

United Church of Christ

SEARCH AND CALL

**A Pilgrimage through
Transitions and New Beginnings**

SECTION FOUR

THE UCC LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

"Give me a God-listening heart . . ."

1 Kings 3:9

The Message

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*1 Kings 3:9
The Message*

DESIGNING A GOD-LISTENING PROCESS

Rarely do members of a local church have the opportunity to reflect together on the question, *"How do we understand ourselves as a church?"* The preparation of a UCC Local Church Profile (LCP) offers just such an opportunity. The data-gathering may be designed in the way that is appropriate for your particular congregation's "personality" and style of carrying out God's mission. Whatever process you follow, the LCP will offer your faith community new possibilities for gathering information, studying, reflecting, discerning, and praying together as you clarify your own unique history and distinctive identity/vocation.

A copy of the Local Church Profile with instructions may be found in the resource material at the conclusion of this section. It may also be downloaded from the UCC website. Go to www.ucc.org and type "lcp" into the search engine. You will find the document available to download in three formats: RTF, Word, and PDF. You may also simply paste www.ucc.org/ministers/pdfs/lcp.doc; www.ucc.org/ministers/pdfs/lcp.rtf; or www.ucc.org/ministers/pdfs/lcp.pdf into your browser.

The Local Church Profile is a document that, when completed, becomes the foundation of your Search Committee's work. The narrative portions of the profile challenge you to discern and discover what it means to your Community of Faith to name your unique identity/calling/vocation as a Body of Christ. The document enables you to tell the story of your relationships with previous pastors and to describe your town, city, or suburb. The profile tells future candidates about your history, your financial situation, and your relationship with the United Church of Christ. The LCP is both a discernment opportunity and a recruiting tool. The various processes suggested here all encourage you to involve a large group of members in sharing their thoughts, beliefs, disappointments, and hopes for the congregation. When this work is done carefully, your congregation as a whole—and your Search Committee—will have a better sense of how you understand your gifts, vocation, and identity as God's People. The more

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clearly you can identify and name your gifts and strengths, the clearer will be the picture of the kind of pastoral leader you are seeking to complement and challenge you as “partners in Christ’s service.”

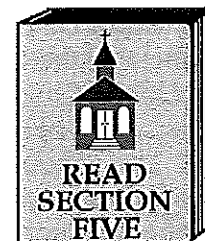
The preparation of the Local Church Profile invites you to take responsibility for describing yourselves accurately and truthfully. Pastoral “mismatches” often can be traced to Local Church Profiles that presented the congregation in unrealistic or inaccurate terms, thus attracting candidates who were not appropriate “fits” for the church as it actually was. Contrary to the fears of some Search Committees, a realistic assessment of the church’s present situation need not be negative; rather, such a document will have integrity and a clear sense of authenticity. In your interactions with candidates, an honest profile establishes a foundation that allows you to explore truthfully both your history and your hopes for the future. On occasion, your committee may be surprised at the level of difficulty involved in preparing such a comprehensive document. At such moments, it is especially important to pause and pray for wisdom.

***Completing the UCC
Local Church Profile
is a required step in
our Search and Call
process.***

A moving conversation between King Solomon and God is recorded in I Kings 3:5-14. Through a dream, God invited the young King to ask for anything he wished. Solomon responded by expressing gratitude to God for the privilege of serving in the midst of such a “great people.” And Solomon then requested the gift of wisdom to aid him in governing those people. Although the King could have asked God for riches or military prowess, Solomon chose to request discernment. The Message translates the request of Solomon in this way, “Give me a God-listening heart so I can lead your people well.” God was very pleased with the request and promised to grant the King “a wise and mature heart.” Studying the story of Solomon and praying for God-listening hearts will nourish your committee as you prepare the material that will become your Local Church Profile.

Completing the UCC Local Church Profile is a required step in our Search and Call process. Clergy who are seriously interested in your position anticipate studying your document, and they will be particularly attentive to the thoroughness of your profile. When you interview ministerial candidates, you will discover that many of the questions they address to your Search Committee are based on the contents of the church profile.

While the completion of a profile is a required step in the process, the development of a position description is strongly suggested but not required. **(Section Five** of this Search Committee resource includes instructions for developing a position description along with sample



documents.) If your Personnel Committee or other church body has developed such a document, it should be referenced when you complete item #34a and then attached to the completed Local Church Profile.

The format of the Local Church Profile has been established by our denomination for use by all Search Committees. Not every item will apply to every congregation, but it is important to complete as many of the items as possible. When finished, the completed document belongs to your congregation; it will be distributed to potential candidates based on the practices of your Conference/Association and the decisions of your Search Committee. At a minimum, the profile will be shared with candidates in whom your Search Committee has a significant interest; in some settings the Search Committee chooses to transmit the document electronically to every candidate from whom they receive a Ministerial Profile.

COMPLETING YOUR LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Suggestions for a Comprehensive Process

The identification of the group to oversee data-gathering and preparation of the Local Church Profile should be a decision of the church governing board. While many churches assume that this work is automatically assigned to the Search Committee, there are other models that churches have found helpful. If you have an interim/transition pastor in place, that individual may have experienced a variety of discernment/discovery/data-gathering processes and will be a helpful resource as you make this decision.

One of two models is commonly followed.

Search Committee Oversight

In this model, the newly designated Search Committee assumes full responsibility for gathering all the data and preparing the Local Church Profile, drawing on information and suggestions from other committees, small group gatherings, and all-church questionnaires.



SEARCH COMMITTEE

Advantages to Search Committee Oversight include:

- 1) an immediate immersion of the committee members in a process of learning more about the congregation;
- 2) an experience of working together that enables the committee members to bond with one another before they begin making decisions about candidates;
- 3) an opportunity—during a sometimes unsettling transition time—for the church members to experience the “Search Committee in Action;”
- 4) an opportunity to strengthen the committee members’ understanding of the history of the congregation and to develop among the members a very positive attitude about the unique ministries of the church.

Disadvantages include:

- 1) the loss of direct involvement of a broader-based group of congregational leaders in the data-gathering and writing process;
- 2) the loss of the opportunity to distribute a “demanding workload” more widely.

Governing Board Oversight

In this model the governing board of the church assumes full responsibility for the preparation of the Local Church Profile. The board often will appoint an ad hoc group or a short-term committee to prepare the LCP draft and submit it to the total governing board for final approval. If your church has recently completed a mission study or engaged in a long-term planning process, you may want to involve one or more members of that group in the profile preparation. Whatever group the governing board selects, it is very important for at least one person who is serving (or will be serving) on the Search Committee to be involved in the congregational data-gathering and the preparation of the profile.

Advantages to governing board oversight include:

- 1) the opportunity for a group of people who are not involved in the Search and Call screening process to listen to parishioners and capture their reflections;
- 2) the involvement of a broad-based group of elected leaders who may provide a more accurate description of the church for the Search Committee to use in its discussion with potential candidates;
- 3) the opportunity for the Search Committee members to use their organizational time to become better acquainted with one another, to learn about the UCC Search and Call process, to explore decision-making and discernment resources, and to begin the candidate screening process with fresh energy.

Disadvantages include:

- 1) the Search Committee’s potential lack of investment in the document they will be sharing with their candidates;
- 2) the possibility of diminished congregational interest because the Search Committee itself is not approaching them directly and requesting their input.

Interim/Transition Pastor Assistance

Your Conference/Association staff person will advise you on the appropriate role your interim pastor will assume during the preparation of the Local Church Profile. The interim pastor may have received specialized training in congregational self-studies; if so, the interim will be an invaluable advisor for the group preparing the profile. Some Conference staff encourage the involvement of the transition/interim pastor while others prefer that the interim pastor take a less active role. If the interim is involved in a less direct way, he/she may be asked to help identify discussion questions for the small group gatherings, serve as a “listener” at one or more of those

***Interims may have
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congregational
self-study.***

gatherings, and offer suggestions to the group preparing the profile without meeting directly with them.

If the interim pastor is not otherwise involved in the data-gathering process, it is extremely important to give that person an opportunity to offer feedback on an early draft of the Local Church Profile. It is unethical for the interim pastor to have any further involvement with the work of the Search Committee once the committee receives candidates' names and profiles.

Consultant Assistance

Some churches choose to contract with a church consultant or to utilize the extensive self-study resources available from church consulting groups and/or seminaries. Such outside assistance is especially valuable if the church has recently experienced extensive conflict or is undergoing significant growth or decline. In addition, a consultant is often recommended if financial mismanagement or sexual misconduct were factors in the departure of the previous pastor. Conference/Association staff will have suggestions of available resources if your church chooses to move in this direction. Once the consulting process has been completed and a report of the congregational self-study received, the governing board still must make a decision about which group (i.e. the Search Committee or a specially appointed committee) will actually complete the Local Church Profile document.

Specialized Circumstances: A Brief Update of a Recent Local Church Profile

In a few situations, a church may have a fairly up-to-date Local Church Profile. Such is the case when a recently called pastor finds it necessary to resign because of unexpected health issues or family concerns. Such is also the case in multi-staff churches when a profile has been completed recently because the church was calling another pastor to the staff. In these situations the governing board or Search Committee may utilize much of the information in the previous LCP. It is still very important that you not simply reproduce the older profile with only a few minor edits. Churches change significantly, even in a six month period. Each section of the document should be examined to determine whether the information continues to be an accurate reflection of the church's situation and self-understanding. In addition, if the pastor resigned after a very brief tenure, a frank discussion of those circumstances is essential.

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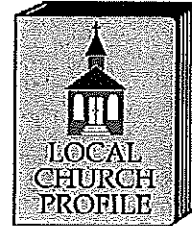
10 STEPS IN PROFILE COMPLETION

1. The group designated to prepare the Local Church Profile begins by reading the entire document, including the instructions. (This “working group” can be the Search Committee or an ad hoc group appointed by the governing board, as indicated on pages 4-3 and 4-4.) You will note that the profile asks for various kinds of information:
 - there are statistics to be gathered (concerning the church and concerning the community);
 - there is information to be gathered (concerning the church and the community);
 - there is interpretive/narrative information to be prepared;
 - there is a Leadership Expectation Checklist to be completed by a large group of church members;
 - there is a one-page Statement on Leadership in Ministry to be prepared;
 - there are references for the church to be identified.
2. The profile group identifies some sections of the profile that could best be completed by others (church secretary/clerk) or by other committees (CE Board, Mission and Outreach Committee, Finance Committee, Property Committee). The profile group sets deadlines and identifies a liaison to follow up with the designated individuals or groups, answering questions, sharing resources, and researching information that may be needed. Deadlines are essential.
3. Important data on membership, church school enrollment, worship attendance, church budget, and mission giving can be found in the UCC 11 Year Statistical Report for your church. **That data is sent annually on CD to each Conference, and your Conference/Association staff person can easily obtain the page that pertains to your church.** Studying the 11 year figures not only makes your work easier but also helps you identify trends. Because these reports are prepared by the Research Department of our denomination, it is not necessary for you to search through UCC Yearbooks in order to put together this material.
4. An essential part of the Local Church Profile is the description of your proposed compensation package. It is recommended that a small group, (possibly selected by the governing board with representatives from the Finance or Budget Committee) focus exclusively on a financial assessment of the church and the development of the compensation package. Before you can begin receiving names of applicants, this financial group and the Search Committee must be aware of the congregation’s true financial picture. **The profile must include a cash salary (or salary range), housing allowance or parsonage information, and a list of benefits customarily**

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offered. The compensation guidelines of your own Conference/Association will be essential resources for this work; **Section Five** of this Search Committee Resource offers detailed information on financial matters as they relate to the calling of a new pastor.

After receiving recommendations from the financial assessment group, the governing board should agree on salary and housing figures as well as a list of benefits that will be offered; this preliminary information should be included in your Local Church Profile. The initial financial decisions should also be recorded in a written document in order to avoid confusion at a later time, especially if there are leadership changes in the church while the Search Committee is completing its process.



Section Five of this Search Committee Resource contains a step-by-step process for "Developing the Terms of Call." Once the initial salary figures, housing figures, and benefits have been determined and included on page six (page 4-16 in this document) in the Local Church Profile, there is still additional work to be done on overall compensation matters. The Search Committee will move ahead with its work once all the necessary information is included in the profile and the material is ready for circulation. The financial assessment group will no doubt want to continue its work by looking into the cost of moving expenses, the common practices in UCC churches with regard to such matters as short-term and long-term disability arrangements, along with numerous other salary and benefit and professional reimbursement items.

NOTE: Detailed "Terms of the Call" will be negotiated directly with the candidate chosen by the Search Committee before information about that candidate is released to the whole congregation. While basic financial decisions will have been made before the search began, flexibility and sensitivity will be needed in order to finalize negotiations that take into account the unique situation of the pastor who has been selected by the Search Committee.

*"God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance,
so that by always sharing enough of everything, you may
share abundantly in every good work."*

II Corinthians 9:8

5. The group working on the profile will develop plans to collect reflections, ideas, and comments from the entire congregation. Such data-gathering will be particularly useful if the content remains focused on the *ways in which members understand, experience, and value your church*. Tempting as it may be, it is not helpful to ask the congregation to spend time praising or denouncing the previous pastor, nor is it useful to focus energy on a vision of "the perfect pastor."

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Each church is free to design this portion of the data-gathering in a way that is appropriate for the customary patterns of your congregation. Possibilities include:

- Conversations following worship;
- On-line chats;
- Evening potlucks;
- Neighborhood gatherings, other small group sessions;
- Saturday or Sunday afternoon coffee and dessert times;
- Congregational Meetings;
- Interviews with committees as they gather for regular meetings;
- Questionnaires.

Resource #1 contains a list of suggested topics for small group discussions as well as some scriptural possibilities for reflection during those group sessions.

Resources #2 and 3 are each very brief and are designed to be completed by each individual adult and youth member. **Resource #4** is designed to gather demographic data from each family unit as well as feedback on several important questions. While it is not necessary to use all three questionnaires, each will give you useful information. **Resources #2 and 4** are taken directly from the Local Church Profile while **Resource #3** is more general and is designed to aid the writing group in composing the narrative portions of the profile. Questionnaires should be made available on-line as well as in printed form. Portions of the questionnaires may also be incorporated in the small group gatherings.

As you tally the results of your questionnaires and as you review notes from the small group discussions, it will be important to keep the congregation informed as to the feedback your committee has received.

Resource #5 includes a list of web sites and books that offer other options for self-study questionnaires; you may find that some of these self-study resources will be more appropriate for your particular congregation. If you are working with a consultant, that person may have a particular data-gathering process that she or he will want the congregation to follow.

6. The resource section also contains a brief questionnaire (**Resource #6**) for you to circulate among the leaders of outside groups who use your church. The documents will offer very helpful perspectives on your church's ministry within the wider community.
7. Now is the time for the best writer(s) on your committee to assemble the gathered material. Because the search process is competitive, it is important to fill your profile out as carefully and as completely as possible. You are also invited to make it attractive by gathering and including photos of congregational life.

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8. When a completed DRAFT of the Local Church Profile is available, the entire Search Committee will want to review it very carefully.
9. The DRAFT Local Church Profile should then be "reality tested" with a group of congregational leaders, the interim pastor, and the UCC staff person. In some settings the profile is made available (usually on-line) to any interested person in the congregation; a feedback session is then held following Sunday worship so the Search Committee can receive comments indicating whether the members believe the content actually reflects who they are and accurately describes the kind of pastor they are seeking.
10. The staff person writes comments for page 17 (page 4-28 in this document), and those comments are reviewed with the Search Committee. The chairperson of the Search Committee and the staff person then sign off on the profile, and the document is ready for circulation. The profile will be distributed according to the practices suggested to you by your staff person.

Concluding Note: *If your Local Church Profile accurately reflects your church's strengths, identity, gifts, and vocation—even as you are discerning what God is calling/claiming you to become in the future—you will never be tempted to seek a pastor to "re-create your past." Rather, you will come to understand—as a result of your faithful work—that you are engaged in a unique, visionary enterprise. You will seek out the new pastor who is eager to work with God and the congregation discerning a new future together, utilizing the strengths, the spirit, and the gifts of all.*

Note: All scripture passages are taken from The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible except where "The Message" is noted.

Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

INTRODUCTION TO THE LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Who
are
we

Who
is our
neighbor

Who is
God
calling us
to become

?

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!

MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

[Name of Church]

[City, State]

[Name of Position Opening]

[Names of Conference, Association]

[Validation Date]

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- Position Posting
- Who Is God Calling Us To Become?
- Who Are We Now?
- Who Is Our Neighbor?
- References
- Consent and Validation

*“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-tellings 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 MissionInsite reports containing demographic information on your community. More information on types of pastorate 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

Church name:

Street address:

Supplemental web links:

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

Conference:

Association:

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

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?

Photographs:

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

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

Current size of membership:

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

Position Title:

Position Duration (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

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

Intentional Interim – a called position for a temporary term of congregational preparation for a settled-pastor search, in which the minister does not typically move church membership to the congregation served or move standing to the related association

Designated-Term – a called position for a designated time period for a defined purpose, in which the pastor may move church membership to the congregation served and may move standing to the related association

Supply – a temporary position in which the pastor does not move membership to the congregation served or move standing to related association

Compensation Level (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

Full Time

$\frac{3}{4}$ Time

$\frac{1}{2}$ Time

$\frac{1}{4}$ Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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

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.)

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis (*from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance*): \$

Benefits (*choose one*):

Salary plus Benefits

Salary includes Optional Benefits

No Benefits

What is the expected living situation for your next minister (*e.g. parsonage, living nearby with a housing allowance, living elsewhere to commute as needed*)?

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

State any incentives (*e.g. school debt reduction or retention bonus after a certain number of years in position*):

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

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

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.

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

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

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.

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?

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?

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

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?

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

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?

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?

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]

3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

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

3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

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

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

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

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>

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:		
Households with minors:		
Single adults age 35-65:		
Joint households with no minors:		
Single adults over 65:		

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

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

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

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

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

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?

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:

3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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		
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>		
Children’s Groups or Classes		
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship		
Church-wide Meals		
Choirs and Music Groups		
Church-based Bible Study		
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>		
Community Meals		
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>		
Drama or Dance Program		
Funerals <i>(number last year)</i>		

Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship		
Prayer or Meditation Groups		
Public Advocacy Work		
Retreats		
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)		
Worship (time slot: _____)		
Worship (time slot: _____)		
Young Adult Groups or Classes		
Youth Groups or Classes		
Other		

Additional comments:

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)

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:

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staffperson 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

REFLECTION

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

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

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

Transfers from Special Accounts	\$
Other (specify):	\$
Other (specify):	\$
TOTAL	\$

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

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?

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church?

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? *(recommended 10%)*

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt:

Reason for debt:

Are capital and other payments current?

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.

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
		\$	\$	
		\$	\$	

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
		\$	\$	
		\$	\$	

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

Does your church have an endowment?

What is the market value of the assets?

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

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

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

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

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$

Investments (other than endowment): \$

Does your church have a parsonage?

Fair market rental value of the parsonage:

How is the parsonage used?

Street / City / State / Zip:

Finished square footage:

Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms:

Assessed real estate value:

Available for minister residence: Y/N

Expected minister residence: Y/N

Condition of structure, systems and appliances

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? (*worship space, pulpit, fellowship space, facilities, etc.*)

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?

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.

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

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?)

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)

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

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

Y/N/Ask us

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Y/N/Ask us

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

Y/N/Ask us

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

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?

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

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.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health |
| <input 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?

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

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.

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?

4b. MISSION InSite

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

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?

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

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

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

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)

REFERENCE 2

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

REFERENCE 3

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

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

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:

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 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.)*
2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Name / Title / Date:

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:

Name / Title:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

United Church of Christ

SEARCH AND CALL

A Pilgrimage through
Transitions and New Beginnings

SECTION FOUR

THE UCC LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

RESOURCES

"Give me a God-listening heart . . ."

1 Kings 3:9

SOCIAL GATHERING QUESTIONS

Resource 1

1. Tell one positive thing about our church.
2. What attracts you and keeps you coming to our church?
3. What do you think is the most important thing a new minister could bring to our church?
4. What do you see as our church's most important need and how do you think we should accomplish this?
5. How could we make it easier for people to volunteer, serve or participate in church activities/committees?
6. What do you think that God is calling our church to do/become over the next few years?

Suggested scripture studies that could be integrated with discussion of this essential question:

I Peter 2:9-10
Luke 4:18-19
II Corinthians 4:1, 7-16a
Isaiah 58:6-11

7. How could we make the Church more welcoming?
8. Other Comments?

FAMILY QUESTIONNAIRE**COMPLETE ONE QUESTIONNAIRE PER FAMILY UNIT**

Please take a moment to respond to the following confidential questions. Responses will help the Pastoral Search Committee create a Local Church Profile for our church. You may view the complete document on the national web site, www.ucc.org. This profile will be used to describe our church to potential pastors.

PROFILE OF CONGREGATION:

1. Age: list the total number of members in each age group that are in your household including yourself:

_____ 0-5 years _____ 19-34 years _____ 50-64 years _____ 75 years or older
 _____ 6-18 years _____ 35-49 years _____ 65-74 years

2. Education of adults in your household, list all adult members in your household including yourself:

_____ Did not complete high school _____ Some college/vocational _____ Graduate school
 _____ High school graduate _____ College graduate

3. Family units, check one:

_____ Couple with children at home _____ Single
 _____ Couple without children at home _____ Single parent with children at home

4. What is the occupation of each adult in your household:

_____ Business _____ Farmer/rancher _____ Professional _____ Tradesperson
 _____ Clerical _____ Laborer/Manufacturing _____ Student _____ Other

5. What is the current employment information of each adult in your household

_____ Employed _____ Not currently employed _____ Retired

PLEASE RESPOND TO ANY QUESTIONS YOU WISH

6. Describe three distinctive attributes of our community:

a. _____
 b. _____
 c. _____

7. Identify major trends you envision in our community during the next five years:

a. _____
 b. _____
 c. _____

8. List three or four problem areas confronting our community that you feel our church should address:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

9. Identify major trends you envision in our church in the next five years:

10. Identify the three most important faith experiences or events in the history of our church:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

11. Identify the most challenging faith experience or event in the life of our church in the last three years and what you believe we learned from that experience:

12. Describe the strengths or positive qualities of our church:

13. Describe the style and content of preaching which you value:

ALL CHURCH SURVEY

Resource 3

To be completed by each adult/youth

Please indicate your assessment of the church's life and work
by circling the number most closely approximating your opinion.

HOW TRUE IS EACH STATEMENT?

1. In terms of fellowship, I see my church as **Warm and Personal:**

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

2. In terms of worship, I see my church as **Alive and Compelling:**

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

3. In terms of its commitment to Christ, I see my church as **Very Dedicated:**

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

4. In terms of knowledge of the Bible, I see my church as **Knowledgeable:**

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

5. In terms of its program of education, I see my church as **Effective and Innovative:**

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

6. In terms of its evangelism, I see my church as **Forthright and Clear:**

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

7. In terms of stewardship, I see my church as **Generous and Self-sacrificing**:

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

8. In terms of its service to others in the community, I see my church as **Active and Concerned**:

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

9. In terms of its emphasis on youth needs, I see my church as **Invested**:

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

10. In terms of its knowledge of the UCC, I see my church as **Knowledgeable**:

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

11. In terms of its unity, I see my church as **Cooperative and Trusting**:

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

12. In terms of communication with/among itself, I see my Church as **Open and Clear**:

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

13. In terms of having clear goals, I see my church as **Well Focused**:

1	2	3	4	5
Very true		Moderately true		Not at all true

(Adapted, with permission, PCUSA "Church Leadership Connection")

LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS: CALLED PASTOR

Resource 4

COMPLETE ONE PER EACH ADULT/YOUTH

Please take a moment to respond to the following.

Leadership Expectations (Question #32 in the Local Church Profile): Read through the list below and **mark only 12** of the items that you think are the most important qualities for our settled minister. If you do not see one you would like included, write it in at the end.

Our church needs a person who...

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

ADDITIONAL CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY AND RESEARCH RESOURCES

Resource 5

Search Committees may wish to explore a contract with an institution that has extensive experience in surveying members of local churches. Such institutions will provide survey instruments, tally the instruments after the members have completed them, and produce a report whose narrative text and graphs give an extensive “picture” of your congregation.

The websites for these organizations will offer you samples of their questionnaires as well as sample reports. Please note that these materials are subject to copyright laws and may not be reproduced or incorporated into your own survey instrument. If your congregation is interested in an in-depth study of your church, it would be wise to check out a variety of research resources. Costs vary; customarily there is a basic contract fee, a minimal charge for each questionnaire used, and a charge for processing the final report.

The Hartford Seminary Institute for Religious Research offers a questionnaire that is specifically focused on a pastoral vacancy; their “*Pastoral Search Inventory*” has been used by many UCC congregations. (Go to www.hirr.hartsem.edu and type *Pastoral Search Inventory* into their search engine.)

Another survey instrument suggested by some UCC Conference/Association Ministers is available from US Congregational Life. That survey is titled “*Discover Your Congregation’s Strengths*.” In addition to providing you with the results of your own survey, their report also provides data that allows your committee to compare your strengths with those of similar-sized churches. (www.uscongregations.org)

Other survey instruments offer full service demographic information that is particularly focused on faith-based communities. The Church of the Nazarene demographic site offers a free data base (<http://ext.nazarene.org/m3/scr/ucc.exe>). Context is another demographic organization (www.perceptgroup.com), and the internet will reveal many other possibilities. If you are considering a contract with a congregational research organization, be certain to consult with your Conference/Association staff person; she/he will be aware of the survey instruments that other search committees have found helpful.

Members of your Search Committee may also wish to explore recent research reports and informative articles about congregations. “*What Do Lay People Want in Pastors?*” is a helpful research report by Dr. Adair T. Lummis; the project includes a valuable section on “*The Plight of Small Churches*.” (www.pulpitandpew.duke.edu/reports.html, available for downloading at no cost.) The Alban Institute produces a wide variety of resources for congregations, and their weekly newsletter is available free of charge. (www.alban.org) There are numerous other websites that UCC congregations have found helpful, including (but not limited to) www.centerforcongregations.org and www.congregationalresources.org.

HOW OTHERS SEE US

(Distribute 2 copies to each community organization or group that uses the church facilities.)

What are the present ministries of this church as you perceive and/or experience them?

What new opportunities of ministry do you see for this church?

What are potential areas of growth for this church?

What else would you like to share with the Search Committee that is seeking a new pastor for this congregation?

(Adapted, "Calling an American Baptist Pastor")

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