

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

**Stratham Community Church
Stratham, NH 03885**

Settled Pastor

**New Hampshire UCC Conference
Rockingham Association**

October 4, 2020

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
- Position Posting

Who Is God Calling Us to become?

*“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)*

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US? LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: Stratham Community Church

Street address: 6 Emery Lane

Supplemental web links: strathamchurch.org

<https://www.facebook.com/strathamcommunitychurch>

<https://www.instagram.com/findfaith1/>

Additional ecumenical affiliations: United Church of Christ

Conference: New Hampshire UCC Conference

Association: Rockingham County Association

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:

Reverend Gordon Rankin

Conference Minister, New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ

140 Sheep Davis Road

Pembroke, NH 03275-3711

Telephone: 603-715-9527

Email: GRankin@nhcucc.org

Summary Ministry Description:

The Stratham Community Church is a welcoming community of faithful, active, and giving individuals devoted to sharing our spiritual life. Missions are an integral part of our church life. For example, we care for the homeless by providing shelter and food through our support of Seacoast Family Promise and the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen. These are just two of the current missions we actively support with time, talent and treasure.

We celebrate worship with music from our wonderful choir, energetic brass band, multi-generational handbell choir and guest musicians. We are open to trying new and/or different ways to celebrate God and our faith. Our congregation gathers after Sunday worship for fellowship with coffee hour, periodic potlucks, and Welcome Sunday in the fall.

Our committees and boards are blessed with committed volunteers giving their time and energy to our church business.

Our online presence has diversified and grown to adapt to our new reality after the pandemic – worshipping online with Facebook Live, creating a new church website and an Instagram page. We want this to continue as a key part of communication with our congregation and the greater Stratham community.

We have a strong commitment to our children and provide opportunities for their faith journey with children’s messages, Sunday school, and youth group.

Our congregation is passionate about missions. We want to continue our commitment to missions and our community. We are searching for someone who also has a passion for missions and will lead us in our continuing focus on missions, teach us the word of God and bring us new ideas.



Front view of the Stratham our Church



View of the Sanctuary during Sunday worship service



Members of Stratham Community Church on a mission trip to Guatemala

What we value about living in our area:

The town of Stratham is a small, suburban community. Our church was established in 1716, the same time as the town was incorporated. We are close to the beach and the mountains, and a one-hour drive from Boston, MA or Portland, ME. We are located in a wonderful area with small town charm, but access to large cities.

Current size of membership: 171

Languages used in ministry (other than English): none

Position Title: Pastor

Position Duration: Settled - a full-time pastor serving SCC in a long-term ministry

Compensation Level: Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?
Yes

SCOPE OF WORK

General job description/responsibilities.

This full time Pastoral Position will include:

1. Spiritual Guidance and Pastoral Care
 - Provide pastoral leadership for creating and maintaining a framework that inspires, nourishes, and informs the spiritual welfare of the congregation
 - Be responsible for the worship experience at Stratham Church. The Pastor will provide overall worship planning leadership. Additionally, the Pastor will be expected to participate at weddings and funerals as necessary
 - With the staff, provide pastoral care for the congregation and for all who seek comfort and guidance through the church; foster a culture of care
 - Be an active participant in the leadership of the adult education program
2. Leadership and Development
 - Be the head of staff supervising and encouraging a collaborative approach with the pastoral, program, and administrative staff; participate in annual and ongoing performance evaluations based on Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual

- Promote the personal, spiritual and leadership growth of pastoral and lay leaders
 - Provide staff support and spiritual guidance to the following committees: Personnel, Finance, Stewardship, and other committees
 - Promote healthy behaviors in the congregation, Council, and staff, and identify and address unhealthy behaviors when seen
 - In collaboration and consultation with the Moderator, provide leadership to the Church Council and the Trustees
 - Promote and interpret the church's mission
 - Engage in professional development opportunities
 - Maintain current standing in the NH UCC
3. Community Engagement and Partnerships
- Serve as a community representative of the church, supporting partnerships and relationships with community groups and other churches
 - Represent the church in the community in social justice initiatives
 - Oversee the church's relationship with internal partners, such as the Seacoast Family Promise, St. Vincent De Paul Community Assistance Center, Transportation Assistance for the Seacoast Citizens (TASC), and others
 - Regularly engage in congregation-wide fellowship activities
 - Ensure a high level of community connection and representation with organizations like the Community of Congregations as well as develop and maintain strong relationships with other clergy within the community Stratham Church serves
4. Resource Development and Fiscal Management
- Lead the congregation in being a welcoming community, growing its participation/membership and finances consistent with the programs and theological mission of the church
 - Responsibly manage the church's financial resources in cooperation with the Trustees and the Finance Committee
 - Take a leadership role in efforts to achieve long-term financial goals of the church

Core Competencies:

- Communicator
- Energized
- Sociable
- Collaborative
- Open-minded
- Nurturing

COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis: Competitive Salary within Conference Guidelines

Benefits: Salary plus Benefits

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

Housing allowance. We do not have a parsonage.

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

The Town of Stratham is a beautiful New England town with many residential options. The Greater Seacoast area is very similar. It is expected that the Pastor would reside somewhere in the Greater Seacoast area with Stratham being the preferred location, but not mandatory.

State any incentives: None

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

The New Hampshire Conference offers monthly Pastoral Leadership Development Support for all clergy in the Conference. The Rockingham Association Clergy meets at least once a month for ongoing peer support. Many of the area ministers and rabbis belong to the Portsmouth Area Ministerium Group to discuss congregational issues and to plan interfaith events.

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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

To understand the direction the congregation wishes to go and to lead strongly, dynamically, and spiritually:

- To grow our faith in ways that allow us to be better followers of Christ To be an active presence in the community
- To demonstrate dynamic leadership and strong communication skills
- To work closely with church leadership on strategic, operational and spiritual growth initiatives
- To work collaboratively with the congregation and staff to grow programs within the church including music, Christian Education, outreach and fellowship

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

We seek a Pastor who has a passion for the missions supported by the church, will become involved in the community and will be better informed to lead our church outreach efforts effectively and bring new ideas to us.

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

We are an English-speaking congregation. We do not have any specific cultural capacities; however, our ministerial leader is expected to work collaboratively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity.

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. 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
- Exhibiting a commitment to lifelong spiritual development and faithful personal stewardship

2. WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE AND MERCY

- Drawing on the ministry of Jesus Christ to confront injustice and oppression

- Understanding community context and navigating change with a community
 - Engaging in mission and outreach
 - Building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence
3. CARING FOR ALL CREATION
- Nurturing care and compassion for God’s creation
 - Maintaining a basic understanding of mental health and wellness
 - Practicing self-care and life balance
 - Providing hope and healing to a hurting world
 - Attending to one’s own spiritual and pastoral care, including engagement in supervision as appropriate
 - Stewarding the resources of the Church
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

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?

- God is calling us to serve and be a vital part of our community.
- God is calling us to strengthen our congregational connections, which have been strained by the pandemic.
- God is calling us to grow our faith and to become better followers of Christ.

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

God is calling us to continue being an integral part of the community as we have for over 300 years by supporting and hosting American Red Cross blood drives, Scout meetings, church suppers, Seacoast Family Promise guests, The Clothes Attic, Stratham Circle Learning Center and various support groups.

The church is also involved in supporting organizations to help end food insecurity such as the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, End 68 Hours of Hunger, Crop Walk and the Salvation Army Food Kitchen.

The Clothes Attic and the Stratham Circle Learning Center are two examples of the church recognizing a need in the community and directly addressing that need. The Clothes Attic was established over 42 years ago initially to address young families' need for ever-changing sizes of their children's clothes. It then expanded to include adult clothes and other accessories. The Stratham Circle Learning Center (SCLC) was established to address the need in the community for a preschool with extended hours for day-care. The need was addressed and during the COVID-19 pandemic, SCLC was designated an emergency day-care center by the State of NH.

WHO ARE WE NOW?

- CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS
- 11-YEAR REPORT
- CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS
- PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING
- CHURCH FINANCES
- HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation’s life of faith.

The congregation is very mission oriented. Missions are the heart of Stratham Community Church. We believe part of our faith is to help those not as fortunate as we may be. Sunday morning worship is certainly a very important part of our faith community, but we spend time, talent and treasure throughout the week working with and supporting many nonprofits in the area, as well as regionally, nationally, and internationally. We have had a number of mission trips to Guatemala and a Native American reservation over the last few years.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

The congregation is very engaged in the missions of the church. We have several local missions (Seacoast Family Promise, Salvation Army Soup Kitchen, St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, End 68 hours of Hunger, TASC, Crop Walk etc.) actively supported by many in the congregation, both in time and financially.

We care for each other. During the COVID-19 situation, a phone tree was set up to make weekly contact (at a minimum) with members/friends that were alone or confined to their residence.

We operate a thrift shop (The Clothes Attic) in our building to provide the community with good quality pre-owned clothes and accessories at very reasonable prices. It has operated for the last 42 years and is operated by all volunteers. For the last 14 years, we have operated a preschool and day-care center in the church to provide quality preschool and day-care to the local community. Our congregation works very well together. We come from very diverse backgrounds and experiences, but all pull together to support our common goals.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Our Sunday morning worship takes place in our 250-seat sanctuary. The service is usually a typical congregational format with scripture readings by a member of the Diaconate, a sermon by the Pastor, multiple music selections including an anthem by the choir and 2-3 hymns sung by the full congregation. (COVID-19 caused us to suspend Sunday worship in the sanctuary. The worship service is now on Facebook Live). The children are with us for the beginning of the service and leave for Sunday school after Children's Time, given by the Christian Education Director. We have announcements at the very beginning of the service before the regular service begins. Our music co-directors use both our organ and piano during the service. We quite often have brass instruments as part of the music selection. The brass players are members of our congregation. Additionally, we have guest musicians that bring us varied music selections. We also appreciate having different forms of worship as described below.

We also have a very warm tradition of "Thankful Dollars". The minister asks if anyone would like to present a "thankful dollar". Members of the congregation come to the front of the church to share a moment with the congregation. It could be a major anniversary or birthday, the birth of a son/daughter or grandson/granddaughter, etc. Through the years we have watched shy young children be carried by their parents to the front to put in their "thankful dollars" with the parents' assistance. As the years go by, we have witnessed these children grow in confidence and be excited to speak with a microphone in front of the congregation. The money collected is given to the Christian Education Committee for their programs.

We have had numerous times that the congregation has been treated to a different format for worship and enjoyed the change. An example of this was a "Cocoa and Carols" service during the Christmas season last year. Everyone had a lot of fun and enjoyed it very much. Our congregation is warm and friendly with each other and with newcomers.

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

Stratham Community Church Sunday School strives to develop an individual's basic knowledge of the Bible. We encourage a deeper faith through stimulating, thought-provoking and engaging discussions and projects. We offer opportunities to be Disciples of Christ.

Using fellowship, mentors, mission and outreach, we will transform our deeper faith into actions we take with us into the week and the world. We will explore the essential stories from the Bible, thus strengthening our faith and maturing our youth into responsible Disciples of Christ.

Sunday school is for youth between the ages of three and twelve and is during the church service. Our Christian Education Director, Lily, invites everyone to come to Sunday school after the children's message is shared. Children are picked up at coffee hour after worship is over.

Our adult education includes book groups and Bible studies organized by the lay people of the church as well as the Pastor. These are scheduled throughout the year.

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

The church has a very well-organized structure for decision-making. (A copy of our bylaws and latest annual report are attached to this profile.) The Church Council, led by the Moderator, is the primary governing body. The Council has oversight responsibility for the rest of the boards/committees.

Many of the boards/committees (Deacons, Trustees, Mission & Justice, etc.), including the Council, meet monthly to accomplish their respective missions. The Pastor is encouraged to attend as many of these meetings as possible. The typical meeting, for any of the boards/committees, lasts one hour with some going longer if needed. The congregation is kept abreast of the church activities by a weekly email (SCC News) published every Thursday.

The COVID-19 situation demonstrated our ability to respond quickly and effectively when the crisis presented itself. We immediately decided to close in-person worship and all activities at the church. We set up Facebook Live as our way of continuing worship online. We switched to a GoToMeeting or Zoom format for our board/committee meetings. Our SCC News was used as our primary communication link with the congregation during this timeframe.

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, attached to this profile.

11-YEAR REPORT

See attached Eleven Year Church Report run 3.10.2020.xlsx

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	121	
Number of active non-members:	50	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	171	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	73%	X
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	18%	X
Less than 5 years:	9%	X

Number of total participants by age:

-11	0-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
7	8	5	8	10	4	0	8	0	X

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	2	X
Joint household with minors:	35	X
Single adults age 35-65:	20	X
Joint household with no minors:	30	X
Single adults over 65:	13	X

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High School:	4	X
College:	5 5	X
Graduate School:	3 5	X
Specialty Training:	6	X
Other (please specify):		

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	6 ⁶ 6	X
Adults who are retired:	3 ³ 2	X
Adults who are not fully employed:	2	X

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

Our congregation is made up of people from professional backgrounds including teachers, business leaders, real estate brokers, office workers and very few hourly laborers. A significant portion of our active congregation is retired.

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?

We are a mono-cultural congregation; however, we have been Open and Affirming for around 15 years which is one of our commitments to diversity.

We strive to educate ourselves to understand the issues of diversity through the missions we serve, social justice and educational opportunities. We are open to new opportunities developing that understanding.

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:

We are open to this sort of exercise.

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings?
Adult Groups or Classes	10	Pastor
Baptisms (<i>number last year</i>)	4	Pastor, Deacons
Children's Groups or Classes	20	Christian Education Director, volunteer teachers
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	200/120	Pastor, Music Director, Deacons
Church-wide Meals	35	Deacons, church volunteers
Choirs and Music Groups	15	Music Director
Church-based Bible Study	10	Pastor, church volunteers
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	Once a month	Pastor, Deacons
Community Meals	30-40	Church volunteers
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	0	Pastor, Christian Education Director
Drama or Dance Program		
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	3	Pastor, Deacons, Music Director
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship		
Prayer or Meditation Groups		
Public Advocacy Work		
Retreats		
Theology or Bible Programs in		

the Community		
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	0	Pastor, Deacons, Music Director
Worship (time slot: 10:00am)	65	Pastor, Music Director, Deacons, Christian Education Director
Young Adult Groups or Classes		
Youth Groups or Classes	5	Christian Education Director

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant?	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (<i>Y or N</i>)
The Rev. Allan Lurvey, Th.D.	Four-Way		Counselor, alternate preacher	Yes

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Office Administrator		Part-time	Pastor & HR Committee	6 months
Sexton		Part-time	Office Administrator & Property Committee	4 years, 1 month
Christian Education Director		Part-time	Pastor & Christian Education Board	3 years, 10 months
Co-Music Directors		Part-time	Pastor & Music Committee	1 yr, 8 mos/ 4 mos
Stratham Circle Learning Center Director		Full-time	SCLC Advisory Board & Trustees	4 years

REFLECTION

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

We have a close-knit congregation, and we enjoy worshipping and working together. We respect traditions in our worship structure and practices, while striving to be creative and engaging. With COVID-19, we have applied this creativity to transfer our worship service online, and most recently an outdoor service. We donate efforts to many missions but may need to work on incorporating the broader community into our work.

CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$108,928
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	\$9,063
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose (Capital Campaign)	\$56,205
Grants (Ella Anderson Trust)	\$5,000
Rentals of Church Building	\$4,760
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$N/A
Support from Related Organizations (<i>SCLC and Clothes Attic</i>)	\$98,664
Transfers from Special Accounts (Portfolio Interest)	\$8,500
Other (specify): (Spring Challenge)	\$22,475
Other (specify):	\$0
TOTAL	\$313,595

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$177,641

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. That is the percentage? 48%

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

We have always paid our financial obligations to our ministers...for over 300 years.

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year?

X	Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
X	One Great Hour of Sharing
	Strengthen the Church
X	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?

We pay our OCWM support as a fixed dollar amount in the annual budget. The current support is \$7,000/year, which is 4% of the total budget.

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: 0

Reason for debt: N/A

Are capital and other payments current? Yes

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

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2018/20	Basic Capital Campaign	\$277,000/325,000	\$316,374 so far	Maintenance of 1837/40 buildings

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

The current campaign was instituted to catch up with deferred maintenance of our buildings that were built in the mid-1800s. We replaced the roof, installed lightning rods across the whole building, replaced the septic system, replaced the flooring in our preschool, paved some of our parking areas and repaired the pavement in other areas, installed security lighting and many other maintenance items. We recently raised our goal from \$277,000 to \$325,000. The mission component of this campaign was restoring our building so the Clothes Attic (our thrift shop), and the Stratham Circle Learning Center (our preschool), could continue to function in their respective areas.

Does your church have an endowment?

Yes, we have an endowment initiated in 2015. The Trustees wrote the policy with input from members of the congregation and using resources from UCC. The initial donation was a bequest from a long-time member that the Trustees chose to put into the endowment. Since that time there have been two additional cash donations and two planned gifts established with the endowment as the beneficiary. We have had two informational sessions on planned giving. One of those sessions led to one of the planned gifts.

What is the market value of the assets?

The current market value as of July 31, 2020 is \$49,979.

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

It has been the decision of the Trustees to not draw from the fund until it has been in existence for a while longer. A withdrawal start date has not been decided.

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

There is a maximum draw of 4% per the policy, however, as mentioned above, we have never taken a draw from the fund.

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

See comments above about the draw. The policy restricts how much of the draw can be used for operating expenses. The draw is at the discretion of the Board of Trustees with the following recommendations for the use of the funds in any year: 50% for missions, 30% for capital expenses and 20% for operating expenses. It was intentionally set up for the Trustees to have discretion on the use of the funds with a specific set of recommendations on their use. It was established that way so that 50-60 years from now the Trustees will have discretion for use based on what is happening at that time in the life of the church.

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

See above comments.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

The endowment is new to SCC. The purpose of the endowment is to provide us funds to help with our missions, capital expenses and then operating expenses.

Reserves (savings): See “Investments” below

Investments (other than endowment): \$306,277 as of July 31,2020

Does your church have a parsonage? No

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

The church owns one building made up of three distinct parts all connected. The Sanctuary is the oldest building built in 1837 and stands on essentially the same location as the church that was founded in 1716. The main floor is the Sanctuary; the basement room, the Rust Room, is used for fellowship hour, church suppers, meetings and community activities. The second oldest building, Parker Hall, was built in 1840 as the Stratham Baptist Church and given to the church when the Baptist church closed in the 1960s. It was relocated to its current location in the 1980s. Parker Hall is home to our SCLC preschool and our thrift shop, The Clothes Attic. The third part of the building is the link between the two older buildings. The link was constructed in 1998 and consists of the church offices and additional conference rooms and classrooms.

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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

Most of our facilities are wheelchair accessible. We have an elevator that stops at each level (3). The altar, choir loft and balcony are not wheelchair accessible.

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

The Trustees in consultation with the minister and the various boards/committees develop the budget. The budget reflects the mission of the church at this time in our history. The most recent major budget change was 14 years ago when we funded the start of SCLC. During the first few years, the preschool was not self-funding which was recognized when the decision was made to open. This mission and The Clothes Attic have been a very significant part of the Stratham community for years.

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.

- 2004 - Converted part of the building to accommodate the Seacoast Family Promise (SFP) Day-center and offices. This included adding a shower and laundry facilities. SFP is an organization that coordinates a network of multiple churches in the area to temporarily house and feed homeless families and assist them in transitioning back into their own homes. Our church also participates as a host church for one week every 3 months, cooking and serving meals, and providing overnight accommodation in our classrooms. SFP has purchased their own building so the space they were using has been added to the Clothes Attic space. Visit www.seacoastfamilypromise.org
- 2006 - We founded the Stratham Circle Learning Center (SCLC), investing in building renovations to house the school. SCLC is now a flourishing program serving the needs of the local community by providing quality preschool education before and after school care. Visit www.strathamclc.org
- 2012 - Collaboration with area churches and organizations to develop One Heart Mission, a mission organization leading faith and service trips to Guatemala and South Dakota. Facilitated travel, work and placement of students/teachers from our mission sites for summer internships within area.

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.

The most challenging faith experience occurred in June 2015 with the resignation of our Minister. Our Pastor was on an approved leave of absence for a health-related issue starting in April 2015. In June 2015, our Pastor resigned needing more time for healing and reflection. During the Pastor’s leave of absence and subsequent resignation, the church continued to provide generous support. In this process we learned the importance of clear and frequent communications between the Pastor and the governing bodies of the church, including:

- Set written expectations for both parties as well as a formal annual review procedure that is thorough and understood.
- Inclusion of the UCC Conference leadership in discussions regarding pastoral performance and the needs of the congregation.
- Compassion and forgiveness.
- Reflection upon the character and qualities the congregation values in a pastor.

Ministerial History (includes all previous ministerial staff over past 30 years)

Staff Member's Name	Years of Service	UCC Standing
Rev. Dr. Regina Kinney, Interim Pastor	1	Yes
Rev. Dr. Jonathan Roach	4	Yes
Rev. Jack Lynes, Interim	1.5	Yes
Rev. Diane Mix	3	Yes
Rev. David Slater, Interim	1.5	Yes
Rev. David Dodge	7	Yes
Rev. Mark Strickland, Interim	1	Yes
Rev. J.J. Bodine	13	Yes

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

The Pastor is an integral part of the whole church community and having a strong working relationship with whoever holds the position is extremely important. The communication between the Pastor and church leadership must be candid, open and constructive. A structure of communication between the Pastor and the Pastoral Relations Committee must be trusting and supportive. We are an improved church in dealing with Pastoral Congregation communication and relationships because of our shared experiences over the last ten years.

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

Yes. For additional information, please speak with the Conference Minister and/or the Search Committee.

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? Yes

WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

- COMMUNITY VISION
- MISSION InSite

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

COMMUNITY VISION

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

Our church is passionate about mission and many of our congregants are highly motivated to serve these missions. Examples include a multitude of services that support food insecurities throughout our community, such as: Salvation Army Soup Kitchen, St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, CROP Walk and End 68 Hours of Hunger. At the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen, we volunteer on a monthly basis to provide a hot meal to our neighbors. We actively collect and deliver financial donations, non-perishable foods and toiletries to the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry to help feed our community. We help organize a local CROP Hunger Walk alongside churches in the community with the goal of ending world hunger. Twenty five percent of the funds raised support the fight of local hunger efforts as well. The End 68 Hours of Hunger organization is supported each year by collecting food and backpacks for school children, to hopefully eliminate the hunger they may experience between the free lunch received at school on Friday afternoon and the free breakfast they receive at school on Monday morning.

The church also supports Seacoast Family Promise, One Heart Mission trips, TASC, and American Red Cross blood drives. Stratham Community Church hosts families through Seacoast Family Promise who are experiencing homelessness, providing meals and shelter for one week every 3-4 months. Through One Heart Mission trips, the church volunteers with other local area churches to support missions to Guatemala and Kentucky, where we serve these communities. Through TASC, we volunteer to transport our neighbors who are unable to drive themselves. We also open our church for American Red Cross blood drives throughout the year and volunteer our support and provide snacks as needed.

We also distribute donations from Christmas Eve Services to many of the above organizations.

Describe your congregation's participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ.

We have a member who sits on the Council of Church and Ministry for the Rockingham Association. We also have a member who is on the Conference Oversight Committee. In addition, we have two delegates who attend annual and special meetings held by the conference or Rockingham Association as well as an occasional national meeting.

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

The Mission and Justice Committee held several discussions with the Stratham Police Chief and local politicians on gun safety and the potential to reduce violence and suicides within our community. Additionally, this committee discussed incarceration within our state and how the church may provide strength and fellowship to people released from prison. Mission and Justice continues to support our neighbors with food insecurity during the pandemic. During this time of social unrest, Mission and Justice, supported by the Church Council, supports a position that rejects racism and the ideal that every person of color has equal access to the social, economic and political programs our country has to offer.

X	Accessible to All (A2A)
	Creation Justice
X	Economic Justice
	Faithful and Welcoming
X	God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
	Border and Immigrant Justice
	Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)
	Just Peace
X	Global Mission Church
X	Open and Affirming (ONA)

	WISE Congregation for Mental Health
	Other UCC designations:
	Designations from other denominations

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?

The selection of which activities/causes need to be discussed within the congregation and would be a good subject to work on with our new Pastor.

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

In the past few years, our choir has joined the choirs of several other churches of different denominations and performed in January with the host church changing each year. Additionally, our Christian Education Director works with several churches in the area for combined youth activities and Vacation Bible School.

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.

We feel our Vision Statement is a very good outline of what we do in terms of our outreach, being community focused and welcoming to all. It is the backbone of how we live our church lives.

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?

Time is allocated with our pastors to be active in our community whether it is offering prayers and/or invocations at town sponsored events with the police department, fire department or Parks and Recreation. A calendar of events is created each year and the Pastor will work with the Church Council on what the priorities should be at any given time.

MISSION InSite (see attached)

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

Moderate 3% growth is forecasted over the next 5 years. The average family income is \$143k allowing ample discretionary funds available for giving.

We are a mono-cultural community with a low number of minorities, which makes it challenging to increase our membership diversity.

About 83% of adults in the workforce are white collar and highly educated (64% with 4 plus years of college education).

Stratham's geographic location and demographics will continue to draw professionals and higher income residents.

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?

We compare reasonably close to the neighborhoods adjacent to our church e.g. Seacoast, in most of the demographic categories.

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

We are an educated, active, caring congregation and will continue to attract the same type of people. We will continue to compete with all the community family activities especially involving youth, in terms of time available, to participate in our programs.

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

We are known for the mission programs that serve the community, The Clothes Attic, The Stratham Circle Learning Center, church suppers and our presence at community events. (Stratham Fair, Memorial Day parade, etc.)

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit us we were prepared to launch a community leader outreach effort involving face-to-face discussions regarding what SCC is doing and how we could help with community issues or opportunities. We were unable to accomplish this but it is still on our agenda.

It is our goal to form a stronger partnership with our community leaders to proactively offer opportunities for church involvement in programs and meeting the needs of the community.

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

They like the community outreach programs along with the spirit and friendliness of the congregation. We are truly a caring community church with strong leadership.

REFERENCES

REFERENCE 1

Name: Rev. Patty Marsden
603-834-1735, Local Pastor

REFERENCE 2

Name: Dan Stockbridge
603-772-0400, Local Funeral Director

REFERENCE 3

Name: Pati Frew-Waters
603-988-7335, Exec. Director of Seacoast Family Promise

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.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

CLOSING PRAYER

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. (*Jeremiah 29:11-13*)

Gracious God,

We pray for your guidance as we come together in the search and call process for the Stratham Community Church.

We pray for your wisdom and spirit in discernment, finding a Pastor and teacher who will embrace our church family in times of celebration and need.

We pray for a Pastor who will actively engage us in Sunday worship, who will join in our passion for community based mission work, who will nurture our families and children, care for our elders and guide us all to grow personally and in faith.

Amen.

Here I am, Lord, I have heard you calling in the night

I have climbed the highest mountains

I have run through the fields

Only to be with you

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;

waking or sleeping, thy presence is light.

Lyric Adapted From:

“I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For” (Written by U2; Island Records, 1987)

“Be Thou My Vision” (Ancient Irish text)

“Here I Am Lord” (Written by Dan Schutte; Publisher: OCP Publications, 1979)

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.

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.*)

Phase One Transition Team (Survey Committee): Rev. Doctor Regina Kinney, Bob Butcher, Lucy Cushman, Carol Gulla, and Dave Timmerman

Phase Two Transition Team (Profile Committee): Dave Brownell, Kristen Dusseault, Steve Nassoura, and Dave Timmerman

Phase three transition team (Pastoral Search Committee): Ryan Curtis, Rob David, Cindy Dominguez, Maria Emanuel, Judy George, Pam Kulesza, and Christine Vanderslice

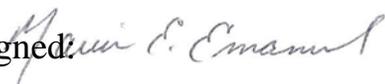
Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed: 

Name / Title / Date: Robert J. Butcher/moderator/4 October 2020

Signed: 

Name / Title / Date: David Brownell/Chair of Trustees/4 October 2020

Signed: 

Name / Title / Date: Name / Title: Maria E. Emanuel/Chair, Pastoral Search
Committee/4 October 2020

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

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

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

Staff Comment: The Statham Community Church is in good standing with the Rockingham Association of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ.

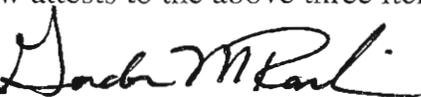
To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete.

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

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

Staff Comment: To the best of my knowledge, the church financial information in this profile has been thoroughly provided.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: 

Name / Title: Gordon Rankin

Email: grankin@nhcucc.org

Phone: (603) 225-6647

Date: 10/15/2020