

# INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE



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

Rachel Hackenberg

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
**LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE**

First Congregational Church  
Dubuque, Iowa

Senior Pastor

Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota Conference  
Eastern Iowa Association]

[Validation Date]

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

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*“God is able to provide you with every blessing, so that  
having all sufficiency in all things at all times,  
you may abound in every good work.”  
(2 Corinthians 9:8)*

## INSTRUCTIONS

The new Local Church Profile supports the calling and discernment of United Church of Christ congregations with their current or future pastoral leadership.

For many congregations, the interim time between ministers is an intentional season that is guided in part by the preparation of a Local Church Profile. Using the Profile, the church can discover its data and express its story for the reliable discernment of a search committee and the beginning of a new pastorate. Searching ministers will want to see this document in its entirety.

The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – **WHO ARE WE NOW**, **WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR**, and **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME** – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years. Known together as the "Discovery Document," these three sections can be completed by a visioning group, a governing body, a transition team, or other group – not just the search committee – in order to draw forward the gifts and imaginative possibilities of a congregation. The church's engagement with the "Discovery Document" might not have the same sequence as the completed Local Church Profile that is read by candidates.

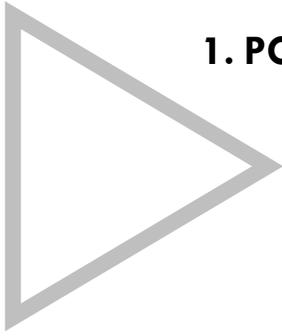
Some questions are easy to answer. Some are not so easy. Prompts are provided to stimulate narrative response if needed; these italicized prompts are merely examples from which to choose or to inspire your own. Efforts to answer the questions will prompt conversations and explorations and story-telling and many prayers. As the Spirit moves throughout the process, congregations will shape a collective articulation of Christ's leading (**WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME**). This last question to be answered becomes the first section to be read by searching ministers in the Local Church Profile, and it is boldest and most actionable piece for faithful leadership into the future.

Your conference can provide materials referenced in the Local Church Profile, such as the 11-Year Report containing data as reported by your congregation annually to the UCC Data Hub, and Mission Insite reports containing demographic information on your community. More information on types of pastorates in the United Church of Christ can be found in the Call Agreement Workbook. Be sure to use the Call Agreement Workbook's Scope of Work to describe in this Local Church Profile the position being sought.

When it is time for ministerial search, the conference can counsel you on posting the Local Church Profile together with your public listing at UCC Ministry Opportunities (<http://oppsearch.ucc.org>).

The last page of the Local Church Profile contains a statement that parallels the consent statement signed by ministers in the UCC Ministerial Profile. In keeping with the covenantal relationship between a church and those it seeks to call, this statement encourages an open, honest exchange of information. On behalf of the United Church of Christ, and on the basis of the best knowledge

available to them, your conference staff will validate your completed Local Church Profile when it is ready to be shared in relationship with prospective new leaders.



## 1. POSITION POSTING

- a. LISTING INFORMATION
- b. SCOPE OF WORK
- c. COMPENSATION & SUPPORT
- d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

### 1a. LISTING INFORMATION

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Church name: [First Congregational United Church of Christ](#)  
Street address: [255 W 10<sup>th</sup> Street; Dubuque, IA 52001](#)  
Supplemental web links: [www.1stcongucc.org](http://www.1stcongucc.org)

Additional ecumenical affiliations (*e.g. denominations, communions, fellowships*): [n/a](#)

Conference: [Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota](#)

Association: [Eastern Iowa Association](#)

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

[Rev. Sarah Jones](#)

[Associate Conference Minister](#)

[808.631.2444](#)

[sarah@ucctcm.org](mailto:sarah@ucctcm.org)

Summary Ministry Description:

*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?*

We at First Congregational are seeking a minister to help us sustain and progress our work as a vibrant, multigenerational, mission-oriented church in the heart of Dubuque. We want someone who will help us move forward in the areas of membership support, youth and adult educational programming, pastoral care, spiritual development, and more. To accomplish this, we need an engaging communicator who is compassionate, committed, organized, and accountable.

Photographs:

*Insert 1 – 3 images of your church, its people, its parsonage or building or gathering space, etc.*



STEPHEN GASSMAN • Telegraph Herald  
A shelter built by First Congregational Church United Church of Christ soon will be dismantled and shipped to a family in Haiti.

## To Haiti, with love from Dubuque

First Congregational Church will send a shelter to the island country

What we value about living in our area (2 – 3 sentences):

We appreciate the city of Dubuque for the diversity and urban feel it brings to the surrounding rural area. Being in the heart of the city, we value our neighbors and are often called upon to help address mission-related needs. We also appreciate that Dubuque offers majestic bluffs, rolling hills, and beautiful farm fields and has a rich history that adapts to meet the current needs of society.

Current size of membership: 359

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*): n/a

Position Title: Senior Pastor

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

Compensation Level: Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? Exceeds

## 1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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*(add here the Scope of Work developed by your church using the Call Agreement Workbook)*

### **Full time Pastoral Position (40-50 hours weekly / 10-12 units)**

- Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship including scripture study, crafting of liturgy and bulletin, sermon preparation, guiding and sometimes finding lay liturgists, planning of music in coordination with musical staff or volunteers, preaching, offering of prayers, etc.
- Faith formation and vitality through prayer, Bible study, service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities and helping lay persons take advantage of them
- Leadership development by working with people in the church to create ministry and programs
- Pastoral care in collaboration with lay people

- Community engagement and leading the way for the church to be an ambassador of God's love
- Weddings and funerals for participants in the worshipping community
- Strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry
- Attend meetings and give leadership as needed to church programs, in collaboration with lay leadership
- Participate in wider church activities such as conference and association meetings
- Administration responsibilities (unless delegated) such as email, website, church supplies, more
- Faithful financial development and stewardship
- Responsibility for supervision of staff
- Availability to wider community for funerals, weddings, special worship programs, and as a representative of the church to local organizations
- Counseling, listening and referral
- Study and prayer to increase faith and to improve skills so as to lead, teach, preach better
- Energizing and deepening spiritual connections and faith understandings of others in all they do
- Focus on youth programming and membership development

#### Core Competencies:

*(List three core competencies that you imagine could be foundational in your next minister's relationship with the church. For example, a church seeking a pastoral care minister might hope to call someone who is caring, sensitive and sociable, while a church seeking an executive minister might want an organized, detail-oriented and time-conscious person.)*

- Compassionate & Committed
- Organized & Accountable
- Engaging Communicator

## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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Salary Basis- Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance): Cash Salary and Housing Allowance based on 2022 UCC guidelines for experience and size of congregation.

Benefits: UCC Pension Contribution; Health Insurance; Life Insurance; Dental and Vision Insurance; 7.65% FICA reimbursement; Cell phone reimbursement; Continuing Education/Professional expense allowance; Vacation, Sick, and Holiday Pay.

What is the expected living situation for your next minister: Living nearby with a housing allowance.

Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister: Mileage reimbursement for conference meetings; community meetings and pastoral care visits are reimbursed at current federal mileage rates.

State any incentives: Compensation package historically exceeds conference guidelines.

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference: Eastern Iowa Conference Clergy meetings; Eastern Iowa Conference Committee on Ministry; Iowa/Nebraska/South Dakota Tri-Conference staff.

If applicable, describe how your church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment: The Senior Pastor position is a full-time position requiring focused dedication to the members and mission of First Congregational United Church of Christ.

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

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

Our vision is to have a church that is relevant, caring, multi-generational, vibrant, safe, welcoming, and flexible. Possibly the most important goal we can collaborate on is to remain the friendly, strong, committed, and faithful group of people we are, while facing the unique challenges posed by having to temporarily vacate our physical space [see section 3e] and search for a new pastor. Together we will find the energy and commitment to embrace a new and exciting future.

We envision getting there through shared leadership focused on meaningful Sunday worship, important both in and of itself and as an avenue toward increasing membership, and compassionate pastoral and lay caregiving. Welcoming and engaging with visitors, encouraging involvement of new members, and reaching out to those who have not yet returned from the isolation of the pandemic will all be important aspects of our shared ministry goals. Just as we are rebuilding part of our physical structure, we are also in need of maintaining and rebuilding the non-physical structures that make up our church.

Other key goals, which will be discussed at greater length elsewhere in this document, include revitalizing our youth and adult educational programming and continuing to meet the mission needs of our surrounding community.

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

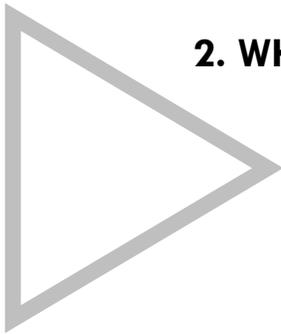
We are a mission-conscious church, working within our community and beyond to meet the needs of our neighbors. Our long-standing CAFé (Christians Activated to Feed) program, for instance, has served well over 100,000 meals to those seeking food and socialization in the downtown area. We even prepared “to go” bags and handed meals out at the door when indoor dining was restricted during the pandemic. Participation by the pastor will be essential in helping us continue this work. Mission is important to us, and we have been an important part of caring for the wider community for many years.

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.

We see the following marks (and accompanying subpoints) as particularly important to who we are and who we want to become as a church:

- *Exhibiting a spiritual foundation and ongoing spiritual practice* [particularly the following subpoints: loving God, following Jesus Christ, and being guided by the Holy Spirit and living a life of discipleship; exhibiting a commitment to lifelong spiritual development and faithful personal stewardship]
- *Building transformational leadership skills* [particularly the following subpoints: performing necessary administrative tasks; encouraging leadership development of self and others through continuing education and lifelong learning]

- *Engaging sacred stories and traditions* [particularly the following subpoints: bringing life to sacred stories and traditions in worship, proclamation, and witness; leading faith formation effectively across generations]
- *Strengthening inter- and intra-personal assets* [particularly the following subpoints: respecting the dignity of all God's people; demonstrating excellent communication skills; maintaining a basic understanding of mental health and wellness; working collaboratively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity]



## 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)

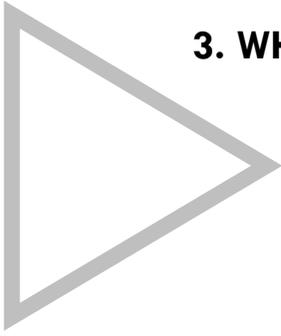
Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

God is calling us to provide meaningful faith experiences to people of all generations; to continue responding to the ever-changing needs of our congregation and community; to honor our past and embrace our identity; and to increase ministerial touchpoints with the community and with each other. We look forward to working with our new pastor to achieve these and other callings.

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

*For example, describe two experiments your congregation has initiated or engaged in the past year, what were the results and where do you see your next steps? Has your church had a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement; if so, where do you see that plan/vision taking you?*

The realities of the pandemic forced us to experiment in many ways with how we engage with our community and congregation. For instance, because singing was against recommended guidelines, we reconceptualized our children's choirs as a Creativity Club that incorporated dance, kazoos, ukuleles, and more. We also held an outdoor parking lot service and remade our Rally Day into a carnival-style event. These and other experiments were successful enough that they will likely be kept going forward, and they speak to the ways that we as a church must continue adapting in order to address future challenges and opportunities.



### 3. WHO ARE WE NOW?

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

- a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS
- b. 11-YEAR REPORT
- c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS
- d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING
- e. CHURCH FINANCES
- f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

#### 3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

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Describe your congregation’s life of faith.

*For example, what beliefs and commitments are stated in your congregation’s purpose statement or membership vows? How is God most often described in worship liturgy? In what ways would you describe the Holy Spirit in your midst?*

We are a congregation of varying ideologies and denominational backgrounds, who aspire to speak and listen to one another in love. Because of our openness and diversity of belief, we have individuals who are on different points in their faith journey. And while we honor traditional hymns, creeds, and scripture translations, we fully embrace inclusive language and modern translations of scripture and are not afraid to explore new expressions for worship, fellowship, and service.

As stated in our bylaws, the purpose of our church is “to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments; to build Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the wider church; welcoming the diversity of all God’s children in terms of race, ethnicity, economic status, sexual orientation, gender expressions and identity, and mental and physical abilities to offer loving service toward humankind; and to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.” This purpose and description of our life of faith can be summed up more succinctly in our informal motto: “wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.”

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

In preparation for completion of this profile, we conducted a congregational survey and asked members to identify the biggest strengths of our church. By far, the most frequent answers involved our welcoming culture and mission focus.

Our church's welcoming culture can be seen not only in our engagement with visitors and genuine care for each other, but also in our open and affirming status, our recent completion of a \$500,000 physical accessibility project, and the importance we place on making our services and ministry available to those who are unable to be with us in person. The streaming capabilities we have developed over the course of the pandemic, for instance, have allowed us to expand our ministry in important ways. Our mission focus is evident in a wide variety of projects, from our CAFé ministry to our Haiti building project.

Beyond these attributes, members also cited as key strengths of the congregation our meaningful worship services, our collaborative organizational structure, and the pride we take in our building and grounds.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

*For example, where does worship take place, and what is it based around? What was a recent baptism like? What are some words used to describe good preaching?*

Our worship services could be described as traditional in style, with a blend of formality and informality. Because we value congregational participation, we use sung responses, include children and youth whenever possible, and have lay people read scripture and make special announcements. Creativity is not out of the question.

High quality music has consistently been an important part of our worship. We feel the spirit move us as we listen to the pipe organ, piano, trumpet, handbells, or upright bass; enjoy children singing, dancing, or playing ukuleles; hear the chancel choir sing Mozart or upbeat gospel; and appreciate guest musicians such as a soprano saxophonist or Christmas jazz ensemble. In general, we like a mix of music styles, though contemporary music is usually presented with traditional instrumentation.

The sermon, God's word and good news interpreted to us, is central to our worship. We have high expectations for scripturally based, Christo-centric, prophetic preaching, and we love a good story that draws us in. We feel that it is okay for us to leave worship feeling either comforted or challenged. It is not okay, though, to feel shamed or to hear a sermon that convicts us of sin and simply tells us to try harder to be a good person. The Gospel rightly proclaimed is always welcomed.

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

*For example, how are young people in leadership? How do people continue to form their faith over a lifetime? Name a topic studied or curriculum used recently; what was the impact of this study on those who attended?*

The pandemic interrupted an active and meaningful Wednesday night youth and family program that was led by staff and volunteers and included Christian education, creative activities, and a family meal. Unfortunately, this is one area that has not yet returned to vibrancy in the aftermath of the pandemic, and we look forward to working with our new minister to revitalize our youth and confirmation programming more generally.

Similarly, although we have been able to continue our minister-led confirmation classes and regular meetings of groups such as Coyople, other activities such as book studies with authors and our Guess Who's Coming to Dinner event have not yet resumed. Again: re-focusing on youth and adult educational programming is something that we see as essential in the next five years.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

*For example, how are decisions communicated in your church? How are teams or committees organized? Where does your church struggle for vision?*

- When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?
- Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?
- Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance? [Yes/No]

Our church bylaws describe the structure and responsibilities of our various boards and committees (including the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees, the Board of Missions and Social Concerns, the Faith Formation Committee, the Church Life Committee, and the Café Committee). Most of these boards and committees meet monthly, and all report updates to the Church Council, which meets quarterly. We also have an Executive Team (made up of the senior minister, moderator, vice moderator, chair and vice chair of trustees, and chair of deacons) and are interested in forming a Pastoral Relations Committee to help provide support to our new minister. Decisions are communicated to the congregation through weekly emails, special mailings, Sunday announcements, and more. An obvious example of a time when action had to be taken quickly was the early stages of the pandemic. The Executive Team moved to biweekly meetings to monitor the situation and make decisions as appropriate.

Copies of our organizational structure, bylaws, and annual report are all available upon request.

### 3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

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(add here the 11-Year Report developed with the help of your conference staff, UCC Data Hub, and MissionInsite)

See attached.

### 3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

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Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	150	
Number of active non-members:	65	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	215	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	50%	Estimate
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	30%	Estimate
Less than 5 years:	20%	Estimate

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
38	37	22	30	35	56	55	27	45	

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	2%	Estimate
Households with minors:	5%	Estimate

Single adults age 35-65:	30%	Estimate
Joint households with no minors:	30%	Estimate
Single adults over 65:	33%	Estimate

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	95%	Estimate
College:	80%	Estimate
Graduate School:	25%	Estimate
Specialty Training:	10%	Estimate
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	35%	Estimate
Adults who are retired:	60%	Estimate
Adults who are not fully employed:	5%	Estimate

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

The range of occupations in our congregation is very broad.

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 see our congregation as diverse in many important respects. Our racial and ethnic diversity, though, reflects the broader community and is predominantly white.

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

We began work in 2020 on the UCC's Brave Space initiative, focusing on anti-racism and LGBTQ+ inclusion efforts. That work was disrupted by the pandemic.

### 3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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

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	30	Lay Leaders
Baptisms ( <i>number last year</i> )	4	Pastors and Staff
Children's Groups or Classes	20	Staff
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	350	Pastors, Lay Leaders, Musicians, Staff
Church-wide Meals	n/a	n/a
Choirs and Music Groups	40	Musicians and Staff
Church-based Bible Study	12	Lay Leaders
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	105	Monthly
Community Meals	75	Lay Leaders, Staff
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	5	Pastors, Staff, Lay Leaders
Drama or Dance Program	15	Staff and Musicians
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	3	Pastors, Musicians, Staff
Intergenerational Groups	200	Lay Leaders and Staff
Outdoor Worship	100	Pastors, Staff, Musicians, Lay Leaders

Prayer or Meditation Groups	n/a	n/a
Public Advocacy Work	n/a	n/a
Retreats	40	Pastors and Staff
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	n/a	n/a
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	3	Pastors, Staff, Musicians
Worship (time slot: 9:30 AM)	120	Pastors, Lay Leaders, Musicians, Staff
Worship (time slot: _____)	n/a	n/a
Young Adult Groups or Classes	n/a	n/a
Youth Groups or Classes	40	Pastors and Staff
Other		

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)
Kaity Kemp	No	Associate Pastor	Licensed Lay Minister	No

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

n/a

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which 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
Business Office Manager	Yes (until new settled pastor is on board)	Full Time	Leadership	5.5 years
Associate Pastor	No	Part Time	Leadership	1.5 years
Custodian	No	Part Time	Office Manager	4.5 years
Music Director	No	Part Time	Office Manager	4.5 years
Chancel Choir Director	No	Part Time	Music Director	1 year
Instrumental Music Director	No	Part Time	Music Director	1 year
Audio Tech	No	Part Time	Office Manager	3 years
Youth Ministry Associates	No	Part Time	Associate Pastor	1 year
Nursery Staff (4)	No	Part Time	Office Manager	2 years

## REFLECTION

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

We are fortunate to have a staff and lay leadership that actively and passionately supports our overall ministry.

### 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$322,500.00
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	5.5%
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i> )	\$120,000
Fundraising Events	\$ n/a
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$ n/a
Grants	\$ n/a
Rentals of Church Building	\$ n/a
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$ n/a
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )	\$ n/a
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$ n/a
Other (specify):	\$
Other (specify):	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$455,452.00</b>

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$450,800.00

*Attach 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.*

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 34%

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church? No

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? (*indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year*)

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)

One Great Hour of Sharing

Strengthen the Church

Neighbors in Need

Christmas Fund

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

What is the church's current indebtedness? n/a

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.

In April 2022, a construction project began on our North Wall for structural repairs. Cost is yet unknown as the scope is still being determined by structural engineers. The organ was removed as well as two of our stained-glass windows for protection during the project.

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2018	Elevator	\$500,000	\$600,000	Make building accessible

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2022	North Wall Repair	TBD	TBD	Preserve Sanctuary

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

We are in the beginning stages of the campaign for repairs on our North Wall. The amount of the campaign has not yet been determined as the scope of the project is being planned. The project will be a breakdown of the following for funding: 25 % Church Funds; 25% Capital Campaign; 25% Pledges; and 25% Historical Tax Credit/Grants. The Board of Trustees is taking on this effort and we expect that significant work towards achieving fundraising goals will be

met in advance of our new settled pastor's arrival but will look forward to the addition of pastoral leadership towards the middle and eventual completion of it.

Does your church have an endowment? Yes, 8 in total.

What is the market value of the assets? \$3,029,267.84

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? One is drawn monthly; two are drawn annually; five are drawn quarterly; also as needed.

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? 5.5%; five years ago was 5.0%

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: For the current budget and past 5 years, 5.5% is put into the operating budget annually.

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? At the current value, approximately 25 years.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates: Dependable on the amount that will need to be taken out of principal for the current capital campaign project.

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$40,000

Investments (other than endowment): \$ n/a

Does your church have a parsonage? No

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

First Congregational UCC is a historic, downtown church. The cornerstone for its third and current location was laid in the mid 1850s, and worship began in the sanctuary in 1860. Our sanctuary seats 350 people in newly cushioned, wooden benches designed for either two or four persons. Our 1869 organ was restored in 2011 and is the oldest organ West of the Mississippi River. A rose window and nine stained-glass windows, including one by Tiffany, filter soft lighting into our place of worship.

The lower level of our main building features a large social room and kitchen area that were updated and remodeled in 2020. The social room is an open area that can seat up to 150 for a meal. Our education wing was dedicated in 1973 and contains the church offices, classrooms, meeting rooms for committee work, and a remodeled parlor. The addition of an elevator in 2018 has made the sanctuary, education wing, and social room completely accessible from the office entrance at the front of the church.

A small courtyard shelters three columbarium crosses between the main building and the education wing. Many of our members have chosen this area for their final resting place. A larger courtyard can be found just north of our church. This downtown green space is used by the congregation for outdoor celebrations and as a peaceful place of contemplation by the community.

Over the past year, structural issues were noted in the sanctuary, and we have temporarily vacated most of the building while engineers determine the extent of the problem and the nature of the repairs needed. This has also necessitated the removal and storage of the organ, which now consumes most of the meeting space in our education wing. Due to safety issues, we had to suspend our long-running CAFé program that provides a meal and fellowship to those that need it. We are cooperating with the Dubuque Rescue Mission to provide a meal while our kitchen and social room are unavailable. Information about the Dubuque Rescue Mission can be found at <https://dubuquerescue.org>.

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

The congregation is currently worshipping at a deconsecrated Catholic church that is owned by a non-profit organization known as Steeple Square. Information about this organization and location can be found at <https://www.steeple-square.com>.

**Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?**

The sanctuary, social room, and education wing, including restrooms, are all wheelchair accessible. Sound systems have been upgraded over the past several years, and we recently purchased personal hearing devices that can either be used independently of hearing aids or connected through Bluetooth to provide sound directly.

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

*For example, when was a time the church made a major budget change? How is the budgeting process done? What new ministry initiative has your church financed?*

We are fortunate that the past and present generosity of members of our congregation and community have provided us with the financial stability that makes our mission and ministry work possible.

### **3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

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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.

Some of the most significant happenings in the recent history of our church have been the formation of our CAFé ministry, which both reflected and enhanced our mission-focused identity, and a series of projects aimed at increasing the accessibility and openness of our church and congregation. These included a large elevator and physical accessibility renovation, a new sound system and video outreach program, and approval of our open and affirming status.

Perhaps the most important event in the recent life of our church happens to be directly related to this document: changes in pastoral leadership. The transition from the long-standing pastor-centric model of Rev. Dr. Kenneth Bickel and Rev. Nancy Bickel to the more lay-centric model of Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel was very significant to the congregation, and we look forward to working with our new pastor to further refine the structure and style of our church and services.

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

Adjusting to the immediate reality of the pandemic in the spring and summer of 2020 involved a series of changes to help keep our congregation both safe and spiritually uplifted. Our Executive Team met biweekly during this time to assess the rapidly changing situation and implement new procedures related to online worship and more, and the deacons mobilized to reach out to the congregation in new and innovative ways. Some of the lessons learned in implementing these changes (related to communication, virtual accessibility, and more) are things we can and should continue going forward.

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.

*For example, what is an example of a recent conflict and something your congregation learned from it? Describe an occasion when your church experienced conflict without being able to resolve it well. Does your church have policies, protocols or structures for dealing with conflict?)*

One occasion that typically involves at least some minor conflict is the congregation’s annual meeting – and the approval of the budget in particular. Over the past several years, church leadership has worked to lessen this and other conflict by increasing transparency, communication, and clarity in both the process by which the budget is developed and the details of the actual budget document itself. Transparency and communication are two of our key values related to conflict more generally – even if they are sometimes easier to implement in theory than in practice.

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

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel	6	Y
Rev. Dr. Kenneth Bickel	25	Y
Rev. Nancy Bickel	25	Y

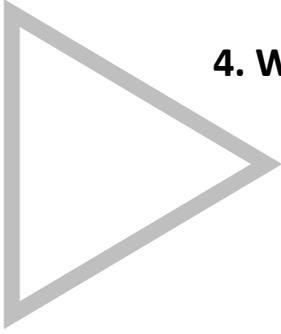
Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

Over the past 30 years, we have gone from being a congregation led by a pastor to being a congregation led by lay leaders with pastor guidance. This has given us the opportunity to have more open conversations and input from members overall.

Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination? **No**

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)

- a. COMMUNITY VISION
- b. MISSION InSite

### 4a. COMMUNITY VISION

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

*For example, which service activities has your church participated in this past year? Where has the church participated in global connections of care and justice? What is currently transformational in your church’s engagement with neighbors near or far?*

First Congregational is a mission-oriented church. Members of the congregation support our CAFé ministry by donating food, cooking and serving the meal, cleaning up afterwards, and contributing financially. Although this ministry is currently on pause due to construction in our church building, we look forward to continuing it for years to come once construction is completed.

In addition, we run a hygiene pantry and support many other local causes: from the Maria House and Teresa Shelter to resettled Afghan refugees. Our mission work also extends nationally, through our support of broader UCC measures and our regular Biloxi Back Bay mission trip, and internationally, most recently through the construction and painting of a grain-bin style home for a family in need in Haiti. We are a “church with a heart for the city,” and this kind of mission work is essential to our ministry and identity.

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

Church leadership has traditionally participated in Association meetings and committees. Currently two members serve at the Association level, one on the Advisory Council and one on the Committee on Ministry. Pastors have also served in various capacities in recent years. Delegates and pastors have attended Iowa Conference annual meetings. One lay and one clergy delegate attended the last General Synod.

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](http://ucc.org).) Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessible to All (A2A)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Just Peace                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creation Justice                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming                  | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> God Is Still Speaking (GISS) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other UCC designations:               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Border and Immigrant Justice            | <input type="checkbox"/> Designations from other denominations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)       | <input type="checkbox"/> None                                  |

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

[As discussed throughout this document, our church aims to be mission-focused and welcoming. We are open to working on other initiatives that support these goals.](#)

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

[Annually, our church co-hosts Vacation Bible School with four other area congregations and participates in an Ecumenical Good Friday Service hosted by St. Luke's Methodist. Monthly, our pastoral staff attends a peer support luncheon with other clergy in the community. Last year, we co-hosted a silent retreat on Saint Julien and also participated in a "Blue" Christmas event at St. Luke's Methodist for those needing extra support with the loss of a loved one. In addition, our church is a member of Dubuque Area Congregations United \(DACU\), which is a collaboration of the Dubuque area interfaith community united by our belief in God, our concerns for justice, and our call to serve others.](#)

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 bylaws state that the purpose of our church is “to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments; to build Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the wider church; welcoming the diversity of all God’s children in terms of race, ethnicity, economic status, sexual orientation, gender expressions and identity, and mental and](#)

physical abilities to offer loving service toward humankind; and to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.” This statement captures well our actual mission and engagement.

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

We encourage our pastors to be actively involved with ministry in the community and also give them latitude to work with leadership and the congregation to pursue particular projects they are passionate about.

#### 4b. MISSION InSite

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

Our MissionInsite report shows that the concerns and needs in our area are not that different from those across the nation. They broadly reflect the mission work we are doing and that is discussed throughout this document.

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?

Like Dubuque as a whole, First Congregational is predominantly white. The neighborhood adjacent to our church is mostly commercial with some apartments and housing. There are several churches in the vicinity with racial and ethnic demographics similar to ours, and there are also churches in the community that have predominantly African American or Asian Pacific Islander populations. Most members do not live in the adjacent neighborhood of the church. They tend to drive in from the suburb-like areas around Dubuque and occasionally from nearby areas in the Tri-State such as Galena, IL and Platteville, WI. Just prior to the pandemic, we experienced a brief influx of welcoming neighbors from the immediate vicinity but that has since halted. There is some economic diversity amongst congregants but many support professional industries in the area.

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

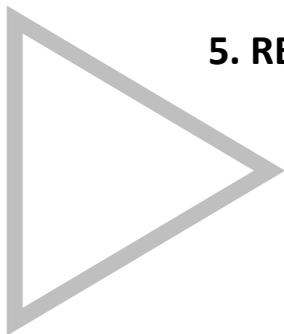
Our ministry aims to respond and adapt to the particular needs of our adjacent community. One example of this is the recent addition of a hygiene pantry to our CAFé program, which directly answered a particular need of our particular clientele.

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

We are known in the community as a mission-driven, “hands-on” church, and we support a variety of service organizations in the community. In 2021, we contributed \$51,420 to service organizations. Of that, 70% was spent locally, 15% nationally, and 15% internationally. Local organizations included: Almost Home (men/children shelter), Dubuque Area Congregations United, Dubuque Rescue Mission, Galena Food Pantry, Marita Theisen Childcare Center, Miracle League, Multicultural Center, Opening Doors/Maria House, St. Mark’s Youth Enrichment, St. Stephen's Food Bank, Western Dubuque Schools (Food Program), and YMCA Women’s Abuse Shelter.

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

Members who have joined the church in the last five years will comment on the friendliness and welcoming nature of the people in the church – we truly are open and affirming. They will also comment on the worship service, in particular the sermon, and the mission focus of the church. The fact that the church serves the community speaks to many new parishioners.



## 5. REFERENCES

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

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

### REFERENCE 1

Name / Position / Setting  
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)

Pastor Stephanie Ells  
First Presbyterian Church  
Phone: 563.582.4494  
Email: [fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com](mailto:fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com)

### REFERENCE 2

Name / Position / Setting  
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)

Ann Lorenz  
Development & Marketing Director  
Opening Doors (Teresa Shelter, Maria House, Francis Apartments)  
Phone: 563.582.7480  
Email: [alorenz@openingdoorsdbq.org](mailto:alorenz@openingdoorsdbq.org)

### REFERENCE 3

Name / Position / Setting  
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)

Beth McGorry  
Director of Donor Relations  
St. Mark's Youth Enrichment  
Phone: 563.582.6211  
Email: [bmcgorry@stmarkyouthenrichment.org](mailto:bmcgorry@stmarkyouthenrichment.org)

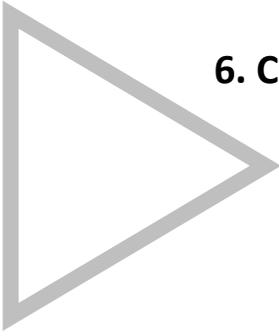
#### PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES

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

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

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

Anything else you wish to share.



## 6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

### 6a. CLOSING PRAYER

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*Include here any prayer or dream for the minister you imagine journeying toward you... a poem, for example, or a Scripture passage or a piece of music that is meaningful to your Search Committee:*

We start each of our Search Committee meetings with a Scripture reading chosen by one of the members. This is a passage that spoke to us and that we thought might speak to our next pastor as well.

Psalm 143:10

Teach me to do your will,  
For you are my God;  
May your good Spirit  
Lead me on level ground.

## 6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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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 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.

1. 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.*)

Although the process of writing this profile was led by the 10-member Search Committee, many boards, committees, and individuals contributed to the document. The committee solicited direct input from the Board of Trustees, Board of Deacons, Board of Missions, Faith Formation Committee, and Café Committee, as well as from church staff and the congregation as a whole (in the form of both a congregational survey and many one-on-one conversations).

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Travis Nelson, Moderator Date: July 27, 2022

Jeff Mozena, Vice Moderator Date: July 27, 2022

## 6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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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:

Name / Title:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



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

*"Jesus answered them, 'Have faith in God!'" – Mark 11:22*