

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE



The Congregational Church in South Glastonbury
South Glastonbury, CT 06073

Associate Minister

Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ

September 24, 2023
(Updated July 22, 2024)

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1. POSITION POSTING

1a. LISTING INFORMATION

Church name:

The Congregational Church in South Glastonbury (South Church)

Street address:

949 Main Street, PO Box 187, South Glastonbury CT 06073

Supplemental web links:

<https://southcongregational.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/@southchurchctlive6494>

<https://www.facebook.com/CongregationalChurchSoG>

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100066341755237>

<https://www.instagram.com/southchurchctsog/>

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

United Church of Christ

Conference:

Southern New England Conference

Association:

Hartford East

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person (Name, Title, Phone, Email):

The Reverend Isaac Lawson, Area Conference Minister

United Church of Christ, Southern New England Conference

125 Sherman Street, Hartford, CT 06105

Phone (860) 761-7188

lawsoni@sneucc.org

Summary Ministry Description:

The Associate Minister, with the Senior Minister, provides spiritual leadership and pastoral care to the congregation, oversees the faith formation programs for children, and participates with the Senior Minister and lay volunteers in current programming for youth and adults.

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Work in partnership with the Senior Minister to provide leadership to the congregation. This includes but is not limited to:

- *Participating in weekly worship services.*
- *Preparation, leadership and preaching for Sunday worship approximately once a month, as mutually agreed with the Senior Minister.*
- *Leading and coordinating Words with Children in worship.*
- *Planning and/or leading special services as needed.*
- *Providing pastoral care with a primary focus on children, youth, and families, but also to the broader congregation as needed.*
- *Assist in providing adult faith enrichment programs (e.g., Bible Study, Small Group Programs)*

Oversee a vibrant and growing Sunday School Program, which includes the Infant and Toddler Room through grade 8, so that families are welcomed, children are known and loved, and volunteers feel equipped and appreciated. This includes the following:

- *Participating in weekly worship services.*
- *Preparation, leadership and preaching for Sunday worship approximately once a month, as mutually agreed with the Senior Minister.*
- *Leading and coordinating Words with Children in worship.*
- *Planning and/or leading special services as needed.*
- *Providing pastoral care with a primary focus on children, youth, and families, but also to the broader congregation as needed.*
- *Assist in providing adult faith enrichment programs (e.g., Bible Study, Small Group Programs)*

In collaboration with the Senior Minister and lay leader volunteers, participate in the Wednesday School program for high school age youth and the Youth Mission program for youth in Grades 7-12. Responsibilities include:

- *Develop curriculum and teach a Wednesday School class as assigned.*
- *Share in providing openings/spiritual messages for Wednesday meals and in recruiting, and training of teachers.*
- *Provide support to Youth Mission leaders and programs as needed.*



- *Working with the Youth Mission Lead Advisor, participate in and provide the spiritual leadership for one of the Youth Mission programs and an annual mission trip.*

Supporting Responsibilities

- *Participate in staff and related ministry team meetings.*
- *Model and champion opportunities for child- and youth-centered perspectives in all elements of church life.*
- *Assure that Safe Practices standards meet best practices and are consistently adhered to in all programs.*

In a short paragraph, reflect on where your church is going and what it might look like when you get there. What do you need to get there? Who are you seeking to join you on this part of your church's faith journey?



South Church is a vibrant faith community, known for our commitment to missions and social justice, our engaging ministries for youth and children, our love of music, and our inspiring worship services. We are an open and affirming church eager to welcome all people who wish to follow Christ, and seek to increase the diversity of our congregation. Our aim is to meet people wherever they are in life and wherever they may find themselves on their spiritual journey. We strive to meet the needs of the larger community through our actions, giving, and hospitality.

In keeping with this tradition, we seek to bridge the growing divide among people in our faith community and wider community through constructive, respectful, and open discussion. We want to offer a space for all to be safely heard, encouraging respect for differing opinions. We aspire, through our individual stories and experiences, to educate one another on divisive issues and to replace judgment with understanding.

As disciples of Christ we are committed to reawakening love in our community and in our culture by nurturing our own and others' spiritual growth, by practicing respect and acceptance, and by being loving toward all people.



Many members currently serve on lay ministry teams or are involved in small groups, however, we hope to nurture still greater involvement in the life of the church and seek to grow our church with new members of all ages, and to attract families with children. We seek to do even more to nurture and excite our membership to live its faith and God's love in our community and in the world.

What we value about living in our area:

South Church is located in South Glastonbury, Connecticut, a village within the Town of Glastonbury, Connecticut, an attractive suburb of Hartford, with diverse topography including farms, protected lands, neighborhoods, commercial areas, parks, recreational areas, and a Main Street historic district. A remarkable portion of our town is still devoted to farmland, orchards and open space. We are largely a single family housing community.

Glastonbury has earned a stellar reputation for its ability to blend bucolic, picturesque and traditional settings with a progressive and thriving town center. The Town of Glastonbury prides itself on its exceptional public education, municipal management, recreational opportunities, and high quality of life. In addition Glastonbury enjoys quick access to the Connecticut and Rhode Island shorelines, mountains to the north, Boston and New York City, an outstanding selection of colleges and universities, and the multiple benefits and attractions offered throughout New England.





Current size of membership:

2021 = 573; 2022 = 524

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

Occasional use of American Sign Language

Position Title:

Associate Minister

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

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

The Associate Minister's scope of work includes leading the development and implementation of weekly Sunday School faith formation programs for children in accordance with our goals, objectives, and policies. The Associate Minister collaborates and participates with the Senior Minister and lay volunteers in Wednesday School (for high school age youth), the Youth Mission program (for youth in Grades 7-12), and both Young Adult and Adult faith enrichment programs. The Associate Minister provides spiritual leadership and pastoral care to the congregation as a whole, but with primary focus on children, youth, and families.



We seek an Associate Minister who loves working with children, youth, and families with concern for their nurture as disciples of Jesus Christ. We invite candidates who are energetic, joyful, faithful, innovative, and collaborative, and who have a passion for congregational ministry.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- *Master of Divinity degree or equivalent from an accredited seminary.*
- *Ministerial standing or approval for ordination in a UCC Association or other ecclesiastical body in partnership with the UCC.*
- *Grounded in UCC polity, theologically oriented to the mission of the church, and supportive of our Open and Affirming statement.*
- *Demonstrated experience, commitment, and passion for working with children and youth with a concern for their nurture as disciples of Jesus Christ, and with a knowledge of child development and family systems.*

CORE COMPETENCIES

- *Ability to support, inspire, empower, facilitate, delegate, and involve others to build strong relationships with various partners, parents, children, the congregation, and the community.*
- *Creative thinker who generates new ideas and is willing to take initiative and try new things.*
- *Strong leadership skills and team-building abilities.*
- *An effective and inspiring communicator who practices direct, honest, and transparent communication; honors confidences; responds to situations with constancy and reliability.*
- *Organizational skills and ability to execute tasks to completion.*

- *Approachable and relational when interacting with the congregation and the staff; exudes a natural sense of care for the well-being of others; responds with empathy to the life circumstances of others; communicates a sense of support; demonstrates appropriate expressions of care.*
- *Enthusiasm for welcoming and reaching out beyond the bounds of the church.*
- *Experience in Google Suite applications and ease with technology. Experience with leveraging social media applications and the church website for the purposes of communication, energizing volunteerism, and community involvement.*

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis: *Salary plus optional benefits*

Base Salary + Housing Allowance exclusive of a Benefits Package is consistent with UCC Compensation Guidelines and ranges from \$60,000 - \$75,000 based on experience. Full details regarding the total compensation package will be shared with prospective candidates.

Benefit Package Includes:

- *Annuity: Up to 14% of cash salary and housing through UCC Pension Boards*
- *Life Insurance/Disability: the church will pay the premium (currently 1.5% of base salary and housing allowance) through UCC Pension Boards*
- *Self-Employed Tax Offset: 7.65% of base salary and housing allowance*
- *UCC Health Insurance (including Vision): Full payment of premiums based on your selection of Plan B for you and your family.*
- *UCC Dental Insurance: Full payment of premiums for you and your family.*

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

Living locally with a preference for living in Glastonbury/South Glastonbury

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

Living within easy commuting distance of South Church for regular attendance at worship, programs, church events, and evening meetings.

State any incentives:

- *Two-month sabbatical after every five years of continuous ordained service*
- *Continuing education/professional development allowance*
- *Minister's Discretionary Fund*
- *Mileage reimbursement/Allowance*
- *Annual Salary Review*

- *Competitive Benefits and Retirement Plan*

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

The Southern New England Conference (SNEUCC) is the largest conference in the UCC and has a wealth of education and networking opportunities for ministers. The Conference organizes "Communities of Practice" for clergy who are engaged in like-ministries. These are optional. There is also a fairly robust coaching opportunity available via SNEUCC for those who want support around specific issues.

See a recent blog post about "Communities of Practice":

<https://www.sneucc.org/blogdetail/clergy-communities-of-practice-offer-nurture-and-support-15275275>.

Hartford International University of Religion and Peace (f/k/a Hartford Seminary) also offers a wealth of opportunities nearby, as well as Yale Divinity School and Andover Newton at Yale.

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

Not Applicable

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

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

Our current goals and priorities are to:

Maintain a strong focus on and commitment to youth and children, with a goal of making South Church a safe space that nurtures children and young families;

Grow our church by reimagining and enhancing our approach to attracting and engaging new people in the ministries of South Church, and improving new member orientation and inclusion;

Maintain and develop robust faith enrichment programs that meet the needs of children, youth, young adults and adults in this complex world. We seek to draw in people of all ages in a safe, accepting and exciting space that offers community, understanding and personal growth;

Continue to strengthen and build partnerships among the congregation, the clergy, and appropriate ministry teams in the work of pastoral care and connection;



Maintain focus on mission and social justice work in the community, region and world, engaging our congregation beyond our walls; and

Awakening our community and the world to God's love.

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

We seek an Associate Minister who will lead by example in translating the Living Word into deeds of compassion in our wider community and the world. We seek an Associate Minister whose passion for outreach is contagious and galvanizing.

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

Our church is primarily English speaking. We seek a minister, however, who is open and receptive to all people, cultures, heritages, races, genders, and sexual orientations/ gender identifications. We seek to continue our extraordinary history of assisting refugee families dating back to the 1970s (e.g. Vietnamese, Bosnian, Syrian, Afghans) and reaching out to less well represented groups (e.g. LGBTQIA+) for inclusivity and acceptance. We support all people without judgment and believe it is our calling to meet all people where they are.

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.

1. EXHIBITING A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

In order to inspire our church to be moved by the Holy Spirit and follow Jesus' example, our Associate Minister needs to feel that passion personally, have a deep loving relationship with God through prayer and introspection, and demonstrate a life of living their faith. The minister should seek out ways to guide others to similarly enjoy an ongoing relationship with God and Jesus, and to share and explore that faith in our community.

2. ENGAGING SACRED STORIES AND TRADITIONS

Our minister needs to have an extensive knowledge and understanding of the Hebrew scriptures, the New Testament, Sacraments, and history of the Christian Church in order to dynamically bring the text to life through personal and relatable experiences. At South Church faith formation is important for all ages and stages of life, and our minister plays an integral role in making the Bible relevant and relatable to all through engaging storytelling, age appropriate educational experiences, and creative observance of our traditions.

3. WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE AND MERCY

In keeping with our strong tradition, our ministers need to practice the radical hospitality of God by working in partnership with the community and various outreach organizations across the globe. At South Church, we are open and eager to engage in local and global mission work which help us to overcome explicit and implicit bias and to confront injustice and oppression.

4. STRENGTHENING INTER- AND INTRA- PERSONAL ASSETS

We expect our ministers to exhibit an exemplary moral compass and model a healthy sense of self, shaped by God, community and life experiences. Our minister will be an effective communicator, and will be a teacher and partner with church members as they focus on their own personal growth and development. We will expect our new minister to be respectful and supportive of all people wherever they are on life's journey.

2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

As a church and faith community, we believe God is calling us to be:

A beacon of safe space for all with focus on mental health, diversity, acceptance and respect for all;

A more widely recognized place to gather and celebrate, a place where people can connect and cultivate new relationships creating a sense of community and belonging;

A support system for parents, families, young adults, single people, and adults of all ages;

A social and spiritual magnet for young people;

A place for constructive dialogue where congregants can hold discussions on divisive issues and find reconciliation with love, respect and understanding;

A recharge station for adults by energizing people with hope, meaning and purpose;

A place of respite for people in grief;

A provider of opportunities for all ages to serve and grow together in the service of others;

A beacon of faith formation and enrichment through adult programs and retreats as well as critical youth programming including Sunday School, Wednesday School, Youth Mission and the confirmation process;





A creative outlet for the South Church community through music, innovation, and exploration of fresh new ideas to practice our faith; and

A provider of alternative ways to integrate faith into people's hectic daily lives using technology to engage and connect, and by finding creative ways to work around youth activities and busy schedules.

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

2022 was one of rebuilding for the children's programs of the church. COVID vaccines for children helped families to gradually re-engage in church life with incredible effort and support from our Sunday School Support Team, teachers, leaders of programs for children and youth, our Communications Ministry Team, staff, parents and other volunteers. As a result, Sunday School participation has grown significantly, giving us all renewed hope for the future.

Over the summer of 2022, an ad hoc team commissioned by the Church Council completed a comprehensive review of our operating model comparing South Church to congregations with similar demographics. The team evaluated our staff responsibilities and how we operate. Several recommendations for, and clarifications to our governance resulted. The Team also identified strengths, opportunities and areas for change. This information has given South Church leaders much insight for our current and future plans.

3. WHO ARE WE NOW?

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

3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation's life of faith.

We are an active community of faith alive with the Spirit; our tradition is to translate the teachings of Jesus into action. We aim to always walk the talk. Over the years we have stood shoulder to shoulder with the most vulnerable among us. South Church inspired the creation of a mental health agency that now serves the needs of thousands of clients in Central Connecticut. We have and continue to serve as sponsors of refugee families from across the globe including Vietnam, Bosnia, Syria and Afghanistan providing assistance with housing, employment, health care and education. We were one of the first UCC churches to declare

ourselves Open and Affirming. Our membership actively participates on our ministry teams and many sit on the boards of non-profit agencies in the Greater Hartford area serving the wider community. We generously fund and participate in hands-on mission work at home and abroad believing that we grow spiritually by giving of our time and talents. We believe that this work evidences God's love in the world and effectuates positive change in the lives of others.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

We are welcoming to all and work to demonstrate radical hospitality by meeting people where they are. We are open-minded and willing to challenge our beliefs and practices when needed. We minister to all regardless of their circumstances. We offer funeral and marriage services to anyone in the community. We are a beacon of light for high school youth offering a unique and exciting safe space of self-reflection, growth, and understanding. We draw youth from throughout the community offering a place where all are accepted. We offer a highly regarded preschool. We are a vibrant and engaged community of faith supportive of one another. We cultivate social engagement and opportunity among our congregants.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

When new people come to a South Church worship service for the first time, they often describe it as a feeling of coming home. The Sanctuary is simple and full of light. The



environment is welcoming and upbeat. Deacons, Ushers, and members of the Hospitality Ministry Team make sure everyone feels comfortable. People greet each other warmly. Our Sunday School teachers and volunteers fuss over the children making sure all new young visitors have an activity bag to ease the jitters. Our altar-scapes are creative and embellish the message. The community sharing of Joys and Concerns offers inclusivity and collective support. The music inspires. Members of the

congregation often share personal witness from the pulpit. The preaching is excellent.

We have two worship services, each with a unique feel:

The 8:30 a.m. worship service is intimate and contemplative. Piano music is featured, and the sermon is followed by a brief dialogue facilitated by the minister.

The 10:30 a.m. worship service is busier. Children stay through the early part of the service and leave for Sunday School in a pack following Words With Children. The choir is featured singing with piano and organ from the choir loft or the front of the Sanctuary, and other church musicians often share their musical gifts. This worship service is presented virtually through our YouTube channel and Facebook in a high quality, professional manner.

We are invested in our music ministry; we have an excellent choir and a strong new music leader. We love and value all forms of music as an integral part of our worship, offering Second Sunday music before the service featuring musicians and vocalists from the community at large. Our church is also blessed to have an abundance of fine musicians who perform in a variety of combinations during our worship services.

The congregation values exemplary preaching that makes scripture relevant to everyday life, is relatable, and that grounds the church theologically for its ministry and mission. We have been blessed with ministers who are gifted theologians and inspiring preachers.

We have extraordinary laity involvement through scripture reading, witnessing from the pulpit, and a favorite annual laity worship service.

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

Throughout our 187-year history, South Church has nurtured justice-loving disciples as a primary ministry in the world. We do this by offering a thoughtful and caring continuum of programs for children, youth, and adults that nurture faith formation and faith in action. We are known for our youth mission programs beginning in middle school, for our extraordinary Wednesday School program for grades 9-12, and for our Confirmation class offered to sophomores that takes them on a year long journey of self and faith exploration under the leadership and guidance of our Senior Minister. Our youth are valued as full participants in all endeavors, including visioning the future of our church and community. Many youth participate as full members of ministry and search teams.

FAITH FORMATION

Our core belief is that all people are children of God, are loved by God, and that faith formation can begin at any age. We aim to create a loving, safe community where children and youth can be themselves, and feel loved, accepted, and valued as they are. We help children and youth to understand that they are each part of God's story; we inspire them to care for one another and all of God's creation and encourage them to begin to develop a lifelong spiritual practice. They are invited to explore the mysteries of faith through scripture, tradition, and experience as they develop a personal relationship with God. We want them to feel supported by their church as they go about their days, and as spiritual transformation and growth happens! We provide a respite to young people from the stressors of family life, school, peer pressure and activities, and excite them to connect with each other and the world.

Infant & Toddler Room – *The infant and toddler room provides a loving and safe space for supervised play while parents take time for restoration and their own personal faith exploration during the 10:30 a.m. Sunday worship service.*



Sunday School (K-8) – *Children join their families and the congregation for 10:30 a.m. worship service*



for a short period of family togetherness. This is an important time for learning about church and for feeling the love and support of the whole congregation. Following a brief Bible-based lesson we call “Words With Children,” the children exit for their classrooms where faith formation begins in engaging and creative formats. Children will learn Bible basics and Bible stories, sing, dance, cook, look at and create art projects, pray, build community, learn acceptance, and practice justice through age appropriate mission projects. Our hope is that children will build a faith foundation, build confidence in who they are, and create a safe space for each other.

Wednesday School (Grades 9-12) - *For more than thirty years, students in Grades 9-12 have gathered for supper and faith exploration on Wednesday nights from 6:00-7:30 p.m. during the school year. We eat family style, practicing hospitality as we break bread and serve one another. After dinner, we form three classes: freshmen, sophomores (Confirmation class), and juniors/seniors. Adult teachers provide activities and engage students in conversation designed to nurture and explore their faith. Exposure to Christian spiritual practices enables young disciples to strengthen moral development and inform personal decision making. Wednesday School classes often integrate real life experiences with spirituality, leaving space to meet youth where they are. At Wednesday School, we are committed to creating a community that is welcoming and safe for all youth.*



9th Grade Class – *The focus for the 9th grade is on feeling welcomed and accepted, and on the youth building community for each other within a Christian setting. Youth are helped to feel confident to take risks in voicing their thoughts. They begin to trust and support one another. Activities are linked to questions and discussion regarding faith and Christian practices, scripture, rituals, and beliefs. The church becomes a spiritual home for them.*

Confirmation Program (Grade 10) - *Confirmation at South Church is a matter of sophomores wrestling with their pressing theological questions with support from their peers and advisors. Youth are paired up with sponsors who mentor them and introduce them to the mission and ministry of the church. The Confirmation advisors create a safe environment where the*



mysteries of faith can be explored collaboratively. Youth gain and share insights into the dynamics of community, their connection with the world around them, and the difference it can make when one believes in God. The Life Map exercise allows participants to see the intersection of their own story with God's story, thus affirming the sacredness of their own lives. The field trip to a local house purported to be on the Underground Railroad helps confirmands affirm their ability to follow Jesus by shining a light into the darkness.

The Spring Retreat prepares confirmands to write a personal statement of faith. The Confirmation year begins in September with a covenanting ritual for the Confirmands and their sponsors. The youth complete the curriculum in June as young adults responsible for their own spiritual journey culminating in the moving ritual of Confirmation for those who choose to do so.

Grades 11 & 12 – *We consider the post confirmation youth to be young adults continuing their faith journey and exploring how to live into their beliefs as they prepare to enter college or other post high school pursuits. We covenant with each other, allowing for a safe space for open dialogue and inclusion. This is a safe environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We strive to build a sense of trust: trust in their peers, trust in their Wednesday School teachers, and trust in their church and God.*

Group discussions explore issues of social justice taking cues from the youth as they grapple with current issues that are on their hearts and minds. They are encouraged to embrace their God-given uniqueness and to cultivate a strong sense of self-worth. It is our hope that upon graduating from this program, these young adults leave with the tools of empathy, valuing themselves, each other, and their potential to make a difference in the world.

Opportunities for Adults - *South Church offers various ways for adults to join together outside of Sunday worship. Both the men and the women host weekly breakfasts at local eateries in town as a way to join together in fellowship. There is also a weekly, in person, morning Bible study meeting streamed through Zoom so all can attend. During the Lenten season, we offer a "Soup, Supper and Film" Series where we come together for soup and a relevant movie, and have meaningful discussions on various topics. There are also Faith Formation Classes that help us to deepen our own faith and to ask questions as a sort of "adult confirmation class." At the end of the class, members are invited to write their own faith statement. Annual Women's Retreats take place either one day onsite, or for a full weekend off site experience (COVID paused). For over*



45 years, 30-40 members have journeyed to the White Mountains of New Hampshire for several days of outdoor winter experiences and fellowship. This tradition continues to this day.

FAITH IN ACTION

At South Church, we believe servant leadership is a way of being in the world, a way of following Jesus' instruction and example. It is a way of following his commandment to love one another. We live out our belief by nurturing servant leadership through social justice mission programs for many ages.



When youth embody servant leadership, they gain real and valuable experiences of putting their faith into action. Throughout the year, youth will be stretched to use their own skills and gifts in a variety of ways, and share the love

we are called to offer the world in the model of Jesus Christ. They will be challenged and enriched as they meet others in life circumstances very different from their own. At times we challenge them to stretch themselves beyond their comfort zones. The programs are designed to help the youth go deeper into their spiritual exploration and development as they experience each program. The goal is constant: to help them learn to become servant leaders in the model of Jesus Christ. They will work in community, learning more about themselves, others, and the presence of God. In making a difference in the world, they grow into young adults who feel empowered to do so throughout their lives.



Church School Youth Mission (K-6) - Children will engage in age-appropriate mission activities learning the Biblical basis of compassion with a concentration on our local community (K-6). We introduce children to the needs of others, and build confidence that they can make a difference in the world. We seek to affirm their unique gifts and contributions, and teach them personal responsibility in creating a safe space for one another.

Middle School Youth Mission (MSYM) - Our Middle School Youth Mission program offers community building and hands-on service opportunities for young people in grades 7-8. This program empowers youth

to truly embody what it means to be servant leaders in the world, culminating in a 4-day service-learning mission trip experience.





High School Youth Mission – Freshmen & Sophomores (FRSO) - *This program will continue to engage youth in issues of social justice. Youth learn to be inclusive, empathetic, and practice hospitality by engaging in outreach experiences. The year ends with a week-long, face-to-face mission trip. Reflection enhances and deepens the Mission Trip experience.*

High School Youth Mission – Juniors & Seniors (JRSR) - *This program will deepen youths' understanding and awareness of issues of social justice and allow them to reflect on the values of their Christian faith. The year culminates in a week-long partnership with Habitat for Humanity to help break the cycle of poverty through affordable housing. At the trip's close, seniors are commissioned into the world as young adults equipped to be humble and confident servant leaders.*



Opportunities for Adults

We offer various ways for adults of South Church to share their time and talent. Most of the banners and some of the tables that we use have been fabricated by various church members. Adults on the Level is a group that is open to everyone and has worked at various Habitat for Humanity sites. The length of the mission trips varies from 1 day to 1 week. We stay as local as Hartford and New Haven, but have also traveled to Houston and Louisiana to help rebuild those areas affected by hurricanes, and to Monhegan Island, Maine to build a medical services facility. Adult volunteers are also the backbone of the Youth Mission Program serving as advisors, sharing their wisdom and working alongside our youth on mission trips in service of others.

Pastor Emeritus Richard Allen leads a small group of volunteers on a mission trip to Malawi, where he spent many of his sabbaticals. The Trustees of the church host fall and spring clean up days to maintain the grounds of the church. Every fourth Wednesday of the month the different ministry teams take turns preparing and serving a meal at the South Park Inn, a homeless shelter in Hartford. There are also several gleaning opportunities at various local farms throughout the year; we donate the produce to local food banks.



Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

Our church governance model is derived from our Bylaws with the roles outlined below. The Church Council is the governing body of the church. Our ministers are responsible for spiritual leadership, leadership and participation in our ministry teams and ad hoc groups supporting church operations and defining our priorities and purpose. All leadership is supported by church staff and advisory committees to live into our common purpose.

OUR PURPOSE: The purpose of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed, to embody this Gospel in ministry and policy, and to celebrate this Gospel in worship and witness. It is our purpose to study Scripture and to translate that Living Word into deeds of compassion for the sake of the earth, the human community, and all of God's creation. It is our purpose to be an inclusive community of faith honoring the diversity of God's handiwork and reflecting Christ's radical welcome.



The Church Council is the governing body of the church. It provides long-range planning and overall governance of the church and its responsibilities include:

- Discern God's vision for ministry and mission at the church,
- Establish long range plan,
- Call of ministers,
- Oversee employee matters with support of HURAC,
- Budget and fiduciary matters with support of FAC,
- Over-all policy making,
- Oversee Ministry Teams,
- Presents Nominees to Church,
- Appoint Church Delegates,
- Safe Practices Policy and the composition of the First Response Team.



The Ministers are called by the Church and are responsible for the spiritual leadership of the Church as its teachers and counselors and will seek by pastoral work, preaching and teaching to enhance the spiritual life of the Congregation and the community. Each Minister serves as a delegate to UCC Association and Conference meetings.

Church Staff support Ministers and Church Council in day-to-day management of the church and in implementing the purpose and priorities approved by Council and the Congregation. Church staff are sometimes supplemented by Lay volunteers.



Ministry Teams are approved by the Church Council and formally organized to lead their ministries in support of the church purpose and priorities. Ministry teams are guided by Minister's and staff.

Ministry Groups arise, evolve and dissolve based on the nature of the ministry or project.

Advisory Committees

The Human Resources Advisory Committee (HURAC) provides oversight of the employment policies and procedures of the Church, ensures that the Church's employment practices embody the Gospels in ministry and policy, are consistent with applicable laws, and engage employees in a professional, fair and constructive manner.

The Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) ensures proper financial stewardship of the Church's resources to best support the Church's overall mission. FAC advises and reports to the Church Council, provides advice and support to the Treasurer, recommends Church financial policy.

The First Response Team responds to issues, concerns and incidents related to the goal of providing a safe environment for everyone.

OUR PURPOSE: The purpose of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed, to embody this Gospel in ministry and policy, and to celebrate this Gospel in worship and witness. It is our purpose to study Scripture and to translate that Living Word into deeds of compassion for the sake of the earth, the human community, and all of God's creation. It is our purpose to be an inclusive community of faith honoring the diversity of God's handiwork and reflecting Christ's radical welcome.

OUR PRIORITIES: Supporting Children and Families, Demonstrating Radical Hospitality, Growing Current Ministries



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

We anticipate our Associate Minister will participate in Ministry Team meetings supporting families, children and youth and offering supportive programs that grow the church. The related Ministry Teams are Sunday School Support Team, Youth Mission Support (YMS), Youth Mission Lead Advisors, Wednesday School Lead Teachers, the Children and Youth Planning Ministry Team, and the Adult Faith Enrichment Team. In addition, the Associate Minister generally spends approximately 2 hours per week in staff meetings and 1-2 hours in one-on-one meetings with staff members as mutually agreed upon. All told, with ministry team meetings, it is anticipated that the Associate Minister will spend approximately 30-35 hours a month in such meetings (including during the day and evenings).

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

When COVID hit, our lives were disrupted to the core. In-person worship stopped, Youth Mission meetings, Wednesday School and Sunday School ceased, and in-person Ministry Team meetings were canceled. On March 14, 2020, we held a special council meeting to close the church and on Sunday, March 15, 2020, we held our very first ever virtual worship service live streamed from the Sanctuary with our Associate Minister's first words being, "Are we live?" It was a profound question. We quickly jumped into action, formed a team of lay leaders who developed and implemented a Reopening Plan covering every aspect of church life. We quickly adapted to new technologies in order to maintain church operations and continue to BE the church. Our worship services continued virtually and a new Ministry Group, our Tech Team, was born! We made appropriate changes to our sanctuary, building, policies and protocols to keep people safe. We reached out to other churches to share our experiences and learn from each other. We acted with urgency and followed CDC and State Guidelines.

In spite of the pandemic, our church life continued virtually through weekly worship services, Bible Study, Gratitude Check-Ins, Zoom meetings for Ministry Teams and youth/adult faith formation, and in person with special outdoor services for Confirmation and Easter. Our office staff worked in a hybrid fashion to keep a presence at the church. Our Pre-School followed state guidelines and managed to keep the program going through the worst of it.



Youth Mission continued to meet: some groups met virtually and some in person outside for the year, sometimes around a firepit. The Junior and Senior program which typically ends in May continued virtually through July at the request of the youth who felt comfort in the community of their peers. We adapted our mission activities to do them safely, holding drive by food drives, book collections, pet food drives, and more.

Our Stewardship Ministry Team redesigned the entire Stewardship Campaign culminating in a drive-by pledge card drop off that featured a church driveway lined with Ministers, Ministry Team Leaders, and the Choir in their robes singing familiar hymns through masks. The church showed up not having seen each other, in many cases, for seven months!


Our Missions Ministry team allocated significant portions of our mission budget to food insecurity and made grants to out-of-work musicians who provided pre-recorded musical

selections for our on-line worship services. Our ministers tended to the spiritual needs of our faith community through hospital visitation, grief support, regular check-ins through a “buddy system,” and more. South Church demonstrated that we were and are a strong community of faith, resilient and creative in facing the challenges of the pandemic.

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

Yes, any information not already included here will be provided.

3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

<div> UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS </div> <div> <i>God is still speaking.</i> UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  </div>										
Church#:	7858B1									
Assoc:	920	Schedule: 0	Congregational Church in South Glastonbury UCC	South Glastonbury	CT	06073				
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	888	280	435	28	29	7	9	103	-69	
2012	889	290	435	22	33	6	12	15	33	
2013	842	290	240	33	23	0	23	80	-47	
2014	713	280	147	18	8	0	18	238	-229	
2015	737	270	124	18	10	0	4	0	24	
2016	679	260	107	20	18	0	12	84	-89	
2017	685	216	98	23	20	2	8	33	8	
2018	689	180	98	13	15	14	8	120	-87	
2019	627	146	98	15	14	26	10	17	29	
2020	628	161	72	17	2	1	13	8	1	
2021	673	98	132	9	0	6	10	59	65	
YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2011	\$545,109	\$0	\$30,229	\$114,934	\$171,162	\$37,643	\$208,706	10.32	\$753,814	\$636,721
2012	\$561,450	\$0	\$30,200	\$11,123	\$67,323	\$38,026	\$105,349	10.01	\$696,799	\$635,136
2013	\$554,952	\$0	\$38,541	\$10,993	\$69,534	\$39,144	\$108,678	10.55	\$693,630	\$639,337
2014	\$577,834	\$0	\$57,651	\$5,844	\$64,495	\$40,021	\$104,516	9.38	\$682,350	\$619,391
2015	\$536,650	\$0	\$50,667	\$4,713	\$65,380	\$42,402	\$107,782	10.17	\$734,332	\$641,344
2016	\$555,682	\$0	\$62,143	\$15,541	\$77,684	\$45,158	\$120,840	11.16	\$676,802	\$611,442
2017	\$598,510	\$0	\$83,389	\$4,143	\$87,512	\$41,783	\$109,295	10.59	\$737,805	\$619,253
2018	\$808,075	\$0	\$80,808	\$4,650	\$85,458	\$25,433	\$80,891	10.00	\$886,888	\$595,822
2019	\$890,888	\$0	\$52,000	\$10,035	\$62,035	\$44,409	\$107,044	8.57	\$713,912	\$614,014
2020	\$890,717	\$0	\$32,467	\$1,265	\$33,732	\$84,405	\$89,137	5.40	\$696,864	\$570,148
2021	\$898,862	\$0	\$30,962	\$1,329	\$32,290	\$83,179	\$85,409	5.09	\$734,331	\$582,049
% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		
2016-2021	-15.61	-68.80	23.38	-83.16	-28.13	9.52	-58.43	4.67		
2011-2021	-33.83	-65.00	-68.88	-77.42	-38.39	11.70	-81.13	-8.56		

3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	524	Yes
Number of active non-members:	237	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	761	This represents total members and friends of the church according to church records.
Active weekly participants	140	No

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church: (Active Members)

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	66%	Yes
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	19%	Yes
Less than 5 years:	15%	Yes

Number of total participants by age: Percentage of members, excludes children

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
NA	3%	16%	3%	7%	23%	11%	16%	20%	Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35: Includes confirmands	20%	Yes
Households with minors:	15%	Yes
Single adults age 35-65:	4%	Yes
Joint households with no minors:	48%	Yes
Single adults over 65:	13%	Yes

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	19%	Represents demographics of Glastonbury as reported in the MissionInsite data
College:	43%	“
Graduate School:	30%	“
Specialty Training:	NA	“
Other (please specify):Some college/vocational school	8%	“

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	61%	Yes
Adults who are retired:	39%	Yes
Adults who are not fully employed:	NA	Yes

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

Business, professional, laborer/manufacturing, tradesperson, service, clerical, farmers.

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. Most UCC congregations tend to describe themselves as “diverse.” Yet, the vast majority of UCC congregations are mono-cultural. What does diversity mean in your context?

We are a primarily white congregation with a wide mix of European ethnic heritages. The majority of our members were not raised Congregational. Diversity to us includes LGBTQIA+, racial-ethnic groups and marginalized groups in our local community. Though we are relatively homogeneous, we are open to all.

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one in the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)?

As a community church, the diversity in our congregation to date has reflected the limited diversity of our community, however, we welcome diversity as evidenced by our Open and Affirming pledge in 1991; we were among the first UCC churches in the State of Connecticut to adopt the pledge. We hope to broaden our faith community to people beyond our locality

to be more inclusive of all people and more welcoming to people of color.

3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i>
Adult Groups or Classes	15	Adult Faith Enrichment Team
Baptisms	11	Ministers
Children's Groups or Classes	35	Associate Minister, Sunday School Support Team
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	Christmas Eve = 285 Easter = 211	Ministers, Director of Music, Deacons
Church-wide Meals	100	Potluck suppers planned by church members
Choirs and Music Groups	Adult Choir = 35 members Second Sunday Music (50)	Director of Music, Music Ministry Team
Church-based Bible Study	30 including online participants	Senior Minister
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	First Sunday of the Month, Maundy Thursday and Christmas Evening	Ministers, Deacons
Community Meals	80 attendees per month	South Park Inn – Ministry Teams take turns serving monthly at homeless shelter
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>	8	Confirmation is generally taught by the Senior Minister and lay teachers;

		in past years 15-20 youth have been confirmed each year
Drama or Dance Program	NA	
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	19	Ministers, Minister of Music, Christian Service, Deacons
Intergenerational Groups	NA	
Outdoor Worship	Sunrise Easter Service	Ministers, Deacons, Music Director
Prayer or Meditation Groups	NA	
Public Advocacy Work	10	Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA)
Retreats	8	8 Confirmands for annual confirmation retreat in 2022; women's retreats had been held, often annually, but stopped due to COVID and haven't yet resumed
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	15	Monthly services at Salmon Brook Rehabilitation and Nursing Center
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	1	Low due to COVID
Worship (time slot: 8:30 a.m.)	20	Ministers, Deacons, lay leaders
Worship (time slot: 10:30 a.m.)	80 plus 20 online worshipers in 2022	Ministers, Deacons, lay leaders
Young Adult (post college) Groups or Classes	NA	
Youth Groups or Classes	40 Wednesday School & Youth Mission	Ministers, Teachers, Youth Mission Lead Advisors, Spiritual Advisors & Advisors, Youth Mission Support Team Ministers, lay leaders
Winter Outdoor Experience Trip	37	This special outdoor trip has been held for 45+ years
"Adults on the Level" (Adult Habitat Humanity opportunities)	10	Lower participation due to COVID

Other	100-300 each	Earth Fair, Santa Photo Op (200 participants), Lenten Fair (100), Halloween Trunk or Treat (300), Mission Fair, Pancake Breakfast (150), Pasta Supper (100)
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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- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Rev Jeff Braun	3 way	South Church	Senior Minister (as of 10/2/23)	N
Rev Erica Avena	3 way	South Church	Interim Minister	N
Rev Larissa Forsythe	3 way	South Church Member	Associate Minister	N
Rev Anne Alvord	No	South Church Member	N/A	Y
Rev Barbara Frey	No	South Church Member	N/A	Y
Rev Richard Allen	No	South Church Member	Emeritus	Y
Rev Robert Henderson	No	South Church Friend	Pastoral Counseling and Care resource for South Church	Part Time Retired
Rev Katy Wilcox	No	South Church Member	Chaplain and ACPE CPE Certified Educator and South Church Youth Mission Spiritual Advisor	N

Note: Our church has also nurtured a number of young people and second career individuals over the years who have gone on to seminary and the ministry elsewhere.

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:



Pastor Emeritus the Reverend Richard C. Allen retired from South Church in 2021 after 33 years. In late 2022, the Church Council approved the resumption of an international mission trip to Malawi, Africa that had been a passion project of Rev. Allen's for years. The last trip occurred prior to the pandemic. We are excited that a group will venture to Malawi in June of this year.

Rev. Richard Allen and his wife, Andrea, live in town and are participating members of the church.

Rev. Robert Henderson, LMFT is an active member of the church. At one time Rev. Henderson led the Pastoral Counseling Center that was housed in an office in the High Street School.

Rev. Henderson maintains an office in a discrete location of the church for occasional discrete counseling.

Rev. Alvord and Rev. Frey are active members of the church.

Rev. Wilcox is an active member of the church and has recently assumed the spiritual advisor role for one of our Youth Mission Groups.

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 in this position
Senior Minister	Yes	Full Time	Church Council	Oct 2, 2023
Interim Minister		Full Time	Senior Minister	Sept 2021
Finance Manager		Part Time	Senior Minister	6 Years

Parish Administrator		Part Time	Senior Minister	1 Year
Director of Music		Part Time	Senior Minister	6 Months
Organist		Part Time	Director of Music	2 ½ Years
Church Cleaning/Sexton		Part Time	Trustees and Senior Minister/Parish Administrator	5 Years

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

We need to do more to reach out and build a more diverse membership.

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$619,725
Endowment Proceeds <i>(as permitted within spending policy of 4.5% of rolling 20 Q average balance) - Illustrates amount used for operating budget. Additional \$19,140 used for mission related giving outside of budget</i>	\$3,000
Endowment Draw <i>(beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal")</i>	\$0
Fundraising Events	\$0
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose <i>(restricted use funds spending limit as permitted within spending policy of 4.5% of rolling 20 Q average balance). Additional \$1,430 used for non-budget, specified use.</i>	\$640
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$62,820
Rentals of Church Parsonage	NA
Support from Related Organizations	NA

Transfers from Special Accounts	NA
Other (specify): <i>Donations for Memorial Luncheons</i>	\$2,792
Other (specify): <i>Interest, Misc., Other</i>	\$2,723
TOTAL	\$691,700

Current annual expenses (2022 fiscal year expense actuals): \$728,079

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

The most recent annual report including the financial package will be provided to candidates.

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

Salary and benefits for one full-time Minister and one full-time Associate Minister represent 36% of 2022 actual budget expenses. This excludes Christian education staff and music staff.

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 – South Church is 5-for-5

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

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? (recommended 10%)

Our current Basic Support is equal to 5% of budget expenses before missions. This is determined annually by our Finance Advisory Committee during the budgeting process. Additionally, we designate 10% of our budget expenses before missions for Mission Partner

support. Collectively, our budgeted commitment to Mission Giving, including Basic Support, is 15% of budget expenses before missions.

What is the church's current indebtedness?

The church has no debt.

Are capital and other payments current?

Yes

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.

There are no current building programs underway. The church is evaluating the efficacy of Solar Panels for the property. A parking lot paving and "associated front of church improvements project" will likely be approved in the next year.

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

South Church is fortunate to have a very attractive and highly visible campus in the center of South Glastonbury. In 2010 a major \$3.7 million capital campaign and building renovation was completed. Our beautiful colonial sanctuary built in 1836 remained intact with a new 15,000 square foot social hall, office complex and education wing added. All areas are fully accessible regardless of physical ability. Green technologies were added such as high efficiency boilers, windows and lighting. The complex is fully climate controlled (including fully air conditioned). Audio visual technologies were added to the social hall for special presentations or services, or use by community groups. Our outreach to the community has been enhanced with community groups using the building for recitals, music lessons, music programs, family gatherings, meetings of sobriety, business meetings, Boy Scout meetings and more.

Year(s))	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2010	Capital Campaign	\$3.7 Million	\$3.7 Million	Accessibility for all, significantly enhanced building facilities that supports our mission, community use, green technologies
2018	Organ Replacement	\$360,000	\$367,000	Enhanced music in worship, supports our congregation's love of music and music vision

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

2010 - \$150K - Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center "Now for the Future" Campaign

2018 - \$17K – Music Grants for virtual performances of out of work musicians during the pandemic and food insecurity through our Mission Partner, Foodshare.

Does your church have an endowment?

Yes, the church has a modest endowment consisting of two funds: A) Missions & Special Programs, and B) Infrastructure & Programs.

What is the market value of the assets?

The Endowment value as of 11/30/22 is \$459,460; other restricted use funds total \$221,271 as of 11/30/22.

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

Annually for the stated purpose of each endowment and restricted use fund.

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

4.5% of the average fund balance over the most recent 20 quarters. This has been consistent for the past 5 years.

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

In 2022 Endowment B provided a \$3,000 spending limit that was used in the operating budget.

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

The goal is for it to last perpetually.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

Other Assets

Reserves (savings):

\$ 557,573 as of 12/31/22

Investments (other than endowment):

None

Does your church have a parsonage?

No

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

South Church's complex at 949 Main Street South Glastonbury consists of:

- *The original Sanctuary (1836), renovated over the years and moved from its original location on the property facing High Street to face Main Street in 1965. This is a simple, yet beautiful, formal, air-conditioned space including a baby grand piano and brand new Austin Organ installed in the choir loft in 2019. There is seating for 340.*
- *Immediately adjacent to the Sanctuary and leading to the main building is a Library perfectly situated for waiting mourners and bridal parties, restrooms, and an elevator.*
- *The lower level below the Sanctuary houses the choir room, four other rooms used for a variety of purposes, and two restrooms.*
- *Attached to the Sanctuary is a 15,000 square foot addition that was completed in 2010. This addition was funded through a capital campaign to create a fully accessible, welcoming space for the congregation and community. It consists of:*
 - *A fully contained staff area with 4 offices, including the ministers', two workstations, a copy room, and waiting area that allows visitors to be greeted in a welcoming environment and staff to be co-located for optimal team engagement. Restrooms flank the office complex.*
 - *The first floor consists of a spacious lobby, bright and welcoming infant and toddler room, a large meeting space adjacent to the staff office, a*



commercial grade kitchen, and a large well-appointed 1590 ft social hall with baby grand piano that overlooks a rolling South Lawn, scenic gardens, and the Memorial Garden with the remains of many beloved members. The Social Hall holds 75 – 200 people depending on configuration.

- *The second floor education wing and meeting space consists of 8 rooms that are used for Sunday School, Wednesday School, church and community meetings and events. There are two restrooms on the second floor.*
- *The large basement is used for storage.*



For more information see:

<https://southcongregational.org/use-our-space/>



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



In addition, the church leased the 1920 High Street School from the Town of Glastonbury in 1994 for 99 years at one dollar a year. In return, the church raised \$1.3 million dollars in a capital campaign for the demolition of the 1945 rear “gym,” asbestos abatement, and the renovation of classrooms and exterior surfaces.

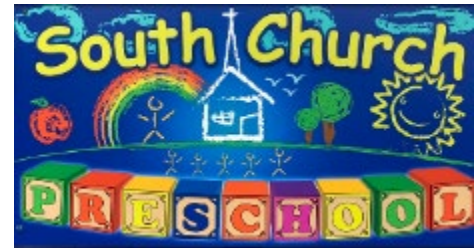
High Street School has been home to the South Church Pre-School which offers a variety of sessions to 85

children ages

3 – 5. Community groups such as the YMCA host summer camps and other activities here as well.

<https://www.southchurchpreschool.org/>

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?



All spaces are wheelchair accessible, except the pulpit.

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

South Church has strong financial competency and believes that it is an expression of our Christian values to be good stewards of the offerings made to the church. In this way, we may best respond to needs that arise in our community, region, and world. We have a commitment to missions that goes back to our roots. This is embodied in our hands-on opportunities to be of service to others, but also by our commitment to stretch ourselves financially; we think of this as the “faith component” of our budget.

Our annual operating budget includes planned mission giving to agency partners plus conference support of 15% of our non-mission expense budget. In 2022, this budgeted total was \$92,037, with 2/3 allotted to agency partners and 1/3 to conference Basic Support. Using our giving priorities of food and shelter, health, social justice and children and youth, the Missions Ministry team distributed the Mission Budget across local, regional, and global giving opportunities. An additional \$82,538 was distributed outside of our operating budget. These contributions followed the same prioritization and were made possible through restricted use funds, the Mission Reserve, the Minister’s Discretionary Fund, Youth Mission giving, and other spontaneous giving opportunities such as Ukrainian relief funding.

We have a tradition of being fiscally transparent, and host open dialogues twice annually with the congregation about financial matters of the church. This enables the congregation to respond generously according to their blessings when needs arise outside of our annual budget. Examples include:

- 2018 - Fully funding a new organ at a cost of \$367,000 including a mission component that funded donations for food insecurity and grants to out of work musicians during the pandemic
- 2007-2010 – Fully funded a \$3.7M building project to create a building in which there were no barriers for those with physical limitations and where every single space was made totally accessible. The congregation rose to the occasion convinced that it was what God was calling us to do. This campaign included a \$150,000 mission component to benefit Silver Lake's "Now for the Future" campaign.

This was a major undertaking requiring great faith and sacrificial giving during one of the greatest economic downturns of the modern era. A theological reflection from our Senior Minister at the time recounted: "As the Building Committee began its research two years ago, there was always an eye to the future, even to those disciples yet unborn. With a keen sense of gratitude for the way our forebearers provided sacred spaces for us, the Building Committee members have imagined sacred spaces for those who will pass by here for the rest of this century. Like the elder who plants an acorn knowing it will be the grandchildren who will enjoy the shade, South Church is invited to think three or four generations hence, taking a leap of faith whose fruits only God can see."

3f. 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.

South Church has a history of choosing inclusiveness, confronting injustice, and wrestling with issues as a community of faith. Prominent examples of this are our founding role in what is now known as InterCommunity Health Care, an organization that provides high-quality, affordable, compassionate healthcare for everyone, and our early adoption as an Open and Affirming congregation. In both cases parents came to the minister to voice their concerns about injustices that their children were facing.

South Church has a long association with InterCommunity. InterCommunity states, "the original foundation of the agency was created in 1977 by three families who gathered together in the basement of a church to exchange information regarding mental health issues and offer each other support." That church was South Church. Seed money of \$1,500 was provided to concerned families who were motivated to improve health access and overcome the stigma of mental illness for their loved ones. Many South Church members have worked with and for InterCommunity over the years and are on its board today. We are proud of our church's role in its founding.

In 1991, South Church Glastonbury became the 5th church in the state to adopt an Open and Affirming statement by the United Church of Christ. It declared that the church welcomes all people regardless of race, age, nationality, marital status, physical ability, mental condition, economic status or sexual orientation. Our Open and Affirming status is a very important part of our Church's identity. Starting in 1989 we worked hard for two years to host panels and talks with gay and lesbian speakers at the church along with a series of conversations and Bible studies on the subject. The result was that we embraced the concept of welcoming the LGBTQ community long before other churches were comfortable doing so. In 2020, our congregation voted to add "gender identity" and "immigrant status" to our Open and Affirming Statement.

South Church has a history of taking bold steps. Throughout the years our church has said "YES" to financial investments in our physical space that have enabled our ministries to grow, and ultimately created a space that reflects our commitment to inclusiveness and hospitality.

In 1965, and with great vision, the sanctuary was moved from its location facing High Street to its present location facing Main Street. Additional property was purchased, the sanctuary was enlarged, new wings were added, and it was all connected to the existing church school and social hall structure. The goal for the campaign was \$200,000.

<https://southcongregational.org/2021/03/05/a-bit-of-history-here-at-south-church/>

In 1995, the historic High Street School was added to the church campus. In return for the church paying for renovation and abatement of the building, the church has leased the building from the town for 99 years at one dollar a year. The theme of this campaign was "Rooted in Faith, Growing in Spirit," and the goal was \$1,500,000. According to the Glastonbury Citizen, at the groundbreaking, our senior minister – refusing the shovels- said he would rather unscrew the boards from one window of the school to "let the light in." The South Church Pre School was moved to High Street School and has served families from this building ever since.

In 2008 church members voted overwhelmingly to undertake a Capital Fund Campaign to finance extensive construction and renovation designed to truly represent who we are and to support South Church's ministry and mission for generations to come. Our new facility, completed in 2010, truly reflects our theology. It is fully accessible. It is welcoming. It is functional. It is equipped for educating all ages in Christian discipleship, for engaging all people



in meaningful fellowship, and for modeling to the world what it means to be accessible to all. The campaign was entitled, "Building to Embody the Spirit" and raised \$3,700,000 in a very difficult financial climate. A complement to this renovation was the successful \$360,000 campaign in 2018 that modernized our organ in support of our music ministry.

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

Our former Director of Children and Family Ministries (DCFM) left in early 2022 to pursue her education and a career in nursing. It was a difficult time as we were still dealing with the impact of COVID and far fewer children were coming to church. One of our highly experienced and very gifted church members stepped up and assumed the role of DCFM. She reached out to families who had stopped coming to church as well as the parents of children who had been recently baptized. These personal connections were key to bringing families back to Church along with their children. The result has been miraculous and, once again, we have many beautiful little ones sitting in the front of our Sanctuary on Sundays as they listen to the Ministers' "Words With Children". This person is no longer serving as the DCFM but remains an active volunteer. We have since combined the DSFM's and the Associate Minister's responsibilities.



Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. “Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....” Describe your congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict.

Some tension points in our church were recently identified when our Transition Team conducted a series of cottage meetings in the spring of 2022. During these house meetings, our church community was able to share its feelings about the church and engage in important dialogue. We learned that there is a deep love for the church, but there are also areas of tension in the congregation which are largely reflected in the wider community and society today.

The tension points that were evident in some of the cottage meetings include (1) decline of young families in the church; (2) risk of burnout among our most active church members; (3) the best way to express our open and affirming value in relation to our Church’s other core values; (4) creating a welcoming environment for all our church members, across the political spectrum; and (5) balancing the differing perspectives on the preferred church service experience—a place for quiet reflection and spiritual recharging versus a place to be challenged with sermons that have content that can be perceived as commentary on political or cultural concerns. These tension points were expressed with love for our Church and will need the church community's attention as we move through 2023 and beyond.

What we learned is that we need to keep asking hard questions and to really listen to each other and seek to understand. We need to continue our past practices of discussing difficult subjects and coming to a deeper understanding about others, and ourselves.

Ministerial History (include all previous ministerial staff for the past 30 years)

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev. Jeffrey Braun, Senior Minister	Started 10/2/23	Y
Rev. Erica Avena, Interim Minister	2021 - 2023	Y
Rev Richard Allen, Pastor Emeritus	1988-2021	Y
Rev Larissa Forsythe, Associate Minister	2016 - 2023; Left 9/23/23	Y
Rev Liz Miller, Associate Minister	2013 - 2016	Y
Rev Lynne Dolan, Associate Minister	2002 - 2012	Y
Rev Alice O'Donovan, Interim Associate Minister	1999-2001	Passed away in 2022
Rev Nancy Miaoulis, Associate Minister	1998	N
Rev Laura Price, Associate Minister	1996-1997	N
Rev John Hudson, Associate Minister	1989-1994	Y

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

We have learned to provide our ministerial leadership with sufficient support and opportunities for growth and self care. We recognize that we must minister to our ministers.

Our lay leaders have a history of strong, cooperative relationships and shared leadership with our ministers.

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

One in 1985

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

4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

4a. COMMUNITY VISION

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

Service and mission are at the heart of who we are as a church. South Church has a longstanding tradition of ministering to our neighbors locally, regionally, and internationally. Our Missions Ministry Team allocates the Mission budget to our partners using giving priorities of food and shelter, health, social justice and children and youth. In 2022, in partnership with our Stewardship Campaign, we held a Missions Fair that enabled the congregation to meet the people behind the good work made possible by their generosity. Seventeen of our Mission Partners were in attendance.



Featured Mission partners included high school students who benefit from the support of the Glastonbury ABC House (A Better Chance), organizations providing food and shelter to Hartford-area folks - such as Hands-on Hartford and ImmaCare, Elizabeth Horton Sheff of the Sheff Movement Coalition fighting for social justice in our state, and representatives from farther reaching partnerships in the Cheyenne and Sioux Reservations in South Dakota, Haiti, Malawi, and more.

Our Syrian and Afghan families joined the festivities and even served food of their native lands.

Also during 2022, our full-year South Church Youth in Mission program culminated with three unique Youth Mission trips that enabled our youth to demonstrate servant leadership by engaging in face-to-face ministry with those experiencing homelessness, working with agencies that support the underprivileged, and building homes with Habitat for Humanity.

For the past 25 years, South Church lay leaders have ministered to the residents of Salmon Brook Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Glastonbury, CT holding monthly worship services on site.

South Church was a founding member of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA), and continues to be active in this social advocacy group around issues of housing, gun violence, mental health, environmental justice and education.

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

South Church delegates represent our church at various gatherings of the Southern New England Conference, the Hartford East Association and ecclesiastical councils, ordinations and installations throughout the year. Delegates also bring Conference and Association news to our church.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at ucc.org.) Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

☐ Accessible to All (A2A)

☐ Creation Justice

☐ Economic Justice

☐ Faithful and Welcoming

☐ God Is Still Speaking (GISS)

☐ Border and Immigrant Justice

☐ Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)

☐ Just Peace

☒ Open and Affirming (ONA)

* WISE Congregation for Mental Health
(in progress)

☐ Other UCC designations:

☐ Designations from other denominations

☐ None

☒ Global Mission Church

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

As a continuation of commitment to mental health issues and our founding role in InterCommunity Health Care, South Church is currently working toward the WISE Congregation for Mental Health designation. Our efforts to become a Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged community for people who are affected by mental health challenges began in 2019. Since then, we've held an educational panel discussion, a book study, a therapy dog Sunday, and engaged in conversations large and small within the congregation. Our efforts were interrupted by the pandemic, but are now revitalized. We are in the process of creating a video to update the congregation, to share testimonials, and to involve more people. Plans are also underway for mental health-related programming during the month of March.

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

We share ministry ideas and fellowship with other local faith communities and participate in our local Interfaith organization. We collaborate with other faith communities in several ways. During the pandemic a group of faith leaders joined forces to support the distribution of free or reduced cost meals to students who were no longer able to access them. This interfaith collaboration has grown into a local food pantry and backpack program known as Glastonbury Links Together. Our Animal Ministry collects and provides pet food to a local Food Pantry hosted by an Episcopal Church. Our church is a founding and active member of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA). Last year, we hosted the 2022 Interdenominational Thanksgiving Service.

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 church mission is documented in our by-laws and compares favorably to the actual time spent engaging in different activities:

"We proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed, embody this Gospel in ministry and policy, and celebrate this Gospel in worship and witness. It is our purpose to study Scripture and to translate that Living Word into deeds of compassion for the sake of the earth, the human community, and all of God's creation. It is also our purpose to be an inclusive community of faith honoring the diversity of God's handiwork and reflecting Christ's radical welcome."

4b. MISSION InSite

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

*Using a 5-mile radius, the study area's **population and household** trends show a growing population with that growth coming from households through birth or young adults returning to live with their parents. There is some evidence of a resurgence of children in younger years which follows a few years of shrinkage in the kindergarten classes in town. 82% of the Households with children are married couples, shrinking slightly, and generally higher than the state average.*

*The **racial and ethnic diversity** is 81% white with a projected slight shrinkage over time with modest growing diversity primarily in the Asian category but also Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino, Pacific Islander/American Indian/Other. There is no data for other types of diversity in the Mission Insite report.*

*The community is **generally affluent** with a range of household incomes. The average household income is projected to grow by 10% over the next 5 years, however, the number of families with household incomes over \$100,000 is showing slight shrinkage.*

*The overall **educational attainment** of the adults in the community is greater than the state. The study area is also well above (78%) the state average for white collar workers. Large employers in proximity to the church provide jobs in Insurance, Healthcare, Aerospace, Education, Sports Broadcasting, Financial Services, and Information Technology.*

*The **average age** in the study area is 44 (inclusive of children), slightly older than the state. The average age of adults only in the study area is 55. The study area phase of life trends for adults only shows 4% Singles & Young Families (age 25-34), 37% Families and Empty Nesters (age 35-54), 14% Enrichment Years Single/Couples (age 55-64) and 45% Retirement opportunities (age 65+).*

Expanding to a broader radius of 10 miles brings in bordering towns that are less white (56%), slightly younger including children (42), lower levels of educational attainment, fewer white-collar workers (67%), lower household incomes, and more single parents. The Mosaic report reveals demographic clusters that are politically diverse (conservative, independent, and liberal), environmentally conscious, family centric, charitable.

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?

South Church is a community church, drawing its population primarily from Glastonbury and South Glastonbury, with some migration in from bordering towns, those former locals who have relocated to retirement communities in other towns, and some online engagement from former members relocated to other states/countries. There is some migration to the church from members of the LGBTQ+ community within and outside of Glastonbury. The congregation's racial and ethnic make-up is reflective of the community and mostly white. The average age of the adults in the church is 60 which is slightly older than the average age of the adults in the study area (55). This may be reflective of the stagnant growth of young families caused by the pandemic and general societal trends in church attendance.

The congregation is economically diverse, driven by life stages and occupation, and skews towards higher levels of educational attainment with a variety of occupations reflective of the

employment opportunities in the area. Our congregation is based in a farm community, and boasts a variety of amazing people with all sorts of skills and life experiences that are brought to bear in support of the ministries of the church. We are creative, analytical, lifelong learners, with compassionate and inclusive hearts.

When compared to the communities in the 10-mile radius report, like the study group, our neighboring towns are less white (56%), slightly younger when including children, have lower levels of educational attainment, fewer white-collar workers (67%), lower household incomes, and more single parents.

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

We need to increase awareness of social and economic problems in the greater Hartford community. The needs of youth include substance abuse among teens and lack of group social/recreational outlets.

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

Historically South Church has always been known as a mission church and for its incredible youth program. One of our most exciting endeavors is our Youth in Mission program. We are deeply focused on guiding our youth to be servant leaders in the world. We encourage a multigenerational approach with adult advisors serving alongside the youth. This program is a major draw for our church.

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

Many families come to our church because of our youth program. Youth often seek out our church when they hear about our program from their peers and end up bringing their parents on Sundays to church. These parents then often get involved in the life and mission of the church with their children. Many others come at the suggestion of a current member who invited them to a church service or an event where they find a community they have longed for inspiring service.

5. REFERENCES

REFERENCE 1

Rev. Dr. Donald Hamer / Interim Minister / St. Luke's Episcopal Church, South Glastonbury
Was former Rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, Hartford, CT for 15 years
Tel. 860-614-1360 / Email: revdon2016@gmail.com / Relationship to Church: Friend

The Rev. Donald L. Hamer 18 Marilyn Drive Glastonbury, CT 06033-4129

February 20, 2023

Search Committee
Congregational Church in South Glastonbury 949 Main Street
South Glastonbury, CT 06073

Re: Search Process

Dear South Church:

Thank you so much for the invitation to write a letter in connection with your current search process for a new Pastor. It is such an honor to be asked.

If I were ordained in the UCC and thirty years younger, your congregation would be a “dream call.”

If I were a member of the UCC living in Glastonbury, I would be an active member there.

As it is, I am a retired Episcopal Priest born and raised in South Glastonbury as a Roman Catholic and converted to The Episcopal Church in my early thirties. After a career as an attorney, member of the Glastonbury Board of Education and the town’s elected Judge of Probate for 14 years, I was ordained an Episcopal priest in my late forties and served in nearby Manchester and then for 15 years as Rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Hartford, Connecticut. I am now a member and Priest Associate of nearby St. James’ Episcopal Church in Glastonbury Center.

If I had to choose a passage from Scripture that best describes South Congregational, it would be Micah 6:8: *He has told you, O mortal, what is good: and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.* It perfectly describes what your congregation stands for in our community, and the ministries which you offer not

only to your congregation but to all who seek God and a wider knowledge of God. South Church models radical hospitality and humble servant leadership.

As a teenager, I remember when your congregation took the bold step of lifting the entire church structure off of its foundation and re-orienting it to face east (toward Jerusalem?), and shifting its orientation from a small side street directly onto Main Street. It was more than window dressing: It was a statement that South Congregational was taking God's mission directly into the wider community, bringing it face to face with God's call to care for those in need and to right the injustices present in our society – right here in our comfortable suburb and well beyond.

I am honored to be invited to be a co-facilitator with your present Interim Senior Pastor for your Lenten discussion series on the film documentary *Traces of the Trade*. It is the type of collaboration that I am pretty sure makes Jesus smile!

Thank you again for the opportunity to write this letter on your behalf. Please let me know if I may be of any further support on your journey to find a new Senior Pastor.

Your Brother in Christ, Don

REFERENCE 2

Sladjana Cvjetinovic / Resettled Bosnian Refugee/ Glastonbury Resident
Tel. 860-328-0257 / Email: sladjanacvjetinovic@gmail.com / Relationship to Church: Friend

February 24, 2023

Dear Potential Candidates,

It is my pleasure to tell you about the amazing Congregational Church in South Glastonbury. In September, 2000, this faith-based community welcomed a refugee family from Bosnia to its midst. That family was my family. Words cannot justify what this community stands for. Leaving a war-torn country we had hoped for God to lead us into a welcoming community, but GOD did far more than that. Being welcomed by South Church has been the biggest blessing of our newfound life in the United States of America.

The entire church community is fueled by faith, care, and compassion. It serves as a place of hope for many and leaves an impression on anyone that visits. We were fortunate that it served as a new start for us. Since we arrived in the States, church members worked tirelessly to make sure my family of four had a safe and comfortable place to live. Long-standing church members have become our closest friends and our family here in Connecticut. Their continuous deeds for my entire family are to this day the greatest blessing. For the past 22

years, they have remained our lifelines of support and love. We remain eternally honored faith brought us together through the vessel of this incredible church. They live their faith.

Church members helped us enroll in schools and attend doctor appointments; another member drove my father to work for half a year until we received a donation of a car from yet another church member. This wonderful community made starting from scratch easy, showing care and compassion with each step despite the language and cultural barrier. The church included the teenagers of our household in their ongoing community projects such as Habitat for Humanity, and provided us with furniture, food, and clothing. They showed us love and shared God's love with us. They also helped us learn the English language and assimilate into the Glastonbury community. A wonderful member Barbara and her husband David came to visit weekly for private English lessons, and we were hosted yearly at a Thanksgiving gathering at Tom and Bonnie's house. The members of the South Church were so welcoming and accepting of our refugee family, providing us with a place of peace and comfort. It was truly a sight to behold.

South Church's members have always been a source of hope and inspiration. They continue to show compassion and understanding to all newcomers in the Glastonbury area. It is an example of the power of faith, and a reminder of the importance of welcoming others with open arms. Although we continue to practice our Eastern Orthodox faith we remain friends with the church, knowing our abundant lives and opportunities for work and education would not be possible without this extraordinary community and its members.

My words of praise are not sufficient for all the good the church has done for us however if I can be of further help, please contact me at sladjanacvjetinovic@gmail.com. It would be my honor to talk more to anyone wanting to become a part of this wonderful church.

Sincerely,

Sladjana Cvjetinovic

REFERENCE 3

Rochelle Ripley / Founder and Director / hawkwing / Serving the Cheyenne River Sioux Lakota Tribe, South Dakota
Tel. 860-402-1064 / Email: rochelle@hawkwing.org / Relationship to Church: Mission Partner

It is my pleasure to share my experiences and collaboration with candidates for the position of Minister for the South Church. We have worked together since the establishment of hawkwing in the year 2000. Our efforts together have engaged all members of the Church including youth, young adults and senior members.

To answer your specific areas of inquiry:

1) Areas of Strength in the Ministry: I am fortunate to work with faith communities throughout Connecticut and in other states. I can state without reservation that South Church is one of our most outstanding partners. There is a level of compassion among the leadership and members that is unmatched for its generosity of time, volunteerism and engagement. They have created a wonderful environment in which all people are truly welcomed and embraced. They often serve as a community resource in offering their time and space for meetings to discuss important issues. Their active youth groups provide volunteers for many of our activities including preparing family holiday boxes which are shipped to the Cheyenne River Lakota Indian Reservation in South Dakota which hawkwing serves. Many teens and adults have traveled with us to Cheyenne River to work on service projects including building accessibility ramps for those in need, repairing homes and hosting health services. There is a general as well as specific environment which I would label "joyful service."

2) Areas for improvement. This is a more difficult question for me to answer. I do not think - as Pollyanna might - that there are not areas for improvement. However from my direct experience, I find that the most important quality any group can offer is honest caring and the desire to serve. And South Church has this in abundance. As all groups are facing transitions post-COVID and as our memberships age, we are all faced with looking at a transition plan. I am certain that the Church has these key areas in mind.

3) Significant Experience: We have worked in so many ways with South Church, that it is difficult to pick out a single experience to share. Let me share a few.

A) Nearly every summer we host a long distance, summer service trip to the Reservation. South Church members, including youth, have traveled at their own expense to assist in some of the services listed above. They complete services during a ten to twelve day trip and engage with members of the Tribe at the grassroots and leadership levels. This includes a shipment of food, medical supplies, clothing and toys among other items, for distribution.

B) Throughout the year, they assist at our warehouse in preparing family give away boxes for the holidays, collections of books and other educational materials and loading the tractor trailers for delivery.

C) Several members were instrumental in the renovation of a trailer into a youth center in one isolated district both inside and in the yard. The children and teens gained a gathering place with outdoor basketball hoops, soccer nets and a 20 item youth playground. We included a television and dvd set for movie nights and equipped a full kitchen which serves meals to anyone in need in the community.

D) The Church is instrumental in fundraising both as individuals and collectively. They have assisted in grants from the community and in staffing fundraisers for hawkwing at the Church.

There are many more examples I could mention, but this gives you a view of some of the experiences we have shared with the members and leadership. South Church is a living example of an open and affirming faith community. We look forward to welcoming the selected

Senior Minister into our Glastonbury Community and know that the selected candidate will look on this Congregation as a new and warm home.

Blessings

Rochelle Ripley, President and Founder

REFERENCE 4

Pastor Cheryl Hoffman / Pastor/ The Lutheran Church of Saint Mark, Glastonbury
Tel. 860-633-1188 / Email: Pastor@SaintMarkGlastonbury.org / Relationship to Church:
Friend

February 28, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter of reference is for South Church in South Glastonbury, CT.

As a minister in Glastonbury for six years, my contact with South Church has been through their participation in ecumenical and interfaith programs. In this area, South Church has been one of the leading congregations in the community. It has been hard to maintain a community interfaith leadership council so, a few clergy have stepped up and worked together to address and meet needs within the community. South Church has provided one of the leaders in this clergy group.

As the small group of interfaith leaders pulled together one of the largest food drives the town has ever seen at the onset of COVID, collected money for food insecure families to help them get through COVID, put together weekend backpack programs for the elementary schools, helped establish the towns self-serve food bank, and created a new community group (Glastonbury Links Together) to address what it means to be poor in Glastonbury, South Church was in on the ground floor providing leadership and support for each of these programs. South Church also provided leadership for and participated in community interfaith prayer vigils for the war in Ukraine, the Thanksgiving service, and TDOR service.

The activities listed above begin to suggest the importance social justice ministry is to South Church. Though I have no personal interaction with their other programs, I am aware of their participation in GHIAA (Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance), their work against racism, and their youth mission trip. I have no doubt that they are involved in other social justice issues and ministries, but I cannot give testimony as to what these are.

I can tell you, however, that members of my congregation are aware of the activities of South Church and have participated in them. I know because I have either heard about an event or I have been handed some form of publication about an event with the words, “Doesn’t this sound cool?” I add this to say that South Church does a good job of letting the community know what they are doing and what they are doing is of interest to the community – not just their members. At the same time, I don’t feel or see South Church as a threat to my ministry, but as one who is more than willing to collaborate together for God’s sake.

It would be my hope that whoever fills the role as South Church’s next Senior Pastor will want to continue both their strong leadership in social justice and in the community collaboration that already exists.

Sincerely,
The Rev. Cheryl Hoffman Lutheran Church of Saint Mark Pastor

6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

6a. CLOSING PRAYER

Oh gracious and magnificent Creator, we praise you and look forward with tremendous anticipation to knowing those who answer our call. We are most excited to partner with the one you have called for us, the one who knows you, relies on you, connects with you, and who passionately seeks to live and teach your Gospel among us. We are excited for the future and the endless possibilities of our Spiritual Growth together. We pray that our love is evident, and that we will be open and eager to be the people you are calling us to be. Bless us, O God, with a new Associate Minister to inspire us, energize us, and nurture us to live out your Word. Let us be their home, their dream, their hope so that they too will be inspired, energized and nurtured as we partner together for the days and years to come in our journeys of faith and commitment to live God’s love and light in the world.

Amen

6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending a suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile? (for example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.)

The Associate Minister Search Team, the Senior Minister Search Team, the Transition Team, the Church Council and key church Ministry Team leaders all contributed to the preparation of this 2023 South Church Profile. Photos were contributed by Lynn A. Damon and Jane DeMaio.

Signed:

Judy Benton and Diane Korntheuer, Associate Minister Search Team Co-Chairpersons
September, 2023

6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

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

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

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: *Rev. Isaac Lawson*

Name / Title: Rev. Isaac Lawson, Area Conference Minister

Email: lawsoni@sneucc.org

Phone: 960-761-7188

Date: July 25, 2024

This document is created through support to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and is only possible through the covenantal relationships of all settings of the United Church of Christ.

“Jesus answered them, ‘Have faith in God!’” – Mark 11:22