

Name of Church
Charlemont Federated Church
Address
PO Box 248 Charlemont, MA 01339
Conference:
Southern New England
Association:
Franklin (SNEUCC)
Title
Pastor/Minister
Start Date
Oct 31, 2025
Description
Charlemont, MA: Charlemont Federated Church-P

Church Contact Information

(413) 339-4294 (Office)

CFC@charlemontfederatedchurch.org (Church Email)

Listing Information

Web Presences

<https://charlemontfederatedchurch.org>

Type: Other

Additional Formal Ecumenical Affiliations

The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts (TABCOM), 189 Prescott Street, Groton, MA 01450 (978) 448-1445 Fax: (978) 448-0025 Association: Pioneer Valley

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person

Name:

Rev Dr. Charlotte Wright

Title:

Bridge ACM

Phone:

(860)761-7192

Email:

wrightc@sneucc.org

Summary Ministry Description

Are you called to serve the Charlemont Federated Church?

We are a mature congregation, diverse yet united, vital, funny, and bonded with each other. We are not afraid to be real. We come from different walks of life and faith traditions, although we are affiliated with the American Baptists and the UCC. Our church brings us together. We worship God, make music, and share our spiritual journeys as well as the ups and downs of rural life. We know we live on a fragile planet, in a country where democracy is at risk. We resonate with Jesus' vision of the beloved community.

For many of us the arts are a source of revelation. We find joy in singing, performing, listening, reading, cooking, gardening. We regard food as a sacrament, providing us with nourishment and fellowship. We take our potlucks seriously!

Our local community is important to us. We serve on its boards and committees. We host a food pantry and a senior center. Many who do not attend services still consider our church theirs. They come to our lecture series and concerts. They turn to us when they need a baptism, a funeral, or the company of friends. We extend to them (and to ourselves) a lot of theological elbow room.

Last year, we met to reflect on our life together. We expressed deep appreciation for the church and its centrality in our lives. We felt cohesive and resilient ... and also tired. In the past eight years we have gone through a pandemic and welcomed a patchwork of temporary ministers, plus a settled pastor who was with us for only two years. Still we thrive.

We are eager to welcome a settled pastor to accompany us as we step into our future. How do we balance the church's demands with the realities of our smaller numbers? How can we deepen service to our community? How do we proclaim a gospel of inclusive love in an era of division? How do we practice extending an extravagant welcome?

We are eager to know who you are and realize you may surprise us. We look forward to meeting you.

Church pictures



What we value about living in our area.

Charlemont is a place of singular and outstanding beauty. We are a rural New England town surrounded by mountains and situated along the picturesque Deerfield River. Tourists and outdoor enthusiasts visit throughout the year to enjoy whitewater rafting, canoeing, fishing, hiking, camping, and biking in the warmer months, as well as downhill and cross-country skiing in the winter. Over many years the call of these hills and streams has drawn artists, writers, theologians, musicians, healers, social activists, and many others seeking a place where the right to independent thought and spirit is a given. Other families have been here for generations, working close to the land. We treasure this mix of old and new.

Charlemont is also near many cultural activities. Seven colleges and the University of Massachusetts, as well as museums, music, theatre, and lecture series are within a 30-to-45 minute drive. In addition, Boston is only two and a half hours away by car, and New York City is four hours away.

Current size of membership

67

Average in person attendance

43

Does your church hold virtual worship services?*No***Languages used in ministry**

English

Position Title

Pastor/Minister

Position Duration

Settled

Compensation Level

3/4 Time (approximately 30-32 hours/week)

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?*Yes***Link to current Conference guidelines**[🔗 Download compensation guidelines](#)**Scope of Work**

Some fields reference *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ* .

The United Church of Christ recognizes *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers* in the formation of ministers, in the practice of active ministry, and throughout life. For the purposes of completing a denominational Profile, ministers are asked to spend some time with the *Marks*.

The Scope of Work developed by our church using the Call Agreement Workbook.*No response***3 core competencies that we imagine could be foundational in our next minister's relationship with the church.****First:**

We seek a well-educated theologian who is versed in the Scriptures and confident in preaching to a theologically diverse congregation. This person will be able to interpret scripture in imaginative and creative ways that motivate and inspire us, speaking to our hopes, fears, and dreams as well as the issues of the day. Preaching to the heart as well as the head and engaging the arts— poetry, music and the visual arts—can touch us deeply and open new pathways for our congregation to learn and grow together.

Second:

Our new minister will be an empathetic and compassionate person, someone who welcomes opportunities for visitation and is skilled in pastoral care. They will be a deep listener, with the ability to be present, open to what lies behind a person's words. The pastor will be accessible and available, able to respond to needs as they arise. We want our minister to work with us to serve both the congregation and the surrounding community.

We seek a settled pastor who leads from an embodied spiritual path, centered in love and attuned to the presence of the Holy Spirit. With an emphasis on faith formation, we hope that our minister will deepen our spirituality and put it to use in the world. This person will have a good and kind sense of humor. Our minister will listen well to learn who we are, how our ministry structures work, and where our gifts and talents lie.

Third:

Our new minister will champion the church’s democratic tradition and recognize the critical role of the congregation. This person will be collegial and non-hierarchical, able to respect and facilitate strong lay leadership. In times of transition, trouble, or conflict, our minister will have skills to help us connect with the wisdom of our faith traditions. We realize that no one person can do everything and that any minister will be stronger in some of these areas than others.

Compensation and Support

The salary basis comes from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/ Housing Allowance. The Conference can assist in determining these amounts or provide a worksheet to be used to calculate these values.

SALARY AND BENEFITS OFFERED: SALARY BASIS: ITEM OFFERED	AMOUNT OR PERCENTAGE(IF DETERMINED)	IS THIS NEGOTIABLE	PASTORAL CANDIDATE DETERMINES
Salary (Cash basis determined from Conference/ Association Guidelines)	42330	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing Allowance	26400	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any Experiential Difference (Related to years of experience)	4219	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salary Basis: 72949			
Pension/Annuity	9622	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Security and Medicare Offset	5258	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical/Dental Insurance	15062	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life Insurance	1030	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability Insurance	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worker's Compensation	1000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If needed, please comment further on your church’s salary and benefits for the minister.

Worker's compensation covers all staff as required by law. Life Insurance and Disability are covered together.

Negotiable due to plans

The expected living situation for our next minister.

It is our hope that our minister will live within a 30-minute drive of the church. We have arranged a temporary two-bedroom rental in the woods with Blue Heron Organic Farm, only 2.5 miles, less than ten minutes, from the church if housing is needed.

If a parsonage is provided, will the church offer a home equity allowance to the pastor? (The recommended guidelines for a home equity allowance is equal to 1.5% of the average home value in the community; this is considered taxable to the minister. The Housing Equity Offset should not be calculated into the Salary Basis upon which other Benefits are determined. Churches should consult a tax advisor prior to establishing any account for an equity allowance to ensure compliance with IRS rules on nonqualified deferred compensation plans.)

No

We have no parsonage, but we have arranged housing through October 2026 and can negotiate from there. See above.

How our church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment.

We are confident in our ability to adjust pastoral duties. We've had a minister who taught seminary in Boston and was with us on the weekends. Our current interim minister works three weeks on and one week off. We are accustomed to caring for our congregation and

know how to arrange and rearrange our own energies. For us, the most important thing is understanding our relationship with our minister within the framework of a call. Does a candidate feel called to serve us? Do we feel called to welcome that person? If we have that ground firmly beneath our feet, details can be worked out.

Additional reimbursements the next Pastor can expect to receive as part of their employment:

Reimbursement for use of personal vehicle.
Cell Phone and/or Internet.
Conference and/or Association meeting registrations
Other meeting registrations (or educational requirement registrations).
Criminal background checks.
Community of Practice Participation.

Peer and professional supports available for ministers in our association/conferences.

The Franklin Association and Southern New England Conference serve as resources for clergy in the Association. Super Saturdays are offered, providing workshops on a variety of topics. Communities of Practice (local groups of clergy) are available for mutual support and peer development. The church has a budget for travel and professional development.

Who Is God Calling to Minister with Us?

The ministry goals we envision our next minister collaborating with the congregation to achieve.

To continue to create both inspirational and grounding worship experiences. We cherish our traditions and rich heritage and are open to exploring new ideas while still maintaining the music and liturgy that speak deeply to our congregation. We seek a minister who believes that God is still speaking through our ancient texts and can interpret God's voice in a way that reaches across the generations. We foresee a person who can provide a sense of reassurance and sanctuary to the congregation and challenge us at the same time.

We hope our new minister will help us maintain our strong sense of community and explore ways to make our church relevant to future generations. People come to this church for its open and inviting welcome. Though we are rooted in the Christian tradition, there is room in our tent for myriad individual beliefs and spiritual journeys. We want to explore further ways to minister to our aging population and to future generations.

How our vision of the minister we are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

We want to deepen our church's presence in our community, building on the ways in which we already serve. We have taken important steps in this direction, and we seek a minister who will encourage our efforts. In addition, we'd like our new minister to be visibly present in the community as one "face of the church" ... to interact with our neighbors, church members, and nonmembers, and to become a part of our hilltown culture.

As members of the global community, we want to respond to and understand the needs of people throughout the world. In the face of challenges, we reaffirm our deep personal connection to all nations and all people. We desire open and honest discussions that respect everyone's point of view and help us act in love as Jesus taught us, taking steps together to contribute to the greater good.

"Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone: therefore, we are saved by love." Reinhold Niebuhr

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

The CFC reflects the demographics of our community, which is primarily white of European descent. Our members are all native English speakers.

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

Based on The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry, those who responded to our all-church survey indicated the following areas of excellence:

- Building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence (75 percent);
- Understanding community context and navigating change with our community (73 percent);
- Empowering the church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit (63 percent);
- Bringing life to sacred stories and traditions in worship, proclamation, and witness as we try to provide hope and healing to a hurting world (63 percent).

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 God is calling us to become as a congregation.

We write in a time of enormous global change. The health of our planet is severely compromised. The divide between rich and poor continues to increase. Political and racial divisions threaten our common humanity. These critical issues are complex, and their solutions call not only for political will but also for moral courage and love. As a congregation we are committed to individual spiritual growth, and to growing as a strong church community, grounded in shared worship. We know well the comfort and the courage that a faith community offers in tough times. We face inward to care for our members. We face outward to care for the world.

We have always seen the church as part of the larger community and have provided space and support to many secular organizations. When asked to imagine the future five years from now, the congregation spoke overwhelmingly of continuing and enlarging our place in our surrounding communities. People spoke of a desire to learn more about the issues that face our hilltowns and to be part of both the conversations and the solutions.

Many voiced a need to find ways to extend our "Extravagant Welcome" beyond Sunday morning. We want to bring people together in activities throughout the week, such as family concerts, potluck dinners, and game nights. Issues of climate change, racial justice, and economic inequality touch us deeply. Our congregation views the current changes in this country with great alarm. We believe that the church has a critical role to play in calling out anti-democratic policies and in standing with those impacted. Our work to combat hunger is a prime example of this. We embrace the ministry of the laity, recognizing that our work for justice is something that we engage in not only as a congregation but also in our individual capacities as members and leaders of organizations, local agencies, and social movements.

How God is calling us to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of our community and congregation.

In late February 2025, Charlemont and neighboring towns experienced a multiple-day storm with dense wet snow, sleet, extreme winds, subzero wind chills, and a loss of power for 60 hours. Area residents had no basic services, no plumbing or utilities. Roads were blocked by heavy snow or downed trees.

The Charlemont Emergency Management Director asked our church to open a warming center and overnight shelter. The State Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross provided additional support, cots, and bedding. Our Good Neighbors Food Pantry provided additional food, and several of our church members took shifts to staff the shelter overnight in coordination with the Red Cross.

Knowing that we were open to community discussion, two local Affinity groups concerned with the changes in our government approached the church last summer. They asked if we would be willing to host a talk by Erica Chenoweth, an authority on non-violent civil resistance and a professor of public policy at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. The sanctuary was packed with a wonderful mixture of older and younger folks. We welcomed adult children with parents, church members, non-members, members of other faith communities, and weekenders who made a special trip to the area for the event. The evening was both informative and uplifting. The question/answer period was especially rich. Folks went away sobered and encouraged. Inspired by what they heard, community members formed several new Affinity groups.

Congregation Reflections

We would describe our congregation's life of faith as...

Two members, one old and one young, sum up our life of faith.

Composer and conductor Alice Parker, a long-time member of our church, stated:

One of the things I most like about our church is that we don't seem to be embroiled in arguments about defining God or the Holy Spirit. We spend little time debating these terms. We spend most of our time living them. The Holy Spirit to me is exactly what binds us together to do all the outreach and inner workings that keep us so busy and united. As for our Creator: we give thanks a lot. We represent a wide political spectrum, but live and move and work and converse together, and support each other in life's crisis points. This feels to me like God's presence.

And when asked why she likes coming to church, two-year-old Vera said: *I like how it makes me feel.*

Strengths or positive qualities of our congregation.

Our congregation identifies welcome, worship, and service as our greatest strengths.

Our church is known for its warmth and acceptance. We worship and sing enthusiastically. We care for our members and neighbors. We are friends who share joys and sorrows. We reach out in times of need, especially when people are faced with illness or death, emotional turmoil or financial hardship. We share our prayer requests out loud weekly and hold each other close throughout the week.

As mentioned earlier, we are committed to the hilltown communities: Charlemont, Hawley, Heath, Rowe, and beyond. We provide food for at least 60 families through the Good Neighbors Food Pantry and take food to those in need. We host the Charlemont Senior Center and twice-monthly clinics with the regional nurse. Mohawk Trail Concerts--a chamber music series--has made its home here for over 50 years. We provide music lessons to school-age children. The church building is available to community organizations and family gatherings. The Charlemont Forum presents speakers every summer on topics including racism, climate change, and newly emerging social issues.

A growing edge for our congregation and what we plan to strengthen as a congregation

A growing edge for us is to enact our vision. After the Covid pandemic and 5 ministerial changes in the last 8 years, it has been difficult to put our ideas into action. We've done a tremendous amount of 'managing,' and we need support getting to our vision.

One aspect of enacting our vision is putting forth our partnership with the community without losing our religious identity. We are the *de-facto* community center, host the Senior Center, are the Emergency Shelter for this town. We host music and lecture series and offer music lessons for kids, but our signage does not fully communicate who we are. We need to do better with this and to communicate that there is something for everyone here, regardless of class, age, gender, or race. We'd like people (like the kids who grew up in the church and who are distantly connected but not churchgoers), to know that there is a place for them, and to have a way for them to be involved in ways that fulfill their needs, not just ours.

What worship is like when our congregation gathers.

Sunlight streams through brightly colored stained glass windows. Soft pipe-organ music is playing. A plain wooden cross, made by a member, hangs on the wall behind the chancel. The sanctuary fills with hymns of praise and gratitude. We sing hymns that span the centuries, honoring our traditions and exploring something new. Our choir sings every Sunday; music is chosen to reflect the liturgical season, the theme of the day, and the tone of the scripture readings. We follow the Revised Common Lectionary but are not bound to it. Our liturgy is elegant in its simplicity. We appreciate preaching that inspires, instructs, and challenges. We like to explore scripture in depth and are open to different interpretations. Preaching from the heart as well as the head and engaging the arts touch us and open new pathways for growth. We strive to follow Jesus' teachings of compassion for the stranger, forgiveness as the root of community, and justice as the norm for daily life. We come from various spiritual paths; all are welcome here. We cherish our relationships. We share celebrations and concerns and pass God's peace at the end of the service, going out to do the work we are called to do.

The educational program/faith formation vision of our church.

The Education and Spiritual Life Ministry organizes programs that enhance and deepen our individual and collective inner lives. Programs have included Bible study, Spirit-Led Kids (Sunday School), Centering Prayer, and meditation.

The ministry frequently hosts post-worship gatherings in which church members share their spiritual journey through life, fostering intimacy and understanding among us.

We have held conversation circles on gratitude and on lamentation, themes that help us relate to each other and to the times in which we live. We often augment celebrations of Advent and Lent with seasonal programs and classes.

Spirit-Led Kids uses art, music, and stories to explore the ways in which God speaks to us and supports us. We look at spiritual practices all over the world. Our young people discuss common themes and concepts and delight in differences.

In conjunction with other ministries, Education and Spiritual Life would like to explore programs with the wider community. We hope to connect with others in our area, including our schools, to create events like poetry readings, art exhibits, explore-your-own theology classes, and conversations about current events.

How our congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

Ministries and Deacons

At the heart are the Deacons, called to serve the church and its members, caring for their spiritual and organizational well-being. Leadership is collaborative rather than hierarchical. Five deacons come from specific Ministries. Four are elected at-large. The Deacons offer consultation and guidance to Ministries and are responsible for the business of the church. This dynamic relationship between ministry and governance is at the heart of our church structure. All congregants are encouraged to be part of a ministry. The Ministries are:

Worship and Music: Works with the minister and the music director to plan services

Buildings and Grounds: Stewards the physical aspects of the church

Education and Spiritual Life: Cares for the religious education and faith formation of participants of all ages

Missions and Outreach: Supports and directs the church's efforts to address the needs of people near and far

Pastoral Care: Coordinates with the minister, organizes the congregation in caring for its members and the larger community

Elected officers: Trustees, Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, Financial Secretary, Auditor and delegates to Association and Conference Meetings

When it comes to decision-making, 10 hours are spent in meetings per month.

Is the pastor expected to attend all church meetings?

No

In times when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. These were the key leaders in taking this action and this was accomplished by...

As news of the attacks spread during the morning of September 11, 2001, it became immediately clear that the entire community desperately needed somehow to come together to comprehend and grieve. The church opened its sanctuary to all on that evening. The space was packed, and people found comfort, joining together in prayer and through well chosen hymns. Like congregations throughout the nation, we knew we needed to be here, to be together in church,

More recently, when natural disasters have occurred, the church has served its broader community, opening its spaces as a warming center during blizzards and as the designated "higher ground" during floods. During the pandemic years, the church's Good Neighbor program greatly expanded the scale and the frequency of its food distribution

As a group, we come together well, organize ourselves, and share responsibility. In these cases, our minister and a few key members took leadership, although everyone in the church reached out.

A copy of an organization structure, by laws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance

[📄 October 2025 revision to CFC Bylaws_approved.pdf](#)

11-Year Report

Download a copy of the 11-Year Report developed with the help of our conference staff and UCC Data Hub.

[📄 Download 11-Year Report](#)

Congregation Demographics

Describe those who participate in your church.

DEMOGRAPHIC	NUMBER
NUMBER OF ACTIVE MEMBERS:	67
NUMBER OF ACTIVE NON-MEMBERS:	21
TOTAL OF CHURCH PARTICIPANTS (SUM OF THE NUMBERS ABOVE):	88

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

No

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

TIME	PERCENTAGE
MORE THAN 10 YEARS:	73%
LESS THAN 10, MORE THAN 5 YEARS:	19%
LESS THAN 5 YEARS:	8%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

No

Number of total participants by age:

AGE	NUMBER
0-11	3
12-17	3
18-24	0
25-34	2
35-44	3
45-54	9
55-64	17
65-74	22
75+	35

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE ADULTS UNDER 35:	1%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH MINORS:	8%
SINGLE ADULTS AGE 35-65:	2%
JOINT HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO MINORS:	71%
SINGLE ADULTS OVER 65:	18%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

EDUCATION LEVEL	PERCENTAGE
HIGH SCHOOL:	13%
COLLEGE:	42%
GRADUATE SCHOOL:	35%
SPECIALTY TRAINING:	10%
OTHER EDUCATION LEVEL:	0%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

EMPLOYMENT TYPE	PERCENTAGE
ADULTS WHO ARE EMPLOYED:	24%
ADULTS WHO ARE RETIRED:	66%
ADULTS WHO ARE NOT FULLY EMPLOYED:	10%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

The range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

Working adults: artist, educator, farmer, financial consultant, health-care professional, journalist, lawyer, musician, psychotherapist, retailer, technology fields, writer, public-sector worker, and diva(!)

Other occupations represented by retired members: architect, bank teller, business owner, electrician, fundraiser, librarian, real-estate appraiser, secretary, social worker

The mix of ethnic heritages in our congregation, and the overall racial make-up.

Our church reflects the history and demographics of our community. During the Colonial period, the area was populated by those of Western European heritage and was primarily white. This pattern continues today.

What diversity means in our context?

We are a diverse group in terms of our theology, economic circumstances, educational backgrounds, and sexual preference. We are one of the few places in the community where people gather together to explore issues of faith from multiple perspectives: long established families with new transplants, local farmers with university professors, social activists with community volunteers, and those of different political persuasions. Our rich congregational life is rooted in this diversity, and great care is taken to respect the attitudes and beliefs of all church and community members.

Has our congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do we plan to hold one on the near future

No

Participation and Staffing

Participation and Planning of Gatherings

WAYS OF CHURCH GATHERING	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
Adult Groups or Classes (in person or online)	25	Pastor & Spiritual Life Ministry
Children's Groups or Classes	3	Spiritual Life Ministry
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	65	Pastor & Worship and Music Ministry
Church-wide Meals	33	All Ministries and Deacons
Choirs and Music Groups	16	Choir Director/organist, Music Teacher, and Worship and Music Ministry
Church-based Bible Study	8	Pastor & former Pastor
Communion (served how often?)	40	Minister & Deacons 1x/mo
Community Meals	35	it varies-ministries and others
Funerals (number last year)	2	Pastor, Choir director/organist, Pastoral Care Ministry
Outdoor Worship	33	Pastor, multiple Ministries and Lay Leaders
Prayer or Meditation Groups	3	Lay leaders and Pastor
Public Advocacy Work	16	Mission and Outreach Ministry
Retreats	15	Pastor, Spiritual Life Ministry, Worship and Music Ministry
Weddings (number last year)	0	Pastor
Worship (digital / online / livestream)	38	in person only; Pastor and Worship and Music Ministry





Worship Times

WORSHIP (TIME SLOT):	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
9:30	38	Pastor and Worship and Music Ministry

Additional comments:

No response

List of all members or regular participants in our congregation who are ordained or commissioned ministers, or who hold Lay Ministerial Standing. Additionally the names of Members in Discernment in our congregation.

NAME	THREE-WAY OR FOUR-WAY COVENANT	MINISTRY SETTING	TYPE OF MINISTRY ROLE	RETIRED
Wayne Zavotka	none	none	none	
Kate Stevens	none	none	none	
Allen Comstock	none	none	none	
Pamela Porter	none	none	none	

Previous pastors or retired ministers who currently hold membership in the church and their role(s) in the life of the congregation:

All listed preach occasionally. Allen Comstock, retired UCC, leads a weekly Bible study. Wayne Zavotka, retired ELCA, serves on the Buildings and Grounds Ministry and is a deacon. Pamela Porter, retired TEC, sings in the choir, and Kate Stevens, retired UCC, is a member of the Spiritual Life ministry.

List of all current staff:

STAFF POSITION	HEAD OF STAFF	COMPENSATION	SUPERVISED BY	LENGTH OF TENURE FOR CURRENT PERSON IN THIS POSITION
Custodian	Deacons	part	Buildings & Grounds Ministry	25 years
Choir Director/organist	Deacons	part	Worship & Music Ministry	25 years
Administrator/bookkeeper	Deacons	part	Minister, Deacons & Treasurer	4 years
Interim Minister	Deacons	part	Deacons	1

Reflection: What this information reflect about our congregation's overall ministry:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.
 Margaret Mead

We are a small church, but our energy and commitment enrich the lives of our congregants and community. We have challenges as we age and shoulder a multitude of responsibilities. Yet we rise to challenges with energy, good will, and a desire to deepen our faith. We are blessed to be part of a church that loves us for who we are, provides a sacred place that reminds us we are not alone and gives us the courage to grapple with the issues of our time.

Church Finances

Current Annual Income

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	103000
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	40500
Fundraising Events	1000
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	20000
Grants	10000
Rentals of Church Building	13000
Total	187500

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

172300

Attach most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer's report as shared publicly with the congregation, or – if your church does not pass an annual budget–list current budgeted expenses here.

[Download church budget](#)

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

46

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

No

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

- Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
- One Great Hour of Sharing

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered?

OCWM is taken from the church operating budget (\$2,000 this year), sent by check

If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, this is the percentage?

2

Total amount of loan debt:

1500

Reason for debt:

window loan

Are capital and other payments current?

Yes

Capital Campaigns

Description of any building programs projected or underway.

Nothing underway

Pictures

Description of any capital campaigns in the last ten years:

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
11	In 2014, we undertook a three year capital campaign. Our goal was to raise \$270,000. We in fact raised \$325,000 plus a \$20,000 grant. This enabled us to restore the seven stained glass windows in the sanctuary, and rebuild an ADA compliant ramp in the back of the church. We also fully renovated our kitchen, replaced the social room windows with insulated glass, and upgraded the library and small room that is now the minister's study. On the outside of the building we repaired sidewalks, rebuilt stone steps and painted the building. Currently we are seeking a grant to insulate the entire building.	0	325000	see under Purpose
0		0	0	

Description of any capital campaigns underway or anticipated:

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
0		0	0	
0		0	0	

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

Building improvements benefited our Good Neighbors Food Pantry.

Does your church have an endowment?

Yes

What is the market value of the assets?

1724000

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

willing to draw if necessary but have not in 10 years

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

total 'return' draw is 4.5%, not touching principle

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

0

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

Eternity

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

In future we expect to start tapping the endowment.

Other Assets

Church Building, Food Pantry building, shed and Property

Reserves (savings):

115000

Investments (other than endowment):

138000

Does the church have a parsonage?

No

Description of all buildings owned by the church:

Built in 1845, the church reflects the traditional Greek Revival style of the mid-19th century. It consists of a high-ceilinged sanctuary with a back balcony and seven tall stained-glass windows (three on each side and one in the narthex); a large social room; a recently renovated kitchen, a Sunday School room, a library/meeting room; a shared office; a minister's study; and indoor and outdoor storage areas.

The Good Neighbors building is a food-storage facility with a walk-in refrigerator and a walk-in freezer, built in 2019. The shed is for general storage and was constructed in 2022.

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

None

Accessibility features of our building(s):

Exterior access such as ramps for wheelchair users or people requiring other mobility assistance
Accessible parking spaces
Access to worship spaces, including chancel and pulpit, for wheelchair users and people with other mobility aids

Access to child care spaces for wheelchair users and people with other mobility aids
Large print bulletins
Wheelchair access in bathrooms

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs:

Our rear entrance, bathroom, social rooms, Sunday School rooms, office, sanctuary and Good Neighbors building are wheelchair accessible. The pulpit, lectern, and chancel are not.

Policies regarding financial practices of the church:

Our church follows the financial guidelines and best practices of the UCC. Church expenses are handled by our treasurer and administrative staff; budgeted projects are overseen by the appropriate ministry, reporting to the diaconate for final approval. Investments and bequests are overseen by the Trustees. We have a discretionary account for emergencies; other expenses are authorized by the treasurer in accordance with policies established by the church diaconate. The financial secretary and office assistant record income; the treasurer with two others have check and fund-transfer authority.

Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what this information reflects about our congregation's mission and ministry:

As frugal New Englanders, we budget carefully and have sizable endowments we manage well. We face small operating deficits most years, however, which we take care of out of funds set aside in surplus times. We have been able to invest in our property recently, although there are always continuing needs.

We separate pledges for the operating budget from those for mission programs to give individuals more control and increase their involvement in missions.

We are aging. As we face the future, we know that factor affects our budgets to some extent and may do so more. Yet we are optimistic.

Historical Information

Significant happenings in the history of our church that have shaped the identity of our congregation.

Structural Reorganization

In the 1990s we decided to try a new structure. We had a hierarchical polity from the 1970s. We studied the original Congregationalists, who understood the ministries of Jesus to be vested in the local congregation. Clergy were Pastors and Teachers, and Deacons were the guiding body of the congregation. We formed a new model based on these principles. The congregation regained its voice and its authority. The Deacons became the spiritual and organizational hub of the church with the minister to guide and advise us. The daily work of the church is carried on by five Ministries. (See Section 3a.)

Pandemic and Rebound

In 2020, like other congregations everywhere, we had to navigate the challenges of COVID-19. We were nimble in sustaining community connection. We experimented with online worship, we increased our digital outreach, and in the summer we had several outdoor services that gave us safe time together. We also increased telephone outreach.

A specific change our church has managed in the recent past.

We have always been proud of being open, trusting, and accessible. Two incidents required us to recalibrate.

The first incident involved church members in our former rental property. A member was convicted of indecent assault and battery of a minor. The church was not directly involved and legally had no role. The Deacons and minister provided support to all involved. Following the advice of our Area Conference Minister, the Deacons banned the perpetrator from church property. After the incident, we reviewed and updated our safe-church policy.

After a recent attempted robbery and a possible intruder in the church, concerns about the security of our building and the safety of our administrator, who often works here alone, prompted another change. We now lock the social areas of the building but leave the sanctuary open.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. "Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....". These are our congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict.

As we grapple with tough decisions and work through disagreements, we aim not to lose sight of the common ground we share and our love for one another. In facing new issues, we expect differences of opinion. We are diverse. Our most significant decisions are made as a congregation.

In deciding to keep or sell the parsonage, the congregation was divided. We held a series of meetings to reminisce about the importance of the parsonage in the life of the church. We reviewed financial information. After several hard-working meetings, we arrived at consensus to sell.

The most recent major conflict through which our church has navigated.

Our recent settled pastor turned out not to be a good match. Differences in expectations and styles created conflicts. The Deacons and the pastor worked to resolve differences. A consultant was hired to help Deacons and minister frame conversations to find common ground. A Pastoral Relations Committee was formed to provide a safe space for congregants and pastor to air concerns. Subsequently, our pastor chose to leave. This was a painful process from which we continue to learn. Four deacons attended a webinar on Church Systems this past fall seeking more insight into how our church functions.

We have realized that we need to clarify the role of the minister and how that person fits within our structure. We want someone who is comfortable with multiple centers of leadership. We want someone who flourishes in a collaborative environment, someone who listens to the heart and soul of the community, our immediate congregation, and our surrounding environs.

Ministerial History:

<i>Name:</i> Allen Comstock	<i>Years of service:</i> 18	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Art Kaufman-Interim	<i>Years of service:</i> 2	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Cara Hocchalter	<i>Years of service:</i> 10	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Jon Rehmus-Interim	<i>Years of service:</i> 0	
<i>Name:</i> Nancy Sykes & Ann Hallstein-Pulpit Supply	<i>Years of service:</i> 2	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Julia Khan	<i>Years of service:</i> 2	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Randy Purinton-Pulpit Supply	<i>Years of service:</i> 1	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Janet Adair Hansen-Interim	<i>Years of service:</i> 0	UCC Standing

What our church has learned about itself and its relationship with people who provided ministerial leadership.

With Allen Comstock, we explored our Congregational roots, reaffirming its democratic traditions and re-establishing a collaborative style in church life. We delved deeper into scripture to reflect on our relationship with God. Cara Hochhalter’s warmth gave vibrancy to our pastoral-care ministry. With optimism and reliance on God’s grace, she embraced our theological diversity. Julia Khan focused on administration, training office personnel and improving church operations. Janet Adair Hansen has provided transitional leadership and re-introduced us to our American Baptist heritage.

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

Yes

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

Has a previous minister been a contributor to conflict following their tenure as pastor?

No

Community Vision

How the relationships and activities of our congregation extend outward in service and advocacy.

The Mission and Outreach (M&O) Ministry champions our church's engagement with local and world issues, educating us and others on issues of poverty and social justice.

Our Church Discretionary Fund assists church and community members suffering from temporary financial hardship. M&O supports victims of domestic violence through the Resilience Center of Franklin County. It also supports the Greenfield Compost Cooperative, owned and run by former inmates of the local correction center. We have hosted the Good Neighbors Food Pantry for over 40 years.

M&O has organized participation in Church World Service programs: CROP Hunger Walk, One Great Hour of Sharing, and emergency relief. We support humanitarian relief in Ukraine; a community development program, Refugio Rafael, in Bolivia; two Israeli/Palestinian peace-making programs, the Schools at Ibillin, and the Wi'am Conflict Resolution Center in Bethlehem; and the Hope Foundation of Fort Smith in Haiti.

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

We send delegates to the Annual Meetings of the Franklin Association and the Southern New England Conference, and others have attended Super Saturday workshops and presentations. Three members of our congregation have served on the Association's Executive Committee, and others have been members of the Committee on the Ministry. Another member of our church is Registrar for the Committee on the Ministry and past Moderator of the Association.

How our church engages with the community organizing movements in our community.

The towns from which we draw are small. Their populations have been declining, but we hope and believe that trend will be reversed because of the beauty of our region, its positive attributes in terms of climate change, and our diverse culture. We have little formal community organization. Our members are the people in our organizing movements. We organize and host the local food pantry. We serve on the school committee. We are friends of the library and coordinate public-health offerings. We are eager to bring our gifts to engage the questions our towns face more fully. Can we afford to maintain our local schools? What can we do to influence the high cost of housing and promote better jobs? How can we balance our historic roots in agriculture with a growing economy based on recreation? How can we share the treasures we have as a spiritual community in a time of great loneliness, division, and fear? These are our opportunities.

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, through Just World Covenants or affiliations with other groups. Check any of the following partnerships which your congregation has formally adopted, or movements which otherwise apply to your congregation.

None.

What the above statement(s) mean(s) to our community. How our congregation plans to work toward the above statements of witness in the future.

A number of these areas are important to us and we work on them, but we have not participated in these particular UCC programs. In future, it's possible that we may explore participation in any number of these programs.

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

Since the pandemic, many of the ways in which we participated with other churches in our area have not resumed. We did, however, team up with the neighboring Heath Union Church to give monetary support for Hope Force International's effort to build temporary housing for people affected by Hurricane Helene. We also participate in the countywide CROP Walk and are members of the Interfaith Council of Franklin County.

How our mission statement compares to the actual time spent engaging in different activities.

The Charlemont Federated Church is a gathering of people who seek to live out the word of God and the teachings of Jesus. We live by faith and love, work for peace and justice, and care for those in need. We value and respect diversity in the ways in which we each express our faith.

The CFC's mission statement is reflected in all aspects of our church life. We are wholeheartedly committed to its mission and actively devote our resources and energy to this end. We express our care differently. Some have knitted prayer shawls for those who are sick or made soup for those who are hungry. Some have stood outside in the snow to protest the deaths of George Floyd or Renee Good. All of us have been compelled to action by love and faith. By taking to heart the word of God and the teachings of Jesus, by tending to the needs of the local and global community, and by caring for one another, the church embodies its mission.

The scope of work assigned to our pastor(s). How their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time.

We want a minister who is visible in the community and aware of local issues and activities. Our minister should interact with our neighbors as well as those who attend services. We encourage participation in activities like the Good Neighbors food distribution program (one afternoon per month) as well as occasional outreach efforts, guided by the ministries. The minister should be prepared to officiate at weddings and funerals of community members as well as church members. Time commitments will vary according to circumstances.

We expect our minister to attend Annual Conference and Association meetings. We support a pastor's connection with other UCC clergy through a "Community of Practice," meeting once per month for mutual support.

We understand that part-time work comes with challenges. We look forward to discussing the range of opportunities our church presents to a minister and to helping him or her figure out the right balance.

The ARDA or MissionInsite Reflection

ARDA/MI File

No response

From looking at our congregation's The ARDA or MissionInsite report, these trends and opportunities are what stood out to us.

Like most rural communities, we have seen a decrease in population, an increase in the average age, and a decrease in the average income. We have fewer school-age children than we used to. We are grappling with the effects of absentee landlords and short-term housing. There are bright notes, however. Our area has a growing outdoor-recreation and hospitality industry. Moreover, most of the towns that look to our church either have or are about to get broadband.

How our congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to our church, and b) other neighborhoods with which our church connects.

Overall, our congregation tends to be more progressive than our neighbors in terms of social issues; our members are less likely to relocate and are older. Over 60 percent of our members are retirees with years of experience in various fields and have many gifts and talents, which they readily share with the church. Without the demands of work, they are available and willing volunteers. We may have fewer young families, but we continue to reach out to them. Although most of our immediate neighbors do not attend worship, church members maintain a vital connection to them.

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

Our community's overall decrease in income has increased the number of families we serve at our food pantry. In recent months, when SNAP benefits were cut nationally, we worked with the local school and educational foundation to send backpacks of food home with students.

Within our church, the community's increase in age has stirred our education ministry to create more activities for adults even as it continues to serve children. These programs are a vital part of our mission and are constantly being recalibrated.

What we hear when we talk to community leaders and ask them what our church is known for.

Neighbors speak of our commitment to community, of the ways in which we epitomize Christian values, our gift of music, and our welcome through meals as well as church services. One non-member who had previously avoided places of worship said that in our church she "saw love, inclusion, service and community support without judgment." She added, "It changed my mind and changed my heart." In addition, our music teacher calls us "a highly effective group of people who affect positive change in their community and beyond."

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

About 60 percent cited the minister and the sense of community; 40 percent noted the music; 22 percent were attracted to our work in missions and social justice; 22 percent said they came because they were personally invited to join.

One person specified that her family “wanted to be part of a community where they felt comfortable.” Another wished “to join a small community atmosphere with ordinary, humble people with a wide range of talents, skills and spiritual backgrounds.” A third stated, “We are a center for hope and succor within the hilltown communities surrounding Charlemont.”

References

Karen Hogness

Completed: Tuesday, Jan 27, 2026

I have lived and been involved in the Charlemont community for 52 years. For 45 years I ran a general store in town. I am not a member of the CFC.

Primary Email Address: hognessk@gmail.com

Mobile Phone: 8024908633

Reference Response

I have knowledge of the impact of this church because of my own deep connection to the Charlemont community.

One of the strongest aspects of the CFC ministry is its active and visible community involvement. This includes an array of secular programs that bring together the larger west county community. Since 1970 the church has housed and sponsored the Mohawk Trail Concerts- a widely acclaimed classical music series. The CFC also provides summer music lessons open to all interested students. The church houses the Good Neighbors Food Pantry and is also the home of the Charlemont Forum- an acclaimed summer lecture series aimed at sparking discourse.

The foundational strength of the CFC is its members. They are caring and bright, forward thinking and creative. They continually step up to meet the needs of the community. This church believes in building community which is so vital today.

Sarah Heminger

Completed: Tuesday, Jan 27, 2026

I am a community member from a nearby town who volunteers for the Charlemont Forum at the Charlemont Federated Church.

Primary Email Address: sarah.hemi@yahoo.com

Mobile Phone: 4138345053

Reference Response

I volunteer for the Charlemont Forum, which offers a free speakers series focused on fostering civil public discourse. Though not a person of faith, I always feel welcome and valued at CFC. CFC is a vital community center and support network often missing in small rural towns. They run a food pantry, offer space for music lessons for children, senior citizens meetings, concert series, and more. I know many admire CFC, yet what may be less visible is its impact on those who experienced past negative interactions with institutions of faith. I come from a rural town where our church was punitive and oppressive. I avoided churches for most of my life. When asked to volunteer I was skeptical, but I trusted the community. I witnessed what I always thought Christian values were meant to be. I saw love, inclusion, service, and community support without judgment. It changed my mind, and changed my heart.

Randolph Purinton

Completed: Thursday, Jan 22, 2026

I was a Pulpit Supply minister for Charlemont for over a year during 2023-2024.

Personal Cell: (413) 687-4343

Mobile Phone: (413) 687-4343

Reference Response

The mood of the congregation is optimistic. They so want their church to continue to be a unique part of their lives. It is a friendly place. The service will often start later than scheduled because people like to meet each other and exchange greetings. This is important because it creates a positive expectation of worship time and conveys a genuine appreciation for what the minister brings each week. The people are united in spirit while acknowledging and accepting that aspects of belief are profoundly subjective. They are interested in others' faith priorities but they love the feeling of community during the service. My favorite part of the service was when

the choir members rise from their seats scattered about in the pews and assemble on and in front of the chancel stairs to sing the Introit and Anthem. It is clear that they are a good and faithful people. A wonderful experience.

Closing Prayer

From "Come Sit," by 90-year-old church member Jack Packard

*.... sit a while in this simple house of God
in generous hands that maintain the place
in hearts providing food for those in need
and eyes that meet eyes in common selfless works
that affirm the Truth, announced by all sacred texts
that We and Love are One
Here where friend or stranger can, when ready,
step into a consecrated stream
and add their voice to a soul-song
that flows on and on .*

Statement of Consent

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?

For example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.

We conducted six small group gatherings in our homes that explored the question "Who have we been," and the whole Congregation participated in four after-church meetings, as well as submitting a written survey. The Church Treasurer provided the financial information; members of all five Ministries as well as the Trustees provided information on related questions; poem was written by a member of the congregation, Jack Packard, and used with his permission; Transition Team prepped profile questions and handed them to the Search Committee who refined them to meet the Portal design.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Our congregation was highly involved in drafting this document. Of course, the life of any group of people is more complex than any single document can reveal. We look forward to meeting you and sharing our warmth, our curiosity, and our spirit with you.

And-we look forward to meeting with you on the other side of these written words, getting to know you a bit more and engaging with you in the spirit of curiosity.

**Please note that we are currently revising our bylaws.