

Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

INTRODUCING THE NEW 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

First Reformed United Church of Christ
Burlington, NC

Pastor

Southern Conference, Eastern North Carolina Association

January 20, 2023

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

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- 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.

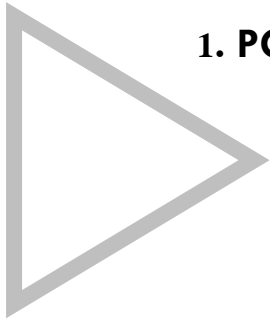
The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – **WHO ARE WE NOW**, **WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR**, and **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME** – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years. 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: First Reformed United Church of Christ

Street address: 513 West Front Street, Burlington, NC 27215

Supplemental web links: www.firstreformeducc.org

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

Conference: Southern Conference

Association: Eastern North Carolina Association

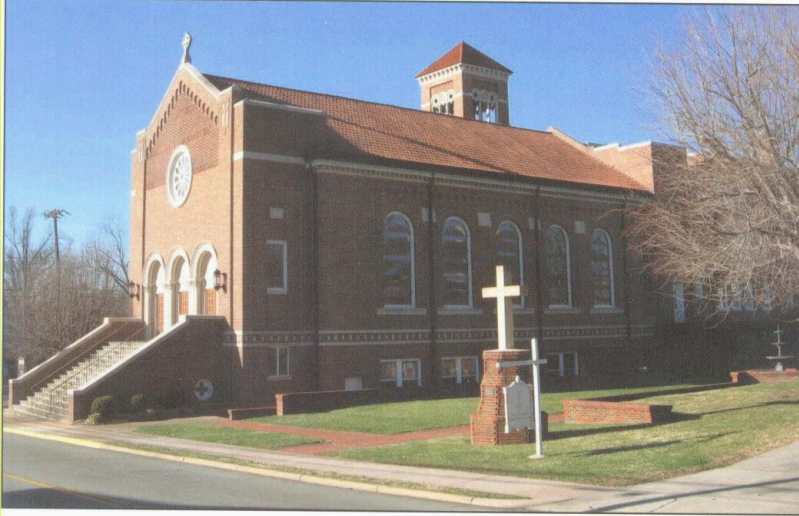
UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person (Name, Title, Phone, Email):

Rev. Dr. Edward Smith Davis, Conference Minister, 336-222-8771, edavis@soc-ucc.org

Summary Ministry Description:

Our church is going through an exciting change. We are looking forward to being more engaged in our community. One way we seek to accomplish this is through growing a diverse congregation that is inclusive of all while remaining willing to have those difficult conversations. We are seeking an effective and energetic leader who is bold in spirit and is a willing listener to help us accomplish these goals.

Photographs:



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

Alamance County is a family-friendly community that provides opportunities for educational, cultural, recreational, and spiritual growth. We are located near large metropolitan areas with superior medical facilities, universities, research parks, and shopping centers but are small enough to provide a sense of community.

Current size of membership:

The Consistory spent the summer of 2022 in an effort to determine an accurate membership listing. After multiple attempts to contact by letter, email, and phone, we have a membership listing that is reflective of our current situation as of October 15, 2022. Membership categories are defined in our constitution.

Full Membership: Members shall pledge themselves to attend regular worship services and to celebrate the Lord's Supper; to live a Christian life, to share in the life and work of the church; to contribute to its support and benevolences; and to seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and community.

We have 62 active members with full membership, including 5 homebound members.

Associate Membership: Associate members may participate in all aspects of the congregation's life except voting and are not eligible for an elected office. Associate members will receive church communications and are encouraged to support the ministry and mission of FRUCC with at least an annual financial gift.

We have 41 associate members.

We also have 9 active attendees who are considering full membership in the future.

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

N/A

Position Title:

Pastor

Position Duration:

Settled

Compensation Level:

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

Conference Guidelines for Pastor's Compensation

Note:

The following is the conference guideline for 2022. It has not yet been made available for 2023.

Many factors influence a congregation's decision on a pastor's cash salary. But the pastor's experience is one of the most important factors. The Southern Conference recommends the following figures as a guide; salary increases beyond the suggestions should be made as appropriate.

1-5 Years' Experience \$45,464.76

6-10 Years' Experience \$53,475.30

11+ Years' Experience \$60,200.99

The above figures do not include housing (either parsonage or housing allowance), utilities, annuity contributions, insurance (health, dental, disability/life), or other professional expenses such as continuing education and travel. This cash salary will vary, of course, with the size of the

congregation and the responsibilities borne by the pastor. In addition to the cash salary, the Conference also recommends that a Pastor's compensation include:

- Housing Allowance: At least 30% of the cash salary, or provision of a parsonage*
- *UCC Health Insurance: \$22,548 for a family coverage, \$10,536 for individual coverage (annual figures based on 2021 Pension Board Rates, are for ages 41+ & using highest plan rate)*
- *UCC Dental Insurance: \$1,122.00 for a family coverage, \$510.00 for individual coverage (annual figures based on 2021 Pension Board Rates, for ages 41+ & using highest plan rate)*
- *Pension Fund: An annual contribution of 14% of cash salary plus housing allowance*
- *Life Insurance and Disability: Can be provided if your employer makes pension contributions of any percentage. This plan provides long-term income in the event of disability, plus term life insurance benefits based on your age and salary basis. It is 1.5% of total salary basis (salary & housing)*
- *Vision Care: Coverage is now offered to individuals and family members paid directly to the Pension Board. Single Rate is \$100 annually; Family Rate is \$249.00 annually.*

**These items are programs of the UCC Pension Boards. For detailed information and other rates on their programs, please call 1-800-642-6543 or check out their website at [pbucc.org](https://www.pbucc.org/index.php/rate-locator#) (<https://www.pbucc.org/index.php/rate-locator#>). Pension Board participants are contacted in the fall of each year with rates for the following year.*

Where a church has a membership of less than 100, or the pastor has less than full academic training (college and seminary), it is suggested that the compensation be 80% of the above cash salary figures, and other benefits should be adjusted. Where the pastor has other employment the church should assist in developing a benefits package.

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

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

- 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, 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 as a representative of the church to local organizations and special worship services
- Weddings and funerals for participants in the worshipping community
- Strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry
- Attend monthly Consistory meetings in addition to team meetings as needed
- Faithful financial development and stewardship
- Responsibility for supervision of staff
- Spiritual counseling as requested and listening to congregational concerns
- Study and pray to increase faith and to improve skills so as to lead, teach, and preach better
- Energizing and deepening the spiritual connections and faith understandings of others in all they do

Core Competencies:

Spiritually Grounded
Enthusiasm for revitalization
Compassionate

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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

Commensurate with experience and in line with conference salary guidelines.

Benefits (*choose one*):

Salary plus benefits including housing allowance, pastor and family health insurance, contribution to pastor's retirement, travel expenses, four weeks vacation, and two weeks paid professional development. An Accountable Reimbursement Plan is in place for business expenses.

A sabbatical leave of three months after five years of service and every five years thereafter, subject to negotiation.

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.

Live within a 15-mile radius of our church.

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

Catawba Clergy Network, Eastern North Carolina Association of the Southern Conference, Alamance County Minister's Association, and other clergy support groups

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.

- Deepening the spiritual life of the community
- Exploring service opportunities in the Community.
- Expanding the use of our current facilities.
- Increasing membership and participation.

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

In our vision, our Minister will be spiritually grounded, enthusiastic, and inspiring in the way they work with us as a congregation to increase our membership and participation. We envision them being a faithful servant who is caring and compassionate, and who is also open to change while being creative and having the ability to think outside of the box. We want to explore more service opportunities in the most needed areas of our community. We currently open our doors to other non-profit organizations in our area and are open to expanding the use of our facilities to better serve the community.

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

Our current congregation speaks English. The second most common language in our area is Spanish.

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

1) Building Transformational Leadership Skills.

- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.
- Strategically creating the future of God's Church.
- Witnessing in the public square to God's redeeming power.
- Performing necessary and appropriate administrative tasks.
- Working collaboratively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity.
- Encouraging leadership development of self and others through continuing education and lifelong learning.

2) Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions.

- Exhibiting knowledge, understanding, and continuing study of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament.
- Maturing in effective proclamation and preaching.
- Understanding the history of the Christian Church, from biblical times forward.
- Bringing life to sacred stories and traditions in worship, proclamation, and witness.
- Leading faith formation effectively across generations.
- Holding the Holy with integrity especially as represented in the Sacraments

3) Working together for Justice and Mercy.

- Drawing on the ministry of Jesus Christ to confront injustice and oppression.
- Practicing the radical hospitality of God.
- Identifying and working to overcome explicit and implicit bias in the life of the Church.
- Understanding community context and navigating change with a community.
- Engaging in mission and outreach.
- Building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence.

4) Strengthening Inter and Intra Personal Assets.

- Developing and maintaining a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life experiences.
- Living in relationships of covenantal accountability with God and the Church.
- Exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity.
- Respecting the dignity of all God's people.
- Understanding and ministering to stages of human development across the life span.
- Demonstrating excellent communication skills.



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?

Striving to become living expressions of God's extravagant grace and love.

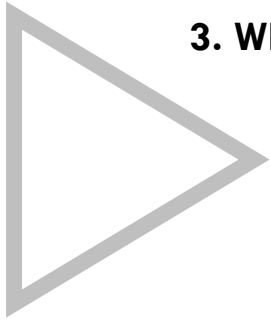
For complete Mission/Vision Statement - see page 36.

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

Emerging Challenges:

- The Burlington metropolitan area (including Alamance County) is a stable middle-class community and ranked as the 6th fastest growing area in North Carolina. Burlington has a population of approximately 55,000 and represents approximately 1/3 of the population of Alamance County.
- Rapid growth brings many rewards but also many challenges around the issues of affordable housing, food insecurity, food deserts, and adequate transportation.
- The organization Impact Alamance seeks to foster community-wide dialogue and make investments in the community that will create lasting change. They are currently anticipating a major report in December 2022 that will inform the future involvement of all local entities, including non-profits, churches, etc.
- God is calling our congregation to continue our long-term history of community involvement as we work with other churches and non-profits to share God's love and grace. One example of our congregation's work in the community is through an initiative called the Hometown Mission Trip. For many years, members of First Reformed UCC traveled to places like East St. Louis, Washington, DC, the mountains of North Carolina, and even out of the country to share God's love with others through acts of service. In June 2017, we decided to stay home. So who should we serve? With our existing connection with the Meals on Wheels program, we decided to reach out to Meals on Wheels clients to complete simple home tasks such as raking leaves, trimming shrubs, installing grab bars, and repairing steps and ramps.. Partnering with our neighbor church, Macedonia Lutheran, we continued this work through the summer of 2019. Due to the pandemic, the usual summer project was canceled, with some outside work being completed in the fall of 2020. Plans are being made to work with the Meals on Wheels staff and board to restart the Hometown Mission Trip in late spring/early summer 2023.

- Our church has been strongly supporting Young Musicians of Alamance since its inception in 2015. We provide space for instruction and offices, and we have continued to provide funding, meals, and volunteers as needed. YMA provides free musical instruction and instruments to children from schools where 85% of students receive free lunch. The program follows the philosophy of El Sistema to enhance social, cognitive, and emotional development through making music together.



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.

Striving to become living expressions of God’s extravagant grace and love.

Our congregation is open to a variety of expressions of the character of God. For example, we use the New Century hymnal, in which God is described as Colorful Creator and Mother as well as more traditional descriptions. We pray continually for the presence of the Holy Spirit in our gatherings and pause for moments of silent listening. We believe that God is still speaking through the Spirit and through the spiritual gifts shared by fellow members and guests.

Please see page 38 for our Mission Statement.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

- Our congregation excels in welcoming all to worship and service.
- We are accepting and appreciative of differences, and find the diversity of abilities and ideas in our body to be a strength.
- Our members are gifted in many areas, including teaching, hospitality, and music and drama.
- Though small in number, our congregation enjoys coming out for service projects.
- Our facility is handicap-accessible and we have opened our doors to a number of community groups, such as Young Musicians of Alamance, Children’s Advocacy Center, Alcoholics Anonymous groups, and yoga instruction.
- Our sanctuary provides a beautiful setting for contemplation and worship.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Worship takes place in a traditional sanctuary, with stained glass windows, a frieze of Leonardo da Vinci’s Last Supper, an altar and movable communion table. There are pews for congregational seating for approximately 350 including a balcony. The chancel includes a pulpit, lectern, privacy panels, and movable seating for up to 25 choir members. With the exception of the pulpit, lectern, organ, and piano, everything in the chancel can be moved for dramatic presentations and flexibility for special events.

Infant baptism is a precious event in our church and takes place around the baptismal font. One way pastors have involved siblings in the baptism is by helping the children to fill the font with water while explaining the significance of water in our faith.

Good preaching is uplifting, challenging, and inspiring. Our members love good teaching and a good story based on the teachings of Jesus Christ and scripture.

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

Due to the small numbers, we have only one Sunday School class. All ages are welcome to this class, and we have 10-15 regular attendees. We have used the lectionary and a variety of book/video studies. Over the past year, we have used materials by Adam Hamilton and Max Lucado. Currently, we are using a video lecture series on the Old Testament from “Great Courses” taught by Amy Jill Levine. These classes always include time for discussion and the discussions are often lively, sharing diverse viewpoints. We encourage freedom to express your thoughts and feelings which can be uncomfortable but is essential.

In past years, we have offered morning and/or evening Bible or book studies attended by 8-10 people per session. These were most often led by the pastor. We have also offered our community workshops/lectures by guest authors, which were well attended by members and visitors. There are plans to begin these activities again, with the easing of COVID restrictions.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

Consistory and Trustee members are recruited by a Nominating Committee (three Consistory members and two volunteers from the congregation). In the annual congregational meeting, nominees are presented, and the slate of officers is opened for additional nominations. The nominees and the annual budget are voted on by the congregation at this annual meeting. This congregational meeting and other called meetings are announced two weeks ahead, and appropriate materials are mailed and/or emailed to the congregation.

We provide an opportunity for all members and active visitors to share in the work of the church by sending out a “Time and Talent” sheet. This outlines the different opportunities for service and asks that members sign up to assist in ongoing or one-time tasks. Ministry team leaders also make personal appeals for assistance as needed.

We have a monthly newsletter and a weekly email from the church office which helps to keep our members informed.

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

1. The Consistory meets monthly for one and one half – two hours.
2. The Trustees meet once per month for approximately one hour.
3. Teams meet at the discretion of the Ministry Team Chairs.

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

When action must be taken quickly, we rely on email communication or Zoom meetings. We also have an automated calling system to contact the entire congregation.

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. A Constitution and Bylaws, a list of the consistory and trustee members, and a list of working teams can be provided. Past bulletins and other publications are available in storage.

3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

See page 39.

3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	62	
Number of active non-members:	9	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	71	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	49	Actual number
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	4	Actual number
Less than 5 years:	9	Actual number

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>
3	1	1	1	4	3	15	16	20	

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	3	Actual number (data base on membership only)
Households with minors:	2	Actual number
Single adults age 35-65:	5	Actual number
Joint households with no minors:	58	Actual number
Single adults over 65:	17	Actual number

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	100%	Yes
College:	50%	Yes
Graduate School:	10%	Yes
Specialty Training:	8%	Yes
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	21	Yes Actual number
Adults who are retired:	37	Yes Actual number
Adults who are not fully employed:		

As is common at this point, many of our retired folks are working in some capacity.

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

Occupational fields range from retail workers to accountants, lawyers, nurses, social workers, construction workers, teachers, entrepreneurs, small business owners, and insurance representatives.

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation and the overall racial makeup. 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?

Our congregation is predominantly white. Diversity in our context refers to age and sexual orientation. We are mostly over the age of 50 and are predominantly straight; we have several active members who are LGBTQ+.

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

We have not gone through the official UCC process. We do, however, fully welcome LGBTQ+ persons.

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	10-15	Faith Formation Team and Teachers
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	1	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes		
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	55	Pastor, Church Musicians, Worship Team (Sometimes with sister church)
Church-wide Meals	40	Fellowship Team
Choirs and Music Groups	8-10	Music Coordinator
Church-based Bible Study	8-10	Faith Formation
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	Quarterly	Worship Team
Community Meals	Approx. 75	Mission and Outreach Team
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>		Pastor
Drama or Dance Program	10	Worship Team (Pre-COVID)
Funerals <i>(number last year)</i>	3	Pastor
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship		Pre-COVID – Annual worship at the lake
Prayer or Meditation Groups		
Public Advocacy Work		
Retreats	15	Women's Retreat
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		

Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	1	Pastor
Worship (time slot: 11:00 a.m.)	30-40	Pastor, Church Musicians, Liturgists
Worship (time slot: _____)		
Young Adult Groups or Classes		
Youth Groups or Classes		
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)
Larry Fisher	No	Southern Conf.	UCC Pastor	Y
Sherry Grant	4		Volunteer Chaplain	Y

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
Interim Pastor		Part-time	Personnel Team	1 year
Ministry Assistant		Part-time	Pastor	33 years
Organist		Part-time	Personnel Team	5 years
Music Coordinator		Part-time	Personnel Team	24 years

REFLECTION

After reviewing the congregational demographics and activities above, we recognize three major points about our ministry.

- Our congregation does not reflect our neighborhood. At one time, this was a neighborhood church in a middle income to affluent area of the city. The area around our church has been and continues to be in transition, with areas of great need and pockets of affluence.
- Our Mission and Outreach work addresses some of the needs in the neighborhood and in the wider area, for example food insecurity, a need for affordable housing, and programs for disadvantaged children. There is a passion for service exhibited in our congregation.
- For the size of our membership and the predominantly senior age bracket, our congregation is extremely active in many areas. This demonstrates a desire to continue to grow in spirit, fellowship and service.

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Details provided upon request during the interview process

Source	Amount
TOTAL	\$ 267,014

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

\$ 280,310

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?

37%

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) \$ 4,000

☐ One Great Hour of Sharing

☐ Strengthen the Church

☐ Neighbors in Need

☐ Christmas Fund

FRUCC is typically a 5-for-5 congregation. COVID and the lack of a settled pastor have skewed things for the past few years.

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

Not calculated as a percentage but a set amount determined by a budget team proposal and voted on by the congregation.

What is the church's current indebtedness? None

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?

Yes

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

Both

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

Remained steady at 4%

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

Endowment funds have been used as a budget subsidy for a number of years. The average support amount for the past five years is \$183,459.

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

27 years

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

We are aware that we are dependent on the endowment for far too much of our budget, and realistically we cannot indefinitely continue in this manner. Consequently, we hope to increase our membership and, therefore, personal support of the budget. When that happens, we would be able to return to our hope of using the endowment primarily for outreach, etc.

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$ 88,099

Investments (other than endowment): \$ 81,793

Does your church have a parsonage?

No

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:

The church is four levels with a fellowship hall and stage, kitchen, choir room, four restrooms, two storage rooms, and electrical rooms on the ground floor. The first story contains the sanctuary, a small storage room, a work room, four restrooms, a nursery, a parlor with a kitchenette, and three rooms for office space. The second story houses three classrooms, a craft room, a storage room, two restrooms, and another room used by a nonprofit as office space. The third floor has one room that is in use by another nonprofit, two restrooms, and multiple storage areas. The sanctuary/fellowship hall portion of the building was completed in the 1940s, the Sunday School building (attached) was completed in the 1920s, and the elevator tower was completed in 2006. The building underwent an extensive renovation that was completed in 2006.

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

None

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

All areas except the chancel, stage, and some storage spaces are wheelchair accessible.

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?

Over the past few years our budget reflects a heavy dependence on the endowment funds to meet expenses due to decreased membership and member-giving. However, we have maintained our beautiful building which we use to support community programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, YMA (Young Musicians of Alamance, our church sponsored music program for underprivileged children), and a yoga class as well as provide space for offices for the Executive Director of YMA and another for the Director of Children's Advocacy Centers of North Carolina (a non-profit supporting the work of local child advocacy centers across North Carolina). Additionally, last year we donated \$5,000 to Alamance County Meals on Wheels for a capital campaign and \$10,000 to support the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity. Over the last two years we have given \$10,000 in college scholarships to area students. Since the beginning of our endowment fund in 2004 our church has donated over \$320,000 for various community mission and outreach programs.

Our budget is created by our executive committee with input from the pastor and financial staff. Once that draft budget is complete, it is presented to the Consistory for updates and forecasts, then approval. Once the budget is approved by the Consistory, it is sent out to the congregation at large to be voted on during the annual congregational meeting.

3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that has shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.

The most significant happening was a very generous endowment gift given to our church upon the death of one of our long-standing and beloved members in 2003. This endowment has allowed us to renovate and maintain our church building, provide support for community benevolent projects, sponsor programs with national speakers for our community and sustain us during the Covid-19 crisis and through a downturn in church attendance and giving.

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

A few months before our pastor Rev. Phil Myers left, the congregation agreed to hire a consultant to coach us in the area of church revitalization and growth. Things got delayed with Phil's resignation but, in February of 2022, we hired an Intentional Interim Minister, Deborah Suess, and in the spring of 2022 we, began work with Rev. Sarai Rice of the Congregational Consulting Group. Rev. Rice first led a 4-hour educational workshop with over 30 members advising us of current church/denominational trends and what we need to consider if we are serious about revitalization. As she consistently pointed out, "Don't expect change (growth) without change." With Rev. Rice's guidance we then met in small groups over the summer of 2022 and considered three queries:

1. *Looking at First Reformed as it is right now, what do we excel at and how could God use these gifts/skills to better serve the community?*
2. *As we think about what God is calling us to do, what is the top challenge to our ability to take our next steps as a congregation?*
3. *Every congregation arrives at a time when it is no longer sustainable because its combination of people, energy, and resources are no longer sufficient. Has First Reformed reached that point? If we have reached that point, how is God calling us to use our remaining resources to further Christ's work in our community? If we haven't reached that point, how is God calling us to use our remaining resources to further Christ's work in our community?*

We came out of those summer discussions with clarity that we are not ready to "call it quits" but are enthusiastic to do the work that will lead to revitalization and growth. The small groups also indicated an interest in a possible merger with a neighboring UCC congregation – that remains a possibility but needs considerable further discernment work.

The Planning Team continues to consult Rev. Rice as we move forward in calling our new pastor. We are particularly hoping for a candidate that has experience and skills in helping a congregation do the work that leads to revitalization. We are willing to invest our resources as well as time and energy to see if we can move forward in such a manner.

The unexpected departure of our pastor of twenty-seven years has caused us to "rally the troops" and take a hard look at ourselves as we discern who we are as a church and to focus on the type of church we want to be. We have edited our membership rolls and have a better awareness of who our members are and can anticipate a quorum so that church business can be conducted.

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.

We have had two significant conflicts within the church although neither was recent. One had to do with conflict between a youth pastor and the senior pastor plus some of the congregation. The youth pastor ended up leaving the church which caused some of the youth and parents to be upset, and a few left the church. This occurred in 2003.

The other event was a vote on whether or not to merge with another congregation in 2009. The vote for merging did not pass by just a few votes. A few folks were upset and left the church while others stayed even though the vote outcome was not what they wanted. We have definitely learned the importance of keeping church membership rolls up to date!

We do not have official protocols or structures for dealing with conflict but we have a very active governing board (Consistory) which is very involved in those types of matters.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
F. Michael Hoper	17	Y
William Smith (interim)	1	Y
Phillip R. Myers	27	Y
Elizabeth Cantrell (associate)	7	Y
Nora Driver Foust (associate)	9	Y

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

Our former pastor was exceptional with organization and administration. We depended on him for too much of the practical management of the church. Over the past year, we have consistently asked, "Who does this?" and the answer seems to consistently be, "Phil."

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

Y/N/Ask us

Yes (As mentioned above, there was a conflict that could not be resolved.)

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

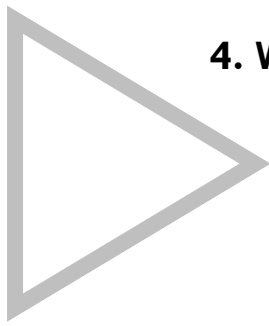
Y/N/Ask us

No

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

Y/N/Ask us

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

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

The congregation is currently involved in the following ways in our community:

- Allied Churches of Alamance County: Our congregation was one of the founding members of this organization. We have supported their work through making financial donations, volunteer work such as cleaning and painting, as well as food drives. Currently, we host a community meal on Memorial Day and Labor Day when the facility is closed.
- Meals on Wheels: A team of volunteers deliver an assigned route throughout the year. On Christmas Eve, our congregation takes on the task of delivering meals for all routes as requested by the clients. Through the church's endowment, we recently made a \$5,000 donation to the MOWs capital campaign to expand the building space for this organization. See Section 2 for a description of the Home Town Mission Trip.
- Habitat for Humanity: Our congregation has supported building projects for many years in Unity Builds with other area churches. In the summer of 2022, we made a donation of \$10,000 to the most recent building project and sent volunteers to assist in the work. Our Morning Circle and Evening Circle have provided snacks and support to Unity Build and Women's Build projects.
- Alamance County CROP Hunger Walk: Our congregation has been involved in raising funds and supporting walkers since its inception. During the pandemic, we continued to support CROP with honor walks including a 2020 walk on the track of the local high school where a member was athletic director.
- United Way of Alamance County: With the need to address food insecurity, United Way has begun a focus on food collection with the MLK Day “Day of Service” collection. In the midst of the pandemic, we conducted a drive-through collection with homemade chocolate chip cookies as a thank-you. United Way recently hosted an Alamance Housing event at a local church where over 120 community members came together to address affordable housing. The co-chair of our Mission and Outreach Team attended. Out of this one-day session, a group of participants

are meeting monthly to determine ways to more efficiently work together to support issues of homelessness and affordable housing.

- Rise Against Hunger: Over the past 10 years, we have partnered with other local churches to sponsor or participate in these meal packaging event. Following strict pandemic guidelines provided by the organization, we worked with six other congregations to raise funds and host an event in October 2021.
- First Reformed donated \$10,000 towards a food truck for the school system to use to provide meals to children during their summer breaks and other days when the schools are closed.
- The Willows, located at 124 Tarpley Street in Burlington, NC, first opened in 1998 and was conceived as an outreach of First Reformed United Church of Christ, which is next door. The Willows has been home to hundreds of residents since it opened in 1998 and has enjoyed an excellent reputation as a supportive housing community. With 40 one-bedroom apartments, a laundry area, a library, a lounge, and lots of gathering spaces, The Willows represents affordable, supportive housing that serves the senior adult population. It is currently managed by United Church Services, a branch of the Southern Conference. The ownership of The Willows will revert FRUCC in 2028 after being a HUD project for thirty years.

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

Our former pastors served on various boards and committees within the Southern Conference and the Eastern North Carolina Association. As our numbers have dwindled over the past 5 – 10 years, the activity of the members in the wider UCC has also dwindled. Currently, we have a member who is serving as Attorney on Record for the Eastern North Carolin Association and who has served on the United Church Homes board for around thirty years, just finishing an expired term. In the past, we have sent a youth delegation to General Synod as well as adult delegates. We have had a member serve on a committee with the national church, and multiple members on boards within the Southern Conference, such as United Church Homes, Blowing Rock Conference Center, Franklinton Center, and the former Black Lake Retreat Center.

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 |

Not currently involved in any of the above ministries.

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.

The focus of our congregation following our mission statement (see page 38) is “going out.” Evidence of this can be found in the work of our Mission and Outreach Team. In spite of the pandemic, we found ways to continue all of our service work - canceling only one project that had been planned for June 2020. The pandemic has taught us that we don’t need to meet - to do committee work - to get things done. All planning over the past two years has been done via emails, text messages, sign-up sheets posted in an area at main entrances to the sanctuary, etc. More time to work and less time to meet will continue because it works!

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?

As of this writing, the congregation has been without a full-time settled pastor for over a year. During that time, all of our mission work has continued through the leadership and participation of members of the congregation. The congregation would expect the minister to be visible and involved in the community.

4b. MISSION InSite

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

Please note that the Mission InSite report is no longer available to us.

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?

Our membership reflects a mix of socioeconomic levels but does not necessarily reflect the immediate neighborhood. We have always been a downtown church, but the surrounding neighborhood has changed from its middle/upper middle class beginnings, and we now sit on the edge of a low income-section of town. However, one block away is an affluent neighborhood. Many of the county's high-income earners have moved to the western side of the county.

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

A core component of the church's mission is giving back to the community. With an increased need for services, we have increased our assistance with Meals on Wheels, and we provide a meal twice per year when the local soup kitchen (Good Shepherd Kitchen) is closed for holidays which has brought into view the increased need as the poverty level rises. There are no youth in our church, so visiting families don't find a place for their children, and it discourages them from coming back. Finding a way to meet the needs of these families is an important goal for us, along with finding better ways to meet the needs of our community at large.

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

The community leaders who guide our many major nonprofit organizations would speak of our long-term support for the work we have done together. From being one of the founding members of Allied Churches to ongoing Habitat for Humanity Unity to regular volunteer work with Meals on Wheels, First Reformed UCC has played a key role in Christian service in our community. In 1998, First Reformed donated property adjacent to the church for the purpose of building HUD-subsidized housing for the elderly, and, as another example, for over 25 years, members of our congregation have welcomed the opportunity to make all of the Christmas Eve Meals on Wheels deliveries.

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

Most say the friendliness of everyone and how welcome we made them feel when they came to visit. We really try to make it feel like you're coming home!



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

Reference Rev. Suzanne Shoffner, retired PCUSA pastor of Shiloh Presbyterian Church in Burlington and retired visitation pastor of Macedonia Lutheran Church in Burlington.

Telephone: 336-524-4188

email: shadra.shoffner@gmail.com

Rev. Shoffner has served our congregation as supply pastor on several occasions and has also led retreats.

REFERENCE 2 (Phone only)

Ralphine Noble, volunteer coordinator for Alamance County Meals on Wheels

Telephone: 336-228-8815

email: noble@alamancemow.org

Ms. Noble has worked with our volunteers monthly and on Christmas Eve.

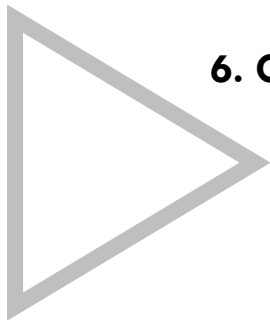
REFERENCE 3

Shellie Realini, Young Musicians of Alamance Board Chair

Telephone: 336-260-9837

email srealini@yahoo.com

First Reformed has provided office space and lesson/practice space since YMA's inception.



6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

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

6a. CLOSING PRAYER

God of Love, it is our desire to grow as a faith community, in both numbers and spiritual maturity, so that we might be a blessing to our neighborhood and the wider Burlington community. As we seek new pastoral leadership, help us be wide open to your leadings and fully transparent as to who we are – our history, our current life together, our strengths as well as our struggles. In all of our conversations and connections remind us to be gracious as we move forward with hope. Ground us and give us courage to respond and act as you lead us. We pray in the name of the Living Christ, Amen.

6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending 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.*)

A Planning Team made up of Consistory members and lay members, interim pastor, and office staff

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Name / Title / Date:

6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION - Conference Minister

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

Staff Comment: First Reformed UCC is in good standing with the Eastern North Carolina Association and the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ.

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

Staff Comment: Yes

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

Staff Comment: Yes

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: 

Name / Title: Rev. Eddie Weathers, Associate Conference Minister

Email: enca@soc-ucc.org / eddie.weathers@yahoo.com

Phone: 336-222-8771 or 336-392-0866

Date: January 20, 2023

Mission Statement

At First Reformed UCC, we are:

***Striving to become living expressions
of God's extravagant grace and love.***

We seek to accomplish this by...

1. Welcoming all persons with a warmth and hospitality that will help them realize that God loves them beyond imagination and that they are of extreme value.
2. Gathering in moments of worship and celebration characterized by authenticity, vitality, and creativity – where one may experience and share the life-changing presence of God in a multitude of ways.
3. Offering a variety of opportunities for spiritual growth, faith development, and supportive fellowship.
4. Helping persons to explore and develop their own individual gifts for ministry and inviting them to share generously of their time, talents and resources.
5. Engaging in acts of service and love that will express the compassion, mercy, and justice of Christ in the world.



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all

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



Church#: 760400

Assoc: 772 Schedule: 0 First Reformed UCC Burlington NC 27215

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2011	345	88	40	0	0	3	11	0	-8
2012	336	80	30	0	4	0	13	0	-9
2013	316	75	25	5	8	0	6	27	-20
2014	225	64	30	0	0	0	9	82	-91
2015	222	60	30	0	1	3	7	0	-3
2016	211	55	25	0	0	2	13	0	-11
2017	206	55	43	0	0	5	8	2	-5
2018	204	55	33	5	0	0	7	0	-2
2019	199	50	35	0	0	5	10	0	-5
2020	190	35	15	0	0	1	4	6	-9
2021	190	35	15	0	0	0	0	0	0

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2011	\$229,458	\$128,100	\$5,000	\$2,085	\$7,085	\$10,161	\$17,246	2.18	\$374,804	\$154,015
2012	\$224,069	\$1,295,956	\$3,400	\$1,496	\$4,896	\$5,949	\$10,845	1.52	\$1,530,870	\$158,764
2013	\$225,264	\$0	\$3,000	\$1,184	\$4,184	\$6,244	\$10,428	1.33	\$235,692	\$145,498
2014	\$211,534	\$0	\$3,750	\$1,124	\$4,874	\$2,671	\$7,545	1.77	\$219,079	\$126,189
2015	\$216,465	\$0	\$3,750	\$2,310	\$6,060	\$3,162	\$9,222	1.73	\$225,687	\$115,343
2016	\$222,726	\$0	\$4,150	\$1,967	\$6,117	\$3,648	\$9,765	1.86	\$232,491	\$107,787
2017	\$234,382	\$0	\$5,000	\$2,279	\$7,279	\$4,935	\$12,214	2.13	\$246,596	\$102,129
2018	\$246,386	\$0	\$4,000	\$1,923	\$5,923	\$4,046	\$9,969	1.62	\$256,355	\$88,127
2019	\$266,130	\$0	\$5,000	\$2,408	\$7,408	\$4,505	\$11,913	1.88	\$278,043	\$75,066
2020	\$261,473	\$0	\$4,000	\$500	\$4,500	\$3,140	\$7,640	1.53	\$269,113	\$71,250
2021	\$261,473	\$0	\$3,500	\$1,000	\$4,500	\$0	\$4,500	1.34	\$265,973	\$0

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2016-2021	-9.95	-36.36	-40.00	-100.00	-100.00	17.40	-26.43	14.40
2011-2021	-44.93	-60.23	-62.50	-100.00	-100.00	13.95	-36.49	-29.04

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

Report from Rev. Sarai Rice, Consultant
August 9, 2022

What stood out for you from the conversations?

- We need people
- We should do something worthwhile with the money
- Sadness at no youth
- We excel at service
- Disappointment around the merger vote 13 years ago
- Pleased with the facility and its use
- No longer self-sustaining
- We have a lot of love and a welcoming spirit, especially LGBTQI+
- Acceptance of differing opinions
- Resistance to the idea of closing
- Everyone enjoyed the fellowship of the small group conversations
- How do we communicate what's here?
- Lots of talk about needing someone who is both a preacher and a leader
- Lots of appreciation for the music
- Question about whether we need screens in the sanctuary to support the music
- There was excitement and energy at every meeting of this planning process
- Some discomfort about going out into the community to ask people to come to the church
- Some appreciation for the UCC identity but also some sense that there were negative aspects to it. Good that it's nonjudgmental and has strong programs for things like disaster outreach, but bad that it's perceived to be very political
- "Don't let the things you cannot do keep you from doing the things you can do."

Young Musicians of Alamance
513 W. Front Street
Burlington, NC 27215

November 11, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

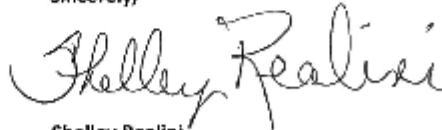
Young Musicians of Alamance is a non profit organization that provides instruments, music instruction, lunches and snacks at no cost to students attending Title I schools in Alamance County and the surrounding areas.

First Reformed United Church of Christ has generously provided meeting and office space for our organization since 2015. Additionally, the ministry team and the congregation have supported our program by contributing funds, volunteering with our classes, providing food and cooking lunches for students.

The ministry team has frequently invited our group to perform during church services and has been warm and welcoming to all students and their families. A number of church members have also been encouraging to our students by attending concerts when we perform out in the community. Over the last few years, we have seen a decrease in volunteers from the church, which was expected during the COVID pandemic. As COVID cases decrease, we would love to see more church members coming back to volunteer with our students.

If you have any questions or would like more information about YMA's association with First Reformed United Church of Christ, please do not hesitate to contact me at (336) 260-9837 or through email at srealini@yahoo.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shelley Realini". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shelley" and last name "Realini" clearly distinguishable.

Shelley Realini
YMA Board President

Suzanne Shoffner
611 Westridge Drive
Burlington, NC 27215

November 17, 2022

Re: First Reformed United Church of Christ

CONNECTIONS

My involvement with FRUCC began in 1998 after graduating from Duke Divinity School and being called as solo pastor of a Presbyterian church in Burlington. I received the invitation to attend a clergy group which met monthly in various churches. The convening minister was Rev. Philip Myers of FRUCC and he and I maintained a relationship for the next twenty some years. His attention to the group was outstanding.

In 2008 my husband and I were called by Global Mission with the Lutheran Church and served as coordinators for the YAGM program in Jerusalem and the Occupied West Bank. Upon returning to NC, I became Visitation Pastor for the neighboring congregation to FRUCC. I again attended clergy meetings led by Phil Myers and became more acquainted with FRUCC during the years 2012 - 2020. The women of FRUCC contracted with me to lead spiritual retreats on three occasions. I have preached there and also served as Officiant at a wedding and a funeral.

STRENGTHS

1. Openness to the community for the use of the building and shared ministries with others. FRUCC and Macedonia Lutheran organize mission days where members go physically into neighborhoods to help out in various ways, such as painting, raking leaves or cleaning.
2. Young Musicians of Alamance was organized and implemented at FRUCC and continues to meet regularly in their well-maintained building. Financial support is also very strong from the congregation.
3. Many other groups have met or are meeting at FRUCC: Yoga, Tai Chi, AA, NAMI.
4. A summer program connected to Camp Agape is held at FRUCC. Meals on Wheels is carried on regularly.
5. Worship services are presented with vibrant messages, beautiful music and meaningful words in a variety of ways.
6. Another strength is the beauty of their facility and the care given to it, while at the same time sharing their space with the community.

7. The inclusion of people of color and people who are openly LGBTQ is another strength. People with special needs are also welcome at FRUCC. The members of the congregation are welcoming and open to new ideas.

The structures and patterns in the life of many mainline denominations and individual congregations have been deeply disrupted by the recent Covid Epidemic. FRUCC is no exception. This complicates the next section of the report.

POSSIBLE AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT OR CHANGE

There is emphasis on the physical structure which may be standing in the way of access to privileged spaces and new ways of being together.

The surrounding neighborhood may not be interested in the activities which have taken place. What new ideas could attract these people?

As in many congregations, people who die are not being replaced by new members.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Shoffner

shadra.shoffner@gmail.com

336 524 4188

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

