

**Name of Church**

Federated UCC

**Address**76 Bell St  
Chagrin Falls, OH 44022**Conference:**

Heartland

**Association:**

Living Water

**Title**

Senior Pastor

**Start Date**

Mar 1, 2025

**Description**

Federated Church is open and affirming and is a "united and uniting church", committed to social justice and sound theology, seeking a full time senior pastor.

**Church Contact Information**

(440) 247-6490 (Church Primary Phone)

**Listing Information****Web Presences**

<https://fedchurch.org> *Type: Professional*

<https://www.youtube.com/TheFederatedChurch> *Type: Other*

<https://www.facebook.com/TheFederatedChurch> *Type: Other*

**Additional Formal Ecumenical Affiliations**

*No response*

**UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person****Name:**

Rev. Dr. Elena Larssen

**Title:**

Association General Minister, Living Water ONE Association

**Phone:**

330.940.2220

**Email:**

agm@livingwaterone.org

## Summary Ministry Description

The Federated Church has a long tradition of dynamic preaching and exceptional music, an inviting spirit, and lively faith in action which combine to offer an expansive sense of community in the Chagrin Valley. During the next part of our faith journey, we are called to energize personal connection & involvement meaningful to all ages and stages, to mobilize community engagement and partnerships, to facilitate individual spiritual deepening through a wide variety of encounters, to continue meaningful congregational care, and to further financial stability and responsibility so that the treasure of belonging to an open and loving community of faith feeds spiritual yearnings for generations to come.

We own two campuses, mortgage-free. For almost 150 years, the iconic steeple of Federated Church has overseen the village of Chagrin Falls from the hill on Bell Street and has been woven into the spiritual life of those who call it home. Ten miles east is our second campus: a 40-acre property of forest, open fields, memorial gardens & labyrinth and a 20,000 sq. foot community gathering space managed by a local nonprofit aligned with the church's social justice ministries.

To fully live into this next chapter, we need the kind of faith leader who moves our hearts & minds by word and by example, who challenges themselves and us to show up and speak up with divine compassion in a broken world, and who guides us into close encounters with ourselves, our neighbor, and our God. We are looking for a senior pastor who will love us, push the edges of our comfort zones, and lead us into a visionary future grounded in God.

## Church pictures



## What we value about living in our area.

The church is located in the village of Chagrin Falls, a welcoming town nestled along the forested valley of the Chagrin River in Northeast Ohio. Situated at the point where the Chagrin River spills through picturesque waterfalls, the village includes charming, tree-lined streets, a vibrant arts scene, as well as its historic and shopping districts, attracting visitors from throughout the area.

The Chagrin Valley encompasses a variety of neighboring communities & suburbs southeast of Cleveland, including Chagrin Falls, Bainbridge, South Russell, Russell, Solon, Moreland Hills, & Auburn, among others. It is full of rolling hills, glacial ledges, & green spaces, excellent schools, active recreation programs and diverse shopping areas. Residents are predominantly college-educated professionals with a strong appreciation for education, community engagement and social responsibility. Small town festivals and concerts draw us together.

Downtown Cleveland is only a ~30-minute drive away. Cleveland boasts of the 2nd-largest theater district in the United States (behind NYC), 3 professional sports teams and a vibrant dining scene. Cleveland is situated on Lake Erie, a playground of activity during the summer months.

For more information: <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/chagrin-falls-oh>

US News article - <https://www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-small-town-for-shopping-2021/>

## Current size of membership

709

Average in person attendance

141

Does your church hold virtual worship services?

Yes

Choose platform type(s) and number for virtual worship.

**Video Hosting Platform**

On average, how many views are received per service?

83

Languages used in ministry

English

Position Title

Senior Pastor

Position Duration

Settled

Compensation Level

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

Link to current Conference guidelines

<https://heartlanducc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2025-Heartland-Conference-Authorized-Minister-Compensation-Guidelines-.pdf>

## 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](#).

[Download scope of Work](#)

3 core competencies that we imagine could be foundational in our next minister's relationship with the church.

First:

1. The successful candidate is an inspired and thoughtful teacher and preacher, grounded in scripture and relevant to current issues and daily living.

The Senior Pastor will be a compelling preacher rooted in scripture while remaining attuned to the complexities of modern life. With humility, wisdom and clarity, they bring biblical truths to life, offering messages that are both spiritually enriching and practically relevant. Their sermons bridge the ancient wisdom of the Bible with the pressing issues of today, guiding the congregation toward faith-filled, Christ-centered living. Through compassionate leadership and a commitment to discipleship, they create a space where faith is strengthened, hearts are uplifted, and lives are transformed by the power of God's Word.

Second:

2. The successful candidate is someone who is wonderfully relatable, has a sense of humor, and is willing to be vulnerable.

The Senior Pastor we seek is someone who is wonderfully relatable, with a "wicked good sense of humor" that brings warmth and joy to our community. This person understands that faith is a journey best traveled with honesty, humility, and the occasional well-timed joke. Their ability to be vulnerable makes them approachable, creating a space where people feel truly seen and understood. By balancing depth with lightheartedness, they bring God close and personal, reminding us that faith isn't just about solemnity—it's about living fully, with grace, laughter, and a deep sense of belonging.

**Third:**

3. The successful candidate is a visionary leader involved in the decision-making process, interacting with our staff, commissions, and ministry teams in moving toward a vision

The senior pastor is a visionary leader who actively engages in the decision-making process, working closely with commissions and ministry teams to move toward a shared vision for the church. As a spiritual leader, they are deeply grounded in God, cultivating and empowering lay leadership to serve with faith and purpose. With a strong commitment to collaboration, they foster an environment where ministry is integrated rather than siloed, ensuring that all efforts align toward a common mission. Through heightened listening and discernment, they inspire and guide the congregation, weaving together diverse voices and gifts into a unified, Spirit-led community that grows and serves together.

## 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)	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing Allowance	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any Experiential Difference (Related to years of experience)	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salary Basis: 0			
Pension/Annuity	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Security and Medicare Offset	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical/Dental Insurance	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life Insurance	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability Insurance	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worker's Compensation	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

We negotiate the compensation and benefits using the table from [Heartland Conference Authorized Minister Compensation Guidelines](#) as a starting point and build from there.

Church Council and our Senior Director of People & Operations generate the package proposal based on the guidelines, experience, & negotiated expectations then send the proposal to HR to approve the package.

The expected living situation for our next minister.

Living nearby with a housing allowance

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

As part of the overall compensation, an equity allowance is provided that is separate from the base salary.

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

Only a full time arrangement is being considered at this time.

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

**Living Water Association (LWA)**-- a peer support group (LWA) provides *Communities of Practice* in which clergy are encouraged to participate, sponsors many *Healthy Practice of Ministry* events, and LWA is a leader in the Heartland Conference in providing such support like a Faith In Action Community Engagement Toolbox, weekly Zoom meetings, and the amazing courses of the SPIRE Center.

**The Heartland Conference** and the **UCC National Headquarters** (located in CLE) both share resources and programs to support the pastor.

## Who Is God Calling to Minister with Us?

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

Ministry goals were created from the Visionary Action Plan created through a detailed process with the congregation in 2021.

- Goal #1: Energize participation-- Ensure that everyone knows their participation at Federated is valuable and desired.
- Goal #2: Community Engagement -- In alignment with our vision, mission and values, develop and deepen partnerships that benefit each other and the wider community.
- Goal #3: Spiritual Deepening --Provide opportunities for people to deepen spirituality through meaningful connections to the arts, movement, nature, service to others, etc.
- Goal #4: Congregational Care --Provide opportunities for people to live their faith through service and ministry that deepens their own relationships while providing care for others.
- Goal #5: Financial Stability -- Create awareness and provide opportunities for the wider community to invest in the ministries of Federated Church. While Federated's operational finances are stable in the short term, we aim to inspire robust investment that ensures long term sustainability toward a thriving presence for decades to come.

To see the full church ***Visionary Action Plan*** click on this link.

We expect the Senior Minister we call to collaborate with the congregation to enliven our gifts & opportunities in efforts to realize these goals, imagine God's dream for God's work through Federated, and deepen the vision.

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

While no one person can be expected to realize these visionary goals, we would expect the new Senior Pastor to assist the congregation by being fully supportive of the strategic actions already in motion, giving feedback and actively participating in the evolutionary process of developing and implementing our goals to integrate our church's gifts with the needs, challenges, and dreams of the wider community.

We will encourage our pastor to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Some successful outreach already in motion include:

Interfaith projects by partnering with other churches and organizations (St. Paul's UCC, an intercity church; Mt. Zion UCC, a predominantly African American church, Forest Hill Presbyterian (a local justice-focused congregation, & Living Water Association)

Social Justice Advocacy Ministry (SJAM) general meetings, programs or events

An active partnership with the Community Life Collaborative's (CLC's) promotion of environmental justice

A 60-year tradition of giving away 100% of the Christmas Eve Offerings to a local selected nonprofit (averaging \$35,000 of gifts)

Partnering with Heartland Conference networks and initiatives (e.g., trip to border, fall Climate Action Summit, camps)

Co-Hosting an annual Iftar meal shared with the local Muslim community

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

The majority of Federated's members speak English as their primary language. This is also true for the community that surrounds Federated. We prefer the next Senior Pastor to use language that is culturally sensitive, inclusive, and relevant to our current day contexts and communications. We seek to clearly express our open & affirming welcome. These language considerations matter to our call to love our neighbor as ourselves, to see the Divine in all expressions of creation, and to clearly convey that all belong to the family of Christ.

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.

#### PARTICIPATING IN THEOLOGICAL PRAXIS

- Practicing theological reflection, and integrating it in living, teaching, preaching, and leadership
- Integrating theological reflection in teaching, preaching, and ecclesial and community leadership
- Demonstrating appreciation for and participation in the ecumenical and interfaith partnerships
- Experiencing and appreciating a variety of theological perspectives

#### BUILDING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call, Christ's mission, and open to the Holy Spirit
- Strategically creating the future of God's Church, and performing necessary administrative tasks
- Working collaboratively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity
- Encouraging leadership and gift development through continuing education and lifelong learning

#### STRENGTHENING INTER- AND INTRA- PERSONAL ASSETS

- Demonstrating excellent communication skills
- Developing and maintaining a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life
- Living in relationships of covenantal accountability with God and the Church
- Exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity, and respecting the dignity of all people
- Understanding and ministering to stages of human development across the life span

#### WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE & MERCY

- Drawing on the ministry of Jesus Christ to confront injustice and oppression
- Practicing the radical hospitality of God
- Providing hope and healing to a hurting world with care and compassion for God's creation, human and nonhuman
- Identifying and working to overcome explicit and implicit bias in the life of the Church
- Encouraging leadership and gift development through continuing education and lifelong learning
- Building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence

### Who Is God Calling Us to Become?

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"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.

Federated Church envisions a vibrant future where we ...

- A. Are seen as a **church for all generations**-- valuing and investing in families, youth, and young adults in ways that invite their leadership and respond to their most pressing needs & nurture intergenerational relationships, service projects, & worship.
- B. Grow our **spiritual education and formation**--creating a space where faith is explored deeply, openly, and creatively.
- C. Expand our **outreach beyond the walls**-- meeting people where they are, listening deeply, working alongside them to realize dreams, and joining them in a shared faith journey as we work together toward the beloved community.
- D. Strengthen our commitment to **social justice and advocacy**-- becoming a leading voice for justice in our community.
- E. Enhance our **digital and online presence**, making our online worship experience and ministries responsive, interactive, inspirational, and accessible to build relationships for all people and create ministry teams for these.

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



*Broader community engagement, engaging youth and young adults & long term financial sustainability* are among the largest emerging challenges facing our congregation. We perceive challenges as opportunities and several experiments are getting some traction to address these challenges through a multifaceted approach to all three tied to our Visionary Action Plan (VAP).

1.) **Performing Arts Series**--Lifting up our community reputation in musical excellence, Federated's music director curates a series of community musical performances held at 76 Bell Street.

2.) **Partnering with The Community Life Collaborative** --The Community Life Collaborative (CLC) is a community-facing 501c3 engaging communities in NE Ohio around environmental justice. As a resourcing & networking organization that also manages the church's FLC property, the CLC coordinates collaborative efforts in the region for developing & mentoring youth leadership, spotlighting the arts & exhibits to raise awareness of issues of environmental equity or stewardship, and offers community programming.

3.) **SJAM** provides multiple opportunities to engage the community in dialogue and action steps toward addressing social and environmental justice issues

4.) **Generosity as a year-round spiritual practice**-- We shifted from an annual pledge committee to a full Commission that elevates practices & opportunities of generosity all year. We spotlight Generosity Moments that show how we impact the community, identify special opportunities for urgent missions throughout the year. A full time staff position was added in 2020 to support this work. Our VAP continues to aim for community engagement, specifically focusing on the needs of local families & youth, as a huge potential for development and growth. We welcome visionary initiatives to collaborate on with the staff, congregation, & partnering organizations. Community opportunities include growing a deep sense of belonging, mental wellness for all, & building the beloved community.

## Congregation Reflections

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

*Our purpose is to worship God; preach & hear the gospel of Jesus; joyfully embody the living spirit of God; embrace all people; transform lives; and empower everyone to love & serve the world through Jesus Christ. We value:*

**Extravagant Welcome**--We warmly welcome & appreciate all people.

**Wondrous Worship**--We open ourselves to God's call while seeking to create sacred space wherever we are.

**Faith Formation**--We nurture & deepen our relationship with God, Jesus & Holy Spirit individually & in community.

**Purposeful Leadership**--We lead, work & serve together in Christ to discern, design, create & inspire opportunities to experience the Divine.

**Responsible Stewardship**--We serve as faithful & generous stewards of God's gifts to us to do God's work in the world.

**Boundless Beauty**--We encourage & celebrate individual & communal expressions of beauty in our worship & surroundings.

**Transformational Ministry**--Following Jesus' example of love & justice, we seek to transform our and others' lives through compassionate response, caring relationships, advocacy & active service.

We believe God's spirit is present & alive in all facets of life - creation, beauty, music, work, service, compassion, and relationships.

Strengths or positive qualities of our congregation.

The greatest strength of our church is an evident culture of love & joyful participation. It creates a healing tone that connects the congregation across differences, and we come away from worship encounters, celebrations, and other shared events lifted up to do God's work.

The recent congregational survey & listening session highlight these as our strengths:

**Facilities & Location:** The church has a variety of high-quality spaces, including sanctuaries, meeting rooms, outdoor spaces, & a strong physical presence in the community.

**Music Ministry:** A significant asset; known for excellence in music, with high expectations from the congregation.

**Welcoming & Inclusive Community:** Open & Affirming, Creation Care, & a strong social justice commitment.

**Faith in Action:** Active in the community through social justice, mission work, and outreach.

**Pastoral Care:** A strong network of pastoral and lay ministry care, ensuring members feel supported & connected.

**Intellectual & Thoughtful Approach to Faith:** Engages with theology & social issues in a meaningful way.

**Strong Congregational & Staff Leadership:** Encourages participation, values collaboration, & is guided by faith-based principles.

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

Federated Church has experienced growth in attendance this year, even during a period of transition—a testament to the strength of our community & enduring need for what we, and God, offer. While some churches are facing decline, people continue to seek spiritual connection, purpose, & a faith-filled community.

Key areas for growth include expanding our children & family ministries, attracting young families, fostering intergenerational worship, & deepening our sense of community. To build on this momentum, we aim to increase visibility by sharing the great work we do, telling our story of a welcoming & dynamic church where all people can practice their faith together & nurture relationships with God.

Strengthening our public presence—through events in the town square, features in local media, & an active social media presence—we hope to reach more people. Additionally, we seek to further distinguish ourselves as an interfaith community by becoming a hub for youth summits, hosting workshops & retreats, & creating spaces for meaningful dialogue & spiritual growth. Through these efforts, we hope to continue to evolve, serve, & grow as a vital presence in our community.

**What worship is like when our congregation gathers.**

Federated worships in a variety of ways & places, from worship in nature in a park or out at our labyrinth to the open-space Family Life Center. But most Sundays, you'll find us gathered at the recently renovated Western Reserve style sanctuary at Bell St. in the heart of the village of Chagrin Falls.

We have a long tradition of exceptional preaching and the finest music. We've come to expect the kind of preaching that is thought-provoking, understanding scripture through a fresh lens, inviting questioning, and connecting lessons & wisdom to the landscape of today. Lay people serve as worship leaders sharing scripture, prayers, or faith witness as part of our worship experience. And a Generosity Impact Moment highlights a mission or ministry supported by the church. We recently added a new organ and piano to enrich our fine music program with both traditional and contemporary music, choir, handbells, and a children's choir.

Our worship service has often been based on the church year calendar & the lectionary readings. We tap a wide range of emotions, from deep empathy to sheer joy! Worship is a celebration of God's grace & goodness and a call to follow in the model of Christ.

**The educational program/faith formation vision of our church.**

We believe all participants at Federated seek to spiritually grow & evolve throughout their life and we try to offer programming and groups that meet each where they are in their faith formation.

- **Birth-Pre-K**-- We give children positive experiences with church and church school to encourage a lifelong interest in faith. We emphasize teaching that they are loved by God, Jesus, the church community, & that church is a safe place to be who God created them to be.
- **K-5th** -- Each week, students are taught from the lectionary text (or overall worship theme) in a way that is meaningful to them using stories, crafts & games in order that they may make connections with the rest of their family after the service.
- **6th-12th**-- We provide the tools needed to develop their own unique faith through thought, action & experience with Confirmation Classes & youth groups.
- **Adult Faith Formation** -- Book journeys, Bible studies, classes, support groups and retreats. SJAM team has developed or hosted several ministries around racial justice in the past 5 years including *UCC White Privilege* course, the *UCC Sacred Conversations to End Racism* & created *Centering God, De-centering Whiteness* with partner churches.

**How our congregation is organized for ministry and mission.**

Our church recently reorganized our ministry structure into the work of four Commissions: Congregational Care; Mission and Service; Generosity, and Spiritual Formation as well as five Administrative Committees: Finance and Properties, Telling Our Story, Human Resources, Membership and Nominating, and Legacy. These Commissions and Committees direct the work of the church under the guidance of the Church Council. A member of the Church Council serves as a liaison that works alongside the commission and committee to which they are assigned. Commissions and committees typically meet once a month.



The staff meets weekly to plan worship, review pastoral needs, and attend to the scheduled calendar of events. An important addition to our structure was the development of Ministry Teams in which individual members and groups are encouraged to develop new ministries that arise from the gifts and talents and their sense of call to serve God. Since 2013, we have developed over 60 volunteer-driven ministry teams that perform a wide variety of study, fellowship, education, service and advocacy ministries.

When it comes to decision-making, 25 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...

When the covid crisis occurred, our church suspended in-person services immediately. Our leadership moved quickly to change from in-person worship and activities to a virtual style of worship and connection. They consulted with medical and video experts plus church members who had experience in virtual communications to develop a vibrant on-line presence with avenues of communication for the congregation. The staff, church council, and lay leaders worked jointly to develop and implement the changes needed to transition to virtual communications and meaningful connections.

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

[Governance Structure REV - apprvd Feb 2024.pdf](#)

[Church Governance and Policy Book \(rev Feb 2024\).pdf](#)

[Federated Constitution adopted February 25 2024.pdf](#)

[2024 Annual Report FINAL.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:	709
NUMBER OF ACTIVE NON-MEMBERS:	312
TOTAL OF CHURCH PARTICIPANTS (SUM OF THE NUMBERS ABOVE):	1021

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

No

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

TIME	PERCENTAGE
MORE THAN 10 YEARS:	72%
LESS THAN 10, MORE THAN 5 YEARS:	16%
LESS THAN 5 YEARS:	12%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

**Number of total participants by age:**

AGE	NUMBER
0-11	53
12-17	68
18-24	61
25-34	20
35-44	51
45-54	102
55-64	163
65-74	255
75+	367

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

**Percentage of adults in various household types:**

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE ADULTS UNDER 35:	4%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH MINORS:	17%
SINGLE ADULTS AGE 35-65:	4%
JOINT HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO MINORS:	60%
SINGLE ADULTS OVER 65:	15%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

**Education level of adult participants by percentage:**

EDUCATION LEVEL	PERCENTAGE
HIGH SCHOOL:	4%
COLLEGE:	44%
GRADUATE SCHOOL:	44%
SPECIALTY TRAINING:	8%
OTHER EDUCATION LEVEL:	0%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

## Percentage of adults in various employment types:

EMPLOYMENT TYPE	PERCENTAGE
ADULTS WHO ARE EMPLOYED:	35%
ADULTS WHO ARE RETIRED:	61%
ADULTS WHO ARE NOT FULLY EMPLOYED:	4%

## ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

No

## The range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

The majority of members are financially stable. Their occupations range from unemployed/retired to executive and everything in between.

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

The ethnic makeup of Federated largely mirrors the communities in which the members live, which is largely white. Federated is a welcoming community which celebrates all peoples and is anti-racist.

## What diversity means in our context?

Diversity in the context of Federated Church: different experiential backgrounds, ages, religious backgrounds, educational levels, & sexual orientations.

We have not had a recent conversation about diversity but it is embedded in our mission & vision for the church & it is something to which we are attending on an ongoing way throughout our programs, meetings, and relationships. We facilitated a 2-yr ONA process of discernment in 2008.

We believe that being Open and Affirming is not just a one-time activity, but rather a process that we live each day through our programs, values and activities.

## 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**

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## 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)	311	Clergy, lay leaders & community members
Baptisms (number last year)	7	Clergy
Children's Groups or Classes	154	Director of Children's Ministries
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	868	Clergy, Music Director, & lay leaders
Church-wide Meals	75	Lay leaders & volunteers
Choirs and Music Groups	79	Music Staff & volunteers
Church-based Bible Study	68	Clergy & lay leaders
Communion (served how often?)	200	1x/mo; Clergy & lay leaders
Community Meals	540	Lay leadership
Confirmation (number confirmed last year)	18	Clergy & lay leaders
Drama or Dance Program	4	Leap of Faith Dancers
Funerals (number last year)	5	Clergy
Outdoor Worship	40	Lay leaders
Prayer or Meditation Groups	60	Lay leaders
Public Advocacy Work	116	Lay leaders
Retreats	17	Lay leaders
Weddings (number last year)	1	Clergy
Worship (digital / online / livestream)	83	Clergy, lay leaders, members, musicians
Youth Groups or Classes	56	Lay leaders & clergy
Other	93	Elected lay leadership

## Worship Times

WORSHIP (TIME SLOT):	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
10:00-11:00am	224	Pastors & Director of Music,

## Additional comments:

Lay leaders offer their gifts and resources to help plan and lead several ministries of our church life including youth groups, book studies, music and retreats. We had 2-3 worship services each Sunday until COVID, experimenting with an informal community family-friendly service in addition to our traditional experience. Currently, our model is one 10:00-11:00 service, with the RISE to Shine Band leading us in contemporary music on the last Sunday of the month.

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
Rev. Jill Harkins Goodman	3	church	Confirmation Class	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rev. Trent Bobbit	3	church	active member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rev. Dan Kershner	3	church	Council commissioner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rev. Brian Bagley-Bonner	3	church	pulpit supply	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rev. Richard Falkenberg	3	church	Small group leader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rev Houston Bowers	3	church	active member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rev. Lizzie Weed	none	unknown	active member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rev. Susi Kawolics	3	church	pulpit supply; contemplative prayer leader; LWA delegate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rev. Judy Bagley-Bonner	3	church	pulpit supply; Conference delegate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rev. Kate Walsh	3	church	LWA officer to Council	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Susi Kawolics is a regular participant in worship & worship design, faith formation, and the Social Justice Advocacy Ministry. Dan Kershner is also a frequent lay leader in worship and in the Social Justice Advocacy Ministry. Jill Harkins Goodwin helps lead the Confirmation Class. Judy and Brian Bagley Bonner each provide pulpit supply as needed as well as profound light-heartedness. Susi Kawolics, Kate Walsh, and Judy Bagley-Bonner also serve as delegates to our Regional Association and/or conference councils.

List of all current staff:

STAFF POSITION	HEAD OF STAFF	COMPENSATION	SUPERVISED BY	LENGTH OF TENURE FOR CURRENT PERSON IN THIS POSITION
Bookkeeper	no	part	SDPO	1 year
Director of Music Ministries	no	full	SDPO	7 years
Director of Missions	no	part	SDPO	26 years
Organist	no	part	Dir of Music Min	31 years
Children's Choir Director	no	part	Dir of Music Min	14 years
Director of Children's Spiritual Formation	no	part	SDPO	5 years
Director of Generosity	no	full	SDPO	1 year
Director of Properties	no	full	SDPO	9 years
Senior Director of People & Operations	Head of Staff	full	Church Council/Senior Pastor	2 years
Assoc. Pastor of Spiritual Formation	no	full	Senior Pastor	3 years
Child Care	no	part	SDPO	6 years

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

We have an active lay membership that serves in worship, governance, and ministry. Most members view the church as a home and stay involved and invested in the mission of Federated for years. In many ways our demographic makeup reflects the community which surrounds Federated, but our age demographic is not an exact representation of the community. We know Federated has what the world needs!

Opportunities for growth lie in diversity of ages & stages:

- *Confirmation membership shifted from 2 to 18 in the past 8 years*
- *The area shows opportunity to develop relevance for the 24-35 yr-old range*

## Church Finances

### Current Annual Income

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	1045505
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	35117
Grants	3000
Rentals of Church Building	71871
Christmas Eve Offering	31876
Trinkets & Treasures Rummage Sale	23150
Total	1210519

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

1062327

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?

19

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

No

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

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

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered?

We try our best to maximize our giving and our impact, even through the COVID shutdown. Our aim is to tithe mission giving. The OCWN is embedded into the annual budget for mission, budgeting about \$21,500. Additionally, a specific Sunday is dedicated to each of the 5 special ministries during the year, spotlighting them through an info video and a special offering. Other donations (approximately \$60,000) will come from special offerings and designated funds, with local outreach budgeted for \$65,014. The Legacy Fund contributes 5% of a rolling 8-quarter average to the annual operating budget.

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

4



Total amount of loan debt:

*No response*

Reason for debt:

All mortgages are paid off.

Are capital and other payments current?

Yes

## Capital Campaigns

Description of any building programs projected or underway.

A Capital Campaign to raise \$800,000 - \$1,000,000 is underway specifically to generate a deferred major maintenance fund to cover major capital expenses/improvements for the Family Life Center campus. This fund will cover major capital expenses for the next decade including roof, siding, parking/pavement, and unforeseen capital costs for this community center of the Federated Church. The campaign is scheduled to run from March through August 2025. The campaign is launched as a followup on the commitment the congregation made in 2024 to retain 2 campuses.

Pictures



Description of any capital campaigns in the last ten years:

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
2017	Replace roof, steeple slate, HVAC, & renovate sanctuary including new organ, flooring, carpet, paint, lights, sound system, cross, etc.	2500000	2930000	Long-term building needs were addressed at 76 Bell
0		0	0	

Description of any capital campaigns underway or anticipated:

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
2025	Major Maintenance Fund for FLC	800000	0	Ensure ongoing community spaces
0		0	0	

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

The mission of the 2025 capital campaign is to fund major maintenance at the Family Life Center to advance community outreach by restoring the FLC building as a vital community touch point aligned with Federated Church's values. Without significant burden of cost or staffing from the church's operating budget, communities outside our membership are exposed to Federated's commitment to ONA, social justice, and more through the partnership with the Community Life Collaborative 501c3.

Does your church have an endowment?

Yes

What is the market value of the assets?

755271

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

Regularly

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

5% of Rolling 8 Quarters Fair Market Value

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

The endowment is designed to grow in perpetuity while making 5% distributions annually.

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

Forever

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

All values come directly from our financial custodian. The endowment is managed by our Legacy Committee.

Other Assets

Revenue from rental income and 2) Designated funds for specified uses

Reserves (savings):

1129185

Investments (other than endowment):

*No response*

Does the church have a parsonage?

No

Description of all buildings owned by the church:

1. 76 Bell Street steepled church—Primary Church Building; Classic Colonial styling
2. Family Life Center, 16349 Chillicothe Rd, Chagrin Falls— "Family Life Center," a 20,00 sq.ft. building built & owned by Federated, 40 acres of land, including memorial gardens and labyrinth; operations managed by the Community Life Collaborative, a nonprofit affiliated with Federated advancing environmental stewardship & justice
3. 102 Bell Street, Chagrin Falls – Single family House adjacent to 76 Bell street church bldg; former parsonage now used as rental property

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

Interior access to different floors for wheelchair users or others with mobility aids (elevator, chair lift, ramps)  
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  
Listening devices in the sanctuary, or wireless technology to connect to hearing aids  
Wheelchair access in bathrooms  
"Quiet room" with worship viewing and listening availability

Handrails on all stairs  
Sound system in sanctuary and other meeting places (fellowship hall, large meeting rooms, etc.)  
Curb cuts  
Accessible bathroom on each floor  
Wheelchair areas in sanctuary (other than "front or back")

#### Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs:

At 76 Bell street, most spaces are accessible by wheelchair via our elevator.  
At The Family Life Center, all public spaces are accessible by wheelchair, as it is one floor and ADA approved.  
While not all worship space is accessible to wheelchairs, the general worship space is wheelchair accessible. The fellowship space is wheelchair accessible. The pulpit is not wheelchair accessible. The pulpit and chancel area are not wheelchair accessible.

#### Policies regarding financial practices of the church:

The Senior Director of People & Operations (SDPO) is the primary signer on most accounts & oversees all payables & benefits contributions. A PT bookkeeper works with the SDPO to see that all bills are paid, invoices are sent & all accounts are reconciled. The SDPO & Finance/Properties Committee review all large or newer expenses. The treasurer oversees all financials, reporting to Church Council quarterly. The annual budget is drafted by the SDPO & treasurer, reviewed by the Finance & Properties Committee and the Church Council & ultimately approved by the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

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

We need to be vigilant about cultivating giving and membership to continue financial sustainability in the long term.  
The congregation demonstrates fiscal responsibility & transparent communication. Missions is always a significant priority, both in the operating budget & in a variety of special offerings. Our Christmas Eve offering, outside our budget (\$1.6 million over the past 50 years), has contributed locally & world wide.  
Our Designated Funds, over \$1 million, support a variety of ministries outside our budget & provide resources for new programs.

## Historical Information

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

- **Standing beside black communities** in the 50's & 60's –Pulpit exchanges, construction of a Chagrin Falls Park Community Center
- **The building & development of the Family Life Center** in 1999 and its recent re-purposing in 2021 for ministry to the wider community focusing on stewardship of the earth & advocacy for social justice through the incorporation of a non-profit organization called the Community Life Collaborative.
- **Open and affirming process** - Engaging a 2-year study & discernment process. Developing an Open & Affirming Statement: approved by our congregation & continuing to weave throughout our faith journeys and decisions.
- **Our response to Covid, streaming services** - In response to the Covid crisis in our community and nation, our church took great care in addressing the health safety of our members by initiating safety protocols and in developing alternative ways for them to participate in worship, study, fellowship and ministry through the use of ZOOM and on-line connections.

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

A thorough 2-year process was initiated in 2018 to address the financial challenge of maintaining & operating 2 campuses. There was a strong division about whether we should maintain & repurpose the FLC property in a way that could be both mission aligned & financially sustainable OR to sell it and use the net proceeds for ongoing ministry & operations for 76 Bell Street. Under Council's direction, many congregational listening sessions were organized to share alternatives, one was chosen.

A group of church members proposed forming a separate non-profit organization, called the Community Life Collaborative, that would engage the larger community in social justice while maintaining the building, grounds & memorial gardens & labyrinth. In February of 2020, the congregation voted overwhelmingly (85%) in favor of a partnership between the Federated Church and the CLC. The church is now in a position to maintain this arrangement with a greatly reduced financial or staffing burden.

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.

No decision is black and white. And, at Federated, we don't check our brains at the door. Acknowledging the complexities of navigating congregational governance, we value open communication and encourage sharing feelings, exploring options, and hearing suggestions that raise questions and possibilities. We don't always get it right the first time, but we welcome differing opinions as conflict arises in our church life. We value a process of forthright conversations, offering intentional time and space for the congregation to explore options as well as to express differing opinions to work towards shared understanding and shared solutions. Giving space for all points of view to be shared and heard, we recognize that the best decisions are informed decisions with shared solutions.

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

In December 2023, Church Council announced that it again recommended the congregation vote to sell the Family Life Center (FLC) property to avoid future capital expenses and utilize proceeds to further secure our long-term financial position. In response, a group of members started an extraordinary grass roots information campaign in support of keeping the FLC property. With record turnout, the congregation decidedly voted 211 to 68 to keep the property at the February 2024 annual meeting. Over the following year, representatives from council and the Community Life Collaborative (CLC) worked together and agreed to a new 5 year management agreement that was overwhelmingly approved by the congregation in February 2025. In addition, a \$800,000 capital campaign was announced to provide for capital needs anticipated over the next 10 years. While progress is being made, we still need to be led, by our ministry and lay leadership, toward continued healing resulting from this conflict.

**Ministerial History:**

<i>Name:</i> Rev Hamilton C. Throckmorton	<i>Years of service:</i> 20	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Rev. Dan DeWeese	<i>Years of service:</i> 10	
<i>Name:</i> Rev. David Norling	<i>Years of service:</i> 15	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Rev. John Townsend	<i>Years of service:</i> 39	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Rev. Betsy Wooster	<i>Years of service:</i> 3	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Rev. Mark Simone	<i>Years of service:</i> 31	UCC Standing
<i>Name:</i> Rev. Susi Kawolics	<i>Years of service:</i> 8	UCC Standing

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

- We have learned much from a legacy of exceptional ministry.
  - Our ministers tend to stay in covenant with us for a long time, indicating we take good care of our ministers. Our staff & lay leadership actively participate in decision making & support implementation of ministries.
  - We have learned the power of a faith leader who interprets scriptures in the relevant context of today's world to inform our faithful actions.
  - Establishing a staff position to administer operations makes room for a Senior Pastor to focus on being our spiritual leader
  - Charisma and humor can give spiritual lift and hope

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

No

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

No

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

No

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

No

## Community Vision

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

Our church has a long history of service to the community & to the larger world. That work ranges from charity donations to shared projects, building new relationships with mission partners.

We have a 50+ year history of supporting our sister inner-city church, St. Paul's Community Church on the Near West Side of Cleveland as well as of supporting the Chagrin Falls Park Community Center, a minority serving community agency that borders our community. We have supported the Sparrow Village Ministry and programs in South Africa and programs for self-development in Nicaragua with financial and ministry teams. We have a long history of youth work camps in various marginalized areas of the U.S. & we have been a host church for families as part of Family Promise to provide support to local families in transition from being unhoused.

Additionally, we traditionally support the missions of our denomination through our Church's Wider Mission budget.

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

Members of the Federated Church have served as delegates to recent UCC Synod Conferences. We have representation in leadership and participation in the monthly Heartland Conference Environmental Care & Justice Network as well as in the regional Living Water Association events, projects, and Faith In Action team. A member of Federated designed curriculum that is now a resource across UCC congregations nationally (*Centering God, De-centering Whiteness*).

The church's decision to re-imagine the use of its second property -- 40 acres of fields & forest with a community center -- for community-facing engagement managed by a separate partner 501(c)3 is often lifted at the national setting of the UCC as a model for innovative use of property to serve community needs. As National UCC works from offices in Cleveland, UCC initiatives such as staff retreat, youth summits and workshops, and more have been hosted at our Family Life Center.

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

In December of 2016, the Social Justice Advocacy Ministries formed as a ministry team of the Mission & Service Commission. The SJAM's mission is to *"to educate ourselves & take action consistent with our faith in order to bring justice to those who are most vulnerable, disenfranchised & marginalized..."* This ministry has since grown to 150+ members and meets monthly to hear of local advocacy events, policies, & issues around such topics as the environment, LGBTQ+, racial justice, voting rights, immigration, criminal justice, & more. With shared leadership, they coordinate monthly programming with speakers, videos, and collaborations.

Our close partnership with the Community Life Collaborative scales opportunities for responding to needs in local communities with programming that organizes workshops, coordinates collaborations with local nonprofits, and dedicates the FLC as a safe and inclusive space to bring communities together around shared dreams and action.

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.

Creation Justice.

Open and Affirming (ONA).

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.

"...God loves us too much to keep us this way". We continue to name these designations & recognize we still have important work and witnessing to do to live into these designations with faithfulness, cultural sensitivity and compassion.

Our ONA commitment is demonstrated in our hiring, baptism & wedding rituals, language, advocacy and operations. We host LGBTQ+ Prom and game nights & participate in the Pride Parade in Cleveland.

Our Social Justice Advocacy Ministry is active in working across the church and with local groups to lift environmental care and justice promoting policies for clean water, air, and soil, LED lighting, planting events, & recycling education & advocacy.

Each of these designations & the processes to reach them emerged from grass roots efforts. As of yet, no group has suggested another formal designation, but our practices certainly have us poised to consider A2A, Faithful & Welcoming, a WISE congregation for Mental Health, or becoming a Global Mission Church.

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

Federated makes deliberate efforts to offer and participate in interfaith activities across the year. These include:

- **Iftar dinners**--where we share a meal celebrating Ramadan and dialogue around topics of spiritual values alongside families from the local Muslim Society
- **Racial Equity Buddies (REB)** -- We partner with a Presbyterian Church in Cleveland Heights to advance racial relationships, understandings, and advocacy;
- **Mt. Zion UCC** -- We share events such as potlucks, movies, and discussions with a like-minded church in Cleveland to build diverse relationships in terms of race and urban-suburban experiences
- **Chesterland UCC**-- When this local church was being threatened for hosting Drag Story Time, we showed up in solidarity
- **Heartland Climate Summit**-- Several members from Federated help coordinate speakers, logistics and facilitation of this annual statewide summit to equip churches for Climate Justice ministries
- **Chagrin Valley Council of Churches** - prayer vigils & joint service projects

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

*MISSION STATEMENT: God accepts me just as I am and loves me too much to leave me that way. Federated accepts all people as they are and supports them in the spiritual journey. With Christ we offer hope and healing to change the world.*

Ministry and mission are all pervasive from operations to engagement. The responsible quality, integrity & efficiency of our governance structure and its leadership, as well as our systems that support making the Good Works happen, allow energy and processes to equip and engage many ministries and missions. It is estimated that church staff and lay leaders can devote at least half our "church time" living into mission and ministries.

Lay leadership retreats are energized & generate fresh goals & actions forward, we aim to be ambassadors of God's extravagant welcome & embrace. In everything we do, we remain centered on a message of God's Grace and unconditional love.

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.

Our pastors are encouraged to engage in community ministry as they feel led & as opportunities to connect arise. Examples of ways our pastors have engaged include building a relationship with the local Muslim Community by participating in joint fellowship and public witness events, fostering relationships with a sibling church Mt. Zion, a predominantly Black church in Cleveland, participating in educational and social activities for parents and youth, work camps and schools, or engaging in Conference or Association offerings. All our pastors have been present and representative at community events.

Their time commitment is negotiable, recognizing that community engagement and guiding the congregation to be ambassadors of God's love & grace, particularly in the promotion of social justice, belonging, and inclusion is expected in the context of a work-life balance.

## The ARDA or MissionInsite Reflection

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ARDA/MI File

[Download ARDA/MI File](#)

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

Federated already has ongoing ministry with people of all ages - our Primetime group reaches out to retirees, and building our intergenerational and family opportunities for engagement is something we already do *and* would like to grow.

We hope to build on these, broadening programs for families and children, and continuing to be a hub for intergenerational gatherings. This is reflected in the amount of families with children around us, as well as the number of single folks who do not have children in the home.

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.

The internal demographics of our congregation correlates pretty well with those of the community in terms of racial homogeneity (87% white) and being highly educated & professional having twice the state average of college & graduate school residents. Per our survey, more persons aged 70+ and far fewer under 35 are represented at Federated.



Near to our church community are the Chagrin Falls Park, a minority neighborhood and Chagrin Valley Islamic Center. We can build honest relationships, working side by side with them toward achieving their goals & dreams.

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

Our Visionary Action Plan indicated that the community is "*attracted to warm & friendly encounters, quality sermons and opportunities to volunteer in the community*". Our church seeks to provide these kinds of experiences & is growing ministries that take us beyond our walls & experiences.

Federated is aware of the intergenerational opportunity of church. Federated seeks to be flexible - one example of this is the confirmation program, which took a hiatus during the pandemic, is now scheduled alternating years. Recently it grew from 2 to 18 high schoolers preparing for confirmation in May 2025.

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

Federated has been prominent in the fabric of this community for the last 150 years. It is a pillar in the lives of many of our residents who join our Prime Time outings for seniors, Wondrous Wednesdays meals, & Christmas Eve services.

Leaders look forward to helping the Federated church welcome a new minister.

In the community, we are known for professing a liberal theology and exceptional music ministries and for sharing our spaces, ministries and missions generously for all.

Additionally, we have a mixed reputation as both upper middle class conservative and very progressive.

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

Consistently we hear from new members that they are excited about the welcome they have received at Federated, the justice work being done through Federated, our open and affirming commitment, the music ministry here and that they look forward to working together to offer that welcome to others.

**According to a 2025 congregational survey, among the top reasons folks currently attend our church include:**

- Sunday worship experience
- Fellowship & community
- Our theology & teachings
- They love the music

## References attached below

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## Closing Prayer

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Holy and Gracious God,

As we look to the future, we pray your blessing upon all who will read these words, that they might be encouraged in their own ministries of justice, peace and compassion. We also pray your blessing upon the community of Federated Church, United Church of Christ, as we seek to accept all who join us on this journey of faith, and offer Christ's hope and healing in our world. We trust your Spirit will guide this community of faith and our next senior pastor in faithful ministry of worship, welcome and partnership. Amen.

## Statement of Consent

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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.*

SENIOR PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE-- Jeff Miller, Harriett Rogers, Kelly Lawrence, Rev. Dan Kershner, Dave Watterson, Maren Koepf

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE & OPERATIONS--Beth Rutkowski

TREASURER--Brady Hively

MODERATOR TEAM & CLERK--Jeff Miller, Steve Downey, Karen Wright, Vicki McGaw, and Peggie Jo Shinagawa,

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES--Kristin LeFeber

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

*No response*



March 26, 2025

**To Whom It May Concern,**

It is with great joy and wholehearted confidence that I write this letter of recommendation for the Federated Church of Chagrin Falls, Ohio, as they seek their next senior pastor.

I had the privilege of working closely with the leaders of Federated Church in shaping their Visionary Action Plan—a process marked by courage, clarity, and a sincere desire to live more fully into their calling. Throughout our time together, I was consistently inspired by the congregation's vitality, depth, and capacity for meaningful ministry. They are a spiritually rooted, joy-filled, and creatively engaged community of faith.

Federated's identity is grounded in a theology of action. Their guiding framework—"Live Your Faith"—is not merely aspirational. It is lived out daily in their worship, justice ministries, spiritual formation, and community partnerships. Drawing inspiration from Micah 6:8, they are a people committed to doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God—and they are eager to be led further along this path.

Their Visionary Action Plan reflects both spiritual depth and strategic focus. From energizing participation and deepening spiritual life, to advancing environmental justice, reimagining congregational care, and ensuring financial sustainability, the church is boldly stepping into the future with imagination and resolve. They are diverse in age, background, and commitment—and united by a shared longing to be a church of impact, relevance, and love.

To the pastor discerning a call to Federated: You will find here not only a strong and healthy congregation, but a thoughtful and forward-looking one. You will be surrounded by people who care deeply, lead generously, and are excited for the road ahead. Federated is ready for a leader who will dream with them, challenge them, and walk alongside them with wisdom and grace.

I recommend this congregation with great hope and enthusiasm for the future they are creating.

With gratitude and trust,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cameron Trimble".

Rev. Cameron Trimble, CEO of Convergence  
[www.convergenceus.org](http://www.convergenceus.org)  
[cameron@convergenceus.org](mailto:cameron@convergenceus.org)  
404-790-3348



**Elena Larssen**  
*Transitional Association General Minister*  
**Michael Anthony Howard**  
*Minister of Faith in Action*  
960 Portage Trail • Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221  
**330.940.2220 • [www.livingwaterone.org](http://www.livingwaterone.org)**

**March 31, 2025**

**Re: Letter of Reference for Federated Church of Chagrin Falls**

To Whom It May Concern,

It is with great respect and deep appreciation that I write this letter of reference for the Federated Church of Chagrin Falls. In a time when many congregations struggle to find their footing amidst shifting cultural landscapes, Federated has demonstrated not only remarkable resilience but a rare capacity for impact, reflection, and community-rooted innovation.

Over the past several years, Federated Church has navigated significant internal challenges, including transitions in leadership and the complexities of managing and discerning the future of their historic property. These challenges could have led to fragmentation or retreat. Instead, what I have witnessed is a congregation that leaned into the difficult work of discernment with grace, honesty, and a collective spirit that speaks volumes about their character and calling.

Perhaps most inspiring has been their role in the emergence of the **Community Life Collaborative**—a vibrant and growing initiative that, while not officially a program of the church, was born from its membership and is hosted on its grounds. This collaborative is a testament to Federated's unique capacity to mobilize resources, empower lay leadership, and open its doors to new models of community life and shared flourishing. It reflects the spiritual imagination and civic courage that live at the heart of this congregation. To give just one example of their impact: to my knowledge, no other congregation in Northeast Ohio has raised over \$150,000 specifically to revitalize the landscape and watershed. Yet the Community Life Collaborative, led by members of Federated, has done just that. Their commitment to environmental stewardship is not a token gesture—it is an act of discipleship grounded in care for the land, the community, and future generations.

Federated is a big-tent congregation. Its membership spans a wide range of perspectives and experiences, and yet they continue to show a remarkable willingness to engage in hard conversations and deep listening. They do not shy away from complexity; they meet it with humility, creativity, and a shared commitment to the common good.

For all these reasons and more, I am proud to offer my highest recommendation for the Federated Church of Chagrin Falls. They are a congregation of deep roots and wide vision, and I believe they are uniquely positioned to be a beacon for what faithful community can look like in our time.

With gratitude and admiration,

  
**Rev. Michael Anthony Howard**  
Minister of Faith in Action

March 30, 2025

Dr. Edith Guffey

2617 Knollbrook Court

Lawrence, KS 66046

Dear Friends,

Whoever is reading this may wonder about the salutation! If you are considering submitting your profile to The Federated Church in Chagrin Falls, I already assume you are an authorized minister, hopefully in the United Church of Christ and therefore a friend and colleague. I note this because for many years, 1992-2011, Federated Church was my church home. I joined with my family when we relocated from Lawrence, KS so I could assume the role as an Officer of the United Church of Christ. Shortly upon arriving in the Cleveland area, I began looking for a church home. You will note that I have not been a member of Federated for over 14 years. Even so, I said yes to the request from the Search Committee for a letter of reference. I believe that sometimes the deep roots of a congregation can continue to define and shape their identity and ministry even in the midst of societal storms. After leaving Cleveland, I served as a Conference Minister, so I am very aware of how the landscape of UCC Churches has changed both before and after the pandemic.

I was first attracted to Federated as a congregation that had a unique blend of head and heart. Much of that was nurtured by the then senior pastor, but that blend was part of the culture of the church and continued through the years we were members. Sermons were intellectually challenging yet also deeply moving and Federated thrived on the combination. While Sunday worship played a central role in the life of the congregation, Federated was and hopefully still is a congregation that does what I believe churches are called to do. Care for each other as members of the Body of Christ AND care and serve its neighbors with an understanding of neighbors in the broadest sense. In addition to a number of opportunities for spiritual and communal growth for members and anyone else who chose to participate, Federated was (is) a congregation that gave both time and money to important work in the community and beyond. They also practice what I call “evangelism of space” as groups other than those directly related to the church often use the facility. I am always grateful when I see a congregation offering this hospitality as a UCC church opening its doors to the community is how I first came to know of the United Church of Christ.

Some of the most important and impactful things I remember about Federated still resonate in what I know of the congregation today. Here are a few:

❖ In my years at Federated, difficult conversations on race and about the LGBTQ+ community were important parts of the ministry of Federated. I am grateful that my adult child who identifies as non-binary was always welcomed and affirmed at Federate. Never words of condemnation, always love and acceptance and Federated became an Open and Affirming Church while we were members. It's particularly important to note that while pastors supported the effort, the impetus to become an ONA Congregation was initiated and led by a local church member, not the pastor.

❖ And as a Black woman, I felt welcome at Federated, we had important conversations about race and the realities of Chagrin Falls Park. Were there the occasional microaggressions? Of course, show me a predominately white church where there isn't. But Federated was trying and working at doing and being better.

❖ Both of my children, now adults were fortunate to be in a congregation with a strong commitment to children and youth AND had resources for programming that supported the verbalized commitment. I believe they are better humans because of the nurture and love they experienced at Federated.

❖ Having left our families behind in Kansas, having a faith community that provided connection in a new environment was important. Federated provided that especially for my husband and children. While I had a significant travel schedule with the UCC, Jerry found community and connections through the stellar music program at Federated.

Was Federated perfect? Certainly not, all congregations have challenges; maintaining buildings, filling positions on boards in an ever-changing culture where time to serve on committees is less and less popular. And no one will deny that church attendance everywhere is down and that impacts financial resources. People in congregations don't always agree, some leave and new people come. The overall administration of a church can be challenging; balancing the excellence in ministry and making tough and smart decisions about infrastructure that supports ministry can be difficult. That's all part of church life, family life if you will. I am sure that Federated has these challenges as any other congregation. But my experience of Federated is that they were and still are a faithful congregation very much dedicated to creating a just world for all. I suspect that being a more progressive voice in the heart of Chagrin Falls, OH is not easy, but Federated has been persistent about being a congregation that understands both mercy and justice and maintains its commitment to being a place where "All Are Welcomed, Accepted and Loved." I know you can never go home again, but if I were to return to Cleveland, I would sure try to have Federated once again as my church home.

I hope these reflections are helpful as you consider Federated as a possible place of ministry. If appropriate, please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Blessings,

*Edith Guffey*