



First Congregational
Church

United Church of Christ
Port Washington

Search Committee

Search Process Overview

August 13, 2020

WHO WE ARE

Summary Ministry Description from our Church Profile

- In a time where many struggle to balance life and faith, our church strives to be a relaxed yet vibrant community, accepting to all. We hope for a strong future, built on the traditions of our progressive congregation, with a minister who shares our beliefs in a multi-generational haven for all those who seek faith in their lives. Compassion and integrity are key aspects we seek in a leader. In return that leader will join an open and inclusive culture with strong family values. We invest in our minister, as we expect he or she will invest in us, challenging our members on their faith journey, encouraging all of us to think outside ourselves while relating life to the teachings of the past.

WHO WE ARE CALLING

- Our congregation is seeking a minister who offers pastoral care and compassion balanced with emotional maturity, who encourages people to relate faith to their daily lives. Integrity, supported by faith and honesty, demonstrated through a commitment to the continued development of theological and biblical skills is essential for our congregational strength. A minister, who is both organized and reliable, while also effective in working with all members of the congregation and staff, will offer the leadership our congregation requires to support our faith journey.

**Core Competencies as defined within our
Congregational Survey:**

- Compassion
- Integrity
- Organization / Reliability

OUR JOURNEY

- **June 2019** – The Search Committee called its first meeting.
- **July 2019** – A congregational survey was prepared and sent out to the congregation.
- **August 2019** – The Local Church Profile was completed.
- **September 2019** – Our profile went live on the UCC Ministries Website.
- **October 2019** – Candidate profiles for the first 10 applicants were received.
- **November 2019** – First round of interviews commenced.
- **December 2019** – Interviews continued for the 18 candidates received.
- **January 2020** – Committee members attended the Holy Conversations with the congregation.
- **February 2020** – Second round interviews commenced.
- **March 2020** – Third round interviews began, as the candidates increased to 25.
- **April 2020** – Plans were made for in-person visits with the top candidates.
- **May 2020** – Two additional candidates were received; candidate visits were delayed due to the pandemic.
- **June 2020** – Interviews commenced with the newest candidates.
- **July 2020** – In-person visitations commenced, with one candidate brought in from Pennsylvania.
- **August 2020** – Final candidate selection and presentment to the Church Council.

OUR EXPERIENCE

- We interviewed 27 candidates from across the United States.
- A few of the candidates were women, however the majority were men.
- Candidates had varied backgrounds and experience, ranging from those new to ministry to those nearing the end of their careers.
- Several candidates were serving churches smaller than ours, others larger. Several were also serving more than one simultaneously.
- We found candidates who had an early calling into ministry, and those who found the path later in life.
- Each candidate was interviewed via Zoom up to 3 times, with nearly the entire Search Committee present for every interview.
- Pre-recorded sermons were reviewed, and references were contacted.
- Interview questions were derived from various sources including our congregational survey, questions pertaining to the candidate's profile, selected by the committee and from the UCC Search and Call guidelines.
- 3 candidates were brought to Port for in-person interviews, 1 of which was brought in from Pennsylvania.
- Sermons were presented by the top 2 candidates in our sanctuary, followed by an additional in-person interview.
- Along the way we did lose several promising candidates who either decided to withdraw their candidacy as not being a strong fit, or as they found other positions. The pandemic did play a role in the loss of 1 promising candidate.
- The selected candidate was by far our favorite, obtaining a unanimous vote from the Search Committee.