
Date

Senior Pastor
Position to be filled

**United Church of Christ
LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE
FOR LOCAL CHURCHES SEEKING NEW LEADERS**

**Local Church
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 opinion about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

Signature of Search Committee Chairperson

Date

Church

Name: First Congregational Church of Bakersfield, California

Address: 5 Real Road

City, State, Zip: Bakersfield, CA 93309

Search Committee Chairperson or Contact Person

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-Mail:

Senior Pastor
Date _____ Position to be filled _____

**LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE
FOR LOCAL CHURCHES SEEKING NEW LEADERS**

Please return the completed document to your conference or association office.

1. Church: First Congregational Church of Bakersfield, California

2. Address: 5 Real Road

City, State, and Zip: Bakersfield, CA 93309

Church Website: [Http://1stcong.weblogger.com](http://1stcong.weblogger.com)

3. Name of Search Committee Chairperson/Contact Person: Steven F. Bacon

Address: _____

City, State, and Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____ FAX: _____

4. Conference/Association Staff Person Assisting Our Church: Rev. Frank Johnson

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____ FAX: _____

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

5. Membership: (as reflected in the eleven-year UCC Statistical Report for our church; "est." indicates the figure is an estimate.)

	Last Year	5 Years Ago	10 Years Ago
a. # Church members	221	269	280
b. Average attendance at worship	151	145	175
c. Average participation of children/youth in C.E.	37	57	73
d. Average weekly participation in adult education	12	26	39
e. # Members who are ordained clergy	3	3	3

6. Profile of Congregation

Estimate percentage of congregation. Each category should add up to 100%.

a. Age:

2 % ages 0 - 5
13 % ages 6-18
6 % ages 19-34
10 % ages 35-49
21 % ages 50-64
15 % ages 65-74
33 % ages 75 +

c. Family units:

12 % couples with children at home
31 % couples without children at home
55 % single
2 % single parent with children at home

b. Education level of adults:

2 % completed less than high school
16 % high school graduates
18 % some college/vocational school
53 % college graduates
11 % graduate school

d. Occupation of adults:

13 % business
8 % clerical
0 % farmer/rancher
0 % laborer/manufacturing
39 % professional
6 % student
2 % tradesperson
32 % other

e. Employment:

38 % employed
9 % not currently employed
53 % retired

f. Describe the racial-ethnic makeup of your congregation:

98% Caucasian; 2% Other

CHURCH FINANCES

(Figures reflect the eleven-year UCC statistical reports as well as the church's annual reports.)

	Last Year	5 Years Ago	10 Years Ago
7. Total Church Income	2007	2002	1997
a. Members offerings and pledges	224,787	245,970	226,605
b. Interest from investment or endowments	1,200	NA	NA
c. Principal reduction (endowments or investments)	[997]	NA	NA
d. Rentals (Use of Facility)	1965	3,000	NA
e. Special Fundraising (Pilgrim Pine Camp)	3000	0	0
f. Other (Weddings, Child Haven)	3600	4500	NA

If the church has conducted an annual stewardship campaign, list results for the past two years:

2007 Goal: \$ 300,000 Pledges: \$ 252,000 Actual Received: \$ 251,000
 2006 Goal: \$ 290,000 Pledges: \$ 286,180 Actual Received: \$ 275,000

	Last Year	5 Years Ago	10 Years Ago
8. Total Operating Budget	281,234	279,867	246,320
a. Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support	58,800	54,400	48,292
b. Our Church's Wider Mission Special Support	6,000	10,552	10,588
c. Other gifts	44,168	33,688	29,946
d. Current local expenses	14,650	4,166	NA
e. Annual capital payments	0	0	0
f. Other debt	0	0	0

9. Identify UCC special offerings the church receives throughout the year and the amounts from last year:

- One Great Hour of Sharing
- Neighbors in Need
- Christmas Fund
- Strengthen the Church
- Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission (only if received through special offerings and not included as a regular budget item in #8 above.)

10. Mission

- a. Beyond your contributions through the UCC, name the most significant local or global missions/ministries or agencies that were financially supported by your local church last year and the amount of support:

Name	Amount
1. Habitat for Humanity	\$5,000
2. Heifer International – 7th Ark!	\$5,000
3. Get on the Bus	\$4,000
4. Dependent Children of Parolees for Christmas	Members take family and fill wishes/needs
5. New Orleans Mission Trip	12 people participate/ third year

b. What mission project has excited your church the most in the past three years? Why?

Get on the Bus. This is an opportunity for members of our congregation to step out of their "comfort" zones and help children of incarcerated females to visit their moms in Chowchilla on the Friday before Mother's Day. We have a "Fancy Brunch" for a fundraiser and supply activities and food for the bus trip.

11. Indebtedness

a. Total amount of outstanding mortgages/capital debt: \$ 0

b. Total amount of other debt: \$ 0

Describe:

c. Are payments current? Yes no

12. Capital Campaigns:

a. If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, note goal and results:

Goal: \$ 500,000

Outcome: \$ 550,000

b. What projects were undertaken as a result of your capital campaign?

Renovation of sanctuary, added office wing and new narthex, added courtyard entrance to church

c. Was there a mission or outreach component to the campaign? _____ Yes No

d. If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe it: NA

13. Assets held by the Church:

a. Reserves (savings): \$ 546,000

b. Endowments/Investments: \$ 193,800

c. Describe buildings and property of your church except the parsonage:

Sanctuary is an "A" frame style with cupola, stained glass windows on the east side and colored glass crossed at front in back of altar. The sanctuary seats approximately 300 persons. It also has a balcony that seats 50. All buildings, except chapel, and office wing were built in 1952. Our offices are in the sanctuary building and contain a reception area, five offices, and a workroom. The second floor of the office wing is a large room furnished for youth meetings and activities. We have a separate Chapel, built in 1999 and seats 100. Attached to narthex via a breezeway, is a large, well equipped nursery. Across from the sanctuary, via a large outdoor patio, is our fellowship hall called Plymouth Hall. It is a large room with storage and attached kitchen. We have an education wing with eight rooms, an office and two bathrooms. These facilities are presently used as a day care center during the week and used for Sunday school on Sundays. The daycare center has a large outdoor playground with trees and playground equipment. Adjacent to Plymouth Hall & Kitchen is the Fireside room which is used for classes, meetings & exercise.

d. Is the church building (including sanctuary and offices) handicapped accessible?

Yes Partially (specify) with the exception of the chancel area No _____

Is the pulpit handicapped accessible? Yes _____ No

e. If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including estimated date of completion: NA

f. If the church owns a parsonage, describe it: NA

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF MINISTERIAL LEADERS

14. If your conference has compensation guidelines, do you follow them?

yes _____ yes for some compensation items but not all _____ no

Does the church consider this position to be full time or part time?

Full Time _____ Part Time (specify) _____

How will church members be supportive of a part time or bivocational pastor who may need another job to supplement the church salary? Will not support

15. Salary History

To provide a profile of salaries for the position you are seeking to fill, indicate salaries at the beginning and ending of the ministers' tenure. Do not include interim positions. If a parsonage is provided, insert the letter "P" in the space provided. Provide information for the last 3 leaders or the last ten years.

	Start Date				End Date			
	Year	Salary	Housing	Annuity	Year	Salary	Housing	Annuity
a. Last	1997	19,630	30,985	7,600	2007	23,000	36,000	9,145
b. Previous								
c. Next previous								

16. During the above period, has your church ever failed to fulfill its financial obligations to its pastor?

_____ yes x no If yes, please comment:

17. Salary, Benefits, and Expenses Offered

- a. Cash salary offered \$ 25,000
Conference recommended salary range: \$ 53-55,000 for up to 10 years experience (this number includes housing and salary)
- b. Housing: \$ 34,000
 x Housing allowance only _____ Parsonage only _____ Would consider offering either
- c. Customary benefits:
 X Vacation: 4 weeks annually
_____ Maternity/paternity leave
 X UCC Retirement Annuity (14 % of salary and housing)
 X UCC Life and Disability Insurance Benefits
 X UCC Health Benefits (_____ other health benefits)
_____ UCC Dental Benefits (_____ other dental benefits)
_____ Social Security/Medicare Offset
 X Continuing Education Funds
 X Continuing Education Time
 X Sabbatical Leave (four weeks after five years)
_____ Other benefits (specify) _____
- d. Ministry Expenses
 X Travel Reimbursement (up to budget limits)
 X Meeting Expense Reimbursement
 X Books and Periodicals
 X Reimbursement of Criminal Background Check Fee
 X Moving Expenses

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

18. Population

a. Population of total city or town in which your church is located:

300,000 (city 2007 est.) 360,000 (metropolitan 2007 est.)

b. Describe the population by racial-ethnic category and identify the source of the information:

White: 61% Hispanic 32% Black 9.2% Asian 4.3% Other 4%

Source: 2000 Census

19. Economic Factors

Identify major sources of employment/income in your community:

- a. Oil-energy
- b. Agribusiness
- c. Professional
- d. Construction
- e. Education
- f. Entertainment
- g. Food service
- h. Accommodations
- i. Government

20. General Description (Add *** if the information came from a survey of the congregation)

a. Describe three distinctive attributes of your community:

- 1. Dry moderate climate and a variety of opportunities for outdoor activities
- 2. Rich ethnic and economic diversity
- 3. Affordable housing compared to large metropolitan areas of the state

b. Identify major trends you envision in your community during the next five years:

- 1. Financial constraints in government because of state budget shortfalls
- 2. Slower population growth in light of slowdown in real estate
- 3. Increase in transportation planning and construction
- 4. Resolve air quality problems

c. List three or four problem areas confronting your community that members feel your church should address:

- 1. Rapid population growth and accompanying tensions
- 2. Homelessness in community
- 3. Growth in medical and education fields with increased need for many types of ministries
- 4. More understanding of local changes and issues including communication with the neighborhood around the church

5. Financial constraints in government because of state budget short falls are reducing all services ie. schools, welfare, medical.

d. Indicate Mission Activities

1. In which your church participates as a part of its mission in the community:

FCC is involved with the following local mission projects:

- Habitat for Humanity
- Bakersfield Homeless Shelter
- Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI)
- Turning Point Mothers and Infant Program
- Parolee Gifts for Children at Christmas
- American Cancer Society's Relay for Life
- ALS Walk
- Gianna's Maternity Home
- Get on the Bus

2. In which your church expects the leader you are now seeking to participate:

This is up to the individual. These mission projects are not dependent on participation by the minister. It would be nice if he/she was to help build with Habitat for Humanity or serve at the Homeless Shelter, but it is not a mandatory requirement.

e. Describe how your church building is now being used by the community:

With the current upheaval in the Episcopal Church, a Grace (Remain) Episcopal, a remaining Episcopal group has been meeting on Sunday mornings in our Chapel.

There is a preschool that is offered five days a week. The school goes by the name of "Child Haven." Child Haven uses the kitchen, Sunday school classrooms, and they have a chapel program that meets in Room 8.

There is a Fred and Beverly Dukes Fine Arts Vesper Service that is offered free to the community about 5 times per year. This is a musical event that runs about 1½ hours. This presentation is held in the sanctuary on Sunday afternoons.

Greater World Gifts Fair Trade Items

The church sponsors a Boy Scout Troop, and they meet every Tuesday night in Plymouth Hall. We also sponsor a Cub Scout Pack.

There is a Round Dance group that meets most Sundays after church in Plymouth Hall.

There is a PFLAG group that meets one Thursday a month in the Fireside Room

Facilities are used for concerts, musical recitals, and fundraisers.

There are weddings performed in both the sanctuary and the James W. Huber Memorial Chapel.

f. Indicate the number of school districts from which members of your church are drawn:

_____ one _____ two _____ x _____ three or more

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

(Add *** if the information came from a survey of the congregation)

21. Identify major trends you envision in your church in the next five years

There seems to be a strong desire for the church to be able to call a second minister to the church, one who would be responsible for the ministry of the children and youth. We are committed to the future with providing the best possible programming and opportunities to involve the youth in an active church life. Many would like to see a children's choir and a youth choir perform and carry the name of the church into the community with outreach programs.

Along with the calling of a second pastor, many members feel that we need to have a second service, one that will allow us to address the needs of the younger members of the congregation and, at the same time, allow for the more traditional service to continue. The second service would tend to be a more contemporary approach to worship with more contemporary music added.

In order to move toward these trends, it is obvious to many in the congregation that we need to "grow" the church more. We need to make sure that the community knows what we offer and that we are an alternative to many mega-churches, a place where people are invited to question and explore as they travel on their individual spiritual journeys. We need to utilize every opportunity to get our message out to the community, including preparing a brochure, for example, that could be placed in the pew racks and around the church, to educate visitors who come the Fred and Beverly Dukes Concert Series or who utilize our facilities in some other way, such as Child Haven parents, Boy Scouts adults and youth, and PFLAG. Some members see the pastor as helping to communicate to prospective members the importance of stewardship, the sharing of one's time, talents, and treasures, as one joins this community of faith.

Many see the need for our church to improve its technological capabilities, including better sound equipment, replacing some of the devices for the hearing impaired, and working to gain Internet connections that will better meet our church's computer needs. Many would like to see the Global Gifts Store expand and become better known in the community.

As we continue to reach out with various missions and social justice activities in the church, we need to also care for our aging congregants. Several people have even felt the need for a third pastor to address the needs of the older members of the church. A few even mentioned the need for the Care and Nurture Board to be implemented once again.

22. Planning

- a. All churches do planning. How would you characterize the way planning is done in your church?
Intermittently- Last one was 2005
- b. What expectations do you have of the person you are seeking in relation to the planning that takes place? Guidance and participation in planning process
- c. When is the last time your church undertook a period of discernment and long-range planning in an intentional way? 2003
- d. What were the outcomes of your intentional long-range planning? Revised church governing structure

- e. Does your church have any plans to undertake a period of intentional long-range planning in the future? Not at this time; however, information gained from the Cottage Meetings indicates that this should be addressed in very near future.

23. Reflections on Congregational Life

Comment on the following with what you believe to be the generally-held responses of the congregation. If more space is needed, use additional pages. (*Add *** if information came from a survey of the congregation.*)

a. Identify the three most important faith experiences or events in the history of your church and the year each took place:

***Different people mentioned different key events important in the faith experiences of our church. The one that most people suggested was our recent spoken “Faith Journeys” by church members during the church service. This practice began in 2007 with the start of Lent and continued beyond Lent until summer. Each week a different person gave their testimony. This deepened our relationships with each other and our faith, by shared acknowledgement of God in our lives.

Several study programs were also mentioned as deepening our members’ faith journeys. A “Companions in Christ” series and a prior series that took people through the entire Bible in one year involved many of our members. Some smaller study series were also well attended on topics of ethics and on Islam, after 9/11/01.

A series of events began after September 11, 2001 that has continued to vitalize our members. Our pastor took the lead in organizing a community interfaith event. Following that, many of us became more active in a number of faith-in-action projects. We committed to “Get On The Bus” to get children to visit their moms imprisoned; we became involved in hands-on mission to New Orleans to help with Katrina clean-up; we transformed our parolee gifts program from a donation of money to more involvement by our members; we hosted an interfaith community peace ceremony; we started a fair trade store; we hosted an event to help Darfur refugees; a Dukes’ legacy fund began offering free concerts to the community; Valentine’s parties were arranged to spread love to Jamison Center, the Bethany Homeless Shelter, the animal shelter, military soldiers and veterans, and other places in need of service. Our church has had a long history of working with Heifer International; Habitat for Humanity; and the homeless shelter, but over the past several years our involvement with community and world has ignited.

A capital campaign was waged and succeeded in raising the money to renovate our church buildings in 1998. This was a major undertaking few would have thought possible. Our members were instrumental in management of the campaign and of overseeing the contractors. Around this same time, an endowment was bequeathed to the church for the building of the James Huber chapel. These were major projects that required much effort and faith that our church would continue to thrive and utilize the facilities.

Our church has supported the “God is still speaking” program and we have held two training sessions supporting it.

About 10 years ago the First Congregational Church and College Height Congregational Church merged. This merger was most beneficial to both congregations from a financial and membership standpoint as well as the participation and growth of the merged church.

b. Identify the most challenging faith experience or event in the life of your church in the last three years and what the church learned from it:

It seems our biggest challenge has been decreasing membership and financial support. We are still in the crux of trying to deal with this challenge. Some members, including big givers, chose to leave the church due to the denomination’s support for some liberal positions. At the same time, some new members have joined us. We do not know why others have left our church, or why we have not been able to attract and keep others. Worship style has been debated as a possible factor. Most say

ours is a church with modern theology, but traditional worship. We tend to excel in service, but avoid evangelism.

c. What is God calling your church to do/become over the next few years?

***People who attended our cottage meetings spoke of God's call for our church to go beyond our comfort zones to reach out to new people in our community and beyond. We believe that loving others means accepting diversity and we have much to offer by sharing this love and the love of Jesus proclaimed in the Gospels. Our church is unique in this community, accepting that "God is Still Speaking." We desire to keep listening and thinking and to become a closely woven net that can catch, hold, and comfort those needing a safe haven. We also need to be a joyfully, hard-working, appreciative net to give our time and talents to help others, and draw in new members.

To accomplish these aims, we need to model the behaviors we believe in and share our light. Many congregants spoke of our need to project and proclaim who we are and what we believe. Some mentioned using banners to identify us and our values at Community events. All of us together can create a strong search light that others can not miss, but we will need to be bold to do so. Not everyone is sure they want to be bold; there is not complete agreement on how to describe our values. Managing our ambivalence will be crucial for us to follow God's call for our future.

Several of our members mentioned that we are the only U.C.C. in Bakersfield and that we should proclaim our unique identity. We are a progressive alternative to fundamental mega-churches. We can offer love, acceptance, and hospitality to all. We can pool resources with other progressive Christians and proclaim our acceptance of other religions. We are called to proclaim the gospels and be the best U.C.C. we can be. Some members are less comfortable with the U.C.C.

Alternative types of outreach were suggested. Some hope to provide plays to invite children, youth and adults to participate. Some believe alternative styles of music would help outreach. Some would like to employ specific evangelism programs.

We have been strengthened as a congregation by many; of our members sharing their faith journeys. We believe that continuing to share our stories increases our communal strength, faith and love. We hope to continue this practice and to become more comfortable talking about our faith.

We know that it will take all of our talents employed to become the church we are called to be. We are not sure how to more fully engage everyone. Some hope that an engaging pastor will make others want to be more involved. Others think we need to study what is keeping people from being more involved, not expecting a pastor to do it for us. Some are appreciative of the unison we have shown in staying together during our difficult interim time and feel this bodes well for our future.

d. Describe how the church expects the person you are seeking to help your church reach these goals:

***According to input from the cottage meetings, we have a long wish list of attributes for our new pastor. We hope our new pastor will develop our church's ministry by getting to know us and help us to get to know ourselves better as well. We hope to develop a close, trusting relationship, built on good communication, genuineness, love, and mutual compassion. It is hoped that our new pastor will build these kinds of sound relationships. We hope this person will help us celebrate our connectedness as a congregation. We know this will require a pastor whole is energetic and outgoing, with a sense of humor and resourcefulness.

We are not a congregation skilled in evangelism. We would hope for our new pastor to have a passion for this and to encourage our skill development in this area. In keeping with our value of diversity and our desire for growth, we hope for our pastor to be open and accepting of all people. Boldly encouraging us to proclaim the gospel to all and inviting all to share in God's love and our love for one another.

e. Chose the statement that most accurately describes the theological/faith stance of your church:
You may check more than one.

- We tend to be theologically conservative.
 We tend to be theologically moderate to conservative.
 We tend to be theologically moderate.
 We tend to be theologically moderate to liberal.
 We tend to be theologically liberal.
 We tend to be quite diverse theologically.
 Other

Comments: While the vast majority is either moderate to liberal or indifferent to theology, there are some who hold a conservative theology. We have much greater diversity on the political spectrum and more tension is experienced due to these differences.

f. Describe the educational program of your church:

Identify the curriculum/a used in your church school and the person or committee responsible for selection of curriculum/a:

We offer Sunday School for children and youth on Sunday mornings during the worship time. We have had difficulty finding a suitable curriculum and are currently testing four different curricula.

Our High School students are using Seasons of the Spirit which they have been using for some time and are quite happy. We have recently combined our pre-k - kindergarten class and our first – second grade. This group is currently using “Bible Zone Live”, the pre-school version. Our third through fifth grade classes have been combined and are using “Exploring Your Faith”. In addition, our sixth through eighth graders are studying from the “Faith in Motion” curriculum. Since the new quarter has just started, we have had little input yet as to teachers’ thoughts on the various curricula.

Indicate resources used for Confirmation and the person or committee responsible for the selection of these resources: Presently we are using “My Confirmation” from the United Church Press. The Pastor and the Director of Youth and Young Adults teach the confirmation class.

Are there educational opportunities for all ages?

We also have a children’s program called Real Buddies in addition to our Sunday School program. This group meets on Wednesday evening and is made up pre – k through fifth graders. These children are using a curriculum put out by Gospel Light Publishing called “God’s Kids Grow: Fruit of the spirit”. Another group made up of fourth through sixth graders meets once a month for study and social interaction and they are using a program called “Friendship First”. Our Director of Children’s Ministries lead both of these groups with the assistance of numerous volunteers.

Our adult studies vary throughout the year with a women’s small group study meeting regularly on Tuesday mornings. This group is currently using the Companions in Christ study on prayer and is led by group members who alternate each week. Another women’s group was formed this year and is using a program put out by Group Publishing titled “Chick Flicks”. This group meets once a month for dinner, a movie, discussion of spiritual principles touched on in the movie, and a short devotional.

In the past, we have had adult classes on Sunday mornings prior to worship which the pastor has usually led. Another small group of both men and women meet for studies through out the year but are currently on break.

Does your church have a written Safe Church Policy?

 X Yes _____ No (If No, has a group worked on this issue in the past? What was the outcome?)

We have a program in place titled “Safe Haven” whereby all volunteers working directly with children or youth are required to fill out a form for limited background check. A committee made up of the pastor, legal counsel, and Christian Education representative to the Council of Ministries oversees this

g. Describe how the church expects the person you are seeking to participate in the congregation’s educational programs: Provide assistance in developing educational programs with the committee.

h. Describe how programs or ministries of your church are evaluated: We are week on formal evaluation and tend to judge programs and ministries by attendance and word of mouth.

i. Describe the strengths or positive qualities of your church: (Add *** if information came from a survey of the congregation.)

***We are a fortunate congregation, with many people sharing their spiritual gifts in the ministry of the church. Many people feel we have a strong Adult Choir and Bell Choir. Both add to the beauty of our worship services. We have a strong and versatile organist. We have had the opportunity to share our personal spiritual journeys with the congregation. We also have three ordained pastors in our congregation, who willingly share their Biblical knowledge and whose talents have helped us during this transition period. In addition, they have served as leaders of group studies and mission and peace projects, too. We also have lay people who have been strong in helping to lead various studies both on Sundays, as Sunday School teachers, and during the week for special groups.

Several of our members feel we are a welcoming church, allowing those who are thinkers to come join us in worship, no matter “wherever they find themselves in life’s journey.” Many feel they can share confidences with a caring member and know that it will remain confidential.

We have two strong staff members who plan and organize activities for the children, youth, and young adults. Both these ladies have been working to enlist members’ assistance for various activities. We have lay leaders who plan and carry out the acolyte program and the weekly children’s message for the worship service. We have a core of volunteers who demonstrate a willingness to serve and are compassionate with one another.

Our Youth are encouraged to participate with worship one Sunday each month, by serving as Greeters, Ushers, Worship Leaders, and leading the congregation in singing of praise music. One young person even volunteered to present the sermon. They have used their talents helping with communion, assisting in the kitchen, serving and cleaning up the coffee hour.

With the previous pastor, several caring groups were organized to assist with the nurturing of others, including Stephen’s Ministries, Healing Touch Ministry, and Pastoral partners. In addition, a women’s Bible study, also initiated by the previous pastor, has been continuing, exploring several of the Companions in Christ Series and other spiritual books.

We also have several social gatherings that promote friendships and strengthen binding relationship and caring for one another, including the Men’s Weekly Friday Morning Breakfast Group, and Chick Flicks. These demonstrate that we can “have fun,” in addition to enjoying spiritual growth.

Various members feel we are champions for several of our Missions commitments, including Get on the Bus, Habitat for Humanity, Heifer International, New Orleans work trips, and Christmas gifts for Parolees' families. We also promote selected peace and justice issues, as in planting a Peace Pole on our church property. Many feel we are good at working together for a purpose!

We show compassion for our membership by having members who enjoy assisting others in the congregation by driving them to church. Some of our members who enjoy visiting with shut-ins and visiting folks who have shown an interest in our church by attending a couple of services.

Finally, our prayer life is strong. Our worship service includes a time for prayers of joys and concerns of the congregation. We have two active prayer chains that follow up on all the prayer requests. Study groups have explored prayer and the strengthening of one's prayer life.

24. Indicate major boards, committees, small groups, and organizations that are a part of your church; the frequency of meetings (monthly, weekly, etc.); and expectations for leadership. For leadership role use: 1 = pastor takes primary initiative and responsibility; 2 = pastor and laity share responsibility; 3 = laity take primary initiative and responsibility; 4 = the pastor's presence is expected periodically/occasionally.

Our organization differs from other church bodies in that we have two Councils, the Administrative Council and the Council of Ministries (nine to twelve members on each council). At present there are only four standing committees (e.g. endowment, personnel, staff-parish relations, and nominating). In place of standing committees and boards, the councils are empowered to create committees as needed to help accomplish their respective responsibilities. Under the Council headings below are the respective responsibilities of each council.

Board/Committee	Purpose	# Members	Frequency	Leadership
<u>Administrative Council</u>	Responsible for business matters of the church, budgets, facility maintenance, personnel, grounds,	10	Monthly	3
Stewardship	Prepare for and implement stewardship campaign.	4	Semi-annually	2
Buildings	Budget for and maintain buildings.	5	Fall as needed	3
Endowment	Reviews request for funds and invests bequests as appropriate.	5	Quarterly	3
Grounds	Maintain sprinklers, gardening service, tree maintenance, etc.	5	As needed	3
Finance	Reviews budgets, requests for non-budgeted funds, salaries.	5	Monthly	2
Personnel	Prepares jobs descriptions, conducts performance reviews, legal matters.	2	Quarterly	2
Liaison with Ministries Council	Attends COM Meetings and reports back to Admin. Council	1	Monthly	3
Child Haven Board	Supervises Dir. Of Day Care Center	1	As needed	3
<u>Council of Ministries</u>	Directs the direction and mission of the church and spiritual growth.	10	Monthly	2
Worship	Responsible for worship materials and pulpit supply	6	Monthly	2
Communion	Prepares elements and provides servers	9	Bi-weekly	3
Christian Education	Selects and purchases curriculum; recruits teachers	5	Monthly	3
Arts & Music	Works with Dir. Of Music and organizes religious productions	5	As needed	2
Outreach and Evangelism	Records weekly worship attendance; sends welcome letters to first time guests; after 2 nd visit, guests receive phone call, personal visit if desired.	3	As needed	3
Fellowship	Plans and implements social activities	1	As needed	3
Justice & Peace	Develop programs to make congregation aware of people needs worldwide and local.	2	As needed	3
Publicity	Advertises programs and writes PSAs	1	As needed	2
Missions	Manages funding for missions of the church	6	Monthly	2

OTHER ACTIVITIES				
Wed. Night Live	Social evening, dinner & children's mtg.	20-30	Weekly	3
Tuesday AM Study	Bible study/spirituality group	6	Weekly	1
Sunday AM Study	Bible study/spirituality group	6	Weekly	1
Chancel Choir	Sing in church service from September through May	16	Weekly	2
Rhapsody Ringers	Practice weekly, perform monthly	20	Weekly	3
Ongoing Small Groups	Purpose	# Members	Frequency	Leadership
Friday morning Men's Breakfast	Fellowship	6-12	Weekly	Lay-led
Exercise Class	Fellowship	3-5	2x/week	Lay-led
Book Club/Study	Fellowship	5-10	every other month	Lay-led
Chick Flicks	Fellowship	12	1 x/month	Lay-led

25. Conflict

Most churches experience conflict at various times. Characterize your church's experience with conflict given the following possibilities. Indicate the extent to which each statement describes your church: **C** = closely; **S** = somewhat; **N** = not at all.

- S** as a church, we respect and listen to each other and work things through without generating divisiveness
- S** as a church, we try to respect and listen to each other, but it is not uncommon for differences of opinion to be a problem and for some people to choose sides
- S** some have left our church because of conflict
- C**- conflict hurts our sense of unity, but we tend not to talk about it
- S** painful experience with conflict has been present, but it has been worked through, and we have learned from the experience
- S** we have had some painful experiences with conflict, and they linger in the background
- S** open conflict is present, and we need a minister who can help us deal with it
- S** other Specify: Some conflict has not been acknowledged until after pastor left
- S** conflict between organist and choir director
- S** The status of children's day care (Child Haven)

Comment: There are some issues that cause unresolved tension. While there are some issues that cause unresolved tension in recent years and that tension has not been expressed as a conflict with the pastor. Too often the tensions remain unspoken and unaddressed.

26. Worship

a. Describe the weekly worship schedule (number of services, times, languages in which the services are conducted, frequency with which communion is included, special emphases such as healing services, contemporary worship, etc.)

One service presently at 10:00 a.m. (English only). Communion is served the first Sunday of every month, alternating passed and intinction monthly..

b. Are your worship services or church gatherings sign language interpreted?

Yes No

Are there particular ministries with persons with developmental disabilities or mental illness?

We do accommodate hearing impaired with a hearing device.

c. Identify how worship is planned on a regular basis in your church

by a worship committee

by the pastor

by the pastor in consultation with the church musician

other – specify:

d. Describe the style and content of preaching valued by your congregation.

A style based on biblical knowledge with down-to-earth practical lessons pertinent to our lives today. We value an accepting, nonjudgmental approach that challenges us to think and act in new ways; that comforts, heals, and inspires; and that empowers us to express our faith outside the church.

e. Describe the role in worship of the person you are seeking:

We are seeking a person who is a motivator and teacher, not fire and brimstone. Create a welcoming atmosphere of inclusion with all who attend our church.

f. What hymnal(s) are currently used by your congregation in worship?

New Century Hymnal

g. Have you considered using another hymnal? Have not officially considered a change.

h. Churches have a variety of practices related to the use of Inclusive Language in worship services.

(Some churches have made the decision not to change any language in worship; others are intentionally inclusive in their references to people avoiding words such as “mankind”. Some avoid exclusively male references for God and seek to include male and female images as well as a variety of metaphors; other churches exercise care in the words of the liturgy but still utilize “traditional” hymns.) How important is this issue to your church?

Inclusive language would be acceptable....

The language of our worship is generally inclusive, with gender non-specific pronouns used as much as possible while still attempting to maintain the flow of language. Sometimes you will hear “he” in one sentence and “she” later, with reference to God. Adopting the NCH several years ago involved some wrestling with which the vast repertory of names for God in the Bible was enumerated. We recognized that while familial imagery for God may be dominant in our time, it is not the only imagery at our disposal. Rarely do clergy-led prayers begin with addresses such as, “heavenly father,” but it is not unusual for lay-led prayers in the context of a committee meeting, for example, to begin this way. We seldom sing the traditionally Trinitarian “Gloria Patri”. The doxology is still in use, with an inclusive language version usually printed, but some people sing the traditional language, it is fair to say there is no sense of conflict or struggle to win “naming rights” for God; peoples’ consciences with regard to God’s name have been honored.

WIDER CHURCH CONNECTIONS

27. United Church of Christ

a. Association, conference, or other denominational programs and activities in which church members participate:

- Southern California Nevada Conference
- Northern Association
- Pilgrim Pines Camp and Conference Center

Do you send delegates to association and conference meetings?

Regularly Occasionally _____ Never _____

Have members of your church ever served as delegates or visitors to General Synod?

Yes No _____ Not Sure _____

b. Association, conference, or other denominational settings in which your church expects the leader you are now seeking to participate: We would hope the Pastor would participate in Southern California Conference and Northern Association Meetings.

c. Choose the word that best describes how lay leaders of your church consciously identify with the United Church of Christ:

_____ closely moderately _____ nominally _____ other

Comment: Some identify closely and a few do not identify with UCC progressive positions. Moderator and members have attended Association and Conference meetings.

28. Ecumenical and Interfaith Activities

a. Describe ways your church participated in ecumenical and interfaith activities during the past three years:

We had one interfaith gathering in our building; an interfaith community peace ceremony and planting of a peace pole; and our previous pastor spoke at the most recent interfaith community celebration of Gandhi’s birthday. Our children participated in a large community “Go Fish” concert with Kern County churches and our youth have attended several small events with youth from the Unitarian church and local Disciples of Christ churches.

b. Describe how your church expects the leader you are now seeking to participate in ecumenical and interfaith activities:

It is hoped that our new pastor would be open to ecumenical and interfaith activities. However, it is only one priority. More immediate priorities have been suggested to include visiting and integrating new members and developing a second, more contemporary worship service.

RELATIONSHIP WITH MINISTERIAL LEADERS

29. Relationship With Prior Leaders

a. Characterize your church’s experience with pastoral leaders over the past 15 years.

You may check more than one response:

In general, our lay leaders have a history of strong, cooperative relationships with the church’s pastoral leadership.

We have had some fairly rocky moments, but we have worked them through, and relationships with pastoral leaders have grown in significant and important ways.

We have had some tough times and things did not always work out.

Other. Specify:

Comment: 1985-6 The Pastor was asked to leave. The reasons were not misconduct and this was a long time ago.

b. Indicate the tenure of the last three installed persons who filled the position you are seeking to fill. Do not include interims:

Name	From	To
1. Jenell Mahoney	1994	2007
2. Duane Meyers	1987	1996
3. Ken Mitchell	1979	1986

c. If a previous pastor or pastor emeritus/a is currently a member of the church, describe his or her involvement in the life of the congregation.

Plays in the Bell Choir

d. In addition to financial support, describe how your church supported the most recent person to hold the position you are now seeking to fill:

Allowed time for pastor to take classes and lectures; provided Family Medical Leave when needed. Provide three months sabbatical after five years of service.

e. Involuntary Terminations:

Have any of the last three persons serving in the position you are seeking to fill left involuntarily or under pressure?

yes no: If "yes," respond to the following:

- Choose all the issues that may have contributed to the involuntary termination. *You may check more than one or indicate "not applicable."*

conflict of personalities in the church
 inadequate performance
 pastoral style inappropriate for this church
 ethical issues or issues of fitness for ministry
 financial stresses
 other. Specify:

- **Indicate, if you can, which of the following best describe the congregation's behavior toward that person prior to her or his leaving: *You may check more than one.***

civil kind
 compassionate supportive
 harsh indifferent

- **Describe what your church has learned from the experience about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:** We have become more willing to work things out rather than let problems get out of control.

30. Does the church have a Pastoral Relations Committee?

Yes no

If yes, describe its purpose, functions and how often they meet: Committee has been inactive but will be reactivated shortly.

A sounding board for pastor and resolving possible differences. This group met quarterly.

31. If there is periodic assessment/evaluation of the nature of the work and of the performance of that work for the position you are seeking to fill? Describe it:

Yes, there is an annual performance review.

Is the periodic ministerial evaluation coordinated with a regular assessment of the overall ministry of the congregation? Yes

32. Leadership Expectations

A list follows of 45 items which represent a range of qualities in the ministry of the church. Place an "X" beside the 12 items which your church feels are the most important aspects of ministry for your church at this time. All the qualities are important. However, please mark those 12 which you feel need first priority at this time. **Do not rank the items.** If the aspects you consider to be important are not included in the list, place them at the end in the blanks provided. Mark only 12 of the following items. Do not rank the items.

Our church needs a person who...

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> is an effective preacher/speaker
members into the church | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 23. works regularly at bringing new |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> continues to develop his/her
theological and biblical skills | <input type="checkbox"/> 24. regularly encourages support of
Our Church's Wider Mission |
| 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> helps people develop their
spiritual life | <input type="checkbox"/> 25. reaches out to inactive members |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> helps people work together in
solving problems | <input type="checkbox"/> 26. works regularly in the development
of stewardship growth |
| 5. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> is effective in planning and leading
worship | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. is active in ecumenical relationships
and encourages the church to
participate |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> has a sense of the direction of
his/her ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> 28. is a person of faith |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> regularly encourages people to
participate in United Church of
Christ activities and programs | <input type="checkbox"/> 29. writes clearly and well |
| 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> helps people understand and act
upon issues of social justice | <input type="checkbox"/> 30. works well on a team |
| 9. <input type="checkbox"/> is a helpful counselor | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 31. is effective in working with youth |
| 10. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ministers effectively to people in
crisis situations | <input type="checkbox"/> 32. organizes people for community action |
| 11. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> makes pastoral calls on people in
hospitals and nursing homes and
those confined to their homes | <input type="checkbox"/> 33. is skilled in planning and leading
programs |
| 12. <input type="checkbox"/> makes pastoral calls on members
not confined to their homes | <input type="checkbox"/> 34. plans and leads well-organized
meetings |
| 13. <input type="checkbox"/> is a good leader | <input type="checkbox"/> 35. encourages people to relate their faith
to their daily lives |
| 14. <input type="checkbox"/> is effective in working with children | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 36. is accepting of people with divergent
views |
| 15. <input type="checkbox"/> builds a sense of fellowship among
the people with whom he/she works | <input type="checkbox"/> 37. encourages others to assume and
carry out leadership |
| 16. <input type="checkbox"/> helps people develop their leadership
abilities | <input type="checkbox"/> 38. is mature and emotionally secure |
| 17. <input type="checkbox"/> is an effective administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> 39. has strong commitment and loyalty |
| 18. <input type="checkbox"/> is effective with committees and
officers | <input type="checkbox"/> 40. maintains confidentially |
| 19. <input type="checkbox"/> is an effective teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> 41. understands and interprets the mission
of the church from a global perspective |
| 20. <input type="checkbox"/> has a strong commitment to the
educational ministry of the church | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 42. is a compassionate and caring person |
| 21. <input type="checkbox"/> is effective in working with adults | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 43. deals effectively with conflict |
| 22. <input type="checkbox"/> inspires a sense of confidence | <input type="checkbox"/> 44. _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 45. _____ |

If there are other comments you wish to make about expectations, include one or more paragraphs here on an additional sheet.

GENERAL

33. Does your governing body or your search committee have a well-defined policy against discrimination? Yes No

Comment: We have a comprehensive employee handbook.

34. Has your congregation participated in an ONA (Open and Affirming) study/discernment process? Yes No

Comment: We have had gays and lesbians hold leadership in the congregation.

35. Is there a position description of the pastor's role and responsibilities?
 Yes No If "yes," please attach a copy.

Does your church have a personnel policy covering this position? Yes
 No

36. List the titles of other paid staff positions for whom this person provides supervision and indicate whether these positions are full-time (FT) or part-time (PT).

Title: Administrative Assistant	(30 hours) PT	<input type="checkbox"/> FT
Title: Bookkeeper	(22 hours) PT	<input type="checkbox"/> FT
Title: Director/Youth & Young Adults	(15-20 hrs) PT	<input type="checkbox"/> FT
Title: Director of Children's Ministry	(15-20 hrs) PT	<input type="checkbox"/> FT
Title: Choir Director	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PT	<input type="checkbox"/> FT
Title: Organist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PT	<input type="checkbox"/> FT
Title: Director of Child Haven	<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FT

37. Name three people who have agreed to serve as references. Make sure they are not members of your church, but know your church well enough to be helpful to a final candidate seeking more information about your church, e.g., conference staff, person in community, neighboring pastor:

Name	Telephone	Relationship to Your Church
a. -----	-----	So. California-Nevada Conference Staff
b. -----	-----	Attendee
c. -----	-----	Previous Interim Minister

38. What groups or individuals in your church have contributed to, reviewed, and/or approved this profile for circulation?

- Interim Transition Steering Committee
- Church Councils
- Pastoral Search Committee
- Congregation

STATEMENT ON LEADERSHIP IN MINISTRY

Using this page, and one additional page if needed, write a statement that will help a candidate better understand the relationship of clergy and lay leadership in the life of your congregation. Candidates will be interested to know whether your lay leaders have a history of strong, cooperative relationships with the church's pastoral leadership. If your church organizational structure is based on intentional lay-led ministries, describe how that structure functions in relationship to the pastor; if your organizational structure is dependent on clergy leadership, describe what will be expected of the pastor.

If you wish, this statement can provide an opportunity for you to elaborate on the list of committees/boards/groups that you identified in Question 24. (For example, in some churches the expectation is for mutual involvement of pastor and finance committee in the financial matters of the church; other congregations have a clear expectation that the pastor will be focused on "spiritual matters" and will be excluded from settings where financial decisions are made.)

Include in the statement reflections on leadership styles that work well for your church. What do you hope/expect that your new pastor will understand and value in your particular style of lay leadership? What would a new pastor need to know in order to work smoothly with your established leaders? If yours is a multiple-staff church, it would be helpful to comment on your expectations of how the staff team members relate to each other. You are encouraged to include anything else you want to say about your church and its expectations of the leader it now seeks:

At First Congregational Church of Bakersfield, our unusual governing design allows pastor and laity to focus on our ministries and vision without waiting through administrative details first. The Council of Ministries is responsible for "policies, planning, decisions, and oversight of all the congregation's ministries, including spiritual growth, parish life, and mission to the community and world" (Bylaws). The Administrative Council is responsible for "the proper governance of the church, including financial, property, personnel, legal, insurance, endowment, stewardship, and administrative matter" (Bylaws). The Administrative Council is responsible for the church budgets including the budget for Child Haven, the church-sponsored daycare center. Within each council, designated members accept responsibility for different areas within the purview of the council (e.g. stewardship, worship). Boards and committee are formed as needed to accomplish the work of the councils. In addition, the congregation elects seven officers who attend selected council meetings and have ex-officio status. These officers include the moderator, assistant moderator, clerk, assistant clerk, treasurer, assistant treasurer, and legal council. The moderator is the lay leader of the congregation.

The two councils have very different styles of operation. The Administrative Council tends to address issues that require decisive action and the analysis of objective data. Members tend to value business-related skills and the church-as-a-business analogy works well here. This group tends to function most independent of the pastor. In the past, the pastor attended Administrative Council meetings and provided input as needed. Because she mostly stayed out of business matters, when she had a strong opinion it was often influential.

The Council of Ministries is a more reflective and deliberative body. Although they attend to the everyday tasks of worship and parish life, like filling communion cups and staffing ushers, they use some of each meeting to discuss the spiritual direction of the church. This group, for example, spends the first several minutes of each meeting discussing readings from the books they've assigned themselves. The pastor participates more in these meetings, though she does not lead them. The council and pastor work collaboratively on special events, alternative services,

and ideas for spiritual growth. Sermon content and most details of Sunday worship are left to the pastor.

About 20% of the total church budget is designated for mission projects. Under the Council of Ministries, an independent functioning Mission Committee dispenses these funds for the outreach of the congregation both locally and nationally.

In addition to the pastor, the church employs two lay ministry leaders: the Director of Children's Ministries and the Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. Each lay ministry leader works fairly independently, with input and cooperation from the pastor as needed. The lay ministry leaders are evaluated by the personnel committee, an extension of the Administrative Council, with input from the pastor. Other staff members include the church secretary, the bookkeeper, the organist, and the choir director. In each case, the pastor works with staff as needed, and provides input into performance evaluations without any formal supervisory responsibilities.

Overall, we have strong lay leadership in the church and don't need a lot of pastoral leadership to help with our two councils and supervise our staff. This is not to say, however, that we don't need strong pastoral leadership; we do.

First and foremost, we need a strong spiritual leader who can keep us together and centered on God as we face our current challenges and look to the future.

One of our biggest challenges is our shrinking membership. Like many mainstream Christian churches, our congregation is getting older, and as older members leave us, they are not replaced at the same rate with new, younger members. We live in a town with many moderately-sized conservative churches and a few mega-churches, but few theologically progressive churches. Although this could be an opportunity for us, we have, so far, been unsuccessful in taking advantage of it.

As this profile makes clear, another challenge requiring wise and patient pastoral leadership is the diversity of thought across the congregation regarding what our church should be and do. This broad range of opinion extends to the role of the pastor as well. Ideally, a strong leader would find the optimal balance between tending and extending the flock, described below.

On an individual level, many members want tending by a good shepherd. They want to feel accepted, known, and loved by a pastor. They want sermons that comfort, heal, and uplift. They want Sunday services that are predictable, traditional, and reverent.

On the other hand, many members want to be extended by the pastor. They want to feel challenged and pushed to be better people than they are. They want sermons that inspire and even shake them into thinking about their faith in new ways. They want Sunday services that are surprising, contemporary, and thought-provoking.

On the church level, many want the pastor to tend to the current congregation. They want her to serve current members and their tastes. They value pastoral visits to current members. They envision growth through bringing in more people who think like us. They see little need develop a niche in the community as this might cause current members some discomfort.

Members who want the pastor to extend the church are interested in assessing and serving the tastes of prospective members. They value pastoral visits to prospective members. They see

growth through evangelizing to others not like us. Although most people in the church tolerate diversity, extenders embrace it. Extenders may be interested in developing a unique niche in the community, despite temporary discomforts. They are likely to endorse closer alignment with the national UCC.

After years of dwindling membership during times that favored tending over extending, the congregation now appears willing to take small steps toward more extending.

In summary, we are strong and active congregation that seeks to work with a wise, loving leader and effective preacher who will tend and extend our life as a congregation keeping us together as we listen for God's plan for our future.

**Conference or Association
Descriptive Reference**

Church Name: First Congregational Church of Bakersfield, CA

Location: 5 Real Road Bakersfield CA 93309

Conference: Southern California- Nevada

Association: Northern

Name of Staff Assisting in the Search: Rev. Frank Johnson

Staff Comments:

Signature of Staff Assisting in the Search

Date