the year-end reports from the Care team, Missions, and Social and Environmental Justice team, as these reports highlight the depth and breadth of our congregation's responsiveness to God's call.

***See Appendix A. Care, Missions, and SEJ Team reports***

## WHO ARE WE NOW?

### CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

#### **Describe your congregation's life of faith.**

Throughout every week and on Sundays, the members of our congregation gather with unique perspectives and needs. They bring talents and expertise that are shared in great abundance as well as in tiny gifts. They also bring all levels of support and desires for community, sharing, and enrichment. The collective goal of the congregation is that all are welcome and valued.

#### **Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.**

We are a blessed congregation with many strengths and positive qualities. We are a community of the **faithful**, believing in the power of working for and contributing to the greater good, whether that is food, clothing, household donations, information, or financial support. Our congregation's strengths include **creating programs** that benefit people in need and add to the enjoyment of life. Among our members, we have **strong lay leaders** with the knowledge, background, expertise, and poise to share their creativity and thoughts in presented sermons, entertainment, and projects which enrich the life of the church and the Charlotte community.

#### **Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.**

As the congregation gathers in our traditional sanctuary on Sunday mornings for worship, one can often hear the 15-20 member adult choir putting the finishing touches on the special music for the day. Congregants catch up with each other as they don their nametags, the tech team members run through the audio and visual checks, greeters at the doors share a friendly hello and offer a printed program, or bulletin, to each attendee, ensuring that everyone can refer to the order of service, submit prayer requests, and scan the list of upcoming events. Children find books and coloring pages at tables set especially for them. Images containing the week's announcements as well as the featured message for the day's service are projected on a large screen at the front of the church. Below the screen, the altar is graced with candles and often a member's gift of flowers for the day.

We are a loud bunch when we get together! Over the inescapable buzz of people engaged in conversation, checking in with one another with greetings and smiles, the Pastor is often compelled to call out two or three times to gain the attention of those in the room. Announcements of upcoming events or meetings are shared just before the people are invited to enter into a meditative posture, preparing for worship as the Director of Music offers a prelude on the baby grand piano that lulls the room into quietness. The weekly worship service consists of a Call to Worship led by a lay liturgist, a choir anthem appropriate for the liturgical or seasonal time of year, a moment with the children before they depart for their age-appropriate message and activities for the day. The service typically includes two readings: one from the Bible (the “ancient” reading) followed by a “contemporary” reading that presents a modern-day alignment with the liturgical message, and is selected from a variety of sources including poetry, orations, or philosophical writings. Regarding sermons, the congregation has come to expect that they will be thought-provoking, deep, well-sourced, and factual. They can also be painful, sometimes disturbing, and yet, they are simultaneously directive, and guided with hope and encouragement.

We sing hymns (in harmony!) that support the message for the week, offer prayers for healing, hope, and in celebration of the life events and challenges of our community. We recite the Lord’s Prayer in “words that are comfortable to [each member].” On Communion Sundays we share in the elements as we believe Jesus directed. Our leaders tastefully express gratitude and acknowledge the necessity for financial contributions that support our church operations without pressure and without passing a collection plate. The service concludes with the congregation reciting our Commission statement, an invitation to continue with social hour over coffee and refreshments, and finally a benediction and musical postlude.

After the refreshment time, there are often meetings held for various teams, perhaps a movie and presentation (monthly), or a time of deep prayer for individual or imminent needs.

During the warmer months of the summer, our worship service is held outside in the Commons using a similar format as indoor worship, but with a bit more relaxed approach: lawn chairs instead of pews, electric piano instead of organ, and impromptu bouquets instead of candlesticks. The children run on the labyrinth and passers-by may pause and gaze at (or perhaps join) the gathering.

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

Ongoing education in this congregational community includes several areas of focus, with a goal of building strong bonds of community between our members of all ages. Believing that people learn and build their individual faith foundations in a variety of ways, our church offers several different opportunities for education.

Over the last several years, the education team has explored and used different curricular programs created for children with limited success. Two years ago, they settled on a program called “Godly Play,” which required significant effort to launch, but has been very successful. Godly Play employs numerous props and tools to create an accessible multi-modal media experience for students. To equip the program for its launch, we tapped into the creativity and willingness of several talented congregants to build many of these tools, thereby reducing start-up costs by making them in-house. Central to the success of this program was the decision to hire two individuals to run this program, a Child Educator and an assistant. The children are delighted to transition from the sanctuary to their own learning environment where they engage in lessons designed specifically for them.

Several learning opportunities are available for adults. On Tuesday evenings, a member with deep knowledge and a passion for understanding ancient religious history examines the historical context, implications, and development of the early Christian church as well as the multitude of forces that challenged the first believers. This class has also stretched into modern times through, for example, a series of class sessions that explored the works of recent and current philosophers, activists, or artists as examples of “Who sounds like Jesus now?” The class seeks to examine the role of empire in the early church as well as the challenges of doing the work of God in the present day. Material is drawn from credible experts and scholars from around the world.

On Sunday mornings, adults gather in advance of the worship service to support each other, to pray, and to preview what will be heard in that day’s readings.

To address curiosities in the community and engage in discussions about God, faith, and religious practices, our pastoral intern initiated “Pub Theology” which meets in a local establishment two Thursday evenings per month. This has been an informal, relaxed way to reach out to community members to discuss belief structures, aspects of faith and how those are put into practice in our lives.

Additional opportunities for learning include regular book studies toward a deeper understanding of social issues (e.g. *Our Time is Now* by Stacey Abrams). We also host regular, licensed movie presentations on topics of social relevance (e.g. *Kiss the Ground*), issues of crisis (e.g. John Oliver on Homelessness), and celebrations of humanity (e.g. *The Secret Life of Bees*). Movie showings are typically followed by a facilitated discussion with a speaker to share details of what is happening locally, and to explore ideas for actions that can be taken to address these issues.

Over the past few years, we have been intentional about offering educational presentations by invited speakers regarding World Religions, Black History, Women's history, and others, as well as an informative presentation by the League of Women Voters on important ballot proposals (Fall 2022).

During Lent 2023, a 3-part series was organized for a new member cohort and attended by many longtime members to deepen their understanding of our faith, which included discussions on Progressive Christianity, History of the UCC, and Organization of First Congregational Church (our specific church) held as part of casual soup dinners.

Visitors as well as long-time attendees are invited to join with the pastor and church members in an informal luncheon to ask questions about the church and to learn about the process of becoming a member.

On a lighter side, certain members have stepped up to share their passion in the kitchen by offering specific cooking classes, which provide a relaxed social time for building community through fun and shared experiences. Similarly, the Art Team has organized and hosted a number of evening events where members and visitors can learn a new art technique.

Among our members, there are numerous former and current educators of all levels (pre-K to higher education), and our congregation strongly values the concept of "life-long" learning.

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

Prior to 2018 our church used a Board of Trustees and an Advisory Council to direct the church operations. As this approach became increasingly cumbersome and inefficient, we undertook a revision of our By-laws and created a Church Council system with a President, Vice President, Member-at-Large, Clerk, and a representative from each of the predominant teams, eg. Missions, Education, Buildings and Grounds, Financial, Endowment, Social and Environmental Justice, Care, Congregational Commons, and

Business. The Church Council holds monthly meetings with the Pastor that are open to all members to report on activities, and to discuss, coordinate, and finalize all the major decisions of the church. Council meeting minutes are drafted and reviewed, and finally approved at the following month's meeting. The minutes are made available to all members.

Teams, groups, and ad-hoc committees meet monthly or as needed, and are empowered to plan activities, programs, events, and to carry out their specific responsibilities with minimal oversight from the Council. Teams or individuals that require or desire additional funding or support make requests or proposals to the Council for discussion and decisions regarding approval.

Information on church decisions and happenings are communicated in a variety of ways. A weekly email is sent to a list of members and friends that shares all current and upcoming events, highlights the "Giving Tree theme" for the month, and any other pertinent information. The "Still Speaking" newsletter is produced monthly and provides timely information as well as articles on specific topics and areas of interest. A Saturday email highlights images from the previous week, previews the Sunday service, and includes pertinent information for the following week. Finally, announcements are made in the Sunday bulletin and before the service as noted above.

We are currently in the process of formalizing and updating our church's organizational chart to reflect the formation of new teams and to clarify the lines of responsibility for all groups. This work came out of our recently completed strategic plan and is intended to assist in providing guidance and structure.

*See Appendix B. Organizational Chart*

**When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?**

Church Council and team meetings are held on a regular basis to discuss agenda items or issues of concern. The pastor is apprised of (and welcome at) these meetings and is regularly consulted for guidance on action items. For decision making, approximately 12 hours each month are spent in formal meetings, with additional time for informal meetings.

Formal meetings:

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Church Council – 1.5 hrs | Worship – 1 hr           |
| Care – 1 hr              | Education – 1.5 hrs      |
| Missions – 1.5 hrs       | Communications – 1.5 hrs |

Congregational Commons - 1 hr  
Buildings and Grounds - 1 hr  
Social and Environmental Justice - 1.5 hrs

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

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the church leaders met to decide whether to hold church services on the upcoming Sunday or not. Reviewing guidance from the MDHHS and the CDC, it was decided that the safest plan for the congregation was to cancel service for that week, and immediately begin preparing some form of online service for the following week. The pastor created video material of readings and the sermon, musicians and vocalists recorded music, visual representations of the day's message were collected, and the technical team stitched all the pieces together. The virtual service was then posted on the church website as well as on our social media page. Additionally, DVDs of the services were created and delivered, along with a DVD player if necessary, to the homes of people that had limited internet access or expertise. Over the following weeks, the virtual service grew in depth and complexity, and more fully reflected the structure of in-person services that the congregation was familiar with. The leadership team creatively sought ways to keep the virtual services engaging and meaningful. These efforts included a "virtual passing of the peace" consisting of short video clips where church members recorded a greeting for the congregation from their own spaces. Over time, the post-service coffee hour was even re-imagined, and held over Zoom to provide an opportunity to check in and share needed time with friends while sheltering at home.

Our great fortune at this time was to have within our membership the technical expertise to edit and produce high-quality content and share it through social media channels and our Church website. We experienced growth at this time with an increase in reach and impact, as noted by locations that viewers were logging in from. As a result of this ability to reach out, serendipitously, financial contributions and membership did not fall.

**Can you provide the next minister with materials to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance?**

Yes, we can provide any of the following: By-laws, annual reports, Church Council meeting minutes, and the recently created Strategic Plan.

# 11-YEAR REPORT



## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS

Church#:	320430	Schedule:	0	First Congregational UCC	Charlotte	MI	48813		
Assoc:	396								
YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2011	423	120	42	0	0	0	7	0	-7
2012	426	125	41	0	11	0	8	0	3
2013	434	110	30	0	10	0	1	1	8
2014	298	110	40	0	0	5	9	129	-133
2015	292	125	25	2	0	0	9	0	-7
2016	279	125	25	4	0	0	17	0	-13
2017	270	90	35	0	1	0	10	0	-9
2018	188	80	10	2	0	1	6	79	-82
2019	189	70	23	0	0	7	6	0	1
2020	187	70	9	0	0	0	2	0	-2
2021	197	65	9	0	14	0	4	0	10

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPPLY CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2011	\$206,010	\$0	\$10,343	\$1,955	\$12,298	\$0	\$12,298	5.02	\$218,308	\$189,524
2012	\$214,822	\$0	\$7,222	\$2,148	\$9,370	\$0	\$9,370	3.36	\$224,192	\$211,781
2013	\$210,771	\$0	\$7,065	\$1,848	\$8,913	\$600	\$9,513	3.35	\$220,284	\$133,700
2014	\$220,349	\$0	\$6,430	\$7,528	\$13,958	\$600	\$14,558	2.92	\$234,907	\$156,186
2015	\$222,960	\$0	\$5,468	\$2,399	\$7,867	\$0	\$7,867	2.45	\$230,827	\$211,441
2016	\$195,250	\$0	\$4,890	\$2,627	\$7,517	\$0	\$7,517	2.50	\$202,767	\$195,250
2017	\$189,179	\$0	\$5,338	\$2,209	\$7,547	\$0	\$7,547	2.82	\$196,726	\$150,397
2018	\$186,500	\$17,220	\$4,626	\$1,399	\$6,025	\$1,000	\$7,025	2.48	\$183,525	\$186,549
2019	\$183,830	\$0	\$4,953	\$3,245	\$8,198	\$0	\$8,198	2.69	\$192,028	\$153,352
2020	\$197,896	\$1,061	\$4,012	\$651	\$4,663	\$0	\$4,663	2.03	\$202,559	\$192,809
2021	\$200,661	\$0	\$5,602	\$1,739	\$7,341	\$0	\$7,341	2.79	\$208,002	\$161,550

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2016-2021	-29.39	-48.00	-64.00	250.00	-76.47	2.77	-2.34	2.58
2011-2021	-53.43	-45.83	-78.57	0.00	-42.86	-2.60	-40.31	-4.72

Please note: Zero values ("0") or ("\$0") may reflect missing information in some years. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 2007.

## CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	147	x
Number of active non-members:	4	x
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	151	x

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	79 %	x
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	8 %	x
Less than 5 years:	13 %	x

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
9	5	3	10	8	34	32	57	x

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	4 %	x
Joint household with minors:	8 %	x
Single adults age 35-65:	8 %	x
Joint household with no minors:	56 %	x
Single adults over 65:	24 %	x

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	95 %	x
College:	50 %	x
Graduate School:	25 %	x
Specialty Training:	5 %	x

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	20 %	X
Adults who are retired:	75 %	X
Adults who are not fully employed:	5 %	x

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

Education, Medicine, Science, Industry, Law and Business, Social Services, Arts

**Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. What does diversity mean in your context?**

The members of our congregation are more ethnically diverse than the greater community. However, those representing non-Caucasian ethnicities are very few in number. When we refer to diversity, we are focusing more on spiritual backgrounds as well as sexual orientation.

**List the date your congregation has had or will have a conversation using a resource such as the Welcoming Diversity Inventory. Comment on the results.**

While the specific date is not known, members of our church used the ONA Coalition’s “Self-Evaluation Tool” to prompt discussion questions. Although this did not bring a lot to our process, these discussions did lead to our church connecting with the Gay Straight Alliance at the local high school, and these youth have been on our contact list for various social events that are hosted to support LGBTQ+ youth in the area.

## PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

**Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.**

Ways of Gathering	Selected details	Who plans the gatherings?
Adult Groups or Classes (Tuesday history, Sunday morning, outdoor meditation, pub theology, cooking classes, art classes)	4 classes (meet weekly), others bi-weekly, other seasonal	Ind class leaders
Baptisms ( <i>number last year</i> )	1 in past year	Minister
Children's Groups or Classes	Godly Play (weekly)	Education team
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	Ave 100 attendees	
Church-wide, community Meals	8 meals in past year	Lay leaders
Choirs and Music Groups	Adult choir, 18 members	Director of Music
Church-based Bible Study	Bi-weekly prayer group	Lay leaders
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	monthly	Minister
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	None in last year	
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	6	Minister
Outdoor Worship	Sundays June-Sept	Minister/Lay leaders
Prayer or Meditation Groups	3 groups, bi-weekly	Lay leaders
Public Advocacy Work	See Social Justice reports	Lay leaders
Retreats	None in past year	Lay leaders
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	Pub Theology	Student Minister Intern
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	None in past year	Minister, Wedding committee

Worship (time slot: 10 am)	Ave 60-70 attendees	Minister and Worship Team
Young Adult Groups or Classes	None in past year	
Youth Groups or Classes	None in past year	
Other	Concert series, Summer Story Hour	Lay leaders

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

Name	Three-Way or Four-Way Covenant?	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Dick Bayliss	No		Occasionally serves as liturgist.	Y
Dawn Christiansen	No		Occasionally serves as guest preacher, or for pastoral care at the request of the minister for vacations or emergencies.	N

**If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation:**

Their roles are the same as other congregants: they share their gifts as needed and as they are able in the service of others and our church.

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

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person
Interim Pastor	Yes	Part time	Church Council	14 months
Director of Music	No	Part time	Pastor	30+ years
Office Manager	No	Part time	Pastor	18 years
Communications Editor	No	Part time	Pastor	1.5 years
Custodian	No	Part time	Pastor	8 years

## CHURCH FINANCES

Current annual income for fiscal year 2022

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$215,388.84
Endowment Balance	\$503,346.84*
Endowment Draw	\$13,070
Fundraising Events (auction, dinners)	\$3,000
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$15,000 est.
Grants	\$3,000
Rentals of Church Building	\$0
Rentals of Church Parsonage	N/A
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g.</i> Missions Team, Women's Fellowship)	\$14,079.43**
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$263,538.27</b>

\*Excluded from total.

\*\*Distributions from the Missions Team and the Women's Fellowship go directly to the recipient organizations and are not a part of the Church's Budget.

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

- \$227,363 for 2023

*See Appendix C. Church Budget*

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

- 45% of budgeted expenses for the year are for total, full-time ministerial support. (\$102,003 of \$227,363 total annual 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?**

Yes - Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM - Basic Support)	<u>\$423</u>
Yes - One Great Hour of Sharing	<u>\$880</u>
Yes - Strengthen the Church	<u>\$495</u>
Yes - Neighbors in Need	<u>\$535</u>
Yes - Christmas Fund	<u>\$1063</u>

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

- Funds are collected as donor designated contributions and are not a part of the church's budget.

**What is the church's current indebtedness?**

- Total amount of loan debt: \$0

**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.**

- Projected installation of solar panels on the roof of the Annex Building. This will require an investment of approximately \$19,187, which represents the cost after subtraction of a referral discount (\$300) and 30% Direct Pay Incentive (\$8,223). The Church Council voted in favor of this investment because of the significant savings on electricity costs as well as it being aligned with our commitment toward protecting the environment for future generations. Project start date will be determined following an inspection of the roof and any necessary repairs are completed.

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

- None since 2010

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

The most recent capital campaign took place from 12/2006 – 1/2010 (5 fiscal years) and resulted in a total inflow of \$1,370,000.

The main projects initiated during the campaign were:

- purchase and demolition of a property and house on Sheldon St, and the demolition of the old parsonage
- replacement of former Church roof with heavy grade resin shingles with 50 yr life expectancy, along with re-shingling of the two towers with slate shingles
- repairs made to wooden floors and damaged plaster in the Sanctuary, as well as repairs in the kitchen and bathrooms
- refurbishing of the stained glass windows and the pipe organ
- gutting and redesign of the Annex building (purchased in 2010) to include an office suite, three meeting rooms, and two restrooms. A new roof and air conditioning system were also installed.

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

**What is the market value of the assets?** \$516,616 as of 5/18/2023

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

- As needed, and under certain circumstances. Endowment funds are sometimes used for certain building repairs. Additionally, \$5,000 from Endowment has been committed for the second consecutive year to fund “mini-grants” for various projects, e.g. movies shown by the SEJ team, root beer floats given away during Charlotte Frontier Days Festival, food and games for the Fall Homecoming cookout, and supplies for the Art Team projects.

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

2022: \$13,070 drawn, which is 2% of the beginning balance of \$581,679  
2017: \$37,761 drawn, which is 9% of the beginning balance of \$417,658

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

The change in market value over the past year reduced the fund by \$107,175. Expenditures of \$13,070 were made for building maintenance and the mini-grant program for internal activities and ministry.

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

Indefinitely, based on changes in stock market values. The church is required to maintain a \$250,000 reserve in the corpus base.

**Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:**

Money is withdrawn for maintenance projects or capital improvements only under consultation with the Church Council treasurer and approval by the Church Council. Contributions to the endowment fund continue to be received.

**Other Assets**

**Reserves (savings):** \$80,000 combined (“rainy day” fund and the Capital Campaign fund)

**Does your church have a parsonage?** No

**Describe all buildings owned by the church:**

The church building occupies three stories with a narthex, the sanctuary including a balcony, a small chapel, a choir room and prayer room, 5 classrooms, a bride’s room, a licensed commercial kitchen, three restrooms, and multiple storage locations. The church owns the Annex Building, an adjacent building of approximately 6000 sq. ft. that was purchased in 2010 and contains 3 offices, 2 conference rooms, a library, 2 rest rooms and storage space.

The church also owns a small building (approximately 400 sq. ft.), formerly a bank satellite building, that was part of the purchase of the adjacent property that became the Congregational Commons.

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

- None

**Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?**

All rooms in the church and annex are wheelchair accessible except the chancel, sanctuary balcony, and lower general use rooms (nursery, classrooms, music storage, and bride’s room).

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

Our church has a “bottom up” budgeting process where committees make requests to the Church Council for operating funds needed for projects. After consideration and discussion of the proposal, the Council approves or denies (rarely) the request. Some initiatives begin as self-financed but may be shifted to either the general fund or endowment once the projects demonstrate their stability.

As part of our Strategic Planning efforts, we are making an intentional effort to look at the long-term needs of the church (maintenance, repairs, depreciation) and to plan our budgets accordingly. Our congregation is committed to the sustainability of the properties, the buildings, and the grounds for future generations. We have upgraded pavement, handrails, ramps, planted trees and gardens, and created well-cared for spaces to be enjoyed by our members and friends.

When faced with a particular challenge, such as with the pivot to online worship services during COVID-19, proposals to upgrade the technology for recording and sharing worship services were researched, discussed, and ultimately funded to maintain connection with our congregation and friends.

In all of our work, we have found that people are incredibly generous, and when made aware of a need, they step up in effort and financial support. An amazing example of this was the recent fundraiser challenge to contribute to RIP Medical Debt, where our congregation donated over \$4000 to eliminate more than \$400,000 in medical debt for Michigan families.



## HISTORICAL INFORMATION

**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.**

One of the significant milestones in our church occurred in 2019 with the adoption of the Open and Affirming designation. In preparation, a committee of interested and dedicated members assembled to research and move the effort forward. Several coffee hours were hosted by this committee for the purpose of introducing the concept to the larger congregation, listening to their comments and addressing their concerns. A panel of members from the Edgewood United Church of Christ in Lansing and their pastor attended a Sunday coffee hour to explain how the ONA designation affected their church life. Messages and reflections from the pulpit were delivered to gently remind us of the benefits of inclusion. When we felt there was no new information to convey, we preceded with the vote. The result of the vote was to adopt the ONA designation.

After adoption we moved forward to outwardly convey that we are an open and affirming church by displaying signage on our property and draping rainbow flags on our front railings. We have shown several movies and documentaries about the LGBTQ+ community. These showings were advertised on Facebook and available to the public at no charge. Our plans to partner with the *Salus Center* (Lansing's LGBTQIA+ community center and advocacy group) to celebrate Pride 2020 were thwarted by COVID-19.

Since social justice is at the heart of who we are as a church, the ONA Committee changed their name to Social Justice Committee in 2020 to better reflect our efforts to include all marginalized groups. In 2021 the name was further changed to Social and Environmental Justice (SEJ) to reflect the committee's expanding purpose. This committee now works in partnership with the Education and Communications Teams to spread awareness and literacy on topics such as voting rights, racial injustice, women's rights, mental health awareness, environmental justice as well as LGBTQ+ rights. Examples of these efforts include bi-monthly book discussions on an array of social justice topics, Black History presentations, discussions and a museum trip, multicultural representation in church services, Pride month activities, and creation of a SEJ Network Facebook page for community awareness. We actively supported I'll Be Your Rock Vermontville Youth Pride 2022 Festival by sponsoring a booth and

giving out free books to youth. It is Michigan's only Pride festival dedicated to LGBTQ+ youth, allies and their families. We also hosted a Valentine's Day Party for the I'll Be Your Rock youth in Charlotte and surrounding areas. We will continue our support in this year's Pride Festival.

We have accomplished much in the last few years to promote and nurture inclusion for all people, but we understand there is more work to be done. The ONA process has been the most important happening in our church because it is an outward and visible sign that ALL are truly welcome in our congregation, that we value the lives, opinions, and gifts of all people, and that our congregation is at its best when equitable practices of diversity and inclusion are genuinely demonstrated toward our entire community.

**Creation of the Congregational Commons:** In 2016, our congregation took a brave leap of faith and approved the acquisition and reclamation of a blighted property (bank drive-through/paved parking lot) adjacent to the church Annex Building. A development team was assembled to discuss, plan, and coordinate improvements to the space, and we broke ground on the project on May 29, 2017. Fundraising events brought in financial support to convert the former bank drive-through lanes into a multipurpose outdoor stage. These efforts also supported the building of a 45 ft. diameter labyrinth, as well as the planting of many trees, shrubs, and grass. Most of the work was completed using the expertise and volunteer efforts from members of the congregation. The team managing "The Commons" has been committed to making it a community-building, self-sustaining green space without placing economic burden on the church financial structure. As noted in other parts of this LCP, various activities take place in the Commons, including outdoor worship services, free concerts, commitment ceremonies, family parties, and the Summer Story Hour program.

Ongoing efforts include renovations to the existing former bank building, development of a play space for children, creating gardens, and improved accessibility.

**Retirement of the hired Associate Pastor position:** In 2016, the Associate Pastor position was eliminated based on a decision made by the church Board of Trustees that it was no longer feasible to sustain. This individual had been in the part-time position for 14 years. Out of their natural drive, they had become the connection of our congregation to social justice initiatives and activities in the local area. They were also the predominant person overseeing Sunday school programming for the youth in the congregation. Upon their abrupt release, it was quickly realized that this created a significant void. Members of the church that cared deeply about the continuation of these various initiatives were inspired to step up, take on leadership positions and "champion" the projects. With this, the team structure in our congregation was born, and we are now more busy than ever! It feels gratifying that so much positivity grew out of

such a dark time. FCUCC members have continuously become more involved and invested in the specific areas, and new initiatives, that they feel strongly about.

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

When the COVID-19 outbreak required that our church shut down, we quickly pivoted to virtual church services. Elements of traditional worship were video recorded, then assembled and distributed virtually using YouTube each Sunday at 10am. This continued for over a year, until we were able to transition to outdoor worship service in the summer of 2021, while still practicing social distancing. The return to in-person worship was welcomed by many, but there were still some that were hesitant to attend, even from a distance. For this reason, we continued to offer the virtual service to our members but switched from pre-recorded videos to a Facebook livestream captured using an iPhone.

In fact, there were several followers who still preferred the convenience of a recorded service. They were able to watch from home over coffee, on the road while on vacation, or to time-shift their viewing until later in the week. More importantly, as summer came to a close, we decided to return to indoor worship while still accommodating the need for social distancing to prevent airborne transmission of infection. This meant reduced capacity in the sanctuary, as well as leaving windows open during the cold winter, which affected attendance. Throughout, we continued to explore ways to keep our remote participants connected as much as possible. This meant using several cameras strategically located in the sanctuary connected via wifi to a laptop that would livestream the service.

Eventually, we moved past some of the more onerous COVID restrictions, but we recognized that virtual worship remained an important part of church life, whether indoors or outdoors. Using funds from our Endowment, we installed high-quality cameras in the sanctuary and connected a high-end gaming computer with custom software to create our livestream. We also upgraded our Internet connection to fiber and added fast wifi connectivity throughout. This system is integrated with our existing sound mixer, as well as the overhead projector in our sanctuary for slides and videos.

Today, we produce a high-quality video service for our members each week, which includes closed captions, slide shows and animated graphics. We target

multiple streaming services, including Facebook and YouTube, and can track our reach using analytics. While our audience averages a modest 5-10 viewers each week, we have regular followers from not only from nearby communities, but also New Jersey and even the Philippines.

Outdoor worship services in the summer are no exception: wifi cameras and wireless microphones send video and audio back to the livestream computer, which is controlled remotely. Finally, this system is available for more than just the weekly church service. We can record and stream other services, such as weddings, funerals, and special events. Remote members may also view and participate in congregational meetings using Zoom. In many ways, it's broadened the way we connect with our congregation, our community, and our world family. You may find videos of our worship services here:

<https://www.youtube.com/@ucccharlotte>

### **Describe your congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict.**

Our values regarding conflict are to listen to all sides and discuss paths to resolution. We strive to empathize with others' points of view while still embracing a vision of progress for the organization as a whole. We have learned that while certain changes seem trivial to some members, these changes may have deep significance to other members based on their lived experience in our place of worship. We have also come to understand that change can push some people beyond their comfort level more than others, and often requires both time and a slower more communicative and loving approach. We know that when change happens rapidly, it can leave some individuals feeling that they no longer recognize their own church, and, while many have come to accept and even embrace the changes, others have chosen to decrease their participation. We strive for good balance and communication among our members by listening, staying flexible and being sensitive as the change is happening. The aftermath of a most recent conflict brought an introspective and reflective phase, which led to the development of our new strategic plan to bring focus, organization of effort, and clearer paths forward. Our church is committed to finding positive ways to heal and move into the future.

***See Appendix D. FCUCC Strategic Plan***

**Ministerial History**

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/No)
Rev. Jody Betten, Interim	2022-present	Y
Rev. Bruce Schoup	2020-2021	Y
Rev. Curtiss Demars-Johnson, Interim	2018-2020	Y
Rev. Philip Hobson	2004-2018	Y
Rev. Tom Jones, Part time associate	2002-2016	Y
Rev Pat Stirling, Interim	2001-2003	Y
Rev. Peter Brenner	1990-2001	Y
Rev. Ken Whitwer, Interim	1988-1990	Y
Rev. W D Colson	1967-1988	Y

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

As a congregation of passionate, motivated, and educated individuals, we have learned that we can weather the storms of conflict and change, and we will survive. We will not be defeated by adversity, or by tasks that seem too hard. We do not give up.

We have learned that a minister needs support and continuous open communication with the members of the congregation to grow in partnership. Our faith community does not need someone to *tell* us what to do in our efforts to share God's love with our community. Rather, we are looking for someone to contribute to our efforts and walk with us. The mindset and goals of our new minister will support and complement the many activities happening in our church and help us to see next steps or new ways of doing things that nurture growth into our mission.

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

- Yes, see "Historical Information" regarding Associate Pastor.

**Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?**

- No

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

- No



Pub Theology

# WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

## COMMUNITY VISION

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

Honoring traditions as we envision a future. The relationships we build reflect the church's values and commitment to education, support, the environment, the arts, and human dignity.

Our church has built strong relationships with several different entities in the community. These include Charlotte Public Library, Eaton Clothing and Furniture Center, which provides low-cost items for sale or for free, SIREN shelter for domestic violence victims and families, Charlotte Rotary, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, Crosswalk Teen Center, Charlotte Community Band, Charlotte Performing Arts Center, and more.

Out of these relationships have come partnerships to share resources and experiences. We see ourselves as "place-makers" providing space for various local groups to meet (scouts, musicians, quilters, book clubs), as well as our own members who gather to work on outreach initiatives (shoeboxes for students on spring break, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Giving Tree collections, Festival of Trees, Shamanic Drum Circle). Our space has been used for baby showers, birthday parties, poetry readings, seminar series, dance recitals, and small group meetings, e.g. Friends of Crystal (a teen/suicide awareness/support group), as well as a retired teachers group. Our church is a visible safe space for LBGTQ+ and other marginalized individuals. We try to find a way to say "yes" to assisting with the needs (spoken and unspoken) in our community.

The Congregational Commons is a reclaimed green space that was created in consultation with the City of Charlotte Chamber of Commerce and is intended to be a place for community recreation, meditation, connecting with nature, and a play space for children. Over time, we have realized that this space also serves as a gathering place for local teens. This has brought to our awareness some of their needs, but we still are working to determine how best to engage with them and offer any needed support. Becoming a teen "hang-out" space was unintended, but we welcome it as a growth opportunity as we strive to find ways to support them as members of our community in whatever way works for them. We operate from a "meet them where they are" mentality and often start by offering food. We have recently been awarded a Courage Grant from the Michigan

Conference of the UCC, which is being viewed as a mechanism to inspire and drive our efforts with this population.

We support the arts in our community. We offer several free concerts at the Commons during the summer months, with opportunities for the community to come together for music and fun, to purchase food, and fill a trailer with donation items for charity. Over the last two years, the Church has partnered with the city to provide the Commons as a venue for part of the “Charlotte Celebrates” summer festival in June. Our church also shares in the sponsorship of a concert on the Courthouse Square during the summer months.

We provide educational activities for local residents in the forms of seminars or movies/speakers on engaging topics. These are promoted on our website and social media, as well as in the local paper. Throughout the summer, a literacy coach (congregant) champion organizes and hosts a weekly Summer Story Hour program for families with small children to gather and listen to stories read aloud and participate in related activities. All children receive a snack and a free book to take home each week.

**Describe your congregation’s participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ.**

In October 2018, our church served as host for the annual meeting of the Michigan Conference. This was a positive experience and an opportunity to share with the wider church some of the work we have been doing locally.

The promotion of wider church initiatives, including the 5 for 5 UCC offerings, occurs at regular times throughout the year, and congregants are encouraged to give as they are able and inspired.

Overall, this is admittedly not a strong area for our church, but efforts are not completely absent.

The pastor and a small number of members attend the Covenant Association and Michigan Conference meetings, and report back to the Church Council, which is appreciated. Although we believe it is important to stay connected with the wider UCC, attending meetings and participating in activities far beyond our local community has been a lower priority for FCUCC as a whole. While continuing to operate fairly autonomously, our church would be open to having a broader connection in order to support the greater mission, and also learn how the Conference may support our local efforts. Importantly, the Covenant Association is active in providing a weekly gathering of Association Clergy for support and encouragement.

**Check all of the following “statements of witness” that apply to your UCC faith community.**

- Accessible to All (A2A)
- Creation Justice
- Economic Justice
- Faithful and Welcoming
- God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
- Immigrant Welcoming
- Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I’M)
- Just Peace
- Global Mission Church
- Open and Affirming (ONA)
- WISE Congregation for Mental Health (*under discussion*)
- Other UCC designations:
- Other similar designations in affiliated denominations
- None

**Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?**

We have a Welcoming Statement regarding broad inclusivity, and we are one of the only churches in this local area that has taken this position. This Statement has had a significant impact on our congregation, mostly positive, but some negative as well. The Statement has drawn new individuals into our church to explore possibilities for their personal lives, and several of our newest members and attendees are people that feel strongly about this commitment. The intentional message that “our church is a safe place for all” is communicated outside of the building with banners, flags, messages and social media posts. This outward display of where our church stands has made some members uncomfortable with the change. Some have chosen to reduce their involvement while other have chosen to no longer participate in the life of the church. Overall, the Statement has led to a net gain by drawing people in, and it has encouraged ongoing education regarding issues of equity and inclusion.

Our Welcoming Statement is as follows:

We at First Congregational United Church of Christ, Charlotte, commit to loving all people equally, just as Jesus did, to see beyond our differences, extending the hand of peace to all.

We actively resist socially exclusive behaviors, relying on the healing and unconditional nature of God's love and grace as our guide.

We strive to grow in God's wisdom, generosity, and compassion, allowing everyone to experience the wholeness of being their authentic selves.

Progressive in our belief that God is still speaking, we renounce any discrimination or injustice, and declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming church.

We invite anyone, regardless of race, ancestry, age, ability, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, economic circumstance, marital status, family structure, faith background, culture, physical or mental facility, to full participation in the common life of the church.

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!*

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

We are most closely connected with two churches in our area: St. John's Episcopal Church and Peace Lutheran Church. We hold joint services for Thanksgiving, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday.

Our position on social justice issues has caused other churches in the area to distance themselves from us, such that there is an interfaith alliance in Charlotte that does not include any of these three churches.

In 2017, our church hosted a six-week series of seminars on world religions that was open to the public. In the last few years, our church has been connected to a group of churches in the Lansing area called the "Capitol Area Chapter" of the "Michigan Interfaith Power and Light" (MIPL). The goals of this group are to promote and enact environment-protecting initiatives and environmental justice. We have been working with MIPL to explore the feasibility of converting our building energy sources from fossil fuels to solar power.

**If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.**

Our work on the Strategic Plan resulted in the current Mission Statement:

*“We are God’s love in action.”*

This mission statement is put into practice using our adopted *Commission Statement* (which had been referred to as our Mission Statement prior to the implementation of our Strategic Plan):

*Our church will provide a place and direction for joining with God, healing the broken, and educating youth and adults.*

*We are challenged by our faith to reach out to our congregants, community, and world family, and to offer opportunities for spiritual growth and renewal.*

*We welcome all into our Christian family.*

*This is our mission as a church of Jesus Christ.*

We are an engaged, inspired, and committed people, and this is our daily work. It is difficult to calculate the amount of time put into carrying out our mission. Therefore, we hope that this LCP, the Annual Report (available upon request), and the Strategic Plan (available upon request) will sufficiently illustrate the dedication of our members and their specific activities focused on living out both the Mission and Commission Statements through all aspects of our community’s life of faith.

**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 pastor will be responsible for planning, preparing, and coordinating the Sunday worship service in collaboration with the Worship Team. The pastor is expected to also meet with various other teams and groups to guide, discuss, and assist with current projects and initiatives. Furthermore, we anticipate that the pastor will be responsive to individual requests for visitation, for discussion and counseling on faith matters, and to be generally supportive of the efforts made by the church within the context of the Mission statement. These efforts are intended to require a majority of the pastor’s scheduled work time.

The congregation perceives the pastor as a member of this community and as such would be supported by a newly formed Pastoral Support Team, made up of 3 members for confidential consultation and support on a regular basis.

We would like to note that it will not be essential or required that the pastor participate in every event that the Teams host. But we also feel that the cohesiveness of our congregation is outwardly displayed when the pastor is present to help represent the church at certain key community events, such as the free concerts at the Commons, the Charlotte Business Expo, or the “I’ll Be Your Rock” Pride Festival to support LGBTQ+ youth in the local rural areas. Prioritizing events for participation, if necessary, could be accomplished in consultation with the Church Council. In short, we hope that the pastor, like many church members, will find their niche and passion for participation among the multitude of possibilities happening at FCUCC. And, like any member, the pastor should be free to explore ways of being “God’s love in action” in the community with their own expressions of faith.

Additionally, the congregation would like the pastor to maintain a professional connection with the wider church for the purposes of staying current with Association and Conference matters and informing us on new opportunities for service and engagement.



## **Demographics**

**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?**

- The percentage of individuals who hold higher education degrees in our congregation is greater than that of the wider community.
- There are more 25-40 year-olds living in the community than are present in our congregation.
- The racial makeup of our congregation is comparable to the greater community.
- Our congregation embraces progress for solving community issues, rather than the community's tendency to lean toward conservation of traditional norms.

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

The largest group of people that is moving into the Charlotte area are single people under 30 years of age with annual salaries of less than \$30,000. Another trend is a steady increase in the elderly population. This is information that we are mindful of as we plan for future programming and outreach.

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

We are the "go to" church when people in the community are asked to recommend an inclusive welcoming church. Local leaders share their view that our church is one of the few churches that is always willing to step up to help. We have many good cooks (!) and we can be counted on to consistently volunteer to assist as needed.

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

New attendees have shared the following reasons for getting involved:

- They observe that the actions of the church members align with the proclaimed church values.

- They feel heard, seen, and accepted, in contrast to previous experiences where they were welcomed, but asked to 'sit in the back,' and told they could not become members.
- They were immediately treated as family.
- They find the worship service, music and message to be meaningful and relevant.
- Their ideas are viewed as possibilities.
- They find individuals that support their suggestions and help them develop plans for action.

Several of our new members have joined in to assist with our service projects, educational opportunities, and outreach work. Without any pressure attached, we value the contributions of time, talent, and/or treasure from all.



## REFERENCES

### REFERENCE 1

Bryan Myrkle  
Community Development Director  
City of Charlotte  
(517) 543-8853  
[bmyrkle@charlottemi.org](mailto:bmyrkle@charlottemi.org)  
City Official

### REFERENCE 2

Courtney Mead  
Executive Director Charlotte Chamber of Commerce  
City of Charlotte  
(517) 543-0400  
[Charlottechamberofcommerce@gmail.com](mailto:Charlottechamberofcommerce@gmail.com)  
City Official

### REFERENCE 3

Julie Kimmer  
Courthouse Square Manager  
City of Charlotte  
(517) 543-6999  
[csamuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:csamuseum@yahoo.com)  
Active Community Member

## CLOSING THOUGHTS

### Reverse St. Francis Prayer

*Lord, make me a channel of disturbance.  
Where there is apathy, let me provoke;  
Where there is compliance, let me bring questioning;  
Where there is silence,  
may I be a voice.*

*Where there is too much comfort and too little action, grant disruption;  
Where there are doors closed and hearts locked,  
grant the willingness to listen.*

*When laws dictate and pain is overlooked...  
When tradition speaks louder than need...  
Grant that I may seek rather to do justice than to talk about it;  
disturb us, O Lord.*

*To be with, as well as for, the alienated;  
To love the unlovable as well as the lovely;  
Lord, make me a channel of disturbance.*

~Author Unknown



## 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 Local Church Profile was compiled by a nine-member Search Committee nominated by the congregation and included the president of the Church Council (as per the by-laws).

Signed:

Matt Slot, Church Council President

Amy Frost

Bill Oatman

Bren Wood

Diane Hudson

Cooper Frost

Ron Field

Todd Rockhill

Jeannine Scott

6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

---

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

Staff Comment: Yes

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

Staff Comment: Yes

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

Staff Comment: Yes

My signature below attests to the above three items.



Signature:

Name / Title: Rev. Cheryl L. Burke

Email: cheryl@michucc.org

Phone: 517332-3511 x210

Date: 6/7/2023

## **Reference Letters**

**B. Myrkle**

**C. Mead**

**J. Kimmer**



**TO:** First Congregational Church, U.C.C. Charlotte, Michigan

**FROM:** Bryan Myrkle, Community Development Director, City of Charlotte

**SUBJECT:** Pastoral Search

**DATE:** May 2, 2023

---

As Community Development Director for the City of Charlotte for the past 23 years, I have had the opportunity to work with the Charlotte First Congregational church many times, and they have proven themselves to be a strong community partner.

I have worked with them several times officially as a city staffer, but I have also worked with them as a participant in many special events and community activities, such as the Summer Concerts on the Square free music series. I have found them willing to share their resources generously in service to the betterment of the community.

The Church has consistently shown an eagerness to lead-by-example, and demonstrates this with a high standard of public spirit and engagement. Church members are quick to lend a hand for community events, and their help and support makes these events more friendly and welcoming for everyone.

The congregation has also been an amazing steward of its beautiful historic building, its surrounding grounds and even the neighborhood. The Congregational Commons area it has developed is a wonderful open door to the community.



The members of the Church congregation also excel in this community as individuals, apart from official Church activities. Many times over the years, I have worked with a dedicated and selfless person on a project or activity, later to find out they are members of the First Congregational Church.

The membership of the Church is its strength, and by working together, they have established a strong and stable presence in Charlotte, and one that is making this community a stronger and more open-hearted place.



First Congregational Church

106 Bostwick St.

Charlotte, MI 48813

Dear Pastoral Search Committee:

The Charlotte Chamber of Commerce would like to express our support for the First Congregational Church. The church has been a longtime member of the Charlotte Chamber, not just as a paid member but as an active partner in events and community outreach programs. The First Congregational Church has been and continues to be a staple in the community. The chamber looks forward to many more years partnering with this openminded and caring organization.

I appreciate the continued partnership and look forward to meeting a new community leader.

Courtney Mead

Executive Director

Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

241 S. Cochran Ave.

Charlotte, MI 48813



Eaton County's Museum at Courthouse Square  
100 W. Lawrence Ave., P.O. Box 411, Charlotte MI 48813  
517-543-6999; [CSAMuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:CSAMuseum@yahoo.com)

First Congregational United Church of Christ of Charlotte      5-9-2023  
106 S. Bostwick St.  
Charlotte MI 48813

It is my great pleasure to write a letter recommending our neighbors and friends at the Congregational Church. Courthouse Square Association as well as I, have worked on and collaborated on countless projects over the years. Everything from a fun engaging brownie tasting to a Black Lives Matter March. I have reached out to the members and leadership when we needed help with troubled youth and adults. We have co-sponsored concerts, shared contractors and supported each other for many years.

They truly have always been a vital part of our downtown and community. The members and leaders of the church truly lead a life of service to all, which is something I very much admire. The church was founded on the very principles of equality, opportunity, and support for all. It has a very rich history of inclusion, kindness and service, principles it's members still practice to this day.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share my opinion.  
Sincerely,

Julie H. Kimmer  
CSA Manager  
ECHC Clerk

## **Appendix A:**

### **Care, Missions, and Social and Environmental Justice Team Reports**

## Care Community

Pam Rinckey, Chair

**Team Members:** Pam Rinckey, Eileen Harrison, Shirley Ripley, Carol Yerkes, Judi Cates, Dottie Moore, Chris Reist, Amy Krizek, Dot Yoder

Since the inception of this committee several years ago, we have continued to broaden our scope of services. Our membership numbers remain steady at 7 to 10 but we would welcome new people and new ideas.

We meet the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in the Annex Library. We are usually joined by the Pastor.

We don't always have a fixed agenda but we take time to look through the prayer requests and any other concern that individual members bring forth. We try to assign individual members to either a home visit, sending a card, or making contact with people who need our care and concern. We also drive people to doctor appointments and church functions, furnish meals for our families and friends who need a bit of help due to illness or a loss in the family and welcome guests to our Sunday Services.

We also go over the prayer lists from both the Sunday programs and the monthly newsletter, Still Speaking, to determine which names can be removed or left on the list for continuing prayers.

We are in the process of editing both the Birthday and Anniversary lists that appear in our church publications. We welcome any feedback and suggestions.

We recently distributed 20 poinsettias along with a personal visit to members and friends of the church who are unable to attend services and events.

We are so pleased with the response from the congregation concerning our work both within the church and the outside community. We hope to continue to expand our scope of service and welcome new members and new ideas for our continued success.

A special thank-you to Pastor Jody Betten for her unflagging support and new ideas during her time with us.



“God is still speaking,”  
means believing  
the good, good news  
that we are not alone.

## Mission Team

Mary Normand, Chair

**Mission Team Members:** Mary Normand, Ramona Kime, Amy Frost, Amy Krizek, Eileen Harrison, Shirley Ripley, Neola Rendell, Bill Yerkes, Carol Yerkes, Katherine Johnson, Todd Rockhill

The Mission Team had another busy year working to support needs both in our community and the broader world. Thank you to the members of the Mission Team who work so hard every year to support the Mission Team projects and to the congregation who so generously support our projects. **It doesn't happen without all of us working together.**



**Global Ministries:** We continue to support 2 students through Global Ministries. We generally hear from the students a couple times a year thanking us for the support.

**Lions Club:** We coordinated Eye Glass collection in response to a request from the Lions Club. Baskets continue to be available around the church for used glasses. The Lions collect these year round.



**Summer Reading Program:** Missions continues to support this program which runs June through August every Monday. This has been and continues to be a very successful program. Thank you to Amy Frost who champions this program.

**Nordic Fire Festival:** We did participate again this year. Unfortunately, we were not in a real visible spot this year, which decreased our outreach, but there were folks looking for us and managed to find us. We will continue to be a part of this event but may do things a little differently.



**Home and Business Expo:** We were placed inside the main building this year which was much better. Their whole set up was much improved. The folks love the cookies. We had some nice positive comments about our Be The Church poster. We were diagonal from the Patriots booth who were aggressively promoting a raffle to adults and youth which included assault rifles. In addition, the gentleman selling the tickets was wearing a side arm. For that reason, some of us feel it is especially important for us to continue to be present.

**Godly Play:** We again worked together with the Sunday School to do our pajama project. 78 sets

of pajamas with a handmade pillow case and book were donated to ECFC. The children love assembling these kits.

**Cookies for Teachers:** We adopted the elementary schools in Charlotte this spring and delivered a large tray of homemade cookies to each one to thank them for all their hard work.

**Spring Shoe Boxes:** 58 shoe boxes were assembled and divided between ECFC and SIREN/Eaton for their clients. Both agencies report they get calls asking if the boxes are in yet.

**Concert on the Square:** The Mission Team along with Weichert Realtors-Emerald Properties and Peace Lutheran Church sponsored a concert in August. We offered homemade ice cream sandwiches, which are always a big hit.

**Stuff the Trailer:** The Mission Team sponsored this during the August Concert on the Commons. This was part of the Strategic Plan for Outreach to involve the community.

**Winter Coat Project:** 108 new coats were donated to Eaton Clothing and Furniture Center (ECFC) and SIREN House. Thank you to Meijer and Walmart for their generous gift card donations and to Bill and Carol Yerkes who champion this event each year.

**Christmas Families:** We adopted 3 families this year. One was from Mid-Michigan Housing Services and two were from SIREN House. All tags were taken and additional items were given.

**Health Kits for the Homeless:** 72 health kits were assembled and divided between SIREN, ECFC, and Mid-Michigan Housing Services.

**Festival of Trees:** There were 46 entries and \$2808 was donated to ECFC to buy boots for their clients.

**Giving Tree Items:** Monthly designated donations included the following focuses: pajamas, cleaning supplies, spring shoe box items, can openers, non-perishable food, personal care items, sheets and towels, socks for the homeless, Mitten Misfits, mittens, gloves, and hats.

**Monetary Donations:** ECFC: \$1000; Cross Walk Teen Center: \$500 and \$250 in food; Helping Hands: \$1000; SIREN/Eaton: \$500; Mid-Michigan Housing Services: \$500; Guardian Suitcases4Kids: \$500; Mitten Misfits: \$100.

**Prayer Shawl:** Our prayer shawl people continue to meet on the first and third Saturday of the month.

**UCC 5 for 5:** We continue to participate in the following: One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need (NIN), Christmas Fund, and Our Churches Wider Mission.

**CROP Walk:** We support this organization, a fundraiser of Church World Service which is “Ending hunger one step at a time.”



# Social and Environmental Justice Committee

Ramona Kime, Chair

**Committee Members:** Ramona Kime (Chair), Mary Kohmuench, Bren Wood, Deb Cogswell, Caryn Hansen, Stephanie Tighe, Deanna Rendel, Jan Shall, Diane Hudson, Judy Johnson, Ron Field, Sandra Field, Amy Frost

The Social and Environmental Justice (SEJ) committee is an active force in the life of our church. The work of SEJ is also an important part of our Strategic Plan, seen in the education and programming elements of our Growth goal and, even more directly, in the Outreach goal: Be the Church. I want to thank all the people who have championed and helped with the many projects over the year. You have helped make this committee an important part of our church's mission.

## Special Projects

**Peace Pole,** The 8' tall Peace Pole has been completed by our artist, Christine Waugh-Fleischman, and is in safe keeping for the winter. It will be installed in the late spring, once the ground has thawed. The plan is to have a special event surrounding the installation.

**Solar Project,** Ramona restarted the solar project (which became inactive during Covid), with help from David Frost on Buildings and Grounds and David Arnosti of Michigan Interfaith Power & Light. Absolute Solar has given us a proposal for solar panels on the Annex roof which has been approved by the Endowment Team. The proposal now goes to the Council.

**SEJ books read this year:** Climate Justice, by Mary Robinson; Our Time is Now, by Stacy Abrams; Love Your Enemies, by Arthur Brooks

## Miscellaneous

- Our church, through Ramona, joined the Capital Area Chapter of Michigan Interfaith Power & Light on their monthly Zoom meetings.
- Circulated "Promote the Vote" petition for a ballot initiative to make voting easier in Michigan
- Booth at the Vermontville Youth Pride Festival, handing out rainbow bandanas with church information and 20 free LGBTQ books
- Chanticleer article re the UCC's Justice and Peace Action Network (JPANet)
- Voter Registration Table at Frontier Days; invited the organization, Voters Not Politicians, to have a table next to ours re: Prop 2
- Hosted League of Women Voters presentation re: 3 state proposals



- Decorated a real Fraser Fir for Festival of Trees with eco-friendly items, including a quilt by Deanna Rendel, using only leftover pieces of fabric
- Chanticleer article about SEJ-related movies to stream during holidays
- Bought and donated 21 LGBTQ books to “I’ll Be Your Rock” youth group in Vermontville with money from a Michigan Conference UCC grant



**Monthly topical projects**

**January, Voting Rights,** Chanticleer article on the history of voting rights; Smaller articles in weekly programs; Short informational paragraphs in Tuesday emails, along with attached pdf of previous Sunday’s article

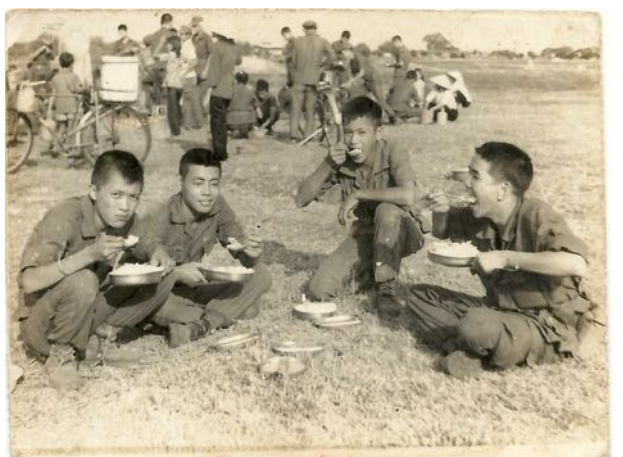
**February, Black History Month,** Large and small flags hung outside; Articles in weekly programs; Online resources: Masterclass on Black History and online tour of National Museum of African American History and Culture; Two presentations by Sandra Field, showing two episodes of the documentary “The Black Church: This is Our Story, This is Our Song” with discussions about Sandra’s own experiences growing up in the Black Church; Presentation by Ron Field about Black Achievements Through History; Field trip (held in March) led by Ron Field to the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit



**March, Women’s History/Equality Month,** Large banner and yard sign hung outside; Film “On the Basis of Sex” about the early professional life of RBG as she fought for women’s equality; Handouts, buttons, women’s rights info on display in BFR; Display in BFR of our own church women throughout history; Article in Chanticleer about the history of Women’s Rights; Booklet by Judi Cates about women in our church and other women leaders



**April, Environmental Justice/Earth Month,** Article for Chanticleer and church’s Facebook page; Link to webinar about native plants in Tuesday email; Banner in front: Save our Planet; April 3rd: focus on bees, with children’s message about bees by Shirley Ripley, coffee hour hosting, and honey tasting with samples provided by Brown’s Bee Service; April 10th: after-church projects: t-shirts to totes, made large canvas banner— “People of Faith for Climate Action”—and signed by congregation members; Movie “Youth v. Gov” about 21 youth who sued the government for not doing enough to combat climate change; “Every Day is Earth Day” stickers for children



**May, Asian American Month,** Articles for Chanticleer; “little people” outside yard signs, Vietnamese display in church; Deanna Rendel presented in church about Thuc’s story; May

1st: exhibit and speaker from Refuge Lansing, an organization that helps local refugees transition to life in the U.S.; evening showing of movie “The Hundred Foot Journey” with light Asian food served before the movie

**June, Pride Month,** Articles for Chanticleer; Pride banner on front of ramp, yard signs, rainbow ribbons in sanctuary and outside around trees and in Commons; “little people”

On Sunday, June 5th, Ellie McIntosh sang “I Am What I Am” during service. We then showed two short films at 11:30: Jonathan Van Ness on non-binary people, and documentary “Becoming Johanna”, a young Latina trans woman, followed by a panel discussion after films with trans folks and parents of a non-binary child

On Sundays, June 12 and 19, during service, Jody Betten and Dan Plasman presented point/counterpoint discussion on “clobber passages” in the Bible.

On June 26th, we participated in Lansing Pride rally.

**September, Latinx Heritage/Immigration Month,** Hosted coffee hour with Latinx food; Showing of the film “Crossing Arizona” about immigration at the Mexican border; Mary Roessler’s presentation on her Peace Corps experience in Colombia; Marylyn Bernard’s presentation on the history of Latinx in the U.S.; also Danial Soza, from Lansing Samaritas, talked about young local Latinx refugees; Marylyn’s second presentation addressed resolving the immigration crisis; Article in Chanticleer about the use of the words “Hispanic” and “Latinx”

**October, Food Insecurity Month,** Articles in Chanticleer on food insecurity and related health issues; Hosted coffee hour, inviting people to bring food for Helping Hands; Showing of the film “A Place at the Table”; Amanda Thompson, from Helping Hands, talked about hunger in the community; we brought non-perishable food; Partnered with Mission Team: Oct. Giving Tree was Brown Bags—non-perishable food

**November, Homeless Awareness Month,** Article in Chanticleer on the many causes of homelessness, Showed two episodes of John Oliver’s “Last Week Tonight” about homelessness, Tracy, from Siren/Eaton shelter, talked to us after the film about what Siren/Eaton does for the homeless in our community;

Partnered with Mission Team; Giving Tree collected adult socks for Housing Services, and the Mission Team made Health Kits for the homeless



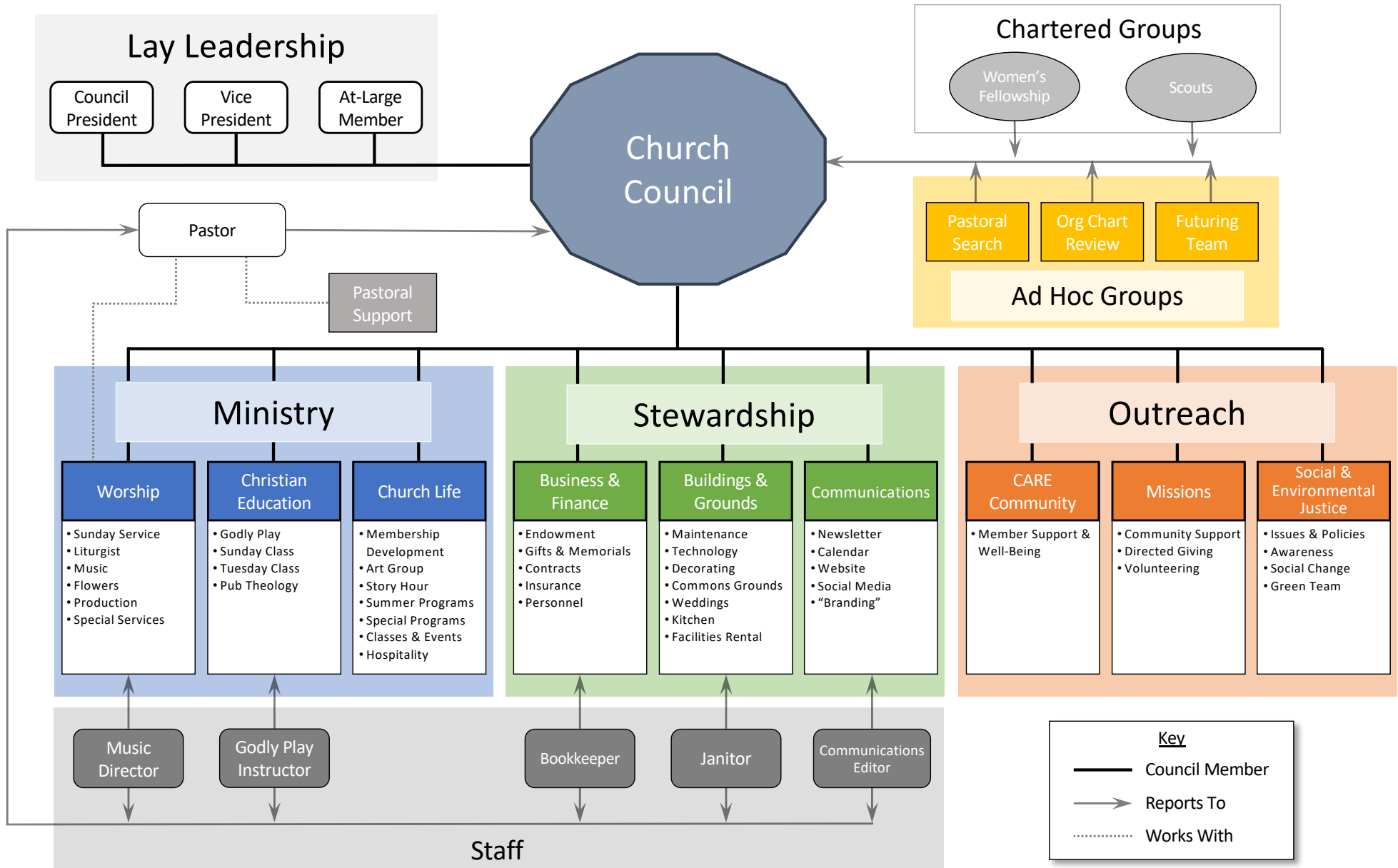
**Appendix B:**  
**Organizational Chart**



# First Congregational United Church of Christ

Proposed Organizational Chart

Draft Version 2023.04.04



**Appendix C:**  
**Church Budget**

<b>INCOME</b>	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	<b>2022 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>
<b>Unrestricted</b>		12/31/2020		12/31/2021		12/31/2022	
<i>members &amp; groups</i>	72 pledges		56 pledges		50 pledges		43 pledges
Pledge income	150,000.00	162,809.39	150,000.00	161,550.00	150,000.00	173,216.02	149,000.00
Gifts	40,000.00	43,009.48	40,000.00	43,153.64	35,000.00	41,826.82	35,000.00
Offering/Loose/Misc	2,000.00	457.75	1,500.00	1,470.30	1,500.00	346.00	500.00
<b>Endowment for mission</b>					5,000.00	192.00	5,000.00
<b>Sub Total</b>	192,000.00	206,276.62	191,500.00	206,173.94	191,500.00	215,580.84	189,500.00
Facility Rental	300.00	-					
Weddings							
Fund raising	600.00	0	600.00	0.00	500.00		500.00
Interest	135.00	228.37	100.00	346.00 171.26	125.00	204.82	125.00
<b>Total Unrestricted</b>	193,035.00	206,504.99	192,200.00	206,345.20	192,125.00	215,785.66	190,125.00
<b>Disbursements- Unrestricted</b>							
<i>Ministry</i>							
Minister Salary	40,000.00	32,668.58	35,230.00	48,124.42	90,000.00	46,180.00	58,000.00
Minister Benefits	24,000.00	25,573.48	24,900.00	22,066.16		21,944.60	28,853.00
Minister Housing	20,000.00	28,753.86	30,000.00	24,894.42		14,280.00	15,000.00
Bridge Pastor	600.00	-					
Pastor Discretion Exp	-	6,296.43		979.08		10.00	
Clergy Reimbursed Exp	1,500.00	151.49	5,000.00	5,019.03		141.93	150.00
Conferences	200.00	-					
Minister mileage	1,200.00	1,705.91					
Advisory / Council	-	-					
Minister's Assistance	<u>125.00</u>		<u>125.00</u>				
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	87,625.00	95,149.75	95,255.00	101,083.11	90,000.00	82,556.53	102,003.00
Christian Ed	1,000.00	279.09	1,200.00	903.20	1,500.00	0.00	2,750.00
Worship	500.00	524.40	500.00	404.07	750.00	244.43	500.00
Wedding	500.00	-	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.00	200.00
<b>Care Community</b>					200.00	0	300.00
Outreach-Missions	1,500.00	1,430.03	1,500.00	1,471.98	2,500.00	2,600.92	2,500.00
<b>Mission "Grants"</b>					5,000.00		

	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	<b>2022 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>
<b>Maintenance</b>							
Custodian	14,200.00	15,009.45	14,820.00	9,848.01	<b>17,100.00</b>	15,600.00	17,100.00
Insurance-bldgs	16,200.00	9,757.75	17,000.00	14,191.00	11,000.00	11,518.00	12,000.00
Gas & Electric	11,800.00	12,337.79	11,800.00	10,029.63	14,750.00	12,211.87	13,000.00
Water & sewer	2,200.00	2,194.16	2,200.00	1,475.20	2,200.00	2,861.29	2,750.00
Equip & Repair	2,800.00	5,583.48	4,000.00	3,039.41	4,500.00	5,505.21	4,500.00
Custodial Supply	500.00	-	500.00	513.12	500.00	718.00	500.00
Trash & Disposal	900.00	780.79	900.00	740.40	900.00	589.49	750.00
Misc Maintenance							
Elevator	3,500.00	4,028.55	3,500.00	1,981.17	3,500.00	2,878.32	3,000.00
Sound System	200.00	-	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.00	600.00
Lawn & snow	6,500.00	4,587.50	6,000.00	4,320.00	6,000.00	4,512.00	6,000.00
Subtotal Maintenance	58,800.00	54,279.47	60,920.00	46,137.94	60,650.00	56,394.18	60,200.00
<b>Office Admin</b>							
Search committee		507.67					1,000.00
Secretary/Bookkeeper	17,300.00	13,890.90	9,690.00	8,219.51	<b>10,830.00</b>	10,335.97	10,830.00
Communication Editor			8,580.00	6,939.27	<b>9,724.00</b>	9,592.00	9,724.00
Communic. Ed. Asst.				423.50			
FICA all Employees	4,000.00	4,754.05	4,400.00	6,863.14	7,250.00	4,036.30	5,000.00
Workers Comp	1,200.00	933.00	1,200.00	0.00	1,000.00	see insurance	see insurance
Subtotal Office Admin			23,870.00	22,445.42	28,804.00	23,964.27	26,554.00
<b>Church Supplies</b>							
Office expense	1,100.00	447.90	2,500.00	787.50	2,500.00	2,602.35	2,500.00
Publ/Communications	100.00	116.78	300.00	1,401.61	<b>1,500.00</b>	728.00	1,246.00
Stewardship	125.00	-	125.00	0.00	125.00	0.00	125.00
Kitchen/Coffee	2,000.00	1,106.27	1,500.00	637.04	<b>1,200.00</b>	978.36	1,200.00
Misc Supplies	300.00	-					
Covenant Per / Capita	750.00	519.75	550.00	514.25	550.00	541.75	550.00
Subtotal Church Supplies			4,975.00	3,340.40	5,875.00	4,850.46	5,621.00

	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	<b>2022 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>
<b>OFFICE EXP</b>							
Accounting	2,200.00	2,460.00	2,500.00	2,265.00	2,500.00	2,715.00	2,500.00
Copies & supplies	800.00	915.72	see admin	1,014.23	see admin		
Bank safe deposit box	100.00		100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00
Postage	650.00	605.00	650.00	491.50	<b>750.00</b>	472.00	750.00
Equip Repairs	200.00	815.95	600.00	0.00	600.00	0.00	500.00
Equip Purchase	-						
Computer/ Software	300.00		600.00	179.00	500.00		500.00
Telephone	2,600.00	2,304.09	2,200.00	2,235.72	2,500.00	1,758.50	1,850.00
Subtotal Office Exp			6,650.00	6,185.45	6,950.00	4,945.50	3,600.00
<b>SUBTOTAL ADMIN/ BLDG</b>	33,725.00	29,377.08	96,415.00	78,109.21	102,279.00	90,154.41	95,975.00
<b>Music</b>							
Organ Repair/Piano	1,200.00	350.00	700.00	537.50	350.00	2,863.00	1,326.00
Director of Music	16,000.00	15,912.00	16,240.00	16,815.40	17,200.00	17,234.24	17,200.00
Bells		0 -					
License	1,000.00	-	1,200.00	568.41	1,200.00	600.00	609.00
Subs & Guest	500.00	-	500.00	160.00	500.00	0.00	675.00
Music Expense	400.00	600.64	500.00	607.94	625.00	1,122.53	825.00
<b>SUB TOTAL MUSIC</b>	19,100.00	16,862.64	19,140.00	18,689.25	19,875.00	21,819.77	20,635.00
<b>TOTAL UNRESTRICT- ED EXPENSES</b>		197,902.46	214,210.00	200,660.82	222,304.00	197,376.06	224,863.00
<b>Summary Total</b>	<b>2020 Budget</b>	<b>2020 Actual</b>	<b>2021 Budget</b>	<b>2021 Actual</b>	<b>2022 Budget</b>	<b>2022 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>
Income	193,035.00	206,504.99	192,200.00	206,345.20	191,500.00	215,785.86	188,625.00
Expense	202,750.00	197,902.46	214,210.00	200,660.82	222,304.00	197,376.06	224,863.00
Gain/(loss)	(9,715.00)	8,602.53	(22,010.00)	5,684.38	(30,804.00)	18,409.80	(36,238.00)

**Appendix D:**  
**Strategic Vision 2025**



# First Congregational Church UCC Charlotte *Strategic Vision 2025*

Strategic Mission Statement: “We are God’s Love in Action”

## Our Values

*Love in Action: Inclusion, Outreach, Creativity, Diversity, Community, Education*

**VISION: First Congregational Church will be a vibrant, thriving, and inclusive church inspiring Love in Action**

## STRATEGIC GOALS

<b>UNITY:</b> Build Relationships	<b>GROWTH:</b> Embrace Change	<b>HEALING:</b> Embody Grace	<b>OUTREACH:</b> Inspire Love in Action	<b>SUSTAINABILITY:</b> Plan for the Future
<p><b>Communications.</b> Ensure clear and timely internal communications.</p> <p><b>Relationships.</b> Strengthen relationships within our own congregation.</p> <p><b>Widen the Circle.</b> Connect with new people and new organizations.</p> <p><b>Leadership.</b> Build and support church leadership.</p> <p><i>Plan Dates: Feb. 2022–Dec 2025</i></p>	<p><b>Education.</b> Promote learning and understanding, within both our church and our wider community.</p> <p><b>Programming.</b> Find new and meaningful ways to engage with youth, families, and adults.</p> <p><b>Service.</b> Apply our strengths and talents to improve our church and our world.</p> <p><b>Adapt.</b> Recognize challenges and seek new solutions.</p>	<p><b>Welcome.</b> Practice extravagant welcome and God’s love for all in our church.</p> <p><b>Diversity:</b> Recognize that everyone brings unique talents and needs.</p> <p><b>Inclusion.</b> Work to support inclusion of all, in our church as well as in our larger community.</p> <p><b>Engage.</b> Overcome differences to find common ground.</p> <p><b>Forgiveness.</b> Develop ways to work through conflict and let go of negative emotions and past mistakes.</p>	<p><b>Caring.</b> Enfold our members in love and support in their time of need.</p> <p><b>Missions.</b> Be the hearts and hands doing God’s work in our Community.</p> <p><b>Be the Church.</b> Seek and promote Social and Environmental Justice.</p> <p><b>Inspiration.</b> Express and model the values of our congregation.</p>	<p><b>Long Term Planning.</b> Prepare and support multi-year, long-term strategic and financial planning.</p> <p><b>Strategic Budgeting.</b> Ensure mission, vision, and outreach work are financially supported in the church budget.</p> <p><b>Finance and Giving.</b> Understand and act to positively encourage financial support of the church.</p> <p><b>Marketing.</b> Become well known in the community by increasing marketing, media presence and church involvement with community events.</p>