

COMPLETING THE LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Introduction: The UCC Local Church Profile should be completed by a representative group of people in the congregation: either the Search Committee or a special committee appointed by the governing board. As part of the process, it is essential that the congregation be given the opportunity to contribute information and offer perspectives through small group meetings and/or written surveys. Suggestions for these data-gathering processes (including sample questionnaires) will be found in **Section Four** of the Parish Life and Leadership Search Committee resource *UCC Search and Call, A Pilgrimage through Transitions and New Beginnings*.

As you prepare material for the Local Church Profile, remember to be as candid and honest as possible in your descriptions of the history, traditions, hopes, and dreams of the members of your church.

“ . . . for the Spirit is the truth.” (1 John 5:6b)

Statement of Consent: The first page of the Local Church Profile contains a statement that parallels the statement that ministerial candidates are asked to sign. In keeping with the covenantal relationship between a church and those it seeks to call, the chair of the Search Committee is asked to sign a statement on behalf of the church encouraging an open exchange of information.

Instructions for Selected Numbered Items*

- #1, #2:** Use the church name as it is known by your Conference and the UCC. If the mailing address is different from the street address, include both. If the church does not have a street address, describe the location.
- #5, #7, #8:** The Research Office of the United Church of Christ provides your conference with an 11 year statistical report for each, individual congregation. Much of the information you will need to complete items #5, #7, and #8 will be found in that report. (Figures are based on the year-end reports submitted by your church clerk/secretary.) Your Conference/ Association staff will provide your committee with that statistical resource. Consult your own annual reports for the remaining items.
- #6, #20, #21, #23, #32** These items should reflect data that was gathered from the congregation through questionnaires and/or small group meetings.
- #14, #17** Consult the compensation guidelines for your conference before completing these items.

*Most instructions are included in the text of the Local Church Profile itself.

Date

Position to be filled

United Church of Christ

**LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE
FOR LOCAL CHURCHES SEEKING NEW LEADERS**

**Local Church
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 opinion 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.

Signature of Search Committee Chairperson

Date

Church

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Search Committee Chairperson or Contact Person

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-Mail:

Date

Position to be filled

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE
FOR LOCAL CHURCHES SEEKING NEW LEADERS

Please return the completed document to your conference or association office.

1. Church:

2. Address:

City, State, and Zip:

Church Website:

3. Name of Search Committee Chairperson/Contact Person:

Address:

City, State, and Zip:

Telephone:

Email:

FAX:

4. Conference/Association Staff Person Assisting Our Church:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Telephone:

Email:

FAX:

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

5. Membership: *(as reflected in the eleven-year UCC Statistical Report for our church;
"est." indicates the figure is an estimate.)*

	Last Year	5 Years Ago	10 Years Ago
a. # Church members			
b. Average attendance at worship			
c. Average participation of children/youth in C.E.			
d. Average weekly participation in adult education			
e. # Members who are ordained clergy			

6. Profile of Congregation

Estimate percentage of congregation. Each category should add up to 100%.

a. Age:

_____ % ages 0 - 5
 _____ % ages 6-18
 _____ % ages 19-34
 _____ % ages 35-49
 _____ % ages 50-64
 _____ % ages 65-74
 _____ % ages 75 +

b. Education level of adults:

_____ % completed less than high school
 _____ % high school graduates
 _____ % some college/vocational school
 _____ % college graduates
 _____ % graduate school

**“So we who are many,
 are one body
 in Christ . . .”
 Romans 12:5a**

c. Family units:

_____ % couples with children at home
 _____ % couples without children at home
 _____ % single
 _____ % single parent with children at home

d. Occupation of adults:

_____ % business
 _____ % clerical
 _____ % farmer/rancher
 _____ % laborer/manufacturing
 _____ % professional
 _____ % student
 _____ % tradesperson
 _____ % other

e. Employment:

_____ % employed
 _____ % not currently employed
 _____ % retired

f. Describe the racial-ethnic makeup of your congregation:

CHURCH FINANCES

(Figures reflect the eleven-year UCC statistical reports as well as the church's annual reports.)

	Last Year	5 Years Ago	10 Years Ago
7. Total Church Income			
a. Members offerings and pledges			
b. Interest from investment or endowments			
c. Principal reduction (endowments or investments)			
d. Rentals			
e. Special Fundraising			
f. Other			

If the church has conducted an annual stewardship campaign, list results for the past two years:

Goal: \$ Pledges: \$ Actual Received: \$

Goal: \$ Pledges: \$ Actual Received: \$

	Last Year	5 Years Ago	10 Years Ago
8. Total Operating Budget			
a. Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support			
b. Our Church's Wider Mission Special Support			
c. Other gifts			
d. Current local expenses			
e. Annual capital payments			
f. Other debt			

9. Identify UCC special offerings the church receives throughout the year and the amounts from last year:

- _____ One Great Hour of Sharing
- _____ Neighbors in Need
- _____ Christmas Fund
- _____ Strengthen the Church
- _____ Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission (only if received through special offerings and not included as a regular budget item in #8 above.)

10. Mission

- a.** Beyond your contributions through the UCC, name the most significant local or global missions/ministries or agencies that were financially supported by your local church last year and the amount of support:

Name	Amount
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

- b.** What mission project has excited your church the most in the past three years? Why?

11. Indebtedness

- a.** Total amount of outstanding mortgages/capital debt: \$
- b.** Total amount of other debt: \$
Describe:

c. Are payments current? _____ yes _____ no

12. Capital Campaigns:

a. If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, note goal and results:

Goal: \$	Outcome: \$
Goal: \$	Outcome: \$

b. What projects were undertaken as a result of your capital campaign?

c. Was there a mission or outreach component to the campaign? _____ Yes _____ No

d. If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe it:
Goal: \$ Beginning Date:
Purpose:

“God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance.”
II Cor. 9:8a

13. Assets held by the Church:

a. Reserves (savings): \$

b. Endowments/Investments: \$

c. Describe buildings and property of your church except the parsonage:

d. Is the church building (including sanctuary and offices) handicapped accessible?
Yes _____ Partially (specify) _____ No _____

Is the pulpit handicapped accessible? Yes _____ No _____

e. If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including estimated date of completion:

f. If the church owns a parsonage, describe it:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Number of Rooms:

Number of Bedrooms:

Number of Bathrooms:

Description:

Distance from Church

Handicapped Accessible? Yes ___ No ___ Partial ___

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF MINISTERIAL LEADERS

14. If your conference has compensation guidelines, do you follow them?

___ yes ___ yes for some compensation items but not all ___ no

Does the church consider this position to be full time or part time?

___ Full Time ___ Part Time (specify) _____

How will church members be supportive of a part time or bivocational pastor who may need another job to supplement the church salary?

15. Salary History

To provide a profile of salaries for the position you are seeking to fill, indicate salaries at the beginning and ending of the ministers' tenure. Do not include interim positions. If a parsonage is provided, insert the letter "P" in the space provided. *Provide information for the last 3 leaders or the last ten years.*

	Start Date				End Date			
	Year	Salary	Housing	Parsonage	Year	Salary	Housing	Parsonage
a. Last								
b. Previous								
c. Next previous								

16. During the above period, has your church ever failed to fulfill its financial obligations to its pastor? ___yes ___ no If yes, please comment:

17. Salary, Benefits, and Expenses Offered

- a. Cash salary offered \$ _____
Conference recommended salary range: \$ _____
- b. Housing: \$ _____
_____ Housing allowance only _____ Parsonage only _____ Would consider offering either
- c. Customary benefits:
_____ Vacation: _____ weeks annually
_____ Maternity/paternity leave
_____ UCC Retirement Annuity (_____% of salary and housing)
_____ UCC Life and Disability Insurance Benefits
_____ UCC Health Benefits (_____ other health benefits)
_____ UCC Dental Benefits (_____ other dental benefits)
_____ Social Security/Medicare Offset
_____ Continuing Education Funds
_____ Continuing Education Time
_____ Sabbatical Leave
_____ Other benefits (specify) _____
- d. Ministry Expenses
_____ Travel Reimbursement
_____ Meeting Expense Reimbursement
_____ Books and Periodicals
_____ Reimbursement of Criminal Background Check Fee
_____ Moving Expenses

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

18. Population

- a. Population of total city or town in which your church is located:
- b. Describe the population by racial-ethnic category and identify the source of the information:

19. Economic Factors

Identify major sources of employment/income in your community:

- a.
- b.
- c.

20. General Description *(Add *** if the information came from a survey of the congregation)*

- a. Describe three distinctive attributes of your community:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- b. Identify major trends you envision in your community during the next five years:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- c. List three or four problem areas confronting your community that members feel your church should address:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- d. Indicate Mission Activities
 - 1. In which your church participates as a part of its mission in the community:

 - 2. In which your church expects the leader you are now seeking to participate:
- e. Describe how your church building is now being used by the community:

- f. Indicate the number of school districts from which members of your church are drawn:
_____ one _____ two _____ three or more

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

*(Add *** if the information came from a survey of the congregation)*

21. Identify major trends you envision in your church in the next five years

22. Planning

- a. All churches do planning. How would you characterize the way planning is done in your church?

- b. What expectations do you have of the person you are seeking in relation to the planning that takes place?

- c. When is the last time your church undertook a period of discernment and long-range planning in an intentional way?

- d. What were the outcomes of your intentional long-range planning?

- e. Does your church have any plans to undertake a period of intentional long-range planning in the future?

23. Reflections on Congregational Life

Comment on the following with what you believe to be the generally-held responses of the congregation. If more space is needed, use additional pages. *(Add *** if information came from a survey of the congregation.)*

- a. Identify the three most important faith experiences or events in the history of your church and the year each took place:

Event

Year

1.

2.

3.

b. Identify the most challenging faith experience or event in the life of your church in the last three years and what the church learned from it:

c. What is God calling your church to do/become over the next few years?

d. Describe how the church expects the person you are seeking to help your church reach these goals:

e. Chose the statement that most accurately describes the theological/faith stance of your church: *You may check more than one.*

- We tend to be theologically conservative.
- We tend to be theologically moderate to conservative.
- We tend to be theologically moderate.
- We tend to be theologically moderate to liberal.
- We tend to be theologically liberal.
- We tend to be quite diverse theologically.
- Other

Comments:

f. Describe the educational program of your church:

Identify the curriculum/a used in your church school and the person or committee responsible for selection of curriculum/a:

24. Indicate major boards, committees, small groups, and organizations that are a part of your church; the frequency of meetings (monthly, weekly, etc.); and expectations for leadership. For leadership role use: 1 = pastor takes primary initiative and responsibility; 2 = pastor and laity share responsibility; 3 = laity take primary initiative and responsibility; 4 = the pastor's presence is expected periodically/occasionally.

Board/Committee	Purpose	# Members	Frequency	Leadership
Ongoing Small Groups	Purpose	# Members	Frequency	Leadership

25. Conflict

Most churches experience conflict at various times. Characterize your church's experience with conflict given the following possibilities. Indicate the extent to which each statement describes your church: C = closely; S = somewhat; N = not at all.

- as a church, we respect and listen to each other and work things through without generating divisiveness
- as a church, we try to respect and listen to each other, but it is not uncommon for differences of opinion to be a problem and for some people to choose sides
- some have left our church because of conflict
- conflict hurts our sense of unity, but we tend not to talk about it
- painful experience with conflict has been present, but it has been worked through, and we have learned from the experience
- we have had some painful experiences with conflict, and they linger in the background
- open conflict is present, and we need a minister who can help us deal with it
- other Specify:

Comment:

26. Worship

- a. Describe the weekly worship schedule (number of services, times, languages in which the services are conducted, frequency with which communion is included, special emphases such as healing services, contemporary worship, etc.)

- b. Are your worship services or church gatherings sign language interpreted?
 Yes No

Are there particular ministries with persons with developmental disabilities or mental illness?
Comment

- c. Identify how worship is planned on a regular basis in your church
- by a worship committee
 - by the pastor
 - by the pastor in consultation with the church musician
 - other – specify:

- d. Describe the style and content of preaching valued by your congregation:

- e. Describe the role in worship of the person you are seeking:

- f. What hymnal(s) are currently used by your congregation in worship?

- g. Have you considered using another hymnal?

- h. Churches have a variety of practices related to the use of Inclusive Language in worship services. (Some churches have made the decision not to change any language in worship; others are intentionally inclusive in their references to people avoiding words such as “mankind”. Some avoid exclusively male references for God and seek to include male and female images as well as a variety of metaphors; other churches exercise care in the words of the liturgy but still utilize “traditional” hymns.) How important is this issue to your church?

WIDER CHURCH CONNECTIONS

27. United Church of Christ

- a. Association, conference, or other denominational programs and activities in which church members participate:

Do you send delegates to association and conference meetings?

Regularly _____ Occasionally _____ Never _____

Have members of your church ever served as delegates or visitors to General Synod?

Yes _____ No _____ Not Sure _____

- b. Association, conference, or other denominational settings in which your church expects the leader you are now seeking to participate:

- c. Choose the word that best describes how lay leaders of your church consciously identify with the United Church of Christ:

_____ closely _____ moderately _____ nominally _____ other

Comment:

28. Ecumenical and Interfaith Activities

- a. Describe ways your church participated in ecumenical and interfaith activities during the past three years:

- b. Describe how your church expects the leader you are now seeking to participate in ecumenical and interfaith activities:

RELATIONSHIP WITH MINISTERIAL LEADERS

29. Relationship With Prior Leaders

- a. Characterize your church’s experience with pastoral leaders over the past 15 years.
You may check more than one response:
 In general, our lay leaders have a history of strong, cooperative relationships with the church’s pastoral leadership.
 We have had some fairly rocky moments, but we have worked them through, and relationships with pastoral leaders have grown in significant and important ways.
 We have had some tough times and things did not always work out.
 Other. Specify:

Comment:

- b. Indicate the tenure of the last three installed persons who filled the position you are seeking to fill. Do not include interims:

Name	From	To
1.		
2.		
3.		

- c. If a previous pastor or pastor emeritus/a is currently a member of the church, describe his or her involvement in the life of the congregation:

- d. In addition to financial support, describe how your church supported the most recent person to hold the position you are now seeking to fill:

e. Involuntary Terminations:

Have any of the last three persons serving in the position you are seeking to fill left involuntarily or under pressure?

_____ yes _____ no: If “yes,” respond to the following:

- Choose all the issues that may have contributed to the involuntary termination. *You may check more than one or indicate “not applicable.”*
 - _____ conflict of personalities in the church
 - _____ inadequate performance
 - _____ pastoral style inappropriate for this church
 - _____ ethical issues or issues of fitness for ministry
 - _____ financial stresses
 - _____ other. Specify:

- Indicate, if you can, which of the following best describe the congregation’s behavior toward that person prior to her or his leaving: *You may check more than one.*

_____ civil	_____ kind
_____ compassionate	_____ supportive
_____ harsh	_____ indifferent

- Describe what your church has learned from the experience about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

30. Does the church have a Pastoral Relations Committee? _____ yes _____ no

If yes, describe its purpose, functions and how often they meet:

31. If there is periodic assessment/evaluation of the nature of the work and of the performance of that work for the position you are seeking to fill? Describe it:

Is the periodic ministerial evaluation coordinated with a regular assessment of the overall ministry of the congregation?

32. Leadership Expectations

A list follows of 45 items which represent a range of qualities in the ministry of the church. Place an "X" beside the 12 items which your church feels are the most important aspects of ministry for your church at this time. All the qualities are important. However, please mark those 12 which you feel need first priority at this time. **Do not rank the items.** If the aspects you consider to be important are not included in the list, place them at the end in the blanks provided.

Mark only 12 of the following items. Do not rank the items.

Our church needs a person who...

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. _____ is an effective preacher/speaker | 24. _____ regularly encourages support of
Our Church's Wider Mission |
| 2. _____ continues to develop his/her
theological and biblical skills | 25. _____ reaches out to inactive members |
| 3. _____ helps people develop their
spiritual life | 26. _____ works regularly in the development
of stewardship growth |
| 4. _____ helps people work together in
solving problems | 27. _____ is active in ecumenical relationships
and encourages the church to
participate |
| 5. _____ is effective in planning and leading
worship | 28. _____ is a person of faith |
| 6. _____ has a sense of the direction of
his/her ministry | 29. _____ writes clearly and well |
| 7. _____ regularly encourages people to
participate in United Church of
Christ activities and programs | 30. _____ works well on a team |
| 8. _____ helps people understand and act
upon issues of social justice | 31. _____ is effective in working with youth |
| 9. _____ is a helpful counselor | 32. _____ organizes people for community action |
| 10. _____ ministers effectively to people in
crisis situations | 33. _____ is skilled in planning and leading
programs |
| 11. _____ makes pastoral calls on people in
hospitals and nursing homes and
those confined to their homes | 34. _____ plans and leads well-organized
meetings |
| 12. _____ makes pastoral calls on members
not confined to their homes | 35. _____ encourages people to relate their faith
to their daily lives |
| 13. _____ is a good leader | 36. _____ is accepting of people with divergent
views |
| 14. _____ is effective in working with children | 37. _____ encourages others to assume and
carry out leadership |
| 15. _____ builds a sense of fellowship among
the people with whom he/she works | 38. _____ is mature and emotionally secure |
| 16. _____ helps people develop their leadership
abilities | 39. _____ has strong commitment and loyalty |
| 17. _____ is an effective administrator | 40. _____ maintains confidentiality |
| 18. _____ is effective with committees and
officers | 41. _____ understands and interprets the mission
of the church from a global perspective |
| 19. _____ is an effective teacher | 42. _____ is a compassionate and caring person |
| 20. _____ has a strong commitment to the
educational ministry of the church | 43. _____ deals effectively with conflict |
| 21. _____ is effective in working with adults | 44. _____ |
| 22. _____ inspires a sense of confidence | 45. _____ |
| 23. _____ works regularly at bringing new
members into the church | |

If there are other comments you wish to make about expectations, include one or more paragraphs here on an additional sheet.

STATEMENT ON LEADERSHIP IN MINISTRY

Using this page, and one additional page if needed, write a statement that will help a candidate better understand the relationship of clergy and lay leadership in the life of your congregation. Candidates will be interested to know whether your lay leaders have a history of strong, cooperative relationships with the church's pastoral leadership. If your church organizational structure is based on intentional lay-led ministries, describe how that structure functions in relationship to the pastor; if your organizational structure is dependent on clergy leadership, describe what will be expected of the pastor.

If you wish, this statement can provide an opportunity for you to elaborate on the list of committees/boards/groups that you identified in Question 24. (For example, in some churches the expectation is for mutual involvement of pastor and finance committee in the financial matters of the church; other congregations have a clear expectation that the pastor will be focused on "spiritual matters" and will be excluded from settings where financial decisions are made.)

Include in the statement reflections on leadership styles that work well for your church. What do you hope/expect that your new pastor will understand and value in your particular style of lay leadership? What would a new pastor need to know in order to work smoothly with your established leaders? If yours is a multiple-staff church, it would be helpful to comment on your expectations of how the staff team members relate to each other. You are encouraged to include anything else you want to say about your church and its expectations of the leader it now seeks:

**Conference or Association
Descriptive Reference**

Church Name:

Location:

Conference:

Association:

Name of Staff Assisting in the Search:

Staff Comments:

Signature of Staff Assisting in the Search

Date