

First Congregational Church of Bellingham United Church of Christ

September 25, 2008

Date

Lead Pastor

Position to be filled

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 covenantal partners openly share information. 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

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

5. **Membership:** (if information is not available, put *n/a* or estimate and put *est.*)

	Last Year	5 Years Ago	10 Years Ago
a. # Church members	601*	625	564
b. Average attendance at worship	200	160	160
c. Average participation of children/youth in C.E.	90	75	
d. Average weekly participation in adult education	35-40	35-40	30
e. # Members who are ordained clergy	11	8	4

* Newly revised numbers indicating members and associated members

6. Profile of the Congregation

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

Note: The congregation participated in a demographic survey as part of the spring 2006 Visioning process and additional information is included.

a. Age: (from survey results plus records)

<u>4</u> % ages 0-5	<u>12</u> % ages 65-74
<u>21</u> % ages 6-18	<u>6</u> % ages 75+
<u>8</u> % ages 19-34	
<u>19</u> % ages 35-49	
<u>30</u> % ages 50-64	

b. Education level of adults: (survey)

<u>5</u> % high school graduates
<u>11</u> % some college/vocational school
<u>34</u> % college graduates
<u>50</u> % graduate school

c. Family units (from survey results)

<u>29</u> % couples with children at home
<u>47</u> % couples without children at home
<u>15</u> % single
<u>7</u> % single parent with children at home
<u>2</u> % unrelated adults

d. Occupation of adults: (survey)

- 27 % private for private
- 35 % government agency
- 12 % non-profit or charity
- 26 % self-employed or family business

e. Employment Status (survey)

- 45 % employed
- 16 % employed part-time
- 26 % retired
- 1 % unemployed
- 6 % homemakers
- 4 % students
- 2 % disabled

f. Describe the racial-ethnic makeup of your congregation

- 97 % white
- 3 % Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native American/Alaskan Native

g. Years of affiliation:

- 6 % less than one year
- 16 % one to three years
- 13 % four to six years
- 17 % seven to ten years
- 32 % eleven to twenty-five years
- 12 % Twenty-six to fifty years
- 4 % more than 50 years

h. Attendance: How often does the most active household member attend FCCB?

- 41 % every week
- 34 % twice a month
- 18 % once a month
- 7 % less than monthly

i. Church participation of household members (percentage of all households responding)

- 56 % Adult Education
- 18 % Chancel Choir
- 30 % Labyrinth walk
- 64 % Boards/circles/committees etc.
- 26 % Women's or Men's retreats

CHURCH FINANCES

	2008	5 Years Ago	10 Years Ago
7. Total Church Income **	523,356.00	505,080	336,405.47
a. Members offerings and pledges	489,300.00	460,700.00	328,033.28
b. Interest from investment or endowments	232.99	1,500.00	540.19
c. Principal reduction (endowments or investments)	29,056	33,400.00	2,500.00
d. Rentals/Building Use Fees	20,000.00	5,000.00	5,330.00
e. Special Fundraising			
f. Other(Carry-over)	20,935.00		

	2008^^	5 Years Ago	10 Years Ago
8. Total Operating Budget **	543,356.00	505,080.00	363,563.00
a. Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support	30,095.00	44,790.00	
b. Our Church's Wider Mission Special Support	15,000.00	15,000.00	
c. Other gifts	15,500.00*	30,000.00	27,600.00
d. Current local expenses	482,761.00	415,290.00	283,095.00
e. Annual capital payments	268,158.00	393,063.00	
f. Other debt (due on loan – see capital campaign)	400,000.00	1.2 million	

The 2008 budget reflects a concerted effort by the congregation to adjust staff salaries to ensure we are paying fair and just wages. The target budget for 2009 includes a return to increased support for OCWM Basic and Special Support. In addition to mission funding from our general operating budget, the congregation gives approximately \$55,000.00 in in-kind and unbudgeted mission and outreach support.

In the past eight years, the congregation has steadily increased giving to the general operating budget and paid off \$2.8 million dollars on the building of a new sanctuary and remodeling of the entire church. The projected balance on our capital debt at the completion of our capital campaigns in May of 2009 is between \$20,000 and \$40,000. Church Council proposed a one-year pledge drive to eliminate all building debt and the congregation approved this proposal.

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

Spring Offering	\$4,600.00
Interfaith Offering	\$2,800.00
Fall Offering	\$3,400.00
The Christmas Fund	\$3,455.00

10. Name the most significant local missions/ministries or agencies that were financially supported by your local church last year and the amount of support:

	Name	Amount
1.	UCC Mission	\$45,310.00
2.	Local Missions Community Meals (Monthly participation in serving meals) Interfaith Coalition (Plus rent free space) Bellingham Food Bank (\$7,700.00 canned food donations)	\$2,300.00
3.	Non-Local Missions	
4.	Fellowship Dues – UCC	\$1,869.00

11. Indebtedness:

- a. Total amount of capital debt:

When the pledges from the recently concluded campaign are paid (June of 2009), we anticipated a remaining capital debt of \$267,000. However, the congregation was informed on October 12, 2008, of a generous bequest left by one of our members who recently passed away. Approximately \$200,000 will be applied to the outstanding capital debt. With our cash on hand and the expectation that most of the outstanding pledges will be paid, our best estimate is that the remaining debt will be between \$20,000 and \$40,000.

- b. Total amount of other debt: 0

- c. Are capital and other payments current? XX yes _____ no

12. Capital Campaigns:

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

The Church has had a series of three capital campaigns since 2000. We have added a new sanctuary and classrooms and remodeled existing facilities to provide a new social hall, kitchen, and library and meeting rooms. The total capital costs were \$3,263,231, of which between \$20,000 and \$40,000 is the balance we anticipate by June 2009.

- b. If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe it:

It is anticipated that we will have a one-year pledge drive to pay off all capital debt by June 2010.

13. Assets held by the Church: (Note: The Trustees, Treasurer, and Bookkeeper are in the process of updating our assets.)

a. Reserves (savings): \$194,303.08

b. Endowments/Investments: \$790,630.65

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

The congregation completed a major renovation and expansion of the church in 2002. We now have a beautiful new sanctuary with semi-circular seating centering on a hand-carved communion table, cross, pulpit, and seasonal liturgical art. The sanctuary is furnished so that it may also be used for concerts and other community events. Situated in a residential area the church is near major streets, one of the 3 high schools, and a low-income housing center. The actual property consists of 1.5 acres.

The physical plant includes:

- Sanctuary seating 370 and a balcony seating 100
- Chapel
- Social hall seating 250 with additional seating for 150 possible in narthex
- Full kitchen with facilities for large groups
- Church offices for secretary/treasurer, lead pastor, pastor, Christian Education/Membership Coordinator, Youth Coordinator, and Parish Nurse.
- Church Library
- Mt. Baker and Fireplace meeting rooms
- Twelve classrooms
- Classroom/office presently occupied by the Interfaith Coalition
- 6750 sq. ft. unfinished basement

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

e. If the church owns a parsonage, describe it: (not applicable)

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF MINISTERIAL LEADERS

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

 X yes no

a. If the compensation package offered falls below conference guidelines, are you willing to have a pastor who is bi-vocational having a part-time position to supplement income?

 yes XX no

b. Are you willing to help bi-vocational candidates locate other employment?

 yes XX no

15. Salary History:

The most recent salary history pertains to interim and contract pastors only. For projected salary, please see question #17.

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

 yes XX no if yes, please comment

17. **Lead Pastor Salary, Benefits, and Expenses Offered:**

a. Salary (includes housing) offered \$70,000, plus \$30,000 fringe benefits

Recommended salary is within Conference guidelines

b. Housing: Pastor will divide compensation according to personal preference

 Housing allowance only: Parsonage only:

 would offer either

Pastor Salary, Benefits, and Expenses Offered:

a. Cash salary offered \$30,150 plus \$36,850.00 fringe benefits

Recommended salary is within Conference guidelines

b. Housing: Pastor will divide compensation according to personal preference

 Housing allowance only: Parsonage only:

 would offer either

c. Customary benefits for both **Lead Pastor and Pastor**

XX Vacation: 4 weeks; annually; 1 week each quarter earned after start date

XX Maternity/paternity leave

XX UCC annuity: (salary + housing) x 14%;

XX Social Security offset (salary + housing) x 7.65%

XX UCC Family Protection Plan; (salary + housing) x 1%

XX UCC group life insurance (\$50/year)

XX UCC health benefit; family coverage

XX UCC dental benefit; family coverage

XX Continuing education funds: \$ annually

XX Continuing education time: 2 weeks annually

XX Sabbatical leave after; years; for; months; at; full salary

XX Books

 Other benefits: Specify:

d. XX Travel reimbursement; 51.8 cents/mile

e. XX Meeting expense reimbursement; \$

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

18. Population:

- a. Total population of city or town in which your church is located: Approximately 71,000
- b. Describe the population by racial-ethnic category and identify the source:

From U.S. Census Bureau, 2000:

White -	88%
Hispanic -	4.6%
Asian -	4.2%
American Indian-	1.5%
Black -	1.0%

19. Economic Factors:

- a. Identify major sources of employment/income in your community

Bellingham now has a diversified economy, Education is the major employer in Bellingham due to Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College, the Bellingham Technical College, and the K-12 system .Currently, the major sources of employment in addition to education are city and county governments, the health care sector, retail stores, construction and property development, and financial services. Significant industries in Whatcom County also include British Petroleum and Conoco Phillips oil refineries, an Intalco aluminum smelter and agriculture, particularly dairy and berry farms. There are also new startup businesses in software and technical fields. The poverty rate for families is 8.5% as compared with the national rate of 10.2%. Whatcom County is currently one of the fastest growing counties in the U.S. and Bellingham is frequently cited in national magazines as one of the most desirable places to live in the U.S.

20. General Description:

- a. Describe three distinctive attributes of your community:
 - Bellingham is growing rapidly, and the economy, landscape, and demographics are all experiencing significant changes.

- City residents tend to be progressive and engage in civic life to an extraordinary degree.
- Both newcomers and long-time residents share a strong sense of place as well as a deep appreciation for the natural beauty of our region and the quality of life it affords. The city wraps around Bellingham Bay and sits half way between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. It is possible to be at mountaintop and seashore within a couple of hours.

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

Growth issues will continue to be of primary concern as we wrestle with questions of how to accommodate the needs of newcomers and long time residents alike, all without losing our sense of community.

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

In a 2006 survey and visioning process, FCCB members expressed a strong commitment to:

- Supporting at-risk children and families
- Working for peace and social justice
- Fighting hunger and homelessness and
- Providing health care access for all.

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

Our beautiful new sanctuary was built in part with the expectation that it could provide a welcoming venue for a variety of community events. In the past year we have packed the house with the Peace & Justice Center's International Peace Day Celebration; we have hosted concerts, readings, lectures, and forums on environmental issues. Our downstairs classrooms and meeting rooms are busy during the week with classes sponsored by Bellingham Technical College; an Alcoholics Anonymous group and a PFLAG group meet here regularly. Our social hall is the setting for the annual Evergreen Aids Volunteer Appreciation Dinner.

We offer rent-free office space to the Interfaith Coalition.

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

_____ one _____ two X three or more

21. Indicate Mission activities:

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

- **Interfaith Coalition:** -- we provide Interfaith Coalition with rent-free office space, yearly auction item donations and proceeds from a specially designated offering each year; we also participate enthusiastically in the organization's "Christmas Families" and "Warm Coat" programs.
- **Bellingham Food Bank** -- we collect food donations on a regular basis and make annual financial contributions; additionally, half of last year's Fall Offering went to the Food Bank.
- **Community Meals Program** – we help to prepare and serve hot meals once a month in conjunction with other area churches.
- **Crop Walk** – we have provided organizational support, participants, and pledges to the local effort.
- Our congregation gives generously to a variety of organizations and causes that are not funded by our regular mission budget. In the past two years, we have raised thousands of dollars for the Slum Doctor Programme, urban mission work in Australia and hurricane relief work in New Orleans. These efforts have been both in conjunction with and in addition to special offerings for UCC programs that include Church World Services, Neighbors in Need and the Christmas Fund.
- Additionally, we regularly receive requests and contribute financial support to a variety of local charitable organizations.
- Our youth are involved in both local and extended mission projects. Recent High School Youth Group mission trips include the National Youth Event, a mission trip to the Dominican Republic and trips within the US.

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

Our mission work is vital to our congregation's understanding of who we are and what we are called to do as God's people. While we do not have specific expectations regarding a potential leader's involvement with any particular program or organization, we do expect him or her to share our commitment and be able to both enthusiastically support and judiciously guide our efforts to put love into action in our community.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

22. Identify trends you envision in your church in the next five years:

The church participated in a visioning process that produced the following themes for guiding the congregation's future. We plan to:

- Envision a bright prospect for growth in our church. Young families, young and mature single people, and retired folks will all find a welcoming and joyful home here.
- See worship services and an expanding array of program opportunities during the week drawing more people to church. They will not want to miss all the good things that happen here.
- Continue to value sermons that are thoughtful, intellectually stimulating, and reflective of relevant research and experience. The emphasis is less on evangelizing and more on probing the meaning and contemporary applications of Christian texts and understandings.
- Encourage strong lay leadership and re-examine the organizational structure of the church in order to involve more people in specific projects and build connections.
- Nurture personal spiritual development and support members in their community social service and humanitarian activities.
- Enrich our traditional liturgy by realizing the full potential of an exceptionally strong music program and by drawing on the creativity of the congregation.
- Attend to the stewardship of all of our resources including the challenge of our increasing operating budget and the outstanding debt remaining from our last capital campaign.
- Develop increasing inter-personal connections within the congregation through small groups formed around members' interests.
- Work to build further capacity and quality in our Christian education and family oriented programming.

PLEASE NOTE: Our church mission statement and values can be viewed on our website: www.fccb.net.

23. Planning

- a. All churches do planning. How would you characterize the way planning is done in your church?

Our planning process has shifted in the past three years with the support of our interim pastors. The present process is a developing, collaborative process between the congregation, the lay leadership on Church Council and Boards, and the pastors. While imperfect, the process has moved us to be more inclusive and transparent in our decision-making. Congregational decisions and discussions that have emerged from this collaborative process are an addition of all rites including marriage to our open and affirming statement, the affirmation of lead pastor/pastor roles, and the development of a narrative budget around our values and the conclusion of our capital debt campaigns.

We are presently working on a reorganization of non-clerical staff, boards, and committees to more effectively support the work of the church, increased use of small groups to connect members and more effectively organized policies and procedures. At some point in the near future, we will be tackling a new Church Constitution.

- b. What expectations do you have of the person you are seeking in relation to the planning that takes place?

The Lead Pastor we seek will:

- Inspire us to act on the church's mission and stir a vision among the congregation that is "catching."
- Work in a collaborative fashion together with staff, lay leadership, and the congregation in a decision-making process that is participatory and effective.
- Encourage the congregation to respond seriously to new directions by their personal involvement and financial support;

24. Reflection on Congregational Life:

- a. Identify the three most important events in the history of your church and the year:

Historically, our important events center on being a long-established church in the Bellingham community. We have been at the heart of the community for 125 years. Our church was instrumental in creating and sustaining an Interfaith Coalition of 48 community churches that offers health, mental health and dental care to low income people as well as emergency and transitional housing to those in need. After a very long period of discussion and education, this church voted to become Open and Affirming in 1999 and expanded that commitment to include the rite of marriage in 2008.

It will also be helpful for applicants to know that after much deliberation (10 years), we embarked on a major expansion and renovation of our building and created a beautiful new sanctuary. Members contributed money and lots of sweat equity by helping to pour concrete, pound nails, pack lumber, sweep up debris and even scrape old building bricks so they could be reused.

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

We would describe the most significant "event" in our recent history as our need to deal with constant and dramatic change. The year 2003 brought a move into a new sanctuary and new pressures on our operating budget. In 2005, at the same time that we were undergoing a discussion of changing out of co-pastor model, our Pastor for 24 years, Donel McClellan, died. Shortly after congregational adoption of a new Lead Pastor/Pastor model, our other Co-pastor of 19 years, Cindy Bauleke resigned. After a two-year interim period, we conducted a full lead pastor search and called the Rev. Thomas Hunter in February of 2008. Tom began his ministry with us in April of 2008 and tragically died in June of this same year. Two gifted contract pastors presently support our life as a faith community.

Grief and loss have overwhelmed us at times. As we move forward and out of this stage of the journey, we have better ways to care for each other and to listen to each other. We know now that we are a resilient church that has tremendous investment in discerning how God is still speaking.

- c. Identify what the congregation intends to accomplish during the next three years:

Acknowledging that we are on a journey of faith, growing in diversity and in our understanding of Jesus' example, we intend to by 2010:

- call a Lead Pastor and a Pastor
- review staffing and organizational structure to maximize and support the gifts of current staff
- refresh existing lay leadership and encourage new leadership to emerge
- strengthen our identity as a Welcoming Church
- extend our ministry beyond the initial "welcome" to include and connect new people
- focus on Church Council Visioning Retreat priorities
- retire the outstanding building debt
- celebrate God's gifts to us and the world

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

The Spirit moves us. This congregation has a sense of urgency to move forward on our vision of a dynamic church focused on worship, spirituality, mission, and community. While our lead pastor and pastor must be able to share their own spiritually compelling vision for a UCC church, we expect that they have the abilities to help the congregation complete the path we have begun. We are seeking a lead pastor and pastor that can work collaboratively with each other, the staff, lay leadership and the congregation to continue to grow the work and membership of this church. More information and specific job descriptions are available on our website for the Lead Pastor and Pastor positions.

- 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

- f. Describe the educational program of your church:

For children: Our church is blessed with a vibrant church school for children, and an annual Confirmation Class for seventh graders and up. Intermediate, Middle School and High School Youth Groups are led by our enthusiastic and dedicated Youth Group Coordinator.

For adults: We provide diverse and ongoing learning experiences for our adult members and friends. Quarterly series will be held this year starting with Religion and Politics supported by the author Richard Domke and small group discussions. This "Intersection" series will continue with the topic, Religion and Science and conclude with Religion and the environment. There is a regular Bible study class on Sunday mornings and support for bi-

weekly meetings of the Historical Jesus Seminar Study Group. Examples of other adult education are six-week Lenten series with classes such as Exercises for Practicing the Spiritual Life, The Cutting Edge, Music and Spirit, and Making Sense of the Bible. The Labyrinth ministry is active and growing. We periodically invite guests to present programs of interest that inspire and nurture spiritual growth including programs on Fair Trade, poverty and mission. A four-week marriage class is planned for this fall.

- g. Describe how the church expects the person you are seeking to participate in the congregation's educational programs:

We seek a Lead Pastor who is excited to lead lively and thoughtful discussions of theology and study of scripture. She or he will be alert to and support educational opportunities to benefit the congregation.

- h. Describe how programs or ministries of your church are evaluated:

We are learning to measure programs on how they meet the needs of the congregation and how they match our values for spirituality, community, and outreach. We have historically used attendance as the primary measure. In addition, on the last day of the class, evaluation sheets are distributed and participants are asked to complete them. The sponsoring Board or Committee uses these as feedback for future programming. Those involved with a particular ministry review how many utilize the program and if their needs are appropriately met.

- i. Describe the strengths or positive qualities of your church:

Our church is caring and generous. We want to connect with each other and with the larger world through our faith and our work as a congregation. We tackle tough issues and work together to resolve them. Recent challenges include a dramatic change in pastoral leadership, a third consecutive capital campaign and increased expenses due to our newly expanded space within the context of a rapidly changing community. In spite of difficult times, we express a joyful spirit as we embrace diversity, encourage questioning, seek justice, and celebrate the extravagant Loving God at our Center.

25. Indicate major boards, committees, 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 takes primary initiative and responsibility.

Group	Purpose of Group	Nr. Members	Frequency	Role
Arts in Worship	Provide musical and visual inspiration to congregation	6	1 x month	2
Adult Ministries	Build Christian community & encourage spiritual journey with adult programming	9	1 x month	2
Christian Education	Support & oversee children & youth Christian Education	12	1 x month	2
Diaconate	Assist with & address concerns/suggestions for worship	12	1 x month	2

Hospitality	Keep kitchen clean & supplied, assist w/ events – oversee Freezer Ministry (food for families in need)	6	As needed	3
Membership	Connect members, update membership list, produce directories	9	1 x month	2
Mission, Justice & Social Concerns	Educate congregation of local and global mission opportunities, conduct special offerings	9	1 x month	2
Open & Affirming	Support diversity activities within the church and community	7	1 x monthly	2
Parish Nurse	Educate congregation on health issues, check on ill members, provide regular blood pressure clinic	2	As needed	2
Personnel	Conduct annual reviews of ordained staff, update job descriptions and employee handbook, recommend to Council the employment or termination of non-ordained staff, recommend salary levels to budget committee	11	As needed	2
Budget	Design and present annual budget to Church Council for approval prior to Annual Meeting	5	As needed	2
Re-Organization	Review staffing and lay organization to more effectively complete the work of the church.	6	As needed	2
Stewardship	Educate congregation on stewardship, conduct annual stewardship campaign			
Trustees	Oversee annual operating budget, investments, endowments, memorials, Pehrson Scholarship, interior & exterior maintenance	9	1 x month	2
Nominating	Provide slate of board & committee members for vote at annual meeting	9	1 x month	2
Church Council	Implement decisions of congregation, appoint committees as needed, review & adopt annual operating budget, employ or terminate non-ordained staff members	6	As needed	3
Pastoral Relations	Nurture, support pastors; address & help resolve issues that may impact pastor's ability to perform critical missions	23	1 x month	2
		5	2 x year & As needed	2

In addition, the following groups offer further opportunities to nurture spirit, encourage fellowship and invite outreach:

- **Stephen Ministry** – an active group of Stephen Leaders and Care Givers ministering to our congregation. Currently, Four Stephen Leaders and eight Stephen Ministers provide

care to eight care receivers. The number of care receivers fluctuates dependent upon need. Pastor staffed.

- **Parish Visitors** – a group that connects with shut-in members of the congregation via regular visits, phone calls, notes, and cards. Fifteen visitors currently visit thirty members. Staffed by pastor and Parish Nurse.
- **Prayer Shawl Ministry** – Twelve to fifteen knitters meet once a week to knit lovely shawls given to those in need of comfort. Staffed by CE/Membership Coordinator.
- **Prayer Chain** – Four Prayer Chains activated by a phone call to a layperson coordinator. Staffed by pastor.
- **Shalom Circle** – Meets each Monday morning for an hour dedicated to prayer and reflection. Three to ten attend. Unstaffed.
- **Women at the Well** – Twenty-five women in two groups (a third group is planned) meet regularly to nurture spiritual growth. Staffed by Pastor and CE/Membership Coordinator.
- **Labyrinth Ministry** – Trained facilitators are on hand to assist in any way while walkers enjoy the peace and beauty of a traditional labyrinth surrounded by glowing candles, water gently cascading over stones and soft music playing in the background. Once/month. The labyrinth is also available at other times for private walks and it is carried into the community for special events and to the Pacific Northwest Conference Annual Meeting. Staffed by CE/Membership Coordinator.
- **Women’s Circles** – Four Circles with a combined membership of eighty-one women meet once a month for fellowship and to support the church, local and wider communities. Unstaffed.
- **Book Club** – Eight to fifteen women meet once a month to discuss books: fiction and non-fiction, contemporary and classics. Unstaffed.
- **In Stitches** – A group of nine women meets each Friday morning to quilt, sew, embroider, and mend. With their quilt ministry, they create beautiful warm quilts to give to church family members and friends in need of special comfort. Unstaffed.

26. 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

N conflict hurts our sense of unity, but we tend not to talk about it

- C 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
- N open conflict is present, and we need a minister who can help us deal with it
- other: Specify:

Comment: The most significant source of conflict recently has been the transition from a Co-Pastor to a Lead Pastor/Pastor model. Education provided in a series of open forums and printed in the church newsletter along with many opportunities for discussion led to widespread agreement supporting the new model.

27. Worship:

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

- by a Worship Committee (Diaconate)
- by the pastor
- by the pastor in consultation with the Church Musician
- other: Specify: The Diaconate works with the two pastors to plan worship on occasion but not on a regular basis.

- b. Describe the style and content of preaching valued by your congregation:

This church family is open to being moved: moved to laughter, moved to tears and moved to reflection and contemplation of a message that challenges, encourages, and nurtures our understanding of God and the teachings of Jesus.

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

We seek a person who provides strong leadership in worship and encourages others in the congregation to assist with liturgy and Communion.

- d. What hymnal(s) does your congregation in worship currently use?

We use the New Century Hymnal.

WIDER CHURCH CONNECTIONS

28. United Church of Christ:

- a. Association, Conference, or Denominational settings in which church members participate:

Church members attend our annual regional conference and national synod gatherings.

- b. Association, Conference, or other denominational settings in which your church expects the leader you are now seeking to participate:

. We anticipate that our future pastoral leaders will

participate at the regional and national levels.

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

___ closely X moderately ___ nominally ___ other

Comment:

Lay leadership values the contact with our regional conference and national synod in lay leadership's efforts to strengthen our own community, and keep our community connected to the broader church community.

29. Ecumenical and Interfaith Activities:

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

Our church community highly values ecumenical activities and has participated in local Crop walks, an interfaith Community Meals program, Habit for Humanity, and an annual Interfaith Choral Concert. The church has historically sponsored a community-wide Christmas Eve service at the Mt. Baker Theater.

Pastor Donel Mc Clellan was instrumental in creating the Interfaith Coalition as an organization that addresses medical and other needs in the local community . Our congregation provides rent-free office space and raises funds for the Interfaith Coalition.

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

Our church community has a strong historical connection to ecumenical activities and will carry that connection into the future. We seek a leader who could nurture and enhance that connection.

RELATIONSHIP WITH MINISTERIAL LEADERS

30. Relationship With Prior Leaders:

- a. Characterize your church's experience with pastoral leaders over the last 10 years.
You may check more than one response:

___ we have had solid relationships with persons providing 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 some tough times and things did not always work out
___ x other: Specify:

We have had two long-term pastors, one for 24 years, and the other for 19 years. More recently, we have had two interim pastors, one for almost three years. Our current configuration is two contract pastors hired on an emergency basis upon the death of our newly called lead pastor and the suspension of the search for a pastor. We are now ready to call pastors to fill both the lead and pastor position. In respect to the congregation's relationship with any of these six individual pastors, we would describe the relationship as solid and appreciative of the gifts each has brought to our congregation. There was a period of contention during the transition out of a co-pastor model. The focus now is on building a healthy church that as a balance of leadership provided by the pastors and lay leaders.

- 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. Donel McClellan	1981	2004
2. Cindy Bauleke	1986	2005
3. Tom Hunter	2008	2008

- c. If a previous pastor is currently a member of the church, describe his or her role in the life of the congregation:

Our former co-pastor is not presently participating in church life, as is the practice with immediate past clergy. She was called in October 2006, to the pastorship of a Congregational church in the area.

- 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:

The congregation has instituted a Pastoral Relations Committee that meets on a regular basis to provide support for the pastors. In addition to this committee, the pastors meet with the moderator and vice moderator on a weekly basis to monitor the work of the church and mutual support.

- 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:

With the prospect of a transition to the Lead Pastor model Cindy Bauleke was offered the possibility of applying for Lead Pastor or remaining as the second pastor. She declined the offer and later resigned with regret stating that she could not accept the Congregation's decision to move to a Lead Pastor model.

1. Chose all the issues that may have contributed to the termination: *You may check more than one. (not applicable)*

- conflict of personalities in the church
- inadequate performance
- pastoral style inappropriate for this church
- ethical issues
- other. Specify:

2. 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.*

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> civil | <input type="checkbox"/> kind |
| <input type="checkbox"/> compassionate | <input type="checkbox"/> supportive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> harsh | <input type="checkbox"/> indifferent |

Describe what your church has learned from the experience about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

31. Does the church have a Pastoral Relations Committee? yes no

If yes, describe its purpose and how it functions:

The Pastoral Relations Committee meets at least twice a year. The Chair of the Committee, any member of the Committee, any Pastor, or the Church Council may call a meeting. The Committee assists the Church Council and the membership by having primary responsibility to (1) nurture, support and assist our pastors as they deal with the daily challenges and stresses that arise as they direct and lead us into a deeper, broader and improved understanding of God's wisdom, justice, and love and (2) address and resolve the concerns and conflicts that impact the ability of the pastors to perform the critical missions of the church. If action is required, the Committee will advise the Church Council, appropriate board and/or committee only of the issue requiring action. The advice should not include any of the discussions, dialogues or conversations internal to the Pastoral Relations Committee which was related to the issue referred out for action.

32. If there is periodic assessment of the nature of the work and of the performance of that work for the position you are seeking to fill, describe it:

Performance reviews of pastors are done six months after employment, and then every six months thereafter by a sub-committee of the personnel committee.

This process involves self-descriptions of roles and functions by the pastor being reviewed with an assessment by a personnel subcommittee as to how well these roles are being performed. This assessment will include input from other staff and lay leadership. The confidential review will identify areas of strength and areas of possible improvement. Setting measurable goals for regular review is an important part of this process.

A Five Year Review of the pastor's ministry is conducted in the fifth year following the call and every five years thereafter by the Personnel Committee. This review is separate

from internal staff evaluations conducted annually by the Personnel Committee. In consultation with the Congregation, the Church Council, the boards and committees, and the church staff, the Personnel Committee will prepare a report on the pastor's performance to be shared first with the pastor who will have the opportunity to make a written response. A final version of the Personnel Committee report will then be made available to the Church Council.

33. Leadership Expectations:

- a. A list follows of 43 items, which represents 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.

The Church Council has identified the following set of 12 qualities of ministry:

- Is an effective preacher/speaker
- Is effective in planning and leading worship
- Is accepting of people with divergent backgrounds and traditions
- Encourages people to relate their faith to their daily lives
- Builds a sense of fellowship among the people with who he/she works
- Helps people understand and act upon issues of social justice
- Is mature and socially secure
- Is a compassionate and caring person sensitive to other's needs
- Is an effective administrator
- Is a person of faith
- Deals effectively with conflict
- Has a strong commitment to the educational ministry of the church

GENERAL

- 34.** Does your church Search Committee, or governing body, have a policy against discrimination?

XX yes _____ no

Comment:

- 35. a.** Describe the functions and duties of lead pastor and pastor:

As described in the Church Constitution and the Resolution on Pastoral Functions and

Accountability, the pastors (Lead Pastor and Pastor) are responsible for:

- Working with the congregation to establish and implement an overall vision for the church;
- Leading worship and providing sermons that nurture the Christian spirit within the congregation;
- Providing a program of pastoral care in a manner that reflects the values of the congregation;
- Directing the administration of staff and, in conjunction with the Trustees, the allocation of funds and other resources pursuant to the budget so that this vision is realized;
- Developing and promoting an education program that benefits all ages – from children through seniors – and involves them in learning how to live as Christians.

These missions are to be specified for each pastor so that there is clear accountability to the church leadership and the appropriate boards and committees. As between the pastors, the Lead Pastor is to be charged with the overall leadership role so that there can be a clear sense of direction and coordination in response to the priorities of the congregation.

Compensation for each pastor is to be commensurate with the preparation, experience, and level of responsibility of each pastor.

The Lead Pastor has overall leadership responsibility and will supervise the other church staff, though some part of those responsibilities may be delegated to the other Pastor or other staff where appropriate in view of the mission undertaken.

35. b. Does your church have a personnel policy covering this position? yes no

Comment:

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: CE Director	<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FT
Title: Church Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FT
Title: Custodian	<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FT
Title: Church Accountant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PT	<input type="checkbox"/> FT
Title: Youth Coordinator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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

- 36.** 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 final candidate seeking more information about your church, e.g., previous pastor, conference staff, person in community:

Name	Telephone	Relationship to Your Church
Rev. Scott Opsahl	360-392-8483	Interim Pastor 2005 – March 2008
Rev. Dick Christensen	360-671-8319	Long-time friend of the church and community member
Laura De Rose	360-734-3983	Executive Director of Interfaith

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

2008 Church Council Members

Writing team of Ken Hoover, Cheryll Blair, Etta Kirk, Rob Olason, Anna Hall-Evans, Janet Ott, Jeff Smith, Brandon Adams, and Sharon Camblin

STATEMENT ON LEADERSHIP IN MINISTRY

Using this page and one additional page if needed, write a statement that will help a candidate understand the relationship of clergy and lay leadership in the life of your congregation. Include in the statement reflections on leadership styles that work well for your church. Describe how clergy and lay leaders work together. 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:

Comment:

Bellingham is a waterfront community on Bellingham Bay with Mount Baker as a backdrop. It provides easy access to Vancouver, British Columbia or Seattle by car or via ferry to the San Juan Islands, Victoria, B.C., and Alaska. Bellingham is the largest city in Whatcom County with a population of over 71,000. Our church of 600 members is the only Congregational Church in Bellingham. In Whatcom County, there are three additional UCC churches.

We have been in transition for a long time and are now ready to begin a new chapter in the life of our church. We have spent time doing the hard work of grieving and healing, of being introspective and visionary. Now we are ready to embrace a Lead Pastor and Pastor who will walk with us and inspire us as we continue our faith journey, attended to the god who is still speaking.

Lay Leadership and the Pastors

Our church has voted twice in the past five years to retain our Lead Pastor/Pastor model. FCCB is currently staffed by an Acting Lead Pastor, a full time second (contract) Pastor, and other staff positions for specific functions. Currently the Lead Pastor supervises a staff comprised of a Pastor, Christian Education/Membership Coordinator, Youth Coordinator, Secretary, Accountant, Custodian, Choir Director, Organist, and Parish Nurses. Between the pastors, the Lead Pastor is charged with the overall leadership role, so that there can be a clear sense of direction and coordination in response to the priorities of the congregation. We anticipate that an experienced pastor whose style is collegial will work well with our talented lay leaders and staff. Our goal, budget permitting, is to retain the present staffing. The first priority for any additional staffing resources would be the addition of a church administrator or administrative assistant.

Within this gorgeous recreational area and the City of Bellingham, at the First Congregational Church, we worship in a beautiful new sanctuary. The building was constructed under the direction of strong lay leadership. During the last four-year transitional period, that lay leadership has continued to take responsibility for the life of this church. Strong lay leaders have balanced and complemented strong interim pastoral leadership. We like this balanced leadership model, lay and pastoral, and look forward to continuing this model as new ordained staff become a part of our congregation.

The congregation invests governing authority in the Church Council, which includes the moderator, vice-moderator, clerk, historian, immediate past moderator, and the chair or designated alternate of each of the nine boards and committees, a representative of church youth, and six members-at-large. The pastors are ex-officio members of the Church Council and all committees. Lay leaders work collaboratively with pastors and other staff members to set goals, implement programs, and assess results. Recent diligent efforts to keep the congregation fully informed as to budget, staffing and governance issues have created a healthy model of transparency. A formal accounting of the work of the Council and its boards and committees is made to the congregation at the Annual Meeting in January.

We are seeking a lead pastor and pastor who will embrace our pastoral care model, which relies heavily on the lay-led groups such as the Stephen Ministry program, parish visitors and parish nurses. Because the pastors are usually the first ones to respond to crises, they are often in the unique position of being able to swiftly identify those who would benefit from care and who can provide that care.

Strong lay leadership is also apparent in the church's thriving Christian Education for children and youth, Adult Education programs and music programs. Our Christian Education program provides excellent opportunities for both adults and children to grow in fellowship with each other and in a deeper relationship with God and Jesus Christ. Experienced musicians staff our outstanding music programs, including a large chancel choir, men's chorus and children's choir. The congregation enjoys and appreciates a newly restored pipe organ and a grand piano. We will celebrate with pastors who are able to creatively use the wealth of teaching abilities and musical talent that exists in our congregation, one who will serve as a resource to our members as they continue to offer a full range of programs that build community and nurture us in our faith journeys.

Our Hopes for the Future

The First Congregational Church of Bellingham has always been an all ages, family inclusive environment, and we hope the new Lead Pastor helps carry on that sense of unity, openness, and affirmation. The manifold boards, committees, activities, and programs of the church provide many spiritual outlets for an energetic and creative congregation. Through preaching, counseling, and congregational leadership, we hope our pastors will support us in our lives as Christians who serve the larger community.

Above all, we hope our pastors will assist and encourage members in their individual religious quests with guidance and motivation along lines appropriate to their spiritual development.

Conference or Association Descriptive Reference

Church Name:

Location:

Conference:

Association:

Name of Staff Assisting in the Search

Signature of Staff Assisting in the Search

Date