UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

The First Church in Jaffrey

The organization is variously referred to as FCiJ and First Church. The words “Congregational,” “United Church of Christ” and/or “UCC” are often inserted under the name of the Church when appropriate to indicate the historical and current denomination affiliation.

14 Laban Ainsworth Way, Jaffrey, NH 03452
Mailing address: P.O. Box 673, Jaffrey, NH 03452

Supplemental web links:
Church website: https://www.firstchurchinjaffrey.org/
First Church in Jaffrey YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCM5K0zoemuNodHkhVpEhxoA

Position: Settled Pastor

NH Conference, UCC/Southwest Association
February 19, 2021
The First Church
in Jaffrey, NH
Formed 1780
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**MEET The First Church in Jaffrey in our short video:** [https://youtu.be/FVC9mAw3rL8](https://youtu.be/FVC9mAw3rL8)
LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: The First Church in Jaffrey
Street address: 14 Laban Ainsworth Way, Jaffrey, NH 03452

Supplemental web links:
Church website: https://www.firstchurchnjaffrey.org/
First Church in Jaffrey YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCM5Koz0emUNodHkhVpehxoA

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person
Rev. Gordon Rankin, Conference Minister, 603-715-9527
grankin@nhucc.org

Summary Ministry Description:

By the beginning of 2020, First Church had journeyed through a 4-year period of organization restructuring, financial system overall, and revised bylaws. We were poised to search for a settled pastor and move ahead. Then COVID-19 struck. Our buildings closed in early March. All the local organizations that use them canceled plans for the summer. We were unable to hold the 104th Annual Summer Fair. Our interim minister, Rev. David Felton, our Minister of Music Gene Faxon, our moderator, and other leaders have used creativity and hard work to keep our small church community together through weekly videos featuring meditations, music, and photos.

We established a “buddy” system and tried to pair individuals who previously had not been close friends with one another. We published a substantive bimonthly newsletter, sent out frequent e-blasts, and held four outdoor services in the fall. First Church grew in spite of COVID-19! Five new members or associate members joined this 240-year-old church on October 18, masked and socially distant but spiritually close, in an outdoors ceremony attended by 36 people at the Horsesheds behind the Jaffrey Meetinghouse.

What is the work ahead? We need someone to deal with the new realities – and unknowns – that are a consequence of more than a year’s worth of restrictions, quarantine, and grief. We are looking for a pastor who can help us grow spiritually, in our relationships with one another, in our engagement with the community and world, and in our welcome to those who are looking for a community of faith. First Church wants to attract new participants to its worship and good works, increase the use of our buildings by local arts and social service organizations, and strengthen our ties to the community, both in Jaffrey and the Monadnock region.
What we value about living in our area:

- The small-town setting with a strong sense of community;
- The natural beauty framed by Mt. Monadnock that offers scenic trails and back roads, lakes and ponds, historic buildings;
- A variety of arts and entertainment options year-round;
- Proximity to several NH, VT, and MA colleges, as well as Boston; and
- The interesting mix of native new Englanders and newcomers from other states who add to the area’s character.

Current size of membership: 76 members and associate members (January 15, 2021)

Languages used in ministry (other than English): None

Position Title: Pastor/Minister

Position Duration:

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

Compensation Level:

¾ Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? Yes

SCOPE OF WORK for Three-Quarter Time Pastoral Position

Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship including scripture study, crafting of liturgy, planning of music in collaboration with Minister of Music.

Faith formation and vitality through prayer, Bible Study, service, and identifying helpful resources for lay persons.

Encourage collaborative leadership among congregation

Pastoral care
Community engagement

Weddings and funerals for individuals with a connection to First Church

Strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry

Participation in wider UCC church activities such as conference and association meetings as time permits

Core Competencies:

▸ Preaching skills, that include enthusiasm, humor, and respect for theological diversity in worship

▸ Skills to help the congregation deal with life’s challenges, particularly as related to aging and health issues

▸ Ability to lead a regular “Bible study” discussion with emphasis on connecting our faith to ethics in everyday life and how different faiths approach common issues

COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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

$ 68,066 ¾ time

Benefits:
Salary includes Benefits

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

Naturally we would prefer that the minister live in our parsonage, but we are open to other arrangements including a housing allowance.

Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister.
See above.
State any incentives:
None at present, but could be discussed.

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

Both the Southwest Association of NH and the NH UCC Conference offer peer and professional support if needed. The NH UCC organizes a yearly Prepare to Serve conference in February for pastors and lay persons that addresses a wide variety of issues. First Church has retired clergy among its active participants who have offered professional support to the pastor in the past. In addition, we always budget money for retreats, seminars, and other educational opportunities that a pastor may want to attend.

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

We have been flexible in the past, scheduling pastoral responsibilities and meetings to accommodate work or educational commitments.

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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

First Church is blessed with many wonderful resources: we are located in a beautiful part of New Hampshire and have well-maintained and handsome buildings and grounds; we are financially stable; we have strong and faithful leaders; we care for one another and connect in meaningful ways through Bible study and other small group gatherings.

We are an older congregation, and while at first glance may appear to be homogeneous, we are accepting and welcoming of diversity. We are well known in the area for the Electric Earth concert series, our annual church fair, and as a venue for receptions and performances. And while these are wonderful ways of reaching the larger community, we recognize we have the gifts for doing and being more.

One of the questions before us is how we can grow beyond our current comfort and stability; we see this as an important task ahead of us, and hope our next pastor will work with us to discern God’s invitations.
In the past four years, we worked with our pastors to redesign our bylaws and committee structure. This was an intentional and prayerful process, looking carefully at the reality of who we are as a church and discerning what structure might best serve the ministries of our small church at this time.

We also went through a careful process of creating a new covenant, reflecting who we are as a community of faith. We engaged in small group conversations, with each group writing their own draft for our covenant. The congregation then spent time discussing the different drafts to discern which most defined who we are and who we desire to be; the final covenant was voted upon at a congregational meeting.

The work on our bylaws and our new covenant has laid a strong foundation upon which we hope and pray to grow.

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

First Church is a 5-for-5 congregation, and is generous in its financial giving locally, to the UCC and to other ministries seeking our support. Over half the proceeds from our annual church fair supports local ministries. We have not been as engaged collectively in “hands on” ministries, and while many people are involved individually in local outreach ministries, we are looking for support to become more involved as a congregation. Some possibilities include partnering more often with the United Church of Jaffrey, UCC (the other UCC church in Jaffrey) and opportunities to connect more with members of the Quaker Meeting and/or other churches in town.

Our building and grounds are beautiful and lend themselves to a number of possibilities for outreach. Our church hosts concerts and supports the annual Amos Fortune summer lecture series; we have a labyrinth, a Memorial Garden, and space for day retreats. We have energy for and interest in offering our building and grounds for programs (book discussions, prayer groups, Bible study, etc.) and performances that draw people together and bring them into the church.

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

NA, given the membership and location of our church.

**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.

Our Search group selected five areas.

- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God’s call, reflective of Christ’s mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.
- Bringing life to sacred stories and traditions in worship, proclamation, and witness.
- Providing hope and healing to a hurting world.
- Experiencing and appreciating a variety of theological perspectives.
- Respecting the dignity of all God’s people.

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?

First Church has a history of strong lay leadership and is seeking a pastor who can listen deeply for the hopes, needs and visions we have for our church, and work with us to discern the church we are called to be. We envision a pastor who brings strong scholarship in theology and Biblical studies, and is able to make this knowledge relevant to the issues we face in daily living. We have a long-standing tradition of musical excellence, and are looking for a pastor who will collaborate with our Minister of Music in using music to enhance our spirituality, as well as creating vibrant and faithful worship services. First Church is progressive theologically and open to different experiences of worship that help to deepen our faith and draw us into the world.

We recognize that conflict is inevitable in any community and seek a pastor who is able to lead us through experiences of conflict and help with healing. As we begin to gather physically after the last year’s required “distancing,” we especially need a pastor who is able to help us come together again, and to heal from grief and loss. We created an effective “buddy system” for pastoral care during the pandemic, and hope a pastor would help us find ways to deepen and build on the personal connections that formed.

Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.
Going Virtual and Going Outside – Meeting COVID Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed substantial challenges for church communities, large and small. Services in small churches embrace community togetherness, singing, close contact with friends – all of which create the perfect environment for Covid-19 transmission.

Due to mandated shutdowns which began in mid-March, First Church in Jaffrey stopped holding in-person worship services in our 1832 brick church facing the Jaffrey Common. We asked ourselves – how can our staff and leadership help members and friends meet their spiritual needs? The answer was to create videos with short meditations, music, and photos, put them on a YouTube platform, and send them to members and friends via e-mail.

It’s a team effort. Our Interim Pastor selects the scripture and prepares his remarks. Then a reader, often one of our members who is a professional actor, records the scripture reading at home or even outdoors. The music team consists of Minister of Music Gene Faxon, and soloists from our choir – a soprano, alto, and tenor. They choose music that supplements the meditation theme chosen by David and practice early in the week.

It all comes together on Thursday under the direction of a member (also our moderator) who possesses skills in photography and video recording. She records the short meditation and the musicians in the church sanctuary and adds the reading along with appropriate visual images. Members and friends receive the e-blast with links to YouTube on Friday; they are encouraged to share the service with family and friends.

The meditations often explore living in the pandemic world from a Christian perspective and are enhanced by both classical and contemporary music, instrumental and choral. The music and the message are complemented by photos featuring not only the Monadnock region, but images captured by the producer and other church friends in their travels.

In early Fall before cold weather descended, we experimented with outdoor services in a space behind the Jaffrey Meetinghouse and in front of the 1810 Horse Sheds, convenient to the church for transporting chairs and speakers and shielded from traffic noise. Masked, socially distant, but spiritually close, these gatherings were a great success. Depending on how long it takes to control COVID, we will probably do this again once warm weather returns. In fact, summer outdoor services may well become a new tradition.

When it became obvious that we could not hold Advent and Christmas services in the church, the video team brainstormed ways to create a visual experience that involved more members and looked more like a traditional service. The sanctuary was decorated with wreaths, candles, and poinsettias. Against this backdrop, Advent candle
lighting by different individuals was part of each week’s service, along with special music and readings.

Entering the virtual world has also involved establishing a church Zoom account (used for meetings and Bible study), installing Wi-Fi range extenders in our buildings, and a decision to redesign the web site. One member organized an old-fashioned buddy system for people who appreciated a regular phone call from a church friend.

March 2021 marks the first year of “going virtual.” We did not think it would be this long, but much has been learned and our sense of First Church community has not been lost.

**CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS**

Describe your congregation’s life of faith.

The home page of our church website proclaims what is at the heart of First Church: *Traditional Worship, Progressive Theology, Welcoming Community*, followed by the UCC tagline *A Just World for All*. We are very much a community church, with most of the members coming from Jaffrey. We look to Sunday worship to provide us with “food for the journey”: fellowship, questions and grounding to carry us through the week ahead.

We are a congregation that welcomes newcomers and tries to welcome new ideas, and that creates a safe place for those who are seeking a community. We proclaim that God is here ~ with us in our worship, and with us when we leave. We look to the life and teachings of Jesus to guide us in our life as community and as individuals. We accept that as followers of Jesus, we are called to love as he loved, to be makers of peace in his name, and to work toward justice for God’s beloved people. We pray to be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit within our church and beyond our doors.

God’s Holy Spirit has been with us down through the years;
God’s Holy Spirit is with and within us now;
God’s Holy Spirit will continue with us to the end of the age,
And if we are not now in a state of Grace,
May God help us to arrive there.

*Search Committee Member Ed Poole,*
*who notes this was partially plagiarized from Joan of Arc.*
Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

Our congregation projects the feeling of family, a sense of welcome and care to members and visitors. This translates into a level of authenticity as evidenced in openness, intimacy, engagement.

We offer progressive theology, comfortable worship, good music, and a contemplative space.

A notable generosity which is evidenced not only in financial support, but willingness to look out for one another and friends in the community.

More than ¾ of the congregation have been participants for 10 years or more, with generational connections in several cases.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Worship at First Church is traditional without being rigid. We use the New Century and Pilgrim hymnals and our choir sings both traditional choral and contemporary music. While our worship is flexible, reflecting the style of the pastor or guest preacher, it follows a pattern familiar to most UCC churches; the sermon and music are central to our worship. We have been fortunate to have creative and diverse pastors who are able to preach sermons that are theologically strong, include personal stories and examples, relate to the concerns before us as a congregation and community, and leave us with questions to ponder. We appreciate the preacher creatively weaving poetry and other readings into the sermon, engaging our imagination as well as encouraging us to think differently about an issue or Biblical story.

There is a welcoming spirit in our worship; we are quick to laugh, and people readily lift up concerns and celebrations during the welcome and time for prayer. We are blessed with our Minister of Music, whose style is collaborative, and who enriches our worship with his own music and with his ability to choose music appropriate for our choir and congregation.

During the pandemic, our Interim Pastor, Minister of Music, several choir members and a “technically skilled” lay person have videotaped meditations, hymns and Taizé services, creating beautiful worship that is easily accessible. We were grateful to have had four outdoor services during warmer weather and to be able to be together as a worshipping community.
Describe the educational program/faith formation vision of your church.

Our congregation is largely composed of older adults from many walks of life; many have retired to New Hampshire from other places. While we may look alike, in reality these individuals represent a diverse array of life experiences, faiths (or questions), and skills. Our primary education program is termed “Bible Study” – its focus depends on the pastor or whomever is teaching. Every survey indicates that Bible Study in some form is very important to many members. We hope to strengthen our ongoing offerings and incorporate a variety of approaches.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

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

Typically, the Executive Circle and the Trustees Circle meet once a month, usually taking August off. Those meetings last 1 ½ hours; the pastor is expected to attend only the Executive Circle unless his or her presence is requested. The task-oriented Circles, such as Worship, Communications, and Benevolence meet less often, typically 4-6 times per year. Those meetings last an hour to an hour and one-half. As an estimate, 5 hours a month are spent in meetings. During this COVID year, the time spent in meetings has been far less, and most have been conducted via Zoom. Communication among Circle members is also handled via e-mail and phone.

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

Several years ago, our then Pastor after serving only nine months informed the moderator at a scheduled meeting that she was resigning and had mailed all parishioners a letter of resignation. It came to all as a shock. Reasons cited were “…we were simply a wrong fit for each other…” and “…I have been repeatedly reminded that our aspirations and approaches to achieving those aspirations are markedly different, no better or worse than the other, just different…”. Ninety days’ notice was given. The Moderator promptly contacted the NH Conference from whom excellent advice and other support were received throughout this unexpected crisis.

Immediately, the Church Council met in Executive Session to discuss the situation. Following this meeting the Moderator sent a letter to the entire congregation as well as to the many “friends of the church” apprising them of the situation. The Council unanimously supported a recommendation that two separate gatherings be held so that members and friends of the church would have opportunity to review the events, grieve and consider our future. The church’s members and friends at that time included seven retired ordained-clergy, six of whom participated in the well-attended group meetings.
These discussions revealed cracks in the Pastor-congregation relationship, in that some sermons had been perceived as highly critical of the congregation’s attitude toward change. In addition, there had been resentment over the Pastor’s decision to stop leading the Bible Study group. The Pastoral Relations Committee and Pastor had met monthly; the lay members later reported that they believed that problems involving style and expectations could be resolved. Furthermore, it should be noted that general opinion was that the Pastor was an excellent preacher and writer who created inspirational worship services.

The departing Pastor’s last service was late in November; it was a formal farewell and was followed by a reception. Initially the Pastor planned on leading services through Advent and Christmas, but the Executive Committee decided that the church’s best interest would be served by having two of our ordained clergy members serve through that season. The departing Pastor’s new residence was not available until late January, so an amicable rental agreement to continue in the parsonage for the final three weeks was reached. A new search committee was formed, and the nominating committee persuaded all leaders to hold their jobs for another year. The pulpit was again filled in May of the year following the resignation.

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, see Website for description of structure and bylaws: https://firstchurchinjaffrey.org/leadership-organization/

11-YEAR REPORT

See Appendix for 11-year report.

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS (as of December 15, 2020)

Describe those who participate in your church.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of active members:</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of active non-members:</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):</td>
<td>84</td>
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</table>
### Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Estimate?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 10 years:</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>Yes, for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 10, more than 5 years:</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 years:</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
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### Number of total participants by age:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>0-11</th>
<th>12-17</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25-34</th>
<th>35-44</th>
<th>45-54</th>
<th>55-64</th>
<th>65-74</th>
<th>75+</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>37</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Are these numbers an estimate? (Check if yes)

### Percentage of adults in various household types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Estimate?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single adults under 35:</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes, for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint household with minors:</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single adults age 35-65:</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint household with no minors:</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single adults over 65:</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Education level of adult participants by percentage:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Estimate?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school:</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Yes, for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College:</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School:</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Training:</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Percentage of adults in various employment types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Estimation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults who are employed:</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Yes, for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults who are retired:</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults who are not fully employed:</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:
- teacher, arts organizer, state employee, retail manager, human resources administrator, accountant, musician, actor, clergy.

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up.
Our congregation historically has reflected the homogeneity of rural northern New England. Many participants, however, were not raised in the UCC tradition, but come from Catholic and many Protestant denominations. Others have had no church affiliation but are looking for a spiritual home as they grow older. Thus, views on religion, politics, environment, and governance are diverse.

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one on the near future?
In fall 2019, roughly 25 individuals participated in three discussion sessions organized around revising our bylaws. Diversity was part of that conversation. This group rewrote our Covenant language as follows:

We covenant with one another and with God, as members and friends of The First Church in Jaffrey, to unite in Christian fellowship, worship and service, exemplifying the teachings of Jesus Christ.

We covenant to communicate openly and respectfully, seeking a vision for our church in the world. Like our forebears, we depend on the Grace of God and the Holy Spirit to lead, inspire, and empower us to love one another and to seek peace and justice.

All who wish to be in covenant with us are welcome regardless of age, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual or gender identity or expression, physical or mental ability, education, immigration status or economic status.
The First Church in Jaffrey is a member of the United Church of Christ and as such, shares a common goal to be in covenant with the church universal and all of God’s creation.

### PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways of Gathering</th>
<th>Estimated number of people involved in attendance</th>
<th>Who plans each of the listed gatherings? (list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Groups or Classes Bible Study</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Pastor, lay leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptisms <em>(number last year)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Groups or Classes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Eve and Easter Worship</td>
<td>60 to 80</td>
<td>Pastor, Minister of Music, Worship Circle (Virtual in 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church-wide Meals</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Hospitality Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choirs and Music Groups</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>Minister of Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communion <em>First Sunday of the month</em></td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Pastor, Worship Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Meals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation <em>(number confirmed last year)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama or Dance Program</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Project Shakespeare Program rents space 1-2 times per year, with Moderator overseeing None in 2020, building closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funerals <em>(number last year)</em></td>
<td>2 (outside)</td>
<td>Pastor and Minister of Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergenerational Groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Worship</td>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>For pandemic year, Pastor, Minister of Music, lay leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer or Meditation Groups</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>Prayer Circle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Public Advocacy Work

- **Retreats**

### Theology or Bible Programs in the Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weddings <em>(number last year)</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>COVID meant no weddings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Time Slot</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>10:30 am Sunday</td>
<td>35-50 Outdoor worship attracted 35-40 in fall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Young Adult Groups or Classes

### Youth Groups or Classes

### Other: Church Fair

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church Fair</td>
<td>300 plus</td>
<td>Fair Circle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments:

We do have occasional weddings and baptisms, but in the 2020 COVID year, the church buildings closed in early March.

**List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers.**

At present First Church has seven ordained ministers in the congregation, all of whom are retired or semi-retired.

- Marvin Caldwell, retired, UCC, participant
- Diane Durgin, retired, UCC, inactive member
- Nancy Elder-Wilfrid, retired UCC, active member
- Ilona Kwiecien, Tree of Life Temple, participant
- Anne Webb, retired Episcopal priest, participant from April to December
- Cassius Webb, retired Episcopal priest, participant from April to December
- Daniel Wilfrid, Retired, Lutheran, active associate member
List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff.

In theory, the pastor is the head of staff, but in practice the staff works collaboratively, coordinating with church officers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Position</th>
<th>Head of Staff?</th>
<th>Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)</th>
<th>Supervised by</th>
<th>Length of Tenure for current person in this position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interim Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td></td>
<td>15 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper</td>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Music</td>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td></td>
<td>16 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REFLECTION**

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

We are a church of active and lively men and women in the second half and last third of life experience. The energy and strength of this congregation draws others of similar ages or even younger into our “family” and programs. We do not have a Sunday School or Confirmation Class, but we do offer spiritual sustenance through worship service, music, Bible explorations, and pastoral care. The annual Summer Fair connects the church with our community at large through the joy of working together to benefit others.
## CHURCH FINANCES

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving</td>
<td>$98,850.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)</td>
<td>$32,219.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowment Draw (beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”)</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising Events</td>
<td>$3,268.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose: Memorial gifts, special offerings</td>
<td>$2,035.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rentals of Church Building</td>
<td>$585.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rentals of Church Parsonage</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from Related Organizations (e.g. Women’s Group)</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfers from Special Accounts, see below</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify): interest income</td>
<td>$10.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify): Woods International Outreach Fund</td>
<td>$2,707.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$134,676.15</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): $130,754.30

2021 budget and 2020 year-end reports available upon request.

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

37.2% for 2021

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

Never
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)

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

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered?
$3,600 per year, budgeted as a line item. Other 5 for 5 Benevolences are supported by special offerings.

What is the church’s current indebtedness? None

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.

None Planned.

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

None in last 10 years

**Does your church have an endowment?** Yes

What is the market value of the assets? $530,197.49 (12/31/2020)

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

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)?
Similar, 4.5 to 6%

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: Only in 2019

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

In 2014, faced with financial pressures, First Church raised its spending policy from 4.5% of the 12-quarter average to 6%. That is how we have avoided or lowered deficits since then. The 6% spending policy is a bit higher than we would
like, but it is well below the “prudent man” maximum of 7%. The goal is to keep the endowment stable.

Other Assets: None

**Does your church have a parsonage?** Yes

- Fair market rental value of the parsonage: $1,400/month including heat, electricity, water
- How is the parsonage used? Interim Pastor lives there
- Finished square footage: 1,888 square feet
- Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms: 4 bedrooms, 2 half baths, 1 full bath
- Assessed real estate value: $190,000
- Available for minister residence: Yes
- Expected minister residence: Negotiable
- Condition of structure, systems and appliances: See below

Built in 1877, the late Victorian style Parsonage with a center hall design has been well maintained and continuously updated. The home has hardwood floors throughout, while the stairs, front hallway and upstairs hallway are carpeted. The main floor consists of a living room, dining room (large but undivided), den with fireplace, kitchen, half-bath, laundry, and a 3-sided, glass enclosed porch. The second floor has a master bedroom and half bath, three additional bedrooms, and full bath. All rooms have closets. A large attic provides considerable storage space. In 2010, new countertops, sink, stove, and microwave were installed in the kitchen. A dishwasher was replaced in 2011. A new washer and dryer were purchased in 2019. The cellar under the Parsonage houses the boilers for the Parsonage and Parish House as well as the oil tanks for both buildings. All were replaced in 2014. A Comcast/Xfinity hookup for the internet, tv, and phone is available.

- Plowing, mowing, landscaping are handled by the Trustees Circle, as are heating, electric, and water costs.

**Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs:**
- Trustee Circle

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

The sanctuary, Parish House, and Parsonage are all connected by passageways with locked doors to secure and separate the three individual spaces. The lower level of the Parish House contains one large room and three smaller ones (with windows); it is accessible from the first level, but also has a separate entrance and driveway.
Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church: NA

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? The worship space and the main level of the Parish House

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

First Church has a longstanding commitment to mission/benevolences. Other priorities are fair compensation for all staff and ongoing maintenance of our historic buildings, which are located in the Jaffrey Center Historic District. The church complex forms part of a preserved landscape that includes the historic 1780 Meetinghouse, the Jaffrey Common, the Horse sheds, and the oldest cemetery in Jaffrey. The budgeting process is done through collaborative discussions among the trustees, the treasurer, and Circle chairs before being presented to the members for approval. Beginning in 2017, the church undertook a major financial transformation by transferring its accounting operations from Cahaba Works to QuickBooks.

Looking to the future, the church has invested in a major redesign of its website by a professional company based in Keene, NH who build and maintain websites. The new website went “live” in mid-February 2021.

**HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation.

**The Annual Summer Fair – Our Signature Event**

For more than 100 years, First Church has held its Fair on the first Wednesday in August from 1 to 4, with the exception of a few years during World War II and the 2020 COVID-19 year.

In the 1870s when the church itself was having financial difficulties, the Benevolent Society (or Ladies Aid Society) as well as individual ladies held fundraising events, the “avails” of which were given toward the minister’s salary. From that period onward, the women volunteered to support the needs of the church and the community. The roots of today’s fair can be found in a fundraising event held in 1882 which netted $99.
By 1916, the annual summer Fair had taken its prominent place in the life of church and community. Over the succeeding years, the proceeds from this event grew considerably, making it possible for the women to contribute funds for upkeep and renovations for the church, parish house and parsonage. Nor was their giving limited to just parish needs, especially since the 1940s when the Benevolent Society (or Ladies Aid Society) and the Missionary Society were combined to form the Woman's Society. It then led the way in contributing to various relief funds for the victims and refugees of World War II.

Today the First Church Fair is an event by and for the broader community. It grosses between $8,000 and $14,000 depending on weather, donations, and the economy. It depends on roughly 100 volunteers, of which only one-third are church members. The entire church is involved in producing the fair and deciding the recipients of its work. The proceeds are distributed to as many as 15 nonprofit organizations that serve Jaffrey and the Monadnock region, as well as scholarships for Conant High School graduates. A smaller portion of the revenues go to the church’s operating budget.

What does this “Fair” look like? For three hours on a Wednesday, the red brick church, Parish Hall, the adjacent 1775 Meetinghouse, the Horse Sheds, and the Jaffrey Center Common become a magical bazaar of treasures and a carnival of children's games. When the doors to the Meetinghouse open at 1 sharp, the building is jammed with shoppers searching for bargains among priced-to-sell antiques and collectibles, art prints and paintings, vintage linens, jewelry, and crafts. Other shoppers seek out books, “white elephants”, pots and pans, small appliances, furniture, garden goods, and the bakery table. Distinguished items from antiques and art are placed in a Silent Auction. The popular Children’s Fair features a strength test, dunk tank, rides in a 1914 Model T Ford, along with many games with great prizes.

The Fair has changed over time, and will continue to do so. But it remains a signature event for First Church, a keystone in outreach and mission. COVID-19 canceled the 104th Fair. In the words of the current Fair committee chair, “In the absence of the First Church Fair there is a void in our hearts (not working together to raise funds for church and community), but probably not so much in our muscles and stamina (considering all the hard work involved!). A longtime member argued, “Gosh, I think Church Fair is a Command Performance, not something you volunteer to do!!! I do not consider it work but a special time for socializing and reconnecting with friends one sees only at The Fair.”

Another volunteer echoed the sentiments of others: “Really missed the Church Fair this year!!! I missed the community of those who ‘are always there’, the awe I have for the community gathering at large, the traditions of really a lifetime and generations....”
Ode to the First Church Fair by Julius Seelye Bixler (1970s)

We’re the good ladies of Jaffrey’s First Church
Embarking once more on our annual search
For what is available
Tasteful and saleable
Sure that you don’t want us left in the lurch.

So please scour your attics and cellars again
For objects now hiding in store-room or den
You may find a treasure
A real source of pleasure
For which the right buyer has long felt a yen.

The Fair as you know is what makes Jaffrey famous
Along with its very distinguished son Amos
But his Fortune’s made
While ours is delayed
We’re waiting for some millionaire’s will to name us!

We won’t ask for food till the great day is here;
We would like your jewels and heirlooms so dear
And elephants white
Are such a delight
We’ll take them, although they may look rather queer.

So bring what you think you can make as donation
We hope this will stir the entire congregation
Your gifts may be slight
But what seems just a mite
Can have its effect on the whole world’s salvation!

The Joy of Music

The stories in our profile show how music underlies spirituality, community identity, and outreach for First Church. Unique instruments, a remarkable space, and people – donors, performers, and audiences – have made this possible.

The Wessel Pipe Organ
First Church installed an Estey “Church Electronic Organ #1657” in 1956, thanks to a generous donor. Some 20 years later, this instrument was failing, and there was consensus that it should be replaced. But with what – another electronic instrument or a pipe organ? Despite the cost, in 1974 the congregation voted for the electropneumatic
pipe organ to be built by John Wessel. The price, excluding needed alternations to the sanctuary, was $10,716. Donations helped fund the purchase.

John Wessel used old and new parts in the organ. He had secured a used organ from an Episcopal Church in Worcester, and made many of the new components in his Brattleboro shop. Finding replacement parts, however, was a continual problem. In 1988, Wessel recommended that the church convert to a solid-state coupler and extension system which had no movable parts. Money was raised, and the conversion was done.

Congregational support for a fine organ has continued. Even into the 21st century, First Church has never hesitated to approve maintenance, repairs, and tuning for the 1975 Wessel organ. Another generous donor allowed the church to replace the bellows and purchase a set of chimes from England in 2003.

Although it’s a modest 20th century pipe organ in a small rural church, this instrument, says our current Minister of Music, Gene Faxon, “has clarity of tone and great versatility.” He adds that even with guitars and folk music making inroads into religious services, “the sacred sound of an organ is inextricably linked with church music.” In 2011, First Church hosted the American Guild of Organists to celebrate the Wessel Pipe organ in a free concert that featured organ music from the 17th through the 20th centuries.

**The Baldwin Grand Piano**

The Baldwin concert grand arrived at First Church in 2009, a gift from Penny Warfield, the daughter of woodcarving artists Robert and Virginia Warfield. In April 2009, a concert by pianist Virginia Eskin titled “Music Inspired by Mountains” inaugurated the piano and launched the First Church in Jaffrey concert series, under the artistic direction of Minister of Music Gene Faxon, who came to First Church in 2005 on a part-time basis.

The series thrived for roughly four years, with an ambitious schedule of programs in the spring and fall, as well as special New Year’s Wassail celebrations. The music performed ranged from Beethoven and Chopin to ragtime, and was performed by jazz bands, string quartets, and soloists. Along with Virginia Eskin, concerts developed and performed by pianist Eve Kodiak were highlights of the series. Another memorable event was “Music in the Afternoon, Songs and Piano Works by Amy Beach” performed by Virginia Eskin, Diane Cushing, the KSC Woman’s Choir and Faculty.

In 2012, the Minister of Music and the Music Committee reviewed the feasibility of the concert series. The goal had always been to attract people to the church and raise its profile in the community. This had worked very well – musicians and audiences loved the acoustics and ambiance – the Electric Earth concert series rented the sanctuary for two concerts that year. The Wassail concert, although still popular, experienced declining attendance and came at a hectic time of the year for all musicians.
First Church had offered a St. Lucia service in December for three years, spearheaded by members in the congregation of Swedish descent. This drew a large crowd, but also placed more demands on the Minister of Music at Christmas time. Gene and the committee had also supported a Midsummer Festival on the Jaffrey Common near the summer solstice in June—another Scandinavian celebration. It was popular, but again it was another event that demanded Faxon’s time and money from the music committee.

Throughout all of this, Gene Faxon was organizing and performing special music with instrumentalist and soloists for the Easter and Christmas services. He worked with our small, but talented choir to diversify the music they sang, including early American hymns and spiritual songs from other countries. We incorporated Taizé services into the church calendar, in part due to a member who had visited this community in France. A church member put Gene in touch with songwriter Eliza Gilkyson in Austin, Texas; her Requiem, which found a renewed audience after Hurricane Katrina, became a favorite in the choir’s repertoire. A two-manual harpsichord belonging to Gene moved into the sanctuary to add one more voice to the worship experience.

By 2015, there was little time or energy available for the concert series. Gene had to cope with turnover in pastors, and he had teaching jobs outside the church. The congregation needed to focus on pastoral leadership and restructuring. Music, however, continued to enrich our worship, and the service always closed with a piano or organ postlude that held everyone’s attention for final moments of contemplation.

Now, the Electric Earth Concert Series considers First Church its “home” and rents it more frequently for concerts which draw 70 to 100 people. With COVID, the music has come full circle from a mechanical pipe organ to services that are videotaped and transmitted via YouTube to members’ and friends’ computers. The Wessel organ, Baldwin piano, and our singers are still there to bring joy in a difficult time.

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

**Seeking Simplicity and Inclusion in Governance**

By 2015, it became apparent to the church leadership that the decades-old organizational structure was not working well. With a gradual decline in members (82 in 2015) and attendance (average of 38), the nominating committee had problems recruiting 12 deacons, three officers, and members for five major committees. In addition, the Woman’s Society functioned as a separate organization with its own five-member board, treasurer and bank account. It allocated funds raised by the Fair, purchased kitchen supplies, oversaw the Parsonage, and was in charge of coffee hour and other social events. Many members had to serve on multiple committees or boards. The Sanctuary, Music, and Christian Education Committees were not active
The Chair of the Woman’s Society resigned in mid-2015 after a 10 year-tenure, and no one would take on the job. The moderator assumed this chairmanship as a temporary measure; she worked with the departing WS Treasurer and church treasurer to incorporate the WS’s funds and tasks into the church operating budget in 2016. Not only did it seem anachronistic to have a Woman’s Society in the 21st century, but the congregation felt that everyone who worked on the Fair should have a say in how the monies were distributed.

The church called two designated term co-pastors in May 2016. One, Rev. Robin Lunn, was charged with facilitating governance reorganization and bylaw revisions. In October the pastors and congregation shared Vision Sunday to identify where we would want to invest our energies in 2017. A critical issue involved streamlining the committee structure to create a more open form of governance that encouraged the participation of all members and friends. Robin proposed a Holacratic Model as “an interlocking system of family groups getting work done efficiently,” with an Executive Circle at the center. After much discussion, the bylaws were suspended in January 2018 and the reorganization began.

Committees became Circles, the deacons’ duties were absorbed into a Worship Circle, the activities of the inactive Woman’s Society moved into the Worship, Hospitality, and Benevolence Circles. A Justice Ministry Circle was created, but ultimately did not work out. The Circles are task-oriented with clearly detailed responsibilities. Participation is voluntary, but all individuals active in the life of the church are encouraged to volunteer for at least one. Many Circles are open to nonmembers, and do not need to meet monthly. The reorganization was not an easy path. It was lined with frustration and conflict, but also fostered pride in accomplishing significant change and bringing more voices to the table of church governance.

Ultimately the Executive Circle expanded its voting membership to include representatives chosen by each Circle: Communications, Pastoral Relations, Trustees, Worship, Fellowship, Benevolence, and the Fair. This change allows the EC to function better as a coordinating body and as a diverse sounding board for discussions about the church’s future. The Executive Circle and the Trustees Circle meet monthly; Worship (which handles all aspects of worship) tends to gather bimonthly. Only the moderator, treasurer, clerk, and trustees are elected at the annual meeting. Congregation meetings – called Supercircles or gatherings – occur each quarter following worship. The Fellowship Circle oversees a simple “sandwich lunch”, and 25 to 30 people typically stay to “lunch and learn.”

*Revising Bylaws and Financials*

The suspension of the bylaws continued through 2019, and a bylaws task force was created. The quarterly meetings that year focused on the bylaw revisions, with the goal of having new bylaws ready for the annual Congregational meeting in early 2020. A major effort was made to use more contemporary language and present a realistic
picture of the First Church in Jaffrey. Issues discussed in depth included the covenant, membership, and the new organization. The bylaws were passed in January 2020.

A financial reorganization took place concurrently with the bureaucratic restructuring, but with similar goals – simplicity, accountability, and transparency. The church switched from Cahaba Works software to QuickBooks with the aid of a church member and a consultant. Bank accounts were merged, and procedures created for disbursements. Reports were finetuned. In late 2017 we hired a new administrative assistant with bookkeeping skills, who ultimately became the official bookkeeper. This reduced the burden of work on the volunteer treasurer. In 2020, a new church member agreed to be the Assistant Treasurer.

Just as the Circles were functioning well, COVID emerged and everything changed. The Executive, Trustees, Benevolence, Communication, and Pastoral Relations Circles continue to meet, primarily via Zoom. The Moderator, Pastor, and Minister of Music coordinate the video meditations and occasional outdoor services.

**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.

First Church has learned that it is critical to first inform the broader leadership and then involve the congregation in identifying the conflict and working out a resolution. This is true whether we are talking about the pastor’s behavior or a proposal to remove two front pews. We have used small gatherings after church and sessions in private homes as venues for discussion. It has been very helpful to have a skilled facilitator who knows the congregation, but is not a part of it. Simple techniques like sitting in a circle and passing a “talking piece” have made it easier for everyone to express an opinion. Part of our new governance structure involves holding a congregational “gathering” every quarter, to update the congregation on projects and ask for input. We are trying to be better listeners.

Conflict has arisen regarding the role of the Pastoral Relations Circle during times of pastoral challenges. We have a supportive PRC, and that is the first place that concerns by and about the pastor are explored. It is a safe place for clergy to express their thoughts. Some members have been resentful about “not knowing” everything immediately, regardless of privacy and confidentiality concerns.
We aspire to these Values and Practices when it comes to conflict:

**Practices:**
- Provide opportunity for all to listen and talk
- Pastoral Relations Circle
- Connect with NH Conference
- Use of skilled facilitator who knows congregation
- Prayer

**Values:**
- Communication
- Listening to others
- Respect and compassion

An example of how a conflict was handled at First Church follows.

First, some background: We called two, married co-pastors for a three-year Designated Term Pastorate, each at 15 hours per week for a total of ¾ time with emphasis on Redevelopment and Repositioning our church for the future. They each brought roughly 20 years of experience. Each woman had a portfolio that emphasized her special gifts. This ministry got off to a great start. Unfortunately, in the second year of their time with us, their 18-year marriage dissolved. Though both tried to handle things professionally regarding their ministry with our church, it became obvious that they could no longer work together. One minister left after 2 ½ years with us; and her wife, with a new contract for the full ¾ time, completed the three-year (plus a few weeks) contract. Toward the end of her time with us, she announced her call to a new church.

The divorce and resignation were unexpected and unsettling to the congregation and the interim process in which they were involved. The minister who stayed on for the full three years had as the major part of her portfolio the changes around redevelopment. She brought many ideas about how First Church could move forward and tried to build an inclusive decision-making process, but underestimated the time and communications effort needed to implement them and bring the congregation into the process. The members of First Church had been accustomed to carrying the leadership responsibilities because of previous short-term pastorates and understandably had some reluctance to make major changes suggested by a pastor who would only be with us for three years. Despite the turmoil, significant changes were made such as the holacratic (Circles) governance structure, a new financial system, website redesign, sanctuary reorganization (removing the first row of pews), and expanding the use of our building for concerts and other community programs.
### Ministerial History (include all previous ministerial staff for the past 30 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff member’s name</th>
<th>Years of service</th>
<th>UCC Standing (Y/N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quentin L. Peacock</td>
<td>1990-1993</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel B. Leavitt, Interim (two terms)</td>
<td>1993-1997</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Hough Ross</td>
<td>1995-1997</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert K. Nace, Interim</td>
<td>1997-1998</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh H. Knapp</td>
<td>1998-2001</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Merrick, Interim</td>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah A. Hill</td>
<td>2000-2008</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marvin J. Caldwell, Interim</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert R. Kyte</td>
<td>2010-2013</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynda Lee Snyder, Interim</td>
<td>2013-1014</td>
<td>ABC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan L. Tarolli</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shayna Appel, Designated Term Pastor, Co-Pastor</td>
<td>2016 -2018</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin R. Lunn, Designated Term Pastor, Co-Pastor</td>
<td>2016- 2018</td>
<td>ABC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin R. Lunn, Designated Term Pastor</td>
<td>1/2019 to 7/2019</td>
<td>See above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Felton, Interim</td>
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Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

Our history of ministry reveals resiliency and strong lay leadership. The congregation highly values good sermons and is accepting of changes in worship ritual. Abrupt change is not welcomed, but gradual changes achieved through well-presented discussions with members and friends and tested through experimentation tend to succeed. Humor and reason smooth the process. A collaborative relationship with the pastor works best for all, even though this may take time and effort to achieve.

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
COMMUNITY VISION

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

During this COVID year, First Church has maintained its financial support for service activities near and far. We upheld our “5 for 5” UCC status through e-blast and newsletter appeals. The Benevolence Circle, which is charged with distributing the funds raised by the previous year’s Fair, decided to focus on food and mental health issues in the community and directed support to the Jaffrey Food Bank, Monadnock Family Services, Shelter from the Storm, and other nonprofits that we knew were helping families deal with COVID and trauma. We did donate to the Children’s Literacy Project based in Vermont, a favorite project of church members, which gives books to students through libraries and schools. We were unable to hold the annual Fair, our major outreach and fundraising event. However, many individuals donated to the Virtual Fair Fund, so we will have money to help our neighbors next year, regardless of what happens this summer.

The church administers the Woods International Outreach Fund which was established by family members to honor their parents who were longtime members of First Church. A committee of family and church members awards scholarships each year for local high school students who wish to study and travel abroad. Woods scholarships have helped young people build houses in Central America, join in a youth orchestra trip to Europe, participate in a Rotary student exchange in France, and join high school trips to Europe and China. At a coffee hour following the worship service, these students share their experiences and talk about the impact of foreign travel on their lives. COVID put this program on hold, but hopefully several scholarships can be awarded in 2022.

Closer to home, we have collaborated with the Harvest Christian Fellowship Church in Jaffrey in their JaffJam event which provides 200 backpacks with school supplies for local students.
Describe your congregation’s participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ

Our pastor normally attends at least one meeting of the Southwest NH Association. Two to five members attend the February Prepare to Serve one-day event sponsored by the NH UCC Conference and report back to the congregation.

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.

___ Accessible to All (A2A)
___ Creation Justice
___ Economic Justice
___ Faithful and Welcoming
___ God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
___ Border and Immigrant Justice
___ Inter-cultural/Multi-racial
___ Just Peace
___ Global Mission Church
___ Open and Affirming (ONA)
___ WISE Congregation for Mental Health
___ Other UCC designations:
   ___ Designations from other denominations
___ None
First Church has not been involved in any of the above UCC initiatives. Our energies have focused on nurturing our small congregation, attracting new participants, the Summer Fair, and promoting greater use of our buildings by community groups.

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

Every year First Church holds joint Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday (with a Tenebrae supper in some years) services with the United Church of Jaffrey, the other UCC Church in Jaffrey.

On Memorial Day, Veterans Organizations hold observances in the town’s five cemeteries that include a rifle salute, the playing of taps, and a prayer. First Church’s pastor offers the prayer at the Old Burying Ground and often at least one other cemetery.

**If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities?**

The lines on our logo and website are probably the closest thing to a mission statement: Traditional Worship, Progressive Theology, Community Service. The covenant in the newly adopted bylaws speaks to broader concerns and future directions. When the church is able to gather again in person after the pandemic ends, we will face adjustments and possibly new directions. “Normal” as it was before is unlikely to return.

**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?

Because our pastor is part-time, community ministry is low on the list of priorities for his or her time.
Comment on your congregation’s MissionInsite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown?

First Church is located in the Monadnock Region of New Hampshire.

Demographic trends according to the MissionInsite report:

Population is estimated to grow just under 2% by 2024. (Slightly under state average) Population trends in Jaffrey and in the state are similar with the over 65 population reflecting the largest increase in age group over the next 10 years. (3.13% per year). Median age for Jaffrey is 41 (State 43)

**Education:**
32% High School or Equivalent (State-27%), Some College 18% (State-Same), Associate degree 8% (State 10%), Bachelors 21% (State 23%), Advanced Degree 14% (State-Similar)
*Jaffrey as a whole has a high degree of educational attainment.*

Other:
50/50 mix of blue collar to white collar employment
Very homogeneous, primarily white

Income:
Average Household income $85,046 vs $93,230 (State)
Poverty index is somewhat below the State Average.

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?

They mirror the aging population trend and high degree of education, as well as the state’s homogeneity. The church’s internal demographics reveal a higher number of white-collar professionals and retirees than the town or state and higher income levels.

Comparisons are difficult with neighboring towns, all of whom are distinct, not cookie cutter replicas. Some are dominated by summer residents, others have more blue-collar employment, still others have reinvented themselves as art centers or commuter satellites for Keene, Concord, Nashua, and Manchester.
Moreover, these MissionInSite numbers are 2019. During 2020 with COVID, real estate boomed because of people moving from urban areas because they are working remotely. The trend of people moving to the Monadnock area to retire continues; but we are experiencing younger people buying homes as second homes to “sit out” the pandemic and plan for retirement. Demographic trends could shift; that is an unknown.

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

The demographics of the older, well-educated retirees seeking a new community have always greatly benefitted First Church. The church is not ethnically diverse, but its members are diverse in theology, politics, and interests – this is attractive to most older newcomers to the region. We may not have children in the congregation, but we welcome grandchildren with great enthusiasm; for some, this is their first experience with a church.

We are mindful, as older individuals, that many become less mobile as they age. We always offer pastoral care and make arrangements to bring Bible study and worship to members who can no longer physically come to church. The video meditations created for worship during COVID have been greatly appreciated by this group.

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

Leaders of the regions’ art groups value the church’s excellence as a venue for concerts (it is “home” to Electric Earth Concerts) and other performances. The church’s financial support for local service and welfare organizations through the Fair revenues is recognized, and a reason many in the community volunteer to work on the Fair. The Amos Fortune Forum bring lectures on a wide array of issues to the Meetinghouse for seven Friday Evenings in July and August. The lectures are free to the public, and the reception held at First Church offers the audience a chance to meet the speakers. First Church has always partnered in events that celebrate the history of Jaffrey Center, like a weekend-long celebration of Willa Cather (she summered in Jaffrey Center and is buried here) and a recent program launching a new book on Laban Ainsworth, the first pastor of the church. In the last two years, Project Shakespeare has used First Church for its performances of Shakespeare play and Dickens’ A Christmas Carol; these performances involve teenagers from local schools and bring an entirely new group of people into the church. Church members are deeply involved in community leadership, having served on town boards and commissions and the boards of nonprofit agencies in both elected and volunteer capacities. First Church members were instrumental in
founding Monadnock at Home, a service to help people age in place, and Shelter From the Storm, which provides transitional housing and services to individuals and families who find themselves homeless.

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

The friendliness of people in the congregation — several have remarked that being invited and led to coffee hour after the service was welcoming. Others commented that the diversity of thinking among members was stimulating and helped create a safe space for an array of opinions. Music is frequently cited as an attraction.
REFERENCE 1
Richard Cassius Lee Webb, Retired Minister, 603-532-6672, rclwebb@myfairpoint.net

I am an Episcopal priest, resident in Jaffrey Center very near First Church. My wife’s family have been summer residents of Jaffrey Center since the 1880s, and always attended First Church when they were here, even though some were Presbyterians or Episcopalians. When I married Anne, I was still in seminary at the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and she had just graduated from the same institution. During our working ministries, we spent our vacations in Jaffrey Center, and attended First Church on Sundays after an early service at All Saint’s Episcopal Church in nearby Peterborough. I have therefore been somewhat involved, though never a member, of First Church since 1969. Since our retirement, we have moved to Jaffrey Center full time, and continue our involvement, including working on the annual Church Fair.

Although my habits and my theological and liturgical preferences are thoroughly Anglican, I have been much impressed over the years with the strength of First Church as a community of faithful members, deeply committed to one another and to the wider community in which they live and serve. Sunday worship at First Church in that time period has varied enormously, reflecting largely the personality of the presiding minister; but there has always remained some thread of pastoral integrity in the announcements, requests for prayers, and general sense of welcome and joy of the congregation in being in each other’s presence. There is rejoicing and commiseration in plenty, both during the service and afterwards.

In recent years, an important asset to First Church has been the ministry of music, led by the organist and choir director, Gene Faxon, and supported by a small but dedicated choir. It has been traditional in the best sense, with deep respect for a variety of musical traditions, lively and austere. Gene’s faithfulness and imagination have been remarkable and deeply pastoral, while dealing with clergy of very different visions of the place of music in worship.

In different circumstances, First Church members have shown their commitment in appropriate ways, from the huge and almost universal participation in the summer Church Fair in years past to the continued volunteering and taped services of music, scripture, photography, and meditation, in these times of pandemic.

I would say that First Church is a generally healthy congregation of willing disciples with a pretty clear sense of what “being church” means. In the last two years, their numbers have been somewhat depleted by deaths and members moving away, but the present interim minister has been a consistent non anxious presence, appreciating them and helping them deal with these and other sources of discomfort, including their response to the current pandemic. If they call a wise and compassionate listener and patient teacher as their next settled minister, I believe they should flourish.

I would be happy to talk further with anyone. My contact information is below.

Yours faithfully, (The Rev.) Cassius Webb
I offer my views of the First Church in Jaffrey [FJIC], as a non-member friend of the church, a 31-year resident in the village community, and an engaged member of civic organizations in the area.

Situated in historic Jaffrey Center, within (yet somewhat distinct from) the larger town of [East] Jaffrey, the handsome FJIC, along with the neighboring 1775 Meeting House, serves as a community focal point. It physically “anchors” the ‘Common’ or village center, and it is equally a locus of various social activities in addition to church services. The FJIC and its congregation are welcoming, charitable, and service oriented. In my estimation, church members are generally agreeable, interesting, comfortable, educated.... and understated, or “Yankee” modest.

The attached Parish Hall has been host to a range of open fellowship meetings (luncheons, yoga, bridge club, A.A., Christmas parties) which serve the community. The sanctuary itself has hosted weddings, funerals, musical events, lectures, celebrations, etc., which also serve the populace.

I appreciate that the ministry at FJIC has always seemed to me to be progressive, collaborative, relevant, and apolitical. The decline in America of non-evangelical churches/religions is concerning, ministries like the FJIC are at risk unless there are cultural/structural shifts, or ways of appealing to youth.

The FJIC is annually the prime mover of this community’s largest public event. The annual (for more than 100 years!) Church Fair, engages virtually all of its members, and a great many nonmembers in planning, donating, collecting, sorting, setting up and taking down everything needed to create the event. It’s one big day, (backed by months of effort and hundreds of volunteer hours) for a sale of antiques, art, baked goods, luncheon, plants, furniture, electronics, dry goods, and children’s toys and games etc. The proceeds are divided between Church missions, and several local charities. Though a tremendous effort, the Fair brings the community together in a happy (and nostalgic) event, and draws people in from many other towns and backgrounds. This FJIC project and ‘celebration’, serves great purpose and is practice worth preserving.

Respectfully,

Richard Stein
REFERENCE 3
Patty Scholl, Retired Social Worker
917-658-2166 (cell)
pschollster@gmail.com

I am a retired clinical social worker who has been a non-attending Quaker all of my adult life. My first experience with The First Church in Jaffrey was as a teenager when I was a guest at a friend’s summer cottage. Her family attended a Congregational church in Westchester County most of the year but attended The First Church faithfully when here in Jaffrey.

Eventually, I came to live in Jaffrey. I would attend the Christmas Eve service and always would take the week off to work on the Church Fair. This is where I experienced the sense of community, acceptance of everyone no matter what the persons’ religious beliefs or church affiliation, and the commitment to helping others (here in Jaffrey or in other parts of the world).

Over the years, I have experienced the love and acceptance of diversity of the congregation. As a Quaker, I never experienced a pastor or minister. We also did not sing hymns in my meetinghouse. I really appreciate singing hymns and having a choir. Also, a wonderful music director who pulls all of this together.

I have learned through the past 15 years of the importance and tone that a minister can bring to a fellowship. I appreciate the value of life experience and inclusion of intellectual content. The First Church has had quite a few different ministers since I have been living here these past 15 years. The fellowship demonstrates the commitment to acceptance of all people, to share their concerns and prayers for each other and for struggles in the world. Members truly care about each other and have great love and warmth for each other.

I appreciate those ministers who became a part of the broader Jaffrey community and were not just there for members of The First Church. I hope that the Search Committee can find a new minister who can provide the spiritual, intellectual and community involvement we all value and appreciate.

Please feel free to contact me.

Patty Scholl
Search Committee Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, Gracious God, Divine Spirit: We turn to you in anticipation and with a longing to bring joy into the work we have been entrusted to do. We begin not knowing the path our search will take, yet assured that with your help the destination will be reached. We ask that you guide our Search Committee through the process of calling a settled pastor for our First Church Family; direct each of our steps as we seek to connect the caring and spiritual closeness of this church’s past and present to the challenge and change of an unknown future...and grant us the wisdom not to resist! May our decisions be as mindful of future generations as those who preceded us have been. May we speak thoughtfully and listen carefully to each other and to those who come before us as candidates. Help us to consider the wants and needs of our congregation when looking for a new leader who will be best suited to inspire our church community...one who will not only lead us spiritually but will help us grow as a community as well. Help us to discern the important and disregard the trivial. Give us vision and insight...and open our hearts to all new ideas and possibilities. In thanks we pray, Amen

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? Sylvia Hamilton, Clerk, Janet Grant, Treasurer, Bobbie Gilbert of the Pastoral Relations Circle, Rev. David Felton, Ken Campbell, Trustees Chair

Search Committee:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Zip</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Jo Marvin</td>
<td>12 Governor Square</td>
<td>Peterborough</td>
<td>03458</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cmjmarvin@gmail.com">cmjmarvin@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>David Bliss</td>
<td>700 Gilmore Pond Road</td>
<td>Jaffrey</td>
<td>03452</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dgbiss77@gmail.com">dgbiss77@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy Elder-Wilfrid</td>
<td>23 Parsons Lane</td>
<td>Jaffrey</td>
<td>03452</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nelderw@gmail.com">nelderw@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sam Greene</td>
<td>785 Gilmore Pond Road</td>
<td>Jaffrey</td>
<td>03452</td>
<td><a href="mailto:greeneappraisal@gmail.com">greeneappraisal@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pam Hill</td>
<td>20 Cutter Hill Road</td>
<td>Jaffrey</td>
<td>03452</td>
<td><a href="mailto:philloncapeod@gmail.com">philloncapeod@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ed Poole</td>
<td>33 Woodstone Square</td>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>78703</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ekpoole@austin.rr.com">ekpoole@austin.rr.com</a></td>
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<tr>
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<td>21 Cutter Hill Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carol Hess, ex officio as moderator</td>
<td>PO Box 747</td>
<td>Jaffrey</td>
<td>03452</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hessjaffrey@gmail.com">hessjaffrey@gmail.com</a></td>
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Mary Jo Marvin
Search Committee Chair

X

March 2, 2021
VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

The First Church in Jaffrey is in good standing with the Southwest Association of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ

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

To the best of my knowledge, the ministerial history contained in this profile is complete

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

To the best of my knowledge, the financial information included in this profile is presented thoroughly.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:  
Name / Title: Gordon Rankin, Conference Minister
Email: grankin@nhcucc.org
Phone: (603) 715-9527
Date: 3/3/2021
### UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS**

**Church#:** 440910  
**Assoc:** 488  
**Schedule:** 0  
**The First Church in Jaffrey UCC**  
**Jaffrey**  
**NH** 03452

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<td>$167,287</td>
<td>$79,113</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$151,931</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$3,600</td>
<td>$4,276</td>
<td>$7,876</td>
<td>$7,916</td>
<td>$15,792</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>$167,723</td>
<td>$89,540</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
<th>MEMBERS</th>
<th>AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE</th>
<th>CHR ED/ FAITH FORM</th>
<th>TOTAL ADDITIONS</th>
<th>TOTAL REMOVALS</th>
<th>CURR LOCAL EXPENSES</th>
<th>TOTAL OCWM</th>
<th>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>-26.83</td>
<td>-2.78</td>
<td>-16.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>19.15</td>
<td>-5.26</td>
<td>17.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-2019</td>
<td>-30.23</td>
<td>-25.53</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>200.00</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>46.15</td>
<td>-3.10</td>
<td>44.92</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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.