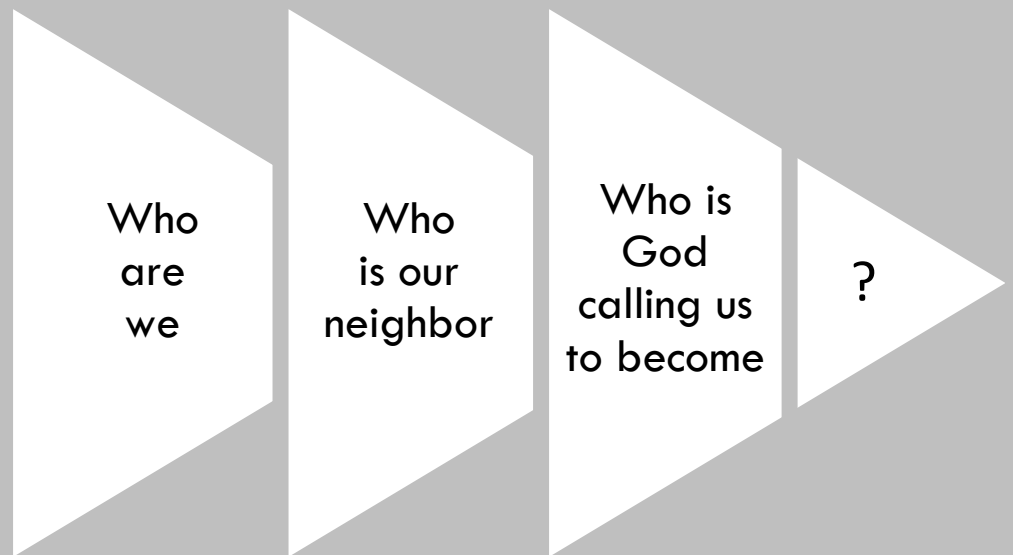


## Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

# INTRODUCING THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE



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

MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,  
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Bethany United Church of Christ  
Claremont, North Carolina

Pastor (Part-Time)

Southern Conference  
Western North Carolina 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.

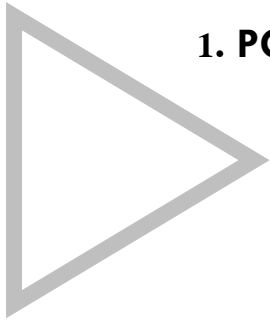
The interim season is not the only time in a church's life when it's valuable to give attention to explore a congregation's vocation. Three sections of the Local Church Profile – **WHO ARE WE NOW**, **WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR**, and **WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME** – are meant to be updated every 3-5 years. 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: Bethany United Church of Christ  
Street address: 2952 Bethany Church Road, Claremont, NC 28610  
Supplemental web links: <https://www.bethanyuccclaremont.org>

Additional ecumenical affiliations (*e.g. denominations, communions, fellowships*):  
Disciples of Christ  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

Conference: Southern Conference  
Association: Western North Carolina Association (WNCA)  
UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person (Name, Title, Phone, Email):

Rev. Dr. Warren Casiday  
Associate Conference Minister  
Western North Carolina Association  
Southern Conference UCC  
(704) 633-3191  
[casiday@gmail.com](mailto:casiday@gmail.com)

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?*

Bethany United Church of Christ is a small semi-rural church that has been very faithful to the call of God and to the ministry of the United Church of Christ. Our dream as a church is to grow with new members and to continue serving the community ministries we have been supporting. To continue our ministry, we need a strong leader that can relate well to such ministries and build relationships within our community. We are an Open and Accepting church as it is written in our Inclusive Statement (<https://bethanyuccclaremont.org/home>), so the leader we are seeking is one who is progressive and open to change.

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):

We live in proximity to restaurants and cultural and recreational opportunities. There are good educational systems, a community college, a liberal arts university, and a newly opened campus of Appalachian State University. The county YMCA is nearby as well as a continuing Care Retirement Community operated by EveryAge, formerly United Church Homes and Services.

Current size of membership: 29

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*): N/A

Position Title: Pastor (Part-Time)

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

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

½ Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? Yes, and it is negotiable.

## **1b. SCOPE OF WORK**

---

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

- Pastoral care in collaboration with lay people (at least to those who are sick, elderly, or grieving)
- Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship including scripture study, crafting of liturgy and bulletin, sermon preparation, planning of music in coordination with musical staff or volunteers, preaching, offering of prayers, etc.
- Faith formation and vitality through prayer, Bible study, service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities and helping lay persons take advantage of them
- Participate in wider church activities such as conference and association meetings as time permits
- Study and prayer to increase faith and to improve skills to lead, teach, and preach.
- Energizing and deepening spiritual connections and faith understandings of others in all they do.

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.).*

Our church is seeking a pastor who is an effective preacher/speaker with gifts in planning and leading weekly worship. We need a person with honesty, integrity and compassion toward all, and one who is capable of building relationships with people of all ages. We also need someone who will work regularly at bringing new members into our church so that we can grow.

## 1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

---

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

Benefits (*choose one*):

Salary plus 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*)?

Pastor's choice, but a parsonage is available.

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

We prefer a minister who lives within 25 miles of our church.

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:

The Southern Conference and the Western North Carolina Association are both very active and Bethany UCC is in good standing with both. The offices are easily reached by email and by phone call to their respective secretaries. The annual gatherings are highlights of worship and fellowship. Though they may be at a bit of a distance, there are many peer relationships to be celebrated in both the Association and the Conference. Peace UCC in Hickory, another Open and Affirming Congregation, is a local resource for friendship and peer support. Other local peer support is available through Abernethy Laurels, a community operated by EveryAge. Both Abernethy Laurels and the EveryAge offices are less than two miles from Bethany. Clergy serving in these ministries are welcoming to new faces, and active UCC clergy are always invited to meet up in the Bistro for lunch or coffee.

In ecumenical life, staff members at local Methodist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran congregations are welcoming and supportive of other progressive pastors. Despite some conservative attitudes in the area, it is easily possible to have a rich ecumenical life of friendships and mutual professional support while serving Bethany UCC.

And finally, as if saving the best for last, at this writing Bethany UCC is blessed to have six

retired ministers and a retired missionary as members of the congregation! These men and women are trustworthy, helpful, supportive, and kind beyond measure. Their skill sets and experience are varied, and they can be counted on to be confidential and encouraging. They are ready friends and peers.

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

Based on past experiences, we are familiar with and flexible with part-time pastors.

### 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.

In the short term, we envision our next minister focusing on ministry to our most senior adults, and whenever possible, helping us bring in new members.

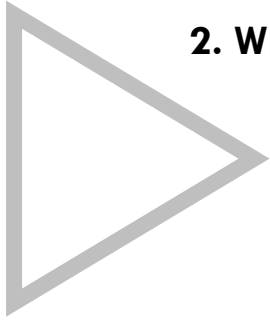
Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

As an open and accepting congregation, we see potential in ministering to individuals who are rejected by the wider community, We hope to continue and expand the support of our current community ministries.

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

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. 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. Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice
  - Loving God, following Jesus Christ, and being guided by the Holy Spirit; living a life of discipleship.
  - Praying actively and nurturing spiritual practices.
  - Being called to ordained ministry by God and the Church.
  - Continuing discernment of one's call in community.
  - Understanding the power of the Holy Spirit at work through the elements of Christian worship to nurture faith.
  - Exhibiting a commitment to lifelong spiritual development and faithful personal stewardship.
3. Nurturing UCC Identity
  - Acknowledging Jesus Christ as the sole Head of the Church.
  - Communicating passion for the oneness of the Body of Christ (John 17:21).
  - Holding active membership in a Local Church of the United Church of Christ.
  - Participating in the various settings of the United Church of Christ, including Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, General Synod, and global ministries.
  - Exhibiting a commitment to the core values of the United Church of Christ: continuing testament, extravagant welcome, and changing lives.
4. 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.



## 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?

We think that God is calling us to live as Christians, to be faithful to God's mission, and to exemplify the purpose of our commitments as stated in our Statement of Faith and our Bethany Church Inclusive Statement. We are called to embody the qualities of love, compassion, justice, and service. As a congregation, we strive to empower our members to think theologically and to act with openness to all the challenges in changing times.

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?*

**Community organizations and ministries:** Fostering Hope is an organization that strives to support the physical, emotional, and social needs of children in foster care. We recently collected requested items to make graduation baskets for high school graduates in foster care. Depending on the organization's requests, our Outreach Committee plans how we can be of service to Fostering Hope.

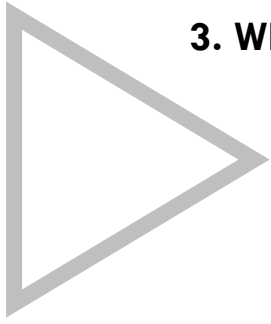
Ashure (formerly Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministry or ECCCM) is a ministry that provides crisis assistance for the people in Catawba County. On the first Sunday of each month, we collect food and monetary donations for Ashure. Twice a month, church volunteers work at the Ashure facility in the food pantry sorting bags of food that will be distributed to clients.

**Community outreach:** We have a registered Little Free Library for the community that is kept well stocked with books. There is a playground that we encourage the community to use. We occasionally offer programs to benefit the community. Our most recent was an Advance Directives Seminar for church members and the community sponsored by Hospice. Information was presented over three evenings and included legal forms necessary to complete the NC Living Will and Healthcare Power of Attorney. Completed forms were notarized for those who had made decisions and had their forms completed.

**Becoming Green:** Six years ago, we voted to become a Green Congregation, We are striving to become more energy efficient. Lights throughout the building were updated with LED lighting. The original oil-burning furnace has recently been replaced with energy efficient mini -split heating and A/C units. We are also depleting our paper products used for receptions and dinners and have returned to using dishes as well as glass communion cups instead of plastic.

**Technology:** Ten years ago, we installed a computer system in the sanctuary to enhance worship. Our tech assistants put the order of worship every Sunday on the large monitors for us to follow. The system and software have been updated recently.

**Keeping current:** We have just had sidewalks placed in our church cemetery and a pad for the installation of a columbarium. The basement of our educational wing has recently undergone improvements to correct a moisture problem. We would like to have our facility used by community organizations when there is need for meeting space.



### 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?*

Bethany UCC-Claremont is a community of Christians called to be a church of peace and justice.

We voted to be an Inclusive Church, open and accepting of all people without qualification, including persons of any race, sex, age, nationality, marital status, physical or mental ability, economic status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or gender identity, and open and accepting of all family units including traditional, single parent, divorced, never married, same-sex, parents of LGBTQ, bi-racial or multi-racial. All are invited to join in the full life, membership, leadership, employment, and ministries of this church. God is most often referred to as Creator, Loving God, Lord and Sustainer, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is referred to as Spirit of God, Sustainer and Eternal Spirit.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

Our congregation is loving, friendly, accepting, welcoming, and inclusive. We are strong in benevolence to the wider church, united in purpose and mission, with a willingness to lead and participate.

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?*

Worship at Bethany UCC is held in our sanctuary (split-chancel with choir pews on each side) and is fairly traditional, following the Lectionary and the seasons of the church year. Our congregation appreciates preaching that is theologically sound, contextual, heartfelt and challenging.

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?*

Currently, we only have one teenager in our church. He serves as an acolyte and has played trumpet during worship. Young adults participate in worship services as liturgists, serve on and lead committees and volunteer in church ministries.

We currently have one adult faith formation class that meets before worship. We have studied several books, most recently *A Bigger Table* by John Pavlovitz. At the conclusion of the study, we brainstormed ways we could expand our table at Bethany UCC and passed those on to our pastor. We also use “The Wired Word,” a weekly online publication that uses current events incorporating scripture and commentary from Biblical scholars, as a springboard for discussion. This class feels a strong bond and are comfortable sharing our innermost thoughts and concerns.

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]

Committees are defined in our bylaws. The Church Council meets monthly, and committees meet quarterly. For fast communication a Council call list is used to contact members.



# 3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

## Eleven Year Church

Includes church membership and financial information for the last eleven years

Conference:

Southern ▼

Association:

Western North Carolina ▼

Church:

Claremont, NC - Bethany UCC (7) ▼

Run Report

1 of 1 Find | Next

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



Church#: 780650

Assoc: 780

Schedule: 0 Bethany UCC

Claremont

NC 28610

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2012	86	42	33	0	0	0	4	0	-4
2013	86	40	33	2	6	0	8	0	0
2014	87	38	31	0	4	0	3	0	1
2015	87	38	24	0	0	1	1	0	0
2016	82	24	40	0	0	0	5	0	-5
2017	89	25	41	0	6	1	0	0	7
2018	89	26	21	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019	95	26	25	0	0	6	0	0	6
2020	93	21	15	0	0	2	4	0	-2
2021	93	22	12	0	0	2	2	0	0
2022	39	22	8	0	0	1	1	54	-54

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
2012	\$98,601	\$0	\$1,750	\$2,177	\$3,927	\$807	\$4,734	1.77	\$103,385	\$51,148
2013	\$113,883	\$0	\$1,250	\$965	\$2,215	\$1,180	\$3,375	1.10	\$117,258	\$58,190
2014	\$100,100	\$0	\$1,750	\$1,121	\$2,871	\$300	\$3,171	1.75	\$103,271	\$60,570
2015	\$135,052	\$0	\$1,090	\$1,073	\$2,163	\$300	\$2,463	0.81	\$137,515	\$54,127
2016	\$79,386	\$0	\$1,050	\$1,935	\$2,985	\$1,869	\$4,854	1.32	\$84,240	\$46,500
2017	\$64,886	\$0	\$2,100	\$2,293	\$4,393	\$585	\$4,978	3.24	\$69,864	\$50,000
2018	\$64,672	\$0	\$2,000	\$1,925	\$3,925	\$500	\$4,425	3.09	\$69,097	\$55,000
2019	\$93,000	\$0	\$2,000	\$1,805	\$3,805	\$360	\$4,165	2.15	\$97,165	\$64,000
2020	\$70,068	\$0	\$2,000	\$1,258	\$3,258	\$0	\$3,258	2.85	\$73,324	\$72,461
2021	\$76,753	\$400	\$2,000	\$3,171	\$5,171	\$350	\$5,521	2.61	\$82,274	\$65,430
2022	\$85,500	\$0	\$2,000	\$1,806	\$3,806	\$200	\$4,006	2.34	\$89,506	\$68,205

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2017-2022	-58.18	-12.00	-80.49	-85.71	0.00	31.77	-13.36	28.12
2012-2022	-54.65	-47.62	-75.76	0.00	1275.00	-13.33	-3.08	-13.42

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.

### 3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

---

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	29	
Number of active non-members:	5	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	34	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	41%	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	21%	
Less than 5 years:	38%	

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>
0	1	0	1	1	3	3	7	14	x

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	3%	
Households with minors:	3%	
Single adults age 35-65:	7%	
Joint households with no minors:	53%	
Single adults over 65:	33%	

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	13%	
College:	30%	
Graduate School:	40%	
Specialty Training:	17%	
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%	
Adults who are retired:	76%	
Adults who are not fully employed:	3%	

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

Our congregation’s working adults are both blue and white collar, i.e. teacher, costume designer, auto tech engineer, supervisor, senior information security analyst.

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?

White, Hispanic, African American

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:

About ten years ago we developed our Statement of Inclusion.

### 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 (1)	9	Retired Pastors
Baptisms ( <i>number last year</i> ) (1)	30	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	N/A	
Christmas Eve / and Easter Worship	35/25	Pastor and Worship Committee
Church-wide Meals	20	Fellowship Committee
Choirs and Music Groups (1)	8	Organist and Worship Committee
Church-based Bible Study	10	Pastor
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> ) Monthly	25-30	Pastor and Communion Stewards
Community Meals	N/A	
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> ) (1)	30	Pastor
Drama or Dance Program	N/A	
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> ) (4)	Range 20-80	Pastor
Intergenerational Groups	N/A	
Outdoor Worship (Sunrise Service)	20	Pastor and Worship Committee
Prayer or Meditation Groups	N/A	
Public Advocacy Work	12	Outreach Committee
Retreats	N/A	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	N/A	

Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> ) (1)	10	
Worship (time slot: <u>  10:30am  _____  </u> )	25-30	Pastor and Worship Committee
Worship (time slot: _____)		
Young Adult Groups or Classes	N/A	
Youth Groups or Classes	N/A	
Other		

Additional comments:

Our church supports Ashure Ministries, donating and volunteering in the food pantry twice monthly. We also support Fostering Hope in numerous ways as needed.

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 (Ordained Ministers)	Three- or Four- Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Nevin Feather	No			Y
Frank Spada	No			Y
Maria Spada	No			Y
Jose DeJesus	No			Y
Steve Kirby	No			Y
Kathy Naish	No			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: Various roles include Pastor Emeritus, Adult Faith Formation Leaders, Church Council, Liturgists, Communion Stewards, Tech Assistant, Committee members, Supply Pastors, Ushers, and Greeters.

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
Organist		Part-time	Worship Committee	7 years
Custodian		Part-time	Property Committee	Nov 2023 - Present

### REFLECTION

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

We are small, but everyone participates in the life and work of the church.

### 3e. CHURCH FINANCES

---

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$ 64,000.00
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	\$ 0
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”</i> )	\$ 0
Fundraising Events	\$ 0
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$ 0

Grants	\$ 0
Rentals of Church Building	\$ 0
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$ 19,320.00
Support from Related Organizations (e.g. Women's Group)	\$ 0
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$ 0
Other (specify):	\$ 0
Other (specify):	\$ 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 83,320.00</b>

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$ 98,195.00  
*Attach most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer's report as shared publicly with the congregation, or – if your church does not pass an annual budget – list current budgeted expenses here.*

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 31%

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

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

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

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

Budgeted amount is \$ 2,000.00.

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. N/A

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

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

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe :N/A

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

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

Does your church have an endowment? Yes, a restricted endowment.

What is the market value of the assets? Reasonable endowment

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

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

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: None

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

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:



## Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$ 16,676.81

Investments (other than endowment): \$ 189,900.00

Does your church have a parsonage? Yes

Fair market rental value of the parsonage: \$1,750.00

How is the parsonage used? Rental

Street / City / State / Zip: 2440 Bethany Church Road, Claremont NC 28610

Finished square footage: Approximately 2,000 sq. ft. plus garage

Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms: 4-5, 2

Assessed real estate value: Tax Value \$104,746

Available for minister residence: Y/N Yes

Expected minister residence: Y/N No

Condition of structure, systems and appliances Very Good

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs: Property Committee.

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

The church is a brick and Gothic style sanctuary with attached educational building. The upstairs educational wing consists of a pastor's and church offices, a kitchen, fellowship hall, parlor, and 2 restrooms. The downstairs has 5 classrooms, a large gathering room, and 2 restrooms. Below the sanctuary is the original church basement with 6 additional rooms, some of which are used for storage. Entrances to the church include a handicap ramp and a stair lift. Wheelchair accessible spaces upstairs include the sanctuary (excluding the pulpit), fellowship hall, restrooms, kitchen, offices, and parlor.

The parsonage is a two-story wood and vinyl siding house with a brick foundation, asphalt shingle roof, one car garage, double-paned windows, basement, and front porch. It has a pastor's study, appliances, blinds, carpet, wood, and vinyl flooring.

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

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

Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Restrooms, Offices, Parlor. We have a handicap ramp and a stair chair.

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?*

The budgeting process is completed by the Church Council.

### 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.

Approximately twenty years ago, thirty members left the church because of concern over consideration of the New Century Hymnal for church use. The hymnal was never purchased; however, the congregation was divided, and an already existing power struggle among members was fueled by the hymnal controversy, resulting in loss of members. The experience encouraged participation in conflict resolution training in the event of future controversy.

The most important event in the life of the church in the past 10 years was the decision to become Open and Accepting. Led by a pastor who strongly but lovingly encouraged us in this process, and through an extended period of study, prayer, reflection and discernment, we were led to become Open and Accepting. Some members felt it was something they were not ready for and decided to leave our church. Our Statement of Inclusion was written, and when it came time for the congregational vote, it was unanimous. We have been and continue to be enriched by all who have come into our inclusive church family.

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

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?)*

Our policy is to refer to our Spiritual Life Committee. In the past, we completed Conflict Resolution Training. If necessary, we utilize the skills of a mediator.

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

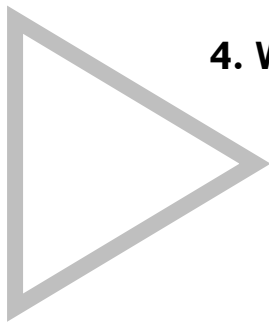
Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Colleen Samson	2009-2021	Y
Earle Potts (Interim)	2007-2009	Y
Jeffery Hammonds	2004-2007	Y
Mark Nanney	2001-2003	Y
John Gundlach III	1997-2000	Y
Melissa Wike	1993-1996	Y

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? No

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation? No

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church? No



## 4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

- a. COMMUNITY VISION
- b. MISSION InSite

### 4a. COMMUNITY VISION

---

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?*

Ashure Ministries, Fostering Hope of Catawba Valley, Corner Table, and Blanket Sunday.

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

Members of our church attend Association (WNCA) and Southern Conference meetings.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).)

Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible to All (A2A)                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Just Peace                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creation Justice                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA)        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming                  | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> God Is Still Speaking (GISS) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other UCC designations: 5 for 5 |
| <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? Yes

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

We participate in and support Blanket Sunday for Church World Service.

If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.

Our active membership is small, and we are an aging congregation. However, we are engaged in service and are eager to grow. We have persisted in our mission "to love and serve God by worshiping, learning, growing in faith and bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to all people."

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?

While there is no expectation, the congregation is encouraged when the pastor can be involved with us in community ministries.

#### **4b. MISSION InSite**

---

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

Our conference is not a registered user of MISSION InSite.

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 church's demographics are similar /comparable to adjacent neighborhoods and those to which we connect.

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

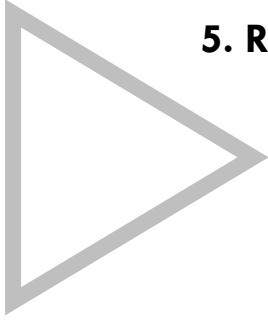
N/A

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

Our church is known as a progressive church.

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

Our inclusive statement and the contrast between us and other churches in the area.



## 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

Delilah Bragg / Retired Professional  
(360-201-6835 / [bayhaute@yahoo.com](mailto:bayhaute@yahoo.com) )

### REFERENCE 2

Ida Bostian / Arts Professor  
(828- 231- 7254 / [ida.le.bostian@gmail.com](mailto:ida.le.bostian@gmail.com))

### 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.

July 21, 2024

To Bethany UCC Candidates,

My partner and I have been attending Bethany UCC intermittently for approximately one and half years. I have found this congregation to be very welcoming and friendly. Inclusiveness is one of the strengths of this congregation. Additionally, the devotion of the congregates is clearly apparent as many go above and beyond with their support of this church. Bethany UCC is very mission oriented and for such a small church has an outstanding record of contributing to their mission objectives.

That being said, one of the areas for improvement would be to have more people attending this church. They are small but mighty. It would be a great benefit to have more people in attendance to expand the music, mission, and outreach ministry.

Our membership has been with another church. The draw to Bethany UCC for us, was to find an open and affirming congregation with a pastor that provided interesting, relevant and thought-provoking sermons. We found that in the current interim pastor.

It is important to us to have inclusivity, music, mission and an engaging pastor. A pastor that not only can teach about the bible, but that can weave the messages to relate to the current world.

I have limited knowledge of Bethany UCC, but I would be glad to answer any questions that you have.

Best regards,

Delilah Bragg  
(360) 201-6835  
Bayhaute@yahoo.com



To whom it may concern,

My name is Ida Bostian. My phone number is 828-231-7254 and my email address is ida.le.bostian@gmail.com.

I live in Black Mountain NC and work as a costume designer in Asheville and the surrounding areas. My main places of employment are Asheville Community Theatre, Brevard College, and The Warehouse Theatre in Greenville SC.

I have attended Bethany United Church of Christ frequently in the past several years. My mother, Sarah Bostian, is a member and has attended for the last 9 years. I visit her most weekends and accompany her to church and various events the church sponsors.

I have noticed that this congregation is very welcoming and personable. Not only did they greet me with much warmth but I have seen them do the same to any visitor that comes to services. They treat each other and anyone who enters with respect and acceptance. They are an open and affirming church meaning, of course, that they welcome people of all ages, ethnicities, races, genders, and sexualities. They truly live up to this title and are aware and sensitive to all folks who enter the church doors.

This congregation is also one with a great capacity for giving. They give of their time and resources equally and with much joy. Many volunteer monthly at the LINC Gift and Thrift Store in Newton, NC. and at the Ashure Ministry food bank. Each month a specific food or toiletry item is gathered and donated to Ashure. Several times a year items for baskets for children in foster care are gathered. If they are asked to donate time or money for victims of floods, hurricanes, fires, etc. they will jump at the opportunity.

Bethany United Church of Christ, like many churches I fear, is a small and ageing congregation. They are also quite homogeneous in terms of race. I feel like more could be done to encourage those outside of this tight knit community to attend this otherwise wonderful Church. I have also taken part in services at the Land of the Sky United Church of Christ in Asheville NC. They are a good example of a more diverse group. I wonder if we could partner with them or ask for some ways to bring in a more varied flock.

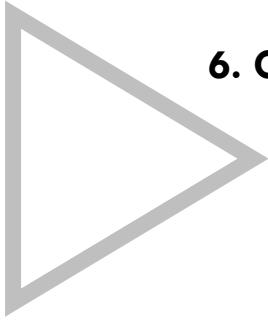
I have been to services that refer to God in a non gender specific manner and this is what I truly prefer. I know this is not the "norm" however, I feel this could be easily integrated into the services and hymns of this church and would help to further their Open and Affirming moniker.

When I first started attending church services with my mother, not only was I welcomed eagerly but I was included in a group that was in charge of the service one Sunday. This was so very special to me as I am not a member but was trusted to speak to the congregation. They continue to treat me with love and respect and have never pushed me to fully join. Although, I know that I would be welcomed with open arms at any time.

I hope this narrative has been helpful in your getting to know and understand this truly special church. Please get in touch with any questions or if I can clarify any specifics. Please know that this is a loving and resilient bunch who deserve the most caring and nurturing of pastors.

Sincerely,

Ida Bostian



## 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:*

Eternal God, we come before you with grateful hearts. We acknowledge your sovereign guidance in all the things we are planning to do. As our church seeks new pastoral leadership, we ask for your wisdom and discernment. Lead us to the pastor you have prepared to shepherd our congregation. Help us find someone who will be faithful to you and can lead with integrity, inspiring us to grow closer to you.

Give the search committee and church leaders clarity and unity in their decision-making as they consider all candidates with fairness and wisdom. As a congregation, help us to be patient and to trust in your perfect timing. Open our hearts and our minds to receive and support the new pastor with love and respect.

In Jesus' name, we pray. 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.*)

Church Profile Committee, Council President, Church Treasurer, Interim Pastor

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Congregational surveys were completed and collected.

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**



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*