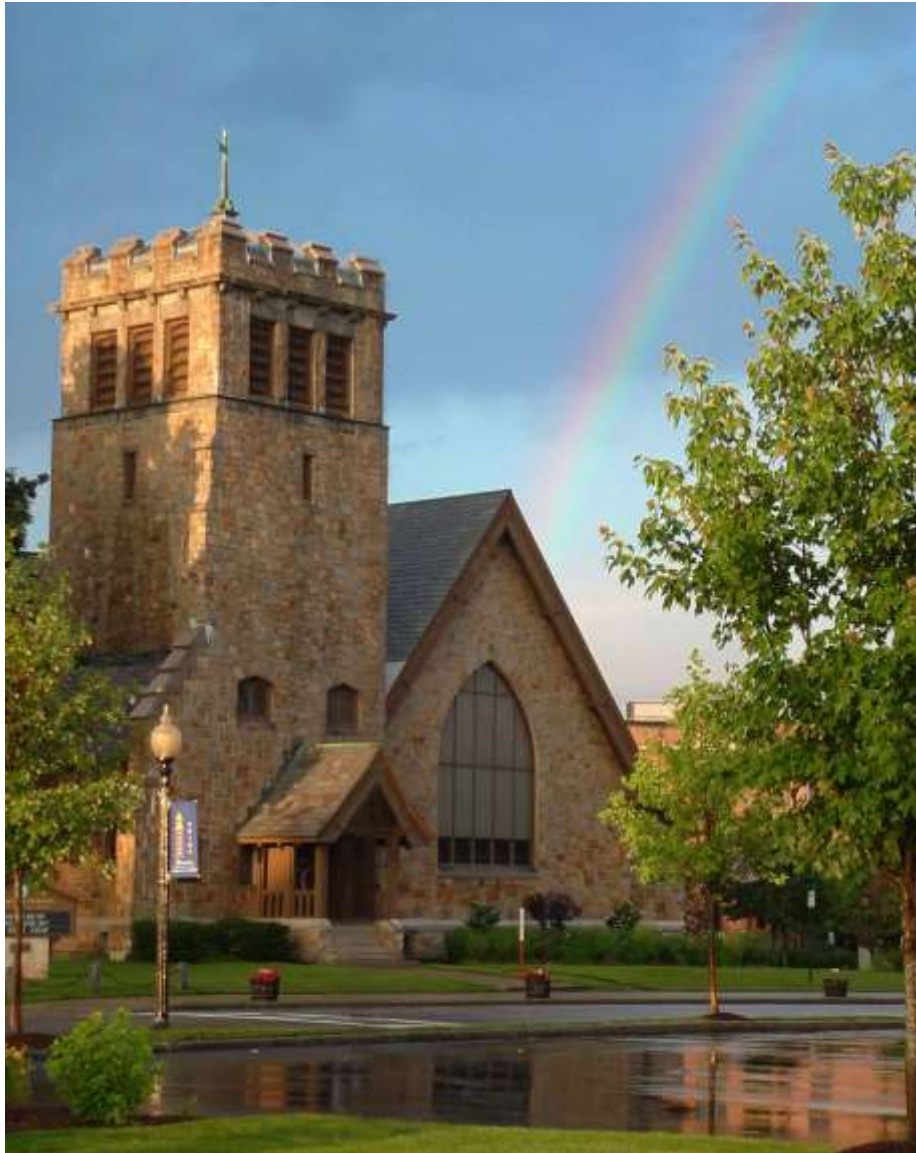


*Local Church Profile of*

**The Congregational Church of Laconia  
United Church of Christ**



*In support of our search for a Pastor and Teacher, July 2023*



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## **LISTING INFORMATION**

**The Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ**

**18 Veterans Square, Laconia, NH 03246**

**(603) 524-0668**

**Website: [www.laconiaUCC.org](http://www.laconiaUCC.org)**

**An Open and Affirming and Just Peace Congregation**

**Conference: New Hampshire Conference**

**Association: Merrimack Association**

**UCC Conference Contact Person: Rev. Dr. Gordon Rankin, Conference Minister**

**[grankin@nhcucc.org](mailto:grankin@nhcucc.org)**

**Summary Ministry Description:**

The Congregational Church of Laconia, UCC seeks a full-time settled pastor to lead and assist the congregation in its ongoing commitment to the teachings of Jesus Christ and the worship of God. We are an active congregation with a strong presence in the downtown community as we minister to each other, to the city's homeless and food-insecure, and to the general well-being of the community.

We are a church community of friends and neighbors. We invite all to our services and gatherings, regardless of where each is on their faith journey. We believe that God is still speaking and we must listen and learn so we might continue to grow individually and collectively.

Our services reflect our belief in God and our commitment to the spiritual and physical needs of both the congregation and the community. We strive to worship with creativity, with beautifully inspired music and text, and with energy and optimism. Our organizational leadership is designed to offer varied opportunities to serve (to infinity and beyond!) and many respond with their time, talents, and treasure.

We seek a pastor who has the energy, commitment, and leadership skills to plan and lead worship services inclusive of all people seeking God. We want to partner with someone whose strong belief in God leads to a celebration of the ways of Jesus and to a commitment to the spiritual growth and well-being of the congregation. As a very active and dedicated congregation, we seek someone who will support our outreach activities and offer new ideas to support and expand them. A lively engagement with children is important as we seek to bring more families into our congregation. Good humor, strong communication skills, and compassion are all vital to our partnership as we minister to people of all ages who have diverse sets of backgrounds, interests, and talents. We hope our new pastor will be an engaged member of the congregation and an active participant in the community for a long time to come.



## WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US



Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ, is a neighborhood church for the city of Laconia and surrounding towns. In its 200<sup>th</sup> year, this Just Peace and Open and Affirming congregation seeks to be a bright light of hope for all who are seeking God's grace, love, and peace in their lives – and that is looking to serve in meaningful ways.

The Pastor and Teacher of our congregation plays a significant role in the life of the church and community. The Pastor engages with the church and community through “In-reach” and Outreach.

While the Pastor will have primary responsibility for several areas of church life, they will do so with a leadership style that equips the laity as “fellow laborers in the vineyard.”

### **“In-Reach”**

The Pastor will help plan and lead Sunday worship services and special seasonal services in cooperation with the Worship and Music Committee, and in conjunction with the church musician. In addition, the Pastor will oversee all weddings and memorial services held at the

church. Other clergy may take part in these services, but only at the invitation of the Pastor. The Pastor shall have “freedom of the pulpit.”

Along with the Diaconate and its Caring Connections Team, the Pastor will lead a program of visitation and pastoral care, especially with those hospitalized and/or facing significant life challenges. The Pastor will also work with the Diaconate to maintain a program that welcomes newcomers into the life of the church.

The Pastor and Teacher will work closely with the Educational Ministries Committee to provide a well-rounded faith formation program for children, youth, and adults. This may include supporting teacher recruitment efforts, engaging church members to teach short-term studies, and offering Bible Studies and/or relevant spiritual development opportunities.

The Pastor provides administrative oversight of all staff members and consults with the Executive Committee in matters related to recruiting and retaining members of the church staff.

## Outreach



The Pastor will be involved in the community in a variety of ways. There are many groups that use the Parish House, and the Pastor will be an ambassador of the church to those groups. In addition, the Pastor will engage as appropriate with ecumenical and interfaith groups in the Lakes Region.

Our congregation has an identity as a “mission-oriented” church. The Pastor will support and encourage the involvement of church members and friends in an array of mission and service opportunities in conjunction with the Outreach Committee. This will include local, Association, Conference, and National setting ministries of the United Church of Christ.

There are many other possible opportunities for ministry, however, these must be contemplated in partnership with the Church Council and undertaken by the Pastor when there is sufficient support from the laity of the Church.

## WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

Our Mission Statement: *“The Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ, is an Open and Affirming and Just Peace Christian community with a scriptural foundation seeking justice and peace for all. We aspire:*

- *to promote vibrant public and personal worship;*
- *to inspire the spiritual development of every person;*
- *to provide a place of warm and friendly community gathering;*
- *to express our concern for our neighbors near and far through sharing and caring; and*
- *to express the joy of our communion with God and with each other as revealed through Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to guide and sustain us.”*

In the responses to our congregational survey, our members and friends acknowledged that through our many ministries, we are indeed fulfilling many of the aspirations expressed in our Mission Statement. What we also discovered is that our congregation has bigger dreams - to reach out to more of our downtown neighbors, to work with other faith communities, and to be an integral part of the community that goes beyond providing services to magnifying the gifts of the community.

The vast majority of the respondents felt the need for our congregation to better serve, educate, nurture, and welcome the more vulnerable from our community and beyond, to include the homeless and those living with addiction and mental health concerns, and to work more closely with other stakeholders in the community to address many unmet needs.

We believe God is leading us to be a beacon of support, hope, and spiritual guidance.





## CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

When we asked our congregation what keeps them coming back to the Congregational Church of Laconia, one response was overwhelming: the welcoming atmosphere and the friendship of people who have become our “church family”. We care for and take care of each other while living our faith in service to our church, our community, and our world.

Our congregants highly value our commitment to outreach and service to others. We are a “Five-for-Five” church, supporting Our Church’s Wider Mission and all UCC Special Mission offerings. The wide variety of opportunities to volunteer and serve engages folks with an even greater variety of gifts. People spoke of their spiritual growth and a greater sense of connection to the community through their involvement in ministries of outreach.

The Christ-centered messages and the quality of the music that enhances our worship are greatly appreciated.

One of our respondents very aptly stated: “As an Open and Affirming and Just Peace church, our faith empowers us to love all and to work for peace and justice in the community, nation, and world.”



## **WORSHIP SERVICE**

Our church is well attended during the Sunday worship service. There are an average of 60-70 people who are physically present (including the choir), with an average of 40 watching the live stream.

We are known as a friendly church. Prior to the beginning of our service, parishioners and visitors are welcomed by a greeter/usher. Greetings and conversations are encouraged as people settle into their seats for the start of the service. Our Music Director then begins the prelude which encourages the congregation to focus on a more reflective presence within the sanctuary. Following a traditional Sunday service opening, the Christ candle is lit, prayers are said, and the Scripture lesson is read, followed by the first of two choir anthems. These aspects of the service allow for further reflection and lead us into the prayerful words of the pastor as they deliver the sermon.

Although the health concerns of COVID kept us from meeting in person prior to 2022, we were very excited to be able to enjoy last year's Christmas season and Easter in our sanctuary. The Christmas Eve service was enjoyed by many, with Lessons and Carols as the service format, supported by anthems from the twenty-plus member choir. It was a moving experience for everyone to be in the sanctuary once again. We were also able to bring the Christmas Pageant back to the sanctuary during the Sunday service before Christmas.



For many years we've been recording the Worship Service to be seen later in the week on a local television station for the public and for our members who could no longer attend in person. With the arrival of Covid, we purchased new and advanced equipment to be capable of offering a live stream worship every week. Our Minister, Music Director, and Media Technician worked diligently to offer a live stream service that was both meaningful and spiritual and kept us connected when we weren't physically together at church. The growing importance and skills required to make this happen led us to shift the Media Technician position to be a part-time member of the staff rather than a volunteer. Live streaming is now a vital aspect of our worship experience. With the purchase of large screens for the sanctuary, we have a new option for reading the lyrics to music, seeing videos, and following along with prayers.



Our services are Open and Affirming and we strive to make that known in a variety of ways. For example, we have invited both lecturers and musical guests whose message is of awareness, loving compassion, and inclusion for everyone. The message of “all are welcome here” is an important aspect of our mission both within our church and to the wider community. We are an open-minded congregation that seeks to explore a variety of options for learning about and understanding scripture.

We are also mindful of providing the most accommodating environment for spiritual exploration in our sanctuary. For example, we recently added a “playground” to our small chapel area in order to provide a safe and comfortable space within the sanctuary for young children and parents. It is equipped with a rocking chair, books, and small toys and allows people to participate in the service as a family. We are grateful to our interim pastor for his constant support as he helps us to keep a flexible mindset in trying new approaches to the ministry of Christ’s love within and outside our church community.

In addition to many other functions, the Church Hall serves as a gathering place for the weekly Coffee Hour fellowship time following the service. We enjoy coffee, snacks, conversation, and getting to know each other. Many attend this time of fellowship, for not only refreshments are sought but it is here where volunteers for events like rummage sales and Christmas Fairs are discovered! Periodically, we offer organized conversations, discussions, videos, and meetings in this space after Coffee Hour.



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Educational Ministries Committee provides a variety of experiences in support of the educational and spiritual well-being of all church members and friends. Faith Formation is offered on the second Sunday of the month during the Worship Service. We gather in a multi-age group of children and youth where they learn from each other, build relationships, and feel loved and affirmed. We practice service to others and learn about justice issues, why we are followers of Jesus, and about the significance of the Bible, while having an enjoyable and positive experience together.



We coordinate a Christmas Pageant that takes place during the Worship service and involves people of all ages. We like to be creative and adapt to the circumstances as needed. For example, no one will forget the online presentation of the Christmas story performed by a church family outside and in front of the church during the Covid shutdown. It was recorded and posted on our website so that all parishioners were able to view it. We will always remember Maggie the dog, whose sheep ears didn't quite fit but who made an excellent sheep just the same!





Our Confirmation program is open to youth who are interested in exploring their faith and expanding their understanding of the United Church of Christ. The program begins in September and is completed in mid-spring. Under the guidance of the Pastor, confirmands and their adult mentors (members of the church chosen by the confirmands) meet on a regular basis to ask questions, learn from each other and get to know each other as they learn about their faith. Recently, our class has had the wonderful experience of joining other churches in the Merrimack Association to share their experiences and learning with a larger group of youth.



Adults enjoy midweek “Lunch and Learn” gatherings where Church or community members lead a presentation/discussion in an area of their interest or expertise. Recent programs include the

Director of the Drug Recovery program at our local hospital, a local gym that offers “Rock Steady Boxing” for individuals living with Parkinson’s, and Prescott Farm Environmental Education Center. We organize monthly Sunday afternoon hikes throughout the beautiful Lakes Region for exercise and fellowship. These have been a great opportunity for new members to get to know others in the congregation.



Many church members participate in Conference and Association-wide activities such as Prepared to Serve - a day with workshops to learn from and with people from all over NH. Quite a few members serve on Conference-wide committees such as Peace and Justice, Christian Formation, and Financial Ministries. Participation with groups such as NH Women’s Fellowship, New England Women’s Celebration, and NEAUCE keeps us connected to the wider church.

## **Horton Center**

[Horton Center](#) is the NH Conference Outdoor Ministries summer camp that is located in the White Mountains. Our church has a long history of involvement as campers and volunteers. Many children and youth have participated over the years during a week in the summer or at the Fall Confirmation Retreat. Adults have participated as counselors and deans, volunteered on work weekends, or attended Grandparent Camp with their grandchildren.

We are very enthusiastic supporters of Horton Center and we encourage any children, youth, and adults to experience camp “on the mountain”. We support all young people who attend camp by providing scholarships that cover all of the costs through the Campership Fund.





## CHURCH STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION



### Governing Structure

From our by-laws: The ultimate authority of the Congregational Church of Laconia is vested in the Members of the Church, meeting as a Congregation. To provide for the efficient operation of the Church, various standing and Ad Hoc committees will be charged with identifying and leading the mission of the Church.

The Church Council meets monthly and is responsible for leading the Members and committees in fulfilling the mission of the Church.

The Church Council consists of the Moderator, who is the chairperson of the Council; the Vice-Moderator, who is the vice-chairperson; the Recording Clerk, the Treasurer; the Chairperson of all standing committees or their designee; three At-Large members, and the ordained pastor on staff.

The Executive Committee is responsible for:

1. Personnel issues including hiring, evaluating, salary recommendations, and terminations;
2. Organization of all congregational meetings;
3. Appointing a Nominating Committee or a Search Committee;
4. Electing members to any vacant elected position; and
5. Any other issue that must be addressed between Church Council meetings.

The Executive Committee has seven voting members:

1. Moderator;
2. Vice-Moderator;
3. Recording Clerk;
4. Treasurer; and
5. The three At-Large members.

## **Church Committees**

Church Committees meet regularly and have the power and responsibility to initiate plans and promote action for the fulfillment of their purposes and evaluate those plans and actions in accordance with the Committee's approved budget. Standing Committees can establish Ad Hoc Committees with their specific responsibilities described. Ad Hoc Committees can include any member of the church and may collaborate with any other standing committee.

## **Diaconate**

The Diaconate implements programs and projects that support the spiritual growth of our church community including Lenten suppers and Advent series. Programs such as Caring Connections, Open and Affirming, Membership activities, and administration of the Dorcas Fund help us to care for our members, visitors, and the wider community. Deacons arrange and serve Communion on the first Sunday of the month and for special services. They communicate weekly with shut-ins and hospitalized members and friends.

## **Property and Finance Committee**

The Congregational Church of Laconia, UCC, boasts a talented and experienced group of committed members to ensure our financial house remains in order and our properties and grounds are well-maintained. The committee coordinates building improvements, use of the buildings, lawn and garden care, and snow removal and develops future plans. The committee meets monthly on the second Tuesday of the month and is also responsible for the financial security of the church, in accordance with its mission. Working closely with the church treasurer, the committee develops a long-term plan for capital expenditures, investment oversight, and monthly reporting.

A sub-committee of the Property and Finance Committee, The Historical Preservation Committee is responsible for identifying, maintaining, cataloging, and preserving written records and historical artifacts for the Congregational Church of Laconia.

In preparation for our 200th anniversary in 2024, we are working with our church committees to create displays about their ministries which are displayed in the garden/elevator entrance to the church.

## **Parish Activities Committee**

The Parish Activities Committee is responsible for the church kitchen supplies and maintenance requests. We make sure the necessary supplies are in place for any church activities requiring



food and refreshments such as: coffee hour, church suppers, luncheons, and other gatherings. We have a large kitchen with a lot of storage space, a gas range, a convection oven, two refrigerators, and one freezer to handle the needs of the church. Our committee is responsible for the organization of the Rummage Sales held in the Church Hall.

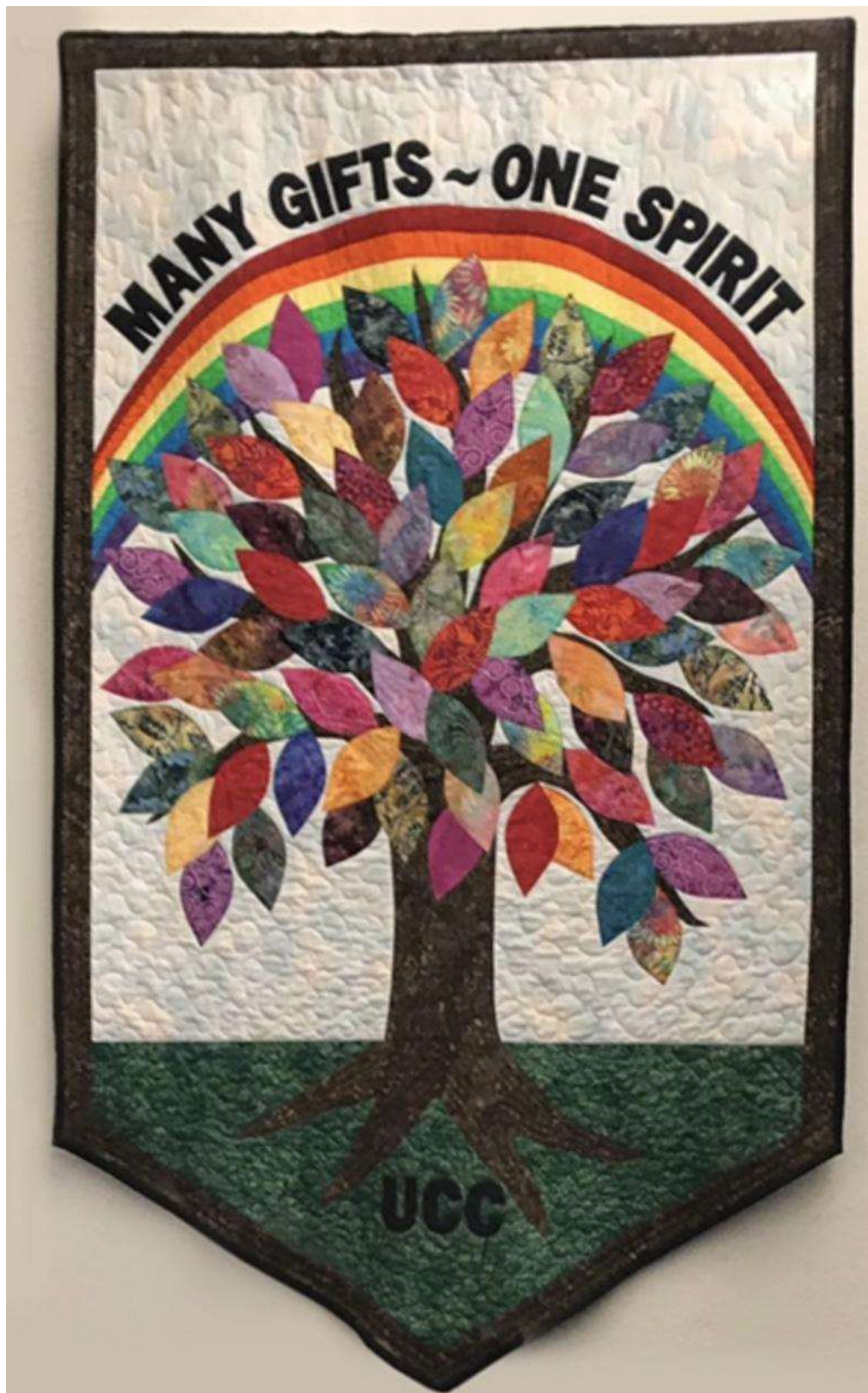


## Educational Ministries Committee

Please see the Christian Education section of the document.

## Worship and Music Committee

The Worship and Music Committee works closely with the Pastor and the Director of Music. The committee is charged with supporting all aspects of the in-person and live stream worship of the church and developing the church's many music ministries— choral, instrumental, and as related to our carillon which rings out joyfully in the downtown neighborhood. The committee coordinates the schedule of worship greeters/ushers and online greeters as well.



## Altar Guild

The Altar Guild is in charge of decorating the church for its many seasons and special events. A major focus is given to the Advent and Christmas seasons, with the installment of the outdoor creche and the altar decorations, and Easter with a large wooden cross erected in the sanctuary and the chancel full of Easter lilies. Pulpit and lectern hangings are changed throughout the church year. Committee members also schedule floral arrangements for the altar, which are donated by church members, usually in memory of loved ones. These arrangements are often delivered to shut-ins, church members, or friends of the church who are in need of a lift following the service.

## Outreach

The Outreach Mission continues to grow out of a long and strong commitment to supporting the Wider Church and finding ways to serve locally and around the world. We strive to continue that legacy by committing 10% of our annual income (plus 5% of investment income) to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM). Further, we continue to be a 5 for 5 Church, supporting all four of the UCC's Special Offerings, plus several other local offerings to support specific ministries. We nurture long-term relationships with Mission Partners in India and Kenya and spread our discretionary Outreach spending amongst ten to twelve other organizations, trying to encourage congregants to learn more and support these other ministries. In 1959, when our Parish House was constructed, the Church committed to offering meeting space to local non-profit groups and that tradition continues to this day. Hundreds of participants each year, mostly non-church members, meet in that shared space.

In addition to financial offerings, we encourage participation in the local community, serving meals at shelters and community dinners, and supporting local social service agencies. We also offer a Little Free Pantry for those in need of supplemental food assistance and, for many years, have offered a Medical Supply Closet that allows people to borrow medical equipment free of charge. Most years, a Mission Trip is organized to support an organization beyond our Community, including the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, Back Bay Mission, and the Maine Seacoast Mission. Most of all, the Outreach Mission of the Church tries to foster an atmosphere of sharing and caring, so that Church members can experience the wonder of helping others.

The Outreach Committee has also been charged with exploring and acting on what it means to be a Just Peace Church. Through our wide variety of Outreach opportunities, we witness issues of justice in many different forms and try to learn how we can better serve. We have been officially designated as a UCC Just Peace Church.

## Other Opportunities to Serve

There are many ways that our members contribute to our church family and community besides serving on committees. Examples of some of the opportunities to serve include:





- Help stock the Little Free Food Pantry;
- Participate in the [GOT LUNCH! Laconia](#) program;
- Stitches of Love Prayer Shawl Ministry;
- Be a mission trip participant;
- Join the Book Discussion Group;
- Be an Adult Bible Study Leader;
- Cook dinners for [Belknap House](#);
- Serve as Convalescent Supply Coordinator;
- Be an office volunteer for special projects;
- Serve as a Faith Formation Leader;
- Provide meals for families during illness or grieving;
- Assist with Thanksgiving Dinner;
- Cook for the Friendly Kitchen;
- Serve at Hands Across the Table;
- Offer rides to those who need help getting to appointments or church events;
- Contribute flowers to the sanctuary for Sunday services; or
- Organize a fellowship gathering.



## CHURCH FINANCES



The Congregational Church of Laconia has a well-managed financial position overseen by the Church Council and the Property and Finance Committee. Our expense budget for 2023 totals \$383,299 which includes \$90,000 allocated to the minister's salary, housing allowance, and annuity. Our budgeted income streams include \$192,000 from pledged offerings, \$20,500 from unpledged offerings, \$112,000 from investment distributions, and the balance from fundraising, building use donations, and other miscellaneous funds and fees.

Our church's endowment is managed by the Bank of New Hampshire, the oldest and one of the largest independent banks in the state, and conveniently located across the street from our sanctuary. As of our most recent meeting with our advisory team in May 2023, our endowment totaled \$1,665,945.32. Naturally, the value of our endowment is dependent upon market conditions; thus far in 2023, its value has increased by approximately \$30,000 or 2%. From time to time we do make small withdrawals as necessary to keep our budget in balance; in 2022 we withdrew \$11,520 to fund a new media technician to keep our live streamed services running smoothly. This amount represented a mere 3.4% of our 2022 expenditures.





The Congregational Church of Laconia proudly contributes to Our Church's Wider Mission; we have been recognized as one of the top five contributing churches in the state. We also collect special offerings for One Great Hour of Sharing, Neighbors in Need, Christmas Fund, and Strengthen the Church. Aside from the budgeted items, we also have a healthy Dorcas Fund which assists church and local community members with unexpected needs such as gasoline vouchers for out-of-county medical appointments, help with heating or electricity when faced

with a shutoff notice, emergency shelter, and other needs at the Pastor's discretion. We also pay annual dues to fund the Merrimack Association of the UCC's New Hampshire Conference.



Our physical assets include the main building, completed in 1906, which consists of a beautiful sanctuary with seating for 200+ and a choir loft that can accommodate upwards of 20 members. One floor below is our Church Hall where all are invited after worship for fellowship and refreshments. The Church Hall has a commercial-grade kitchen for special events such as the annual Hazel Duke Thanksgiving Dinner, open to all in our community free of charge. It is also used by other groups including Got Lunch Laconia, a community-wide organization that buys, packs, and delivers meals to 500+ children every week in the summer. More than a hundred volunteers from around the area come to the church to volunteer.



Adjacent to the main building is a two-story Parish House built in 1959 containing the church offices, classrooms, library, medical supply lending closet, and various other meeting rooms



including a large Fellowship Hall with a smaller kitchen. The buildings are used extensively by outside groups such as AA, NA, Streetcar Theater Company, Belknap Mill Quilters Guild, Power Chords community chorus, Got Lunch, and the Church of Another Chance. The sanctuary, Church Hall, and the upper floor of the Parish House are accessible via a three-story elevator and an enclosed bridge connecting the two buildings which overlooks our Community Walkway and Memorial Garden.

Additional financial details can be found in the Appendix.



## HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The history of The Congregational Church of Laconia is one of welcome and engagement. The church began in 1824 with “an act of human kindness as a missionary preacher was welcomed into a Laconia home.” It maintains that original spirit as a neighborhood church for the city. Through all the changes from rail service to automobiles, from major manufacturers to deindustrialization, and from stable communities to a lively mix of long-time residents and new “summer folk,” the church has been a beacon of light on its prominent corner for all in need of love and hope.

In this bicentennial year, the congregation is hearing more about intriguing figures of the past. Rev. John Young (1831 – 1867), the second pastor of the church, quelled a fleeting effort to rewrite the Ten Commandments thereby making them more palatable for restive spirits in the “age of progress.” Rev. Arthur Stanley Beale (1921 – 1923) was quoted as saying, “the happiest church is the one where every person is busy.” That spirit remained at Congregational Church even though Rev. Beale did not! During the tenure of Rev. Rodney Wiley Rounder (1924 – 1929), the church building was nearly destroyed by a major fire. Our historical records pay special attention to our radical hospitality. After acknowledging that thousands of people gathered to witness “the conflagration,” it was noted that “Mrs. Rounder served hot coffee to the firemen at the parsonage.” Rev. Miller Currier Lovett (1965 – 1970) served during a very turbulent time. People recall these as full and exciting years in the life of the church. “At a time when the world was demanding that the Church of Christ demonstrate that it was not an outmoded relic of the past, the Congregational Church of Laconia was striving to bring a word about the possibility of life that was relevant to a new generation and a new age.” We humbly hope that, during the tenure of our next settled minister, this part of our history repeats itself!

## **CHALLENGES**

The Congregational Church of Laconia is made up of a variety of individuals from many different backgrounds. Like most city churches, issues do arise from time to time that require action by the congregation. Our Church By-Laws, thoughtful prayer, and group discussions will generally help us with our decision-making. We are located in the middle of New England and our folks have had a reputation for holding strong opinions and not being hesitant in sharing those opinions. It should be noted, however, that these good Christian folks seem to understand the need to respect each other and find common ground to communicate and find accommodation. At times in the past, when requested by the Pastor, a pastoral relations committee has been established to assist the Pastor with issues of concern. This congregation has shown a true sisterhood and brotherhood for its membership and our community as we discuss challenging situations. Our Pastors and Lay Leaders have always been dedicated to seeing us through any and all issues that may arise.



## MISSIONINSITE OVERVIEW

This section and the data within the report titled “MissionInsite Report” detail the demographic information of the community, the Church, and our congregation. We are also mindful that post-pandemic challenges, social justice movements, below-average inventory of affordable housing, the need to “better support” the homeless population and those living with addiction/in recovery, the political differences in Washington, recent Supreme Court rulings, and various global crises will continue to impact our small New England community and the communities surrounding Laconia.



Laconia is a city of approximately 17,000 residents. Laconia is the county seat of Belknap County in central New Hampshire. Laconia is located on Lake Winnepesaukee, bordering Lake Winnisquam and Opechee and Paugus bays of Lake Winnepesaukee. In a mountain setting, it is a gateway to the Belknap and White Mountains of NH. Nearby resorts include Lakeport, Weirs Beach, Meredith, and Gilford. Other attractions in the Lakes Region, to name a few, include Gunstock Mountain Resort, Meadowbrook and the Colonial Theater Musical Arts Centers, NH International Speedway, Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad, the Mount Washington cruise ship, and many walking and hiking trails. Weirs Beach is the home of one of the last remaining drive-in theaters in the country. Laconians enjoy close proximity to mountains, beaches, Boston, and Canada.

In addition to Laconia, our Church community draws its members and visitors from the towns of Alton, Belmont, Gilford, Meredith, and Sanbornton. With the Lakes Region being a “resort community”, the population often triples during the summer months. Three towns border Laconia with Lake Winnepesaukee encompassing a large portion of Laconia’s northern border. Laconia’s downtown is experiencing a renaissance of theater, music, new businesses, and festivals following the restoration of the historic Colonial Theater.

Laconia and surrounding towns have experienced a dramatic increase in home sales and, along with a higher than normal price of homes, over the past three years has been left with a negative inventory of affordable housing as well as a workforce shortage. To accommodate the growth and lack of affordable housing, several “affordable housing” developments are currently under construction with the hope to alleviate these issues.

Laconia’s public school system includes three elementary schools (K-5), a middle school (6-8), and a high school (9-12). The high school campus is also home to the Huot Technical Center, a regional career and technical information program serving students in Laconia and surrounding Lakes Region communities. Neighboring towns also have their own K-12 public school systems, and the Lakes Region boasts several prestigious private prep schools.

Laconia’s median household income in 2021 was listed as \$55,800.00 and is approximately 80% of that of the three surrounding towns. Unemployment hovers around 4%. The median age of Laconia and the surrounding communities is approximately 48 with 22% being 65 years of age or older.

For more information please refer to the MissionInsite Reports in the Appendix.

## CLOSING PRAYER

The purpose of this Church is the gathering of people to celebrate and promote the worship of God, as made known to us through the teachings of Jesus Christ, and to put into action these teachings through compassionate ministry for all of God's creation.

A short prayer written by Edgar A. Guest, an English-born American writer who lived from 1881 to 1959:

*Circle of Love*

*It is good, dear God to be a part of this family: circle of love, place of rest, bastion of peace. When every other source of comfort fails, this is where I return. Thank You for being in our midst. Amen.*

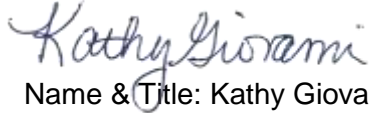
May our journey together satisfy our purpose and grant us peace in His name.

## STATEMENT OF CONSENT

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending a suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathy Giovanni".

Name & Title: Kathy Giovanni, Search Committee Chair

Date: July 2023





## APPENDIX A: BACKUP DATA

### Compensation and Benefits

The church adheres to [New Hampshire Conference guidelines](#) regarding compensation and benefits for pastors. A housing stipend is offered in lieu of church housing/parsonage.

### 11 Year Report

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2012	436	155	30	0	0	0	0	0	0
2013	424	141	50	0	10	8	25	5	-12
2014	378	135	33	4	1	5	10	46	-46
2015	371	130	28	0	5	1	13	0	-7
2016	371	132	53	0	0	7	7	0	0
2017	368	114	58	6	0	4	13	0	-3
2018	361	110	68	0	0	4	11	0	-7
2019	364	99	43	4	0	9	10	0	3
2020	261	100	32	0	0	0	15	88	-103
2021	255	45*	22	0	0	0	6	0	-6
2022	255	45*	22	0	0	0	0	0	0

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2017-2022	-30.71	-60.53	-62.07	-100.00	-100.00	-24.50	-24.32	-24.60
2012-2022	-41.51	-70.97	-26.67	0.00	0.00	-12.30	-31.82	-14.24

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2012	\$375,214	\$0	\$35,640	\$5,736	\$41,376	\$0	\$41,376	9.50	\$416,590	\$0
2013	\$423,941	\$0	\$35,899	\$13,999	\$49,898	\$24,635	\$74,533	8.47	\$498,474	\$284,830
2014	\$426,808	\$0	\$37,232	\$12,158	\$49,390	\$15,960	\$65,350	8.72	\$492,158	\$256,701
2015	\$465,846	\$0	\$32,124	\$14,310	\$46,434	\$23,418	\$69,852	6.90	\$535,698	\$261,079
2016	\$419,535	\$0	\$36,409	\$12,509	\$48,918	\$1,500	\$50,418	8.68	\$469,953	\$251,011
2017	\$435,841	\$0	\$33,460	\$3,815	\$37,275	\$692	\$37,967	7.68	\$473,808	\$226,100
2018	\$452,369	\$0	\$31,502	\$5,550	\$37,052	\$4,000	\$41,052	6.96	\$493,421	\$205,035
2019	\$424,715	\$0	\$33,112	\$3,966	\$37,078	\$0	\$37,078	7.80	\$461,793	\$200,797
2020	\$360,039	\$4,408	\$27,680	\$5,350	\$33,030	\$4,000	\$37,030	7.69	\$397,069	\$208,811
2021	\$329,049	\$0	\$25,665	\$9,234	\$34,899	\$0	\$34,899	7.80	\$363,948	\$212,984
2022	\$329,049	\$0	\$25,613	\$2,596	\$28,209	\$0	\$28,209	7.78	\$357,258	\$0

## Congregational Demographics/Participation

The church currently has a membership of 255. This includes pledging and non-pledging members who also meet our criteria to be considered active members. This criterion consists of three components of which one has to be present. Do you attend church? Do you donate your time or talent? Do you tithe? This criterion is not limited to financial support as we see participation, in particular, as being a key element in the life of an active church. The average age of our membership is approximately 76 including 6 members over the age of 100. In addition, there are also several individuals who attend regularly but have not officially become members. A large percentage of these non-pledging congregants give graciously of their time and talents as well as making financial contributions. Regardless, each and every person and/or family is highly valued and considered important members of the church community.

The number of both in-person and online participants in our weekly worship is also consistently recorded along with weather conditions and notes that highlight special holidays and occurrences within the life of the church. Attention to such data gives us a sense of congregational participation and reasons why people may or may not attend on any given Sunday. For example, over the 2022-23 seasons, the average in-person and online attendance combined is approximately 60 and includes holidays and special services. As we are located in a tourist area, such data also illuminates seasonal trends and helps us to plan accordingly.

## Staff

- Interim Pastor
- Financial Secretary
- Communication Specialist
- Media Technician

- Sexton
- Music Director

## Ministerial History

Name and Title	Years of Service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Campbell Lovett - Interim Pastor	2022 - current	Y
Neil Wilson - Senior Pastor	2018 - 2022	Y
Edward Koontz - Interim Pastor	2016 - 2018	Y
Paula Gile - Associate Pastor	2011 - 2020	Y
Warren Bouton - Senior Pastor	2004 - 2016	Y
Barry Grevatt - Senior Pastor	1970 - 2001	Y

Congregational Church of Laconia has had remarkably stable pastoral leadership over the past thirty years. No pastor has left under pressure or been involuntarily terminated. Our clergy have not been a part of Situational Support Consultations or Fitness Reviews.

## Church Financial Summary

Income	2023 Budget
Pledged Offerings	\$192,000
Unpledged Offerings	\$20,500
Income From Endowment Funds	\$115,000
Fund Raising	\$5,000
Building Use Donations	\$5,000
Other Income	\$4,000
Draw from Endowment	\$41,799
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$383,299</b>

Expenditures	2023 Budget
Mission Support	\$30,550
Committee Expenses	\$24,650

Compensation	\$217,507
Taxes & Benefits	\$31,360
Administrative Expenses	\$17,900
Property Expenses	\$61,332
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$383,299</b>

## APPENDIX B: MISSIONINSITE REPORT

This information may be viewed on our website at <https://www.laconiaucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/ExecutiveInsite-Laonia-111822.pdf>