



Haydenville Congregational Church Profile



Haydenville Congregational Church

143 Main Street, Haydenville, MA, 01039

Position Opening: Settled Pastor
Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ
April 2018

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

Position Posting

Who Is God Calling Us to Become?

Who Are We Now?

Who Is Our Neighbor?

References

Consent and Validation

“God is able to provide you with every blessing, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.”

(2 Corinthians 9:8)

LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: Haydenville Congregational Church

Street address: 143 Main Street, Haydenville, MA 01039

Supplemental web links:

- <http://haydenvillechurch.org/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/haydenvilleucc/>

Conference Association: Hampshire Association of the Massachusetts Conference, UCC

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:

Name: Rev. Jill Graham

Title: Associate Conference Minister

Phone: (413) 441-1618

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Summary Ministry Description:

Haydenville Congregational Church (HCC), United Church of Christ, is a dynamic, growing, diverse and welcoming faith community committed to love, service, justice, peace, and care of the Earth. HCC is intentional and courageous in its radical welcome of people on all parts of life's journey. As exemplified by Jesus, we welcome the voices, presence and power of each person, including those defined as "other," pushed to the margins, silenced or rejected. We joyfully embrace our identity as a Spirit-filled, Justice-seeking, Peace-loving, Open and Affirming, Anti-racist, Child-centered, Song-filled, Ever-thankful, Stubbornly-hopeful Beloved Community.

In 2004 Haydenville Congregational Church was, in effect, a start-up church. Though it was established in 1851, its membership had dropped to 15 members, two of whom left when its new pastor encouraged HCC to be an Open and Affirming congregation. Over the years, the church grew to over 200 members drawn from throughout the Pioneer Valley by our radical welcome and active commitment to social change. As we grow from a pastoral to program church, our task is to fulfill this vision of Beloved Community.



HCC at Northampton Pride March (2015)

About the area

Haydenville is located where Northampton meets the Hilltowns, and where Hamp meets Noho. “Hamp” refers to the family and culture of those who have lived in this region for generations. “Noho” refers to more recent transplants of artists, young farmers, recent retirees and graduates from local colleges. It’s an intersection of geography, history, and culture well represented in our church family.

Massachusetts Route 9, which runs from the New York/Massachusetts border, through the Berkshires, and across the state to Boston, is the main street through Haydenville. A ride west will take you through the town of Williamsburg and on to the Hilltowns, a collection of thriving communities, each with their own character and flavor, nestled in wooded hills and valleys. A ride east takes you into the heart of the Pioneer Valley, through the city of Northampton, and into the towns of Hadley and Amherst. Known as the “Five College Area”, it is the home of Smith, Amherst, Hampshire and Mount Holyoke Colleges and University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

Culture abounds in this area, with numerous art galleries, film festivals, live theater and dance as well as a lively music scene with well-known musicians. Great craft shows of locally produced wares are frequent, often drawing visitors from around the nation. The Pioneer Valley is home to many well-known artists, writers, and performers.

The Pioneer Valley and the surrounding area is also a great place to get out and enjoy nature’s four seasons, with many local parks, lakes and ponds, hiking trails, and paved multi-use trails for hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing.

Current size of membership: 133 active members, 107 households

Languages used in ministry: English

Position Title: Pastor

Position Duration: Settled

Compensation Level: Half Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

No, but the Board of Trustees reviews staff compensation during each annual budget cycle and has increased pastoral compensation at least

once in the past five years, with the goal of meeting conference guidelines as soon as possible.

Scope of work

20-25 hours weekly

The role of Settled Pastor is to oversee the life of the church in collaboration with lay leadership. They articulate the mission and values of HCC, offer pastoral leadership to the congregation alongside clergy and lay leaders, and ensure that the systems, practices, programs and policies of the church responsibly and effectively support HCC's progressive ministry.

We are a church well in transition from a pastoral to a program church, and are currently demonstrating our ability to manage both administratively and spiritually with a good number of strong lay leaders and ordained members. The scope of work in this profile reflects our commitment to staying on this path, ensuring that lay leadership continues to work in collaboration with the settled pastor. It also reflects our hope of someday having a full-time settled pastor again. The scope of work is ambitious, and *negotiable*. Each area will continue to be supported by lay and ordained leaders. We hope that it reflects our desire to have a settled pastor who is engaged and knowledgeable about all areas of Haydenville Congregational Church, but ultimately responsible and accountable for only a few of them, according to our shared needs, and their skills, interests and desire for professional growth.

Key roles and responsibilities:

1. Preaching and teaching.

- Prepare and preach 35-40 Sundays/year (to be negotiated when call agreement is drafted)
- With lay leaders, ensure worship leadership for remaining Sundays.
- Conduct sacraments of Communion and Baptism.
- Conduct weddings and memorials.
- Work with the Worship Teams of staff and lay leaders to
 - Plan scripture study and liturgy.
 - Craft weekly bulletin and regular church communications.

- Plan music
- Recruit and guide lay leaders for roles in Sunday services.
- Oversee the pastoral care needs of the congregation and support lay leaders engaged in this role.
- Foster discipleship among members such that we deepen skills and practices of living as Jesus followers in our daily lives.

2. Leadership and planning: The Pastor is responsible for planning and staff coordination in the execution of the church's mission, goals and strategic vision:

- With lay leaders, plan and lead weekly staff meetings.
- Monitor the spiritual pulse of the congregation through direct contact and regular meetings with lay leadership.
- With lay leaders, ensure staffing, facilities and programs are effectively aligned to meet strategic goals.
- With lay leaders, promote regular review and update of strategic planning and visioning processes.
- With lay leaders, ensure regular communications with members and the local community.
- With lay leaders maintain appropriate connection with MACUCC.

3. Staff supervision and development:

- With lay leaders, oversees staff training, development and performance evaluation.
- With lay leaders, hires or dismisses staff and prioritizes staff additions.
- With lay leaders, fosters effective lines of communication between staff, lay leaders and the congregation.
- With lay leaders, sets annual goals with staff and addresses performance issues as they arise.

4. Administration and fiscal responsibility: Be knowledgeable of Trustees' management and oversight of critical church functions, including staff supervision, church administrative policies and procedures, budgets, cash flow, and property management.

5. Personal growth and spiritual renewal. As a valued leader, the Pastor will model self-care and renewal by taking:

- Appropriate time for personal reading, research, prayer and meditation, and opportunities for professional development and personal growth.
- Days off and vacation time as negotiated in the Call Agreement.

6. Evaluation. The Trustees organize evaluations of the Pastor annually or as needed. With lay leaders, the Pastor conducts annual evaluations of staff members based on mutually agreed upon performance goals established at the beginning of the calendar year.

Core Competencies:

- Strong pastoral leader
- Skilled manager
- Experienced advocate and teacher

Strong leader

HCC's settled pastor will be an engaging presence with a strong, spirited preaching style that is personal, scripturally literate, and relevant to the lives of our congregation as well as to our neighbors locally and in the world. They will be a good storyteller. They will be an articulate public voice for HCC especially as it pertains to our social justice work, and an even more skillful listener. Their personal style will be one that is warm, friendly and welcoming. They should see themselves as a community builder.

As a church in transition from pastoral to program church, our pastor's leadership style will model "leadership *with*" rather than "leadership *over*" when it comes to working with current and emerging lay leaders and members in discernment. They will be committed to the empowerment of members to "be the church," to gain skills and experience in a variety of leadership roles in the chancel, behind the scenes at church, and in the larger community. They will be especially mindful of promoting leadership among those whose voices are often silenced or marginalized in other parts of society.

The settled pastor will model self-care, excellent time-management, and demonstrated ability to handle competing priorities and set clear boundaries. They will manage conflict creatively, and look for opportuni-

ties to build community around emerging challenges, whether they originate in the church or are rooted in larger community or world issues.

Skilled manager

As HCC continues to grow as a program church, the church must craft new policies and protocols to handle decisions that formerly were the sole purview of the pastor. The settled pastor will be an excellent manager of people and resources, with skills to foster collaborative processes to create policies and protocols consistent with our mission and our Covenant of Right relations, and reflective of our commitment to inclusion and social justice.

HCC has often been described as a church that is not wealthy but *is* generous. With lay leaders, the settled pastor will be a good steward and wise manager of HCC's financial resources and our facilities. They will offer skill and vision to guide development and implementation of strategies that will enable us to sustain both our growing HCC family, and our aging building, well into the future.

Experienced advocate and teacher

We envision our settled pastor as someone who is committed to expanding our radical welcome, our commitment to lifting up the voices of marginalized people, and our progressive agenda for social justice and care of the Earth.

Our next settled pastor will serve as a role model within and beyond the congregation to challenge all forms of bigotry. They will be conversant in the personal, social, economic and other challenges facing members of our church family and extended community who are transgender, nonbinary, LGBTQ, People of Color, refugees and undocumented members of our community, Muslims and those from other faiths. They will value the diverse faith experiences represented by our membership and within our larger community.

Our settled pastor will challenge HCC members to continue to grow in our faith as followers of Jesus as we broaden and deepen our understanding of these issues, and increase our skills to work in the service of justice, equality, liberation and peace.

Compensation and support:

- Salary + Housing Allowance: \$37,000
- FICA adjustment: \$2775
- Pension: \$5,180
- Health Insurance: ~\$5,045
- **Total Compensation: \$50,000**

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

HCC does not have a parsonage so our pastor must secure housing within a half hour drive from the church.

Peer and professional supports available for ministers in your conference:

The Massachusetts Conference offers several programs and opportunities for pastoral support and education:

- Clergy Communities of Practice meet regularly. All clergy are encouraged to participate. (<http://www.macucc.org/clergycommunitiesofpractice>) The conference holds “Super Saturday” programs twice a year. These events offer workshops on pertinent and practical ministerial matters. (<http://www.macucc.org/supersaturday>).
- Hampshire Association of MACUCC meets monthly.
- Given the presence of the five colleges and several community colleges there are many opportunities available for continuing education.
- There is an informal monthly gathering of local clergy.

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

Haydenville Congregational Church values our extravagant all-inclusive welcome and we want that to be obvious the moment someone walks in the door. But there are opportunities to grow. We want to be even more family-oriented. We want to grow as a place that is safe for *anyone* who is marginalized and welcoming for mainstream folks as well. We want all who join us to have a sense of the spirit being present in everything we do. We want to continue our consistent commitment to peace and justice issues both locally and in the world. We want people to know that we bring God into every aspect of our church life. We want more opportunities for faith development through ser-

mons, small group experiences, volunteer activities and social justice work in the larger community.

Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

Many of us have had the experience of HCC being widely recognized by people who have never been to our church. We are *that* church: the one who shows up at marches and counter-protests with our banner and tee-shirts. We are the largest single contingent in the local Pride March. We organize buses to regional and national marches for climate care and women's rights. We host numerous programs and workshops on dismantling prejudice and countering hatred. We are involved in several ongoing local missions as well:

- Cathedral in the Night (an outdoor ministry to homeless residents in Northampton);
- Interfaith Cot Shelter in Northampton during the cold weather season;
- Circle of Care, connected to Catholic Charities, to support a refugee family in our area;
- Support of undocumented people in Sanctuary at local churches;
- Food pantry for food-insecure members and neighbors;
- For several years we supported the Sunrise Foundation, primarily supporting a school helping Nicaraguan children get basic and vocational education;
- We have collected kits for refugees in cooperation with the Jewish Family Services in Springfield.
- We participate as a church in the Hot Chocolate Run, a local activity that raises funds for those escaping domestic violence.

We continue to increase our awareness of the needs of our neighbors and help to meet those needs. Since we are a destination church rather than a neighborhood church, having a minister who fosters our involvement in the wider community helps us expand our covenantal relationship with other UCC Churches and other interfaith communities for social justice work and faith development.

Culturally specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling:

Haydenville Congregational Church's extravagant welcome defines our culture. We describe ourselves as a spirit-filled, justice seeking, peace-

loving, LGBTQ+ and Trans Affirming, anti-racist, child-centered, song-filled, ever thankful Beloved Community and we are much more than that. We are poor and rich, middle class and working class; strong and broken; young and old; Christian, non-Christian, recovering souls of other religions etc., all with a strong commitment to inclusion, justice, and welcome.

On LGBTQ+ Celebration Sunday (April 30th, 2017). The service opened with 12 people in front of the sanctuary introducing themselves as gay, trans, lesbian, cis, queer, men, women, and bi-gender humans. Pastors Chris and Lindsey welcomed everyone by reminding us that we are all welcome in this place. Pastor Lindsey sang “How Could Anyone Ever Tell You, You Are Anything Less Than Beautiful.” People wept. We read a litany that starts “We are your gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender children.” For the offering, a transgender member read 30 statements listing, “What the queer community should have told us.” The last ten are, “You are loved.”

LGBTQ+ Sunday is a special day for our church community, but it is also typical of our approach to Christian faith, particularly our commitment to being Open and Affirming, and our understanding of how that intersects with issues of homelessness and hunger, refugees and immigrants, race and class, and care of the planet.

Our next pastor will value our use of the pronoun “They” in reference to them in this document. We are not looking for someone who is perfect in their articulation of the intersectionality of the social justice issues we embrace. That person doesn’t exist. Rather, we are looking for someone who models vulnerability, humility, and willingness to grow with us as we work for justice, advocate for equality and pray for peace.



Sign in front of HCC

WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

In 2015-16 HCC conducted a series of Visioning events that involved almost every member, including children, youth and elders, in activities and discussions focused on the question, “Who is God calling us to become?” As we began creating the HCC profile, we reprised these discussions. Three distinct themes emerged each time: God is calling us to be more inclusive, more expansive, and more sustainable.

Becoming more inclusive

Becoming more inclusive starts with living into our radical welcome on Sunday mornings and every day of the week. There is a hunger to continue to build the diversity of our membership, along with the understanding that embracing this vision means committing to learning to dismantle the barriers to inclusivity that are embedded in a mostly white, largely middle-class congregation.

Over the past two years HCC’s Peace and Justice Steering Committee launched several programs toward this end. A six-part series on Islam

and Islamophobia brought many members as well as the community at large to Saturday morning programs. A workshop on money examined issues of class. A series on Black Lives Matter deepened our understanding of white supremacy and led to a six-week workshop series on understanding white privilege that involved 20 members and continues to meet monthly. A workshop on nonviolent strategies to interrupt street harassment and bullying involved almost 30 members. A series of post-worship workshops and discussions on the challenges faced by siblings who are transgender and nonbinary deepened our welcome.

A re-naming ceremony, similar to a baptism, was offered for members who have transitioned to their true gender expression. This provided an opportunity for each of us to be reminded that God knew each of us before we were formed in the womb, and that we are each charged to be prophets. The ceremony ended with singing, *I will change your name*, by D.J. Butler.

*I will change your name
You shall no longer be called
Wounded, outcast, lonely or afraid
I will change your name
Your new name shall be
Confidence, joyfulness, overcoming one
Faithfulness, friend of God
One who seeks My face.*

There have been bumps in the road. In our zeal to be Open and Affirming to transgender siblings, we almost abandoned use of the words “brothers and sisters,” beloved by many, especially our sisters and brothers of color. Now it’s usual to hear, “sisters, brothers, siblings” from the pulpit and in the dining room. We rapidly embraced the idea of adding pronouns to our nametags, not realizing that there were those in our membership who were not ready to “out” themselves as trans or nonbinary.

We continue to learn the skills to interrupt microaggressions, yet we are human and sometimes fail to notice them, leaving the burden of dealing with them to those who are targeted.

This past spring, two children came out to the congregation as transgender. We want HCC to continue to be, and grow, as a safe, welcoming, nurturing place for them, and all children of God, to be fully who they are. We want those children, and everyone else, to know and feel the wideness of our welcome.

Becoming more expansive.

HCC is a destination church, with many members traveling relatively long distances, passing other UCC churches and churches of other denominations to get to Haydenville on Sunday morning. Fifty or more of us show up for the Northampton Pride march each year wearing our colorful “I am the Church” Tee-shirts. Haydenville church has a growing reputation as a progressive, welcoming, family friendly church.

Our vision for the next chapters in the life of our church includes expanding how we are known beyond our own church family. We want to be widely known as the church that truly welcomes everyone. We want it to be known that our radical welcome is rooted in hard work, self-examination, study and willingness to grow, rather than lip service to a popular idea. We want to expand our welcome of families of all kinds.

HCC has just begun to explore creating sibling relationships with predominantly Black churches in the region, and making common cause with other faith groups in support of progressive commitment to social justice and care of the Earth.

We want to reclaim Christianity as a faith and practice of love, peace and justice rather than judgment and condemnation. Some of our members have been harmed by other churches’ judgments and condemnations of their core identities, and so are hesitant to identify as Christian. Others, seeing how the label “Christian” has been hijacked by regressive political forces, hesitate to claim that label for themselves, even if they claim the faith and practice. Yet all of us are longing to be seen, and to share, the richness of our full identities as members of this band of believers, this Beloved Community.

We desire expansiveness of our faith both outside the walls of our Haydenville sanctuary, and inside each of us as we learn to see the face of Jesus in each other, and when we look in the mirror.

Becoming sustainable.

This vision has to do with living in right relation to the Earth, and to our own future. Decisions about practices, purchases and programs, must be made in ways that model care for the planet and that ensure HCC's future on it.

We are blessed with a lovely New England church building that is costly to repair and maintain, and expensive to heat while it devours non-renewable fuel.

We are also blessed with smart, visionary lay leaders who are excellent stewards of our limited financial resources. As we continue our transition from pastoral to program church, it is critical that we engage in strategic planning focused on building a financial future that supports our current and future church family, expands programs for children and youth, elevates our work for social justice and care of the Earth, and ensures ongoing stewardship of our building such that it more adequately shelters all that we hope to do.

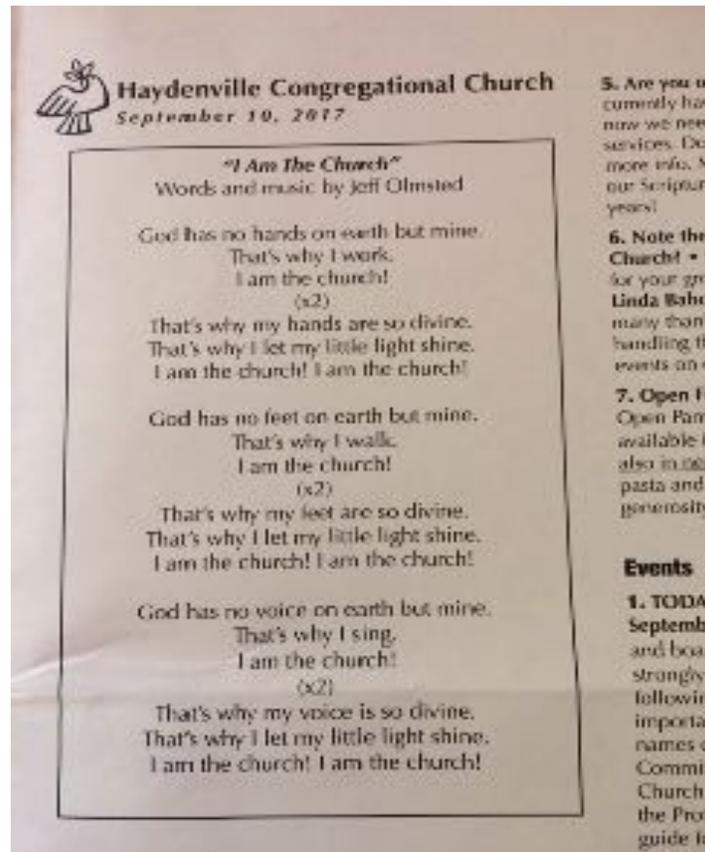
EASTER SUNDAY, 2014

You shall no longer be called: Wounded, outcast, lonely or afraid



Artwork by Hansson Rindgers

Inset by Art Group www.hansonrindgers.com as featured here



WHO ARE WE NOW?

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

HCC's life of faith.

We are a diverse congregation from many different walks of life and past religious experiences. In our services and small group gatherings God is regularly described as Mother, Father, Creator, and Author of the Universe, Maker of All That Is, and more. We are a safe and supportive place for the varied members of our church family. We've had services to lift up congregants with mental health issues, and to celebrate transformations from despair to hope.

We are a church that talks back. Sermon Response Time is a valued tradition on Sunday mornings. After the sermon, the micro-

phone passes to congregants who share thoughts, stories, and reflections on the sermon.

In seeking to offer more quiet options for our members, we offer Evensong and Blue Christmas services. The youth of the church lead a service each year and have asked to do more, and over the last year have begun to have a presence in worship leadership.

Music plays a critical role in our service. Singing begins before the service. The Choir's anthems tend toward contemporary, sometimes pop or folk, and we are often blessed by our music director's original compositions, including the poetry of Rumi set to music.

Strengths and positive qualities of our congregation.

Our Covenant of Right Relations is a good indicator of who we strive to be. It says, "With God's help, we vow to be intentional and courageous about living our radical welcome of people who are on all parts of life's journey. As exemplified by our brother and teacher Jesus, we will welcome the voices, presence and power of every person, especially those who have been defined as "other," pushed to the margins, excluded, silenced and closeted; and we will joyfully embrace our identity as a Spirit-filled, justice-seeking, peace-loving, LGBTQ+-affirming, anti-racist, child-centered, song-filled, ever-thankful, stubbornly-hopeful Beloved Community."

What worship is like - a typical Sunday:

Several folks arrive an hour early to fold the bulletins, make coffee and put out the parking signs. If it's communion Sunday, Deacons prepare the cups and bread. Folks preparing our after-service luncheon arrive with pot-luck offerings. Greeters take their places at the entrances, name tags on and bulletins in hand. More members arrive and catch up with each other. In the sanctuary the choir polishes their anthem.

The service begins with an effusive welcome by the minister and a lay leader that sets the tone for what is to follow. A lay leader in-

vites the offering, the choir sings, and we sing the children off to Children's Church.

The sermon delivers good news, uncomfortable truths, and everything in between. Sermon Response Time often evokes reflective, thoughtful, supportive, and sometimes challenging comments from the congregation that deepen the message.

Joys and Concerns are shared by another lay leader, and invite prayers for friends and family, world leaders, victims of recent disasters and wars, and always prayers for peace, a time for silent prayer, followed by the Lord's Prayer. Yet another lay leader reads the announcements for the week before our closing hymn and benediction.

Then on to Coffee Hour, served by the monthly Coffee Klatch (with names like Grateful Bread, or Loaves and Dishes) who organize a spread rich in food, conversation and connection that caps a meaningful morning at Church. Gradually folks leave for home.

The Church is now empty except for the sexton doing a final clean up, the folks in the kitchen who have emptied the last dishwasher load and perhaps the Minister meeting privately with a member. It's quiet now. The week has begun in reflective prayer, inspirational liturgy, song, thanksgiving and community. We look forward to next Sunday.

Educational program and faith formation:

Children's (Upstairs) Church, and Youth Activities

A variety of curriculum, from "Godly Play" to "Whirl" and "Holy Moly", are used in Children's (or Upstairs) Church. On Blue Moon Sundays (the fifth Sundays that happen five times a year,) the young people help prepare meals for Cathedral in the Night, a ministry that our church supports in Northampton. Each May the youth of the church create and lead a Youth Service. In 2017 Our young people expressed interest in being more involved in church services throughout the year and in doing a Youth Service more than once a year. Now they are frequently part of the wel-

come and scripture reading. Starting in 2018 Children's Church opted to stay for Sunday service on the first Sunday of each month so that families may take communion together, and children get the experience of a full worship service.

Our attendance in Upstairs Church varies from Sunday to Sunday. There can be over 20 children between the ages of 2 and 12 and sometimes only 3 or 4. We are a "child oriented" church, but we realize that there is work that can be done in that area. When interviewed, the young people praised the staff, volunteer and paid, that have worked with them over the years. They praised their creativity and their ability to make things interesting and understandable. We feel we have a solid base to work from, but we know we can do even better.

Youth Group is currently on hiatus. The group of teens active in the church several years ago have aged out in 2015. Before that they focused on community service projects that introduced them to Earth care, hunger and homelessness. A fair amount of time was spent in community building, including making and eating dinners together at Church on Sunday nights, having sleep overs at the Church, going on weekend retreats to Silver Lake UCC retreat center in Connecticut, and doing activities like rock climbing and bowling, and fundraisers for local charities.

Adult faith formation

Programs include a Men's Fellowship group, as well as book groups and Bible Study at various times throughout the year, some led by clergy, most led by lay leaders. New members' classes are offered whenever there is a critical mass of new attendees interested in membership.

How HCC is organized for ministry and mission.

Our church is in transition from being a pastoral church to a program church. Until recently our decision-making structure looked like the wheel of a bicycle, with the pastor in the middle. The spokes - each leadership group - radiated out to, and supported the membership, with accountability only to the pastor.

Now, as we become a program church, the agency of each leadership group (Council, Trustees, and Deacons) has expanded. Guided by our mission, bylaws and an emerging set of codified policies and procedures, more distinct, independent and inter-dependent roles have emerged for each group. For example, Deacons have a more central role in planning worship and developing strategies for lay pastoral care. Trustees have developed many new policies concerning personnel, fiscal matters, and rental use of the church building. Council plays a more critical role in ensuring that, as agency within each group grows, accountability to our mission is maintained, and communication among leadership and the congregation flows smoothly.

When membership was tiny, communication was primarily via phone calls or face to face meetings. Now HCC uses many strategies to ensure the flow of information. Cloud-based storage holds files of meeting minutes and agendas for leadership groups, accessible by all members of those groups. Most church meetings are open to all (except those involving personnel matters.) Email is the primary means of communication among leadership group members. Church-wide communications are via a weekly emailed information bulletin and a quarterly newsletter. Both are electronic, with printed versions snail-mailed to members as needed. HCC is growing in its use of social media. Sunday sermons are now available as podcasts. Many of the meetings to craft this Profile document were by video-conferencing.

Our transition from pastoral to program church is not without the expected tensions, but there is a high level of understanding among leadership and members that to maintain and grow HCC's mission, particularly our commitment to social action, leadership must be more broadly shared.

Since January 2018 we have been without a settled pastor, yet church has continued with vision, faith and renewed energy. We are fortunate to have a "deep bench" of clergy among our membership, as well as skillful lay leaders, who collaborate to craft our weekly worship services that have been creative and energiz-

ing. Pastoral care has been delegated to one of our ordained members.

Currently our leadership structure is as follows:

Church Council is a representative group of church leaders that forms the overall policy and planning body of the Church. It coordinates the plans and activities of the boards, committees, and leadership groups. Led by a Moderator, Vice Moderator and Clerk, its membership includes heads of Trustees and Deacons, and chairs of standing committees including Peace and Justice Steering Committee, Music Committee, Stewardship, Children and Family Ministries, Safety Committee, as well as the Human Resource Coordinator and Treasurer. Church Council meets the second Sunday of each month after Services. Meetings last about an hour.

Trustees have primary fiscal responsibility, set policies and procedures concerning church operations, conduct annual staff evaluations including that of the pastor and oversee care of building and facilities. Trustees meet monthly for about two hours.

Deacons serve as the lay spiritual leadership of the church, with key roles in Sunday services and pastoral care. Deacons meet monthly for about two hours.

In addition, there are several ministries that provide care of the church and its members, including meals and transportation for members who are ill or injured, and volunteers who care for building and grounds. These groups meet as needed.

When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month? See above notes with meeting times for each group.

Managing Crisis

There are no recent disasters or crises that involved current members. There are a number of stories of crises averted, largely due to an empowered and skillful membership, rooted in our rebuilding of the church membership fifteen years ago, when all thirteen members not only held all of the leadership roles, but also repaired and rebuilt some of the building.

A more recent challenge concerned Ladies Aid, whose membership had shrunk to a small group of mostly retired, mostly elderly women. The fundraising function of Ladies Aid had been subsumed by the Stewardship Committee, and care of the kitchen and food prep for church events had evolved to more inclusive participation in these responsibilities. Even so, in 2015 the discussion to “lay down” Ladies Aid was difficult, sometimes fraught with anxiety about maintaining a role for the women elders of the church. After almost a year of discussion, prayer, argument and discernment, the group took several months off, then reconvened to make a final decision about whether to continue. All members agreed to end Ladies Aid as an organization within the church and create other ways for women to meet. A women’s Bible study group emerged from that group and lasted about a year.

In terms of response to national or community crises – a mass shooting, a troubling election, a natural catastrophe elsewhere in the world – the church mobilizes rapidly to minister to members by being open during the week for healing, pastoral care, community and conversation, often followed by programmatic responses to educate the congregation and the community. In 2017 we formed a Safety Committee in response to several high-profile church and school shootings. Members attended a day-long workshop convened by the Department of Homeland Security that offered practical ways for churches to prevent and prepare for the unthinkable.



Letter writing on a Blue Moon Sunday

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

From the 2017 Church-wide Survey in which about 65% of members participated.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	107 households 133 active members	Yes, but very close. Does not include children
Number of active non-members:	10	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	143	Yes, but very close.

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church*:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	26.9%	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	34.6%	
Less than 5, more than 2 years:	26.9%	
Less than 2 years	1.2%	

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
16.5%	4.1%	N/A	3.1%	18.6%	16.5%	23.7%	17.5%	

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	2.0%	Percentage
Joint household with minors*:	21.6%	
Single adults age 35-65:	21.6%	
Joint household with no minors:	31.4%	
Single adults over 65:	23.5%	

*Includes ALL household with minors, even single parent

Education level of adult participants by percentage*:

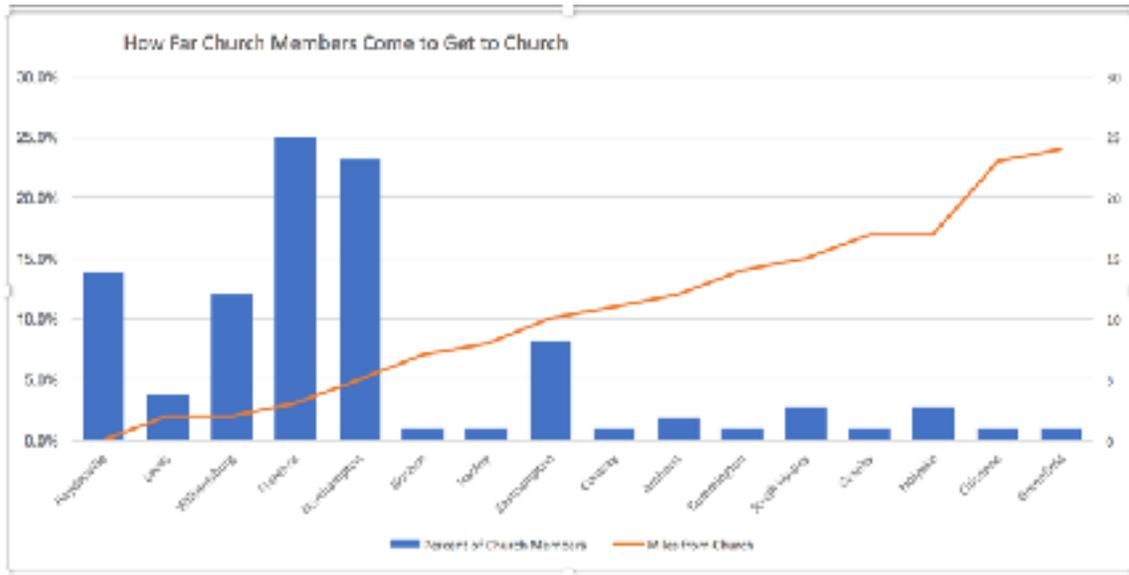
		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	1.6%	
College:	23.4%	
Graduate School:	51.4%	
Specialty Training:	12.2%	
Other	8.4%	

*Some respondents have specialty training in addition to high school, college, and graduate school education.

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed full-time:	24.7%	
Adults who are employed part-time:	36.5%	
Adults who are retired:	37.6%	

Adults who are unemployed:	1.2%	
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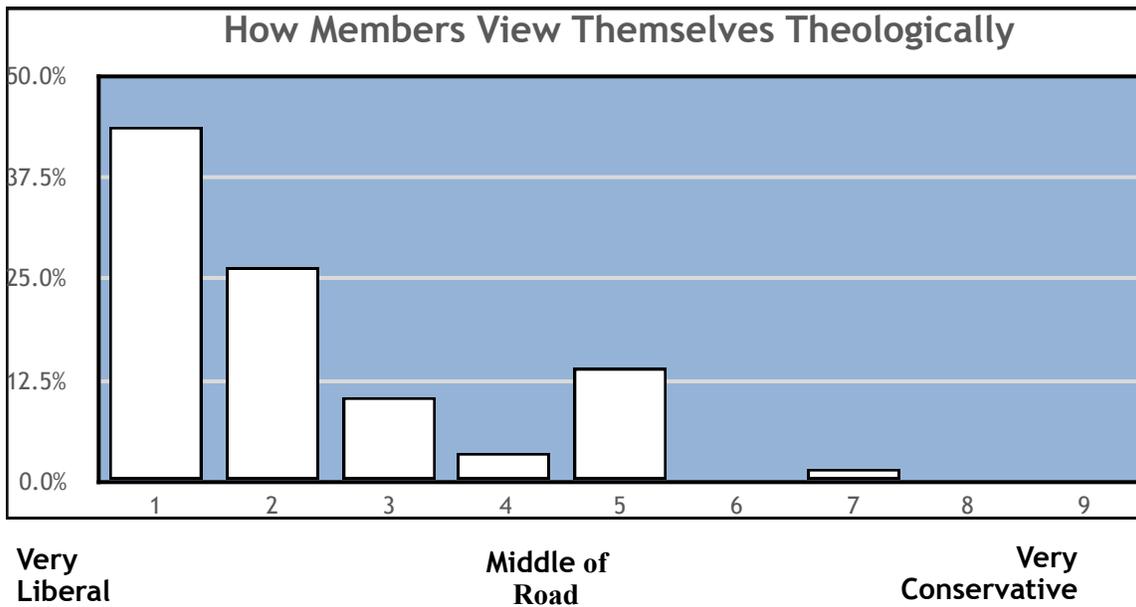
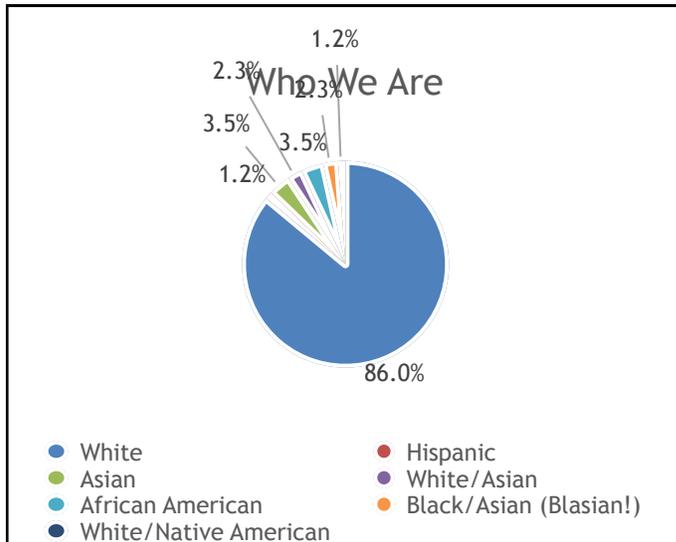
Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

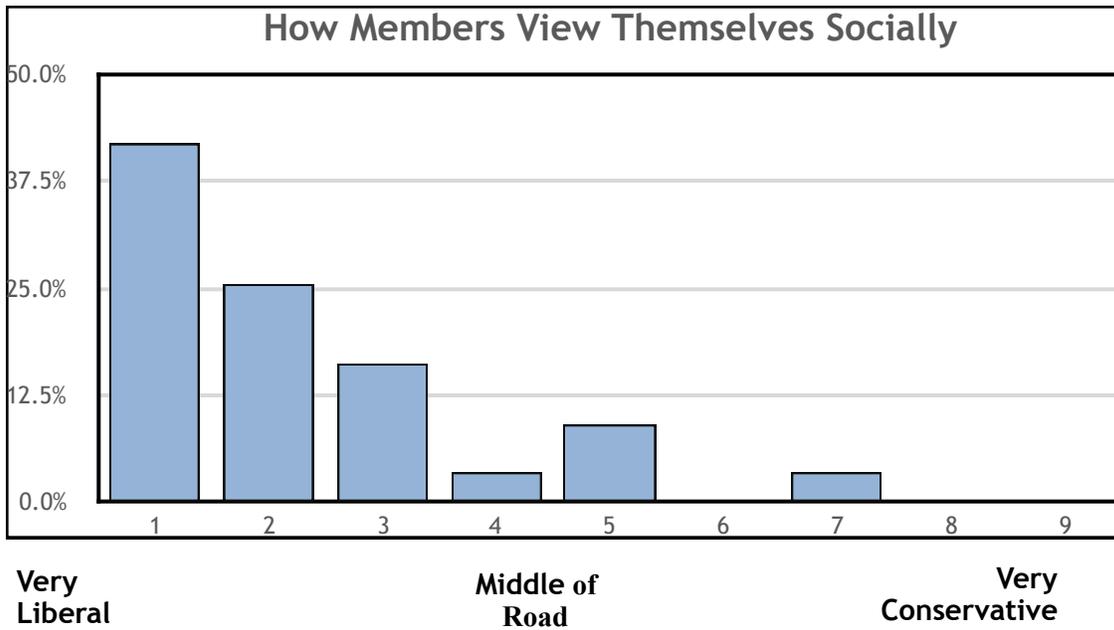
The most represented professional sectors are those in caring professions in health care, mental health services, advocacy and support services and nursing. We have a fair number of folks who are employed at one of the many institutions of higher education in the region as educators or administrators, as well as a fair number of public school teachers. We have many folks in service industries such as food service and retail, and several who do skilled labor in the building trades and landscaping. There are a number of artists, dancers and writers, some office workers, a few scientists, and several retired UCC pastors.

We have many members who take multiple jobs to make ends meet, and several who face chronic or episodic unemployment due to changes in the economy, or issues in their personal lives.

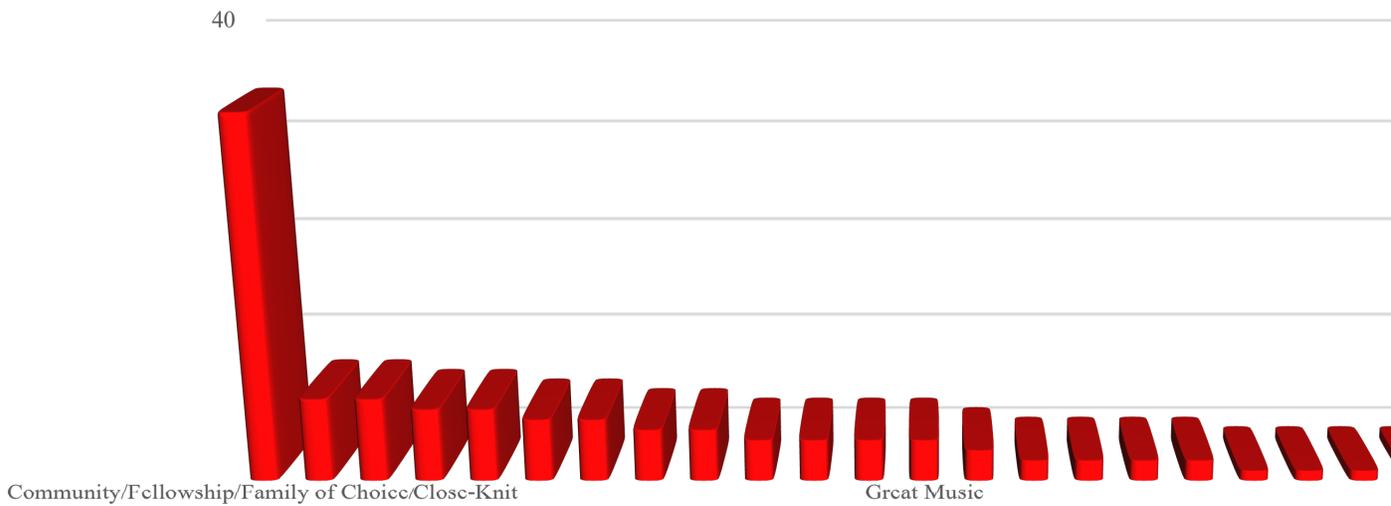
Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. See tables below:

Based upon survey respondent's feedback:





Why We Love Haydenville Congregational Church (and Why We Keep Coming Back)



Compiled Comments Given By Survey Respondents

Conversations using a resource such as the Welcoming Diversity Inventory.

Diversity is an ongoing conversation at HCC, using many in-house resources and talents of members. As noted elsewhere in this document, HCC has had numerous workshops, events, sermons, study and discussion groups on various aspects of diversity. The intensive Visioning workshops in 2015 and 2017 revealed that diversity continues to be a priority in our church. Our work has been reflected in the many activities described elsewhere in this document on building skills to expand our welcome and dismantle the barriers to marginalized communities.



One of our oldest members, Saint Norma Kellogg, with one of our youngest.

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Ways of Gathering.

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? (<i>list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff</i>)
Adult Groups or Classes	10	Quarterly - Pastor; Pastor & Leader, Leader
Baptisms (2017)	9	Pastor (*+1 adult name blessing)
Children's Groups or Classes	15	Children's Church Director

Haydenville Congregational Church Profile - March 2018

Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	160	Pastor (s), Deacons, Musicians
Church-wide Meals	60	Picnic and Thanksgiving
Choirs and Music Groups	12-15	Weekly choir
Church-based Bible Study		Covered under adult groups
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	1 X Month	Pastor, Deacons, Musicians
Community Meals	4 X/ quarterly	Cathedral in the Night
Confirmation (<i># confirmed last year</i>)	0	
Drama or Dance Program	2 X worship a year	
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	3	
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship	1 per summer 20 people	Pastor and leader
Prayer or Meditation Groups		
Public Advocacy Work	Ongoing/ various	
Retreats	Choir and Deacons retreats	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	1 in sanctuary	5 total, 2 by pastors outside HCC

Haydenville Congregational Church Profile - March 2018

Worship (time slot: __10 a.m.____)	70-90	
Worship (time slot: _____)	NA	
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	
Youth Groups or Classes	0	

HCC members or regular participants who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers.

Name	Three-Way or Four-Way Covenant ? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Yes or No)
Rev. Yohah Ralph	4	Hospital	Chaplain	No
Rev. Dr. Peter Ives	No	Theologian in Residence		Yes
Carole Bull	No	Licensed Hospital Chaplain	+MID	No
Rev. Phil Hall*	No	Retired		Yes
Rev. Carol Rinehart	No	Hospice Chaplain		No
Rev. Matilda Cantwell	3-way (In process)	Smith College Chaplain		No

*Phil Hall served the church as an interim Pastor for a little more than a year between 1995 and 1997.

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff.

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Director of Children's Church		Part time	Pastor	Open
Minister of Music		Part time	Pastor	6 years
Office Manager		Part time	Pastor	3 months
Sexton		Part-time	Pastor	12 years
Treasurer		Volunteer		3 years
HR Coordinator		Volunteer		1 year

During this transition we are operating with a Worship Team led by Rev. Peter Ives and staffed by various lay and ordained leaders. Rev. Ives is paid for his work and so is Rev. Carole Reinhart who is handling pastoral care.

Reflection on congregational demographics and activities

The information suggests that we are a congregation and a community ripe with potential to grow. We know that the young families who join

are looking for a place where their children can learn about justice rooted in faith. We know that lesbian and gay families are normative in our congregation, and that our welcome to trans and non-binary individuals is genuine and informed. The diversity of our faith backgrounds and experiences invites us to think more broadly about who our neighbor is. We recognize that building significantly more racial and ethnic diversity in a region that is overwhelmingly white may not be a useful goal. Rather, we should continue to focus on broadening our welcome by understanding the structural and institutional ways in which racism and other forms of bigotry show up in our community, and on developing skills to dismantle white supremacy and other forms of privilege.

One opportunity before us is more consistent outreach to the local community of Haydenville, Williamsburg and the Hilltowns so that we become both a neighborhood and a destination church.

CHURCH FINANCES (2018): Current annual income (dollars used during most recent fiscal year)

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$104,000
Endowment Proceeds <i>(as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)</i>	\$500
Endowment Draw <i>(beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”)</i>	\$0
Fundraising Events	\$10,000.00
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$5,000.00
Grants	\$
Rentals of Church Building	\$4,500.00
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$0

Support from Related Organizations (e.g. Women's Group)	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts Salary Gift.	@7,000.00
Other (specify):	\$0
TOTAL	\$131,000.00

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year):
\$173,792.00

- The total compensation for the pastor is 41 percent of the budget.
- The total compensation all employees is 59 percent of the total budget.

HCC has never failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church.

Haydenville Congregational Church is a 5-for-5 church.

HCC has no current debt.

Most recent Capital Campaign

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2010	General building repairs	\$100,000	\$88,712	Steeple repair, painting, windows

Does your church have an endowment?

HCC has no endowment but has several investment funds that provide some annual income. We are in the process of forming an investment committee to manage these assets. Each fund and their current value is included in the attached budget.

Buildings owned by the church:

The Haydenville Congregational Church is located in the center of the Village of Haydenville, which is part of the Town of Williamsburg, Massachusetts.

The Church Building

The building is typical of most New England churches of the mid-19th century. It is a wood frame building with white clapboard siding. The church has a clock in the steeple which is property of the town of Williamsburg. It chimes on the hour.



View from MA Route 9 (Left)

Our Front Door (Below)



Entrance to the dining room

The Sanctuary

The Sanctuary is a warm, somewhat dated space with a good organ and a more frequently used electronic piano. There is no stained glass, just large clear windows to let us know what's going on in the world outside. The pews draw pretty much universal dislike for their bolt-upright backs

and hard narrow seats. Seat cushions and pillows help, and there are rocking chairs in the rear of the sanctuary. Many members have shared the hope that someday we will replace the pews with more flexible and comfortable seating.

Kitchen and Dining Room

The church kitchen and dining room are on the first floor at the back of the building and serve as the heart of our phenomenal post-service coffee hour. During most of the year we offer buffet-style selections organized by members of that month's Coffee Klatch. The dining room is usually where Deacons, Trustees, and various committee meetings are held, as well as our church's social justice programs and educational events. The entrance to the dining room serves as a primary entrance to the church most Sundays and is the only accessible entrance. The kitchen is rented to a local caterer during the week, and from time to time the dining room is rented for local events.

Restroom Facilities

The three non-gender specific restrooms are on the first floor. Two are tiny but functional, with toilets and small sinks. The larger, accessible restroom off the meeting room includes a fold-out baby changing table. There are step stools in this bathroom to aid young children as they transition from diapers to using the toilet. The entire first floor, with the exception of the pulpit and chancel, is handicap accessible. The second floor is not accessible.

The Second Floor

The second floor includes a large Sunday School room, a smaller nursery, a spacious pastor's office, a smaller office for the church administrator, and a tiny copy room. There are no restroom facilities on the second floor.

The Church Grounds

Haydenville Congregational Church relies on skilled, energetic members to care for our lawn and gardens in the spring, summer, and fall, and for winter snow removal. Our parking lot, shared with the Williamsburg Town Office, is plowed by the town.



Early Morning Pictures of Our Gardens

The Church owns, and is sited on, 0.4 of an acre on the corner of High Street and Route 9 in the center of Haydenville, MA. The Church also owns 0.7 acres of undeveloped land donated in 2013, located on Dewey Circle off of Mountain Street in Haydenville.

Budget Reflection

The current budget suggests several opportunities for HCC. A foremost goal is to increase the budget such that we can afford a full-time pastor with requisite benefits. Currently we are a church that must raise all the funds each year to pay our expenses, and while we have consistently done that, it's time to implement some longer-range planning to build

greater stability and sustainability into our budgeting process, and to expand our options for giving:

Planned Giving for Endowment. HCC has a significant aging population who are dedicated to the church, yet we have never conducted a planned giving campaign to encourage members to include HCC as a beneficiary in wills, trusts and insurance policies. This could be an effective way to build an endowment that can ensure some percentage of the church's annual budget going into the future

Capital Giving. Our aging infrastructure will soon need some attention, and this is also an opportunity for us to reconsider our building, its uses, and our needs going into the future.

Mission Giving. Past fundraisers at HCC targeting specific issues (most recently a concert to raise funds for the Philippines after the typhoon in 2015) demonstrated that we can build audiences of local community, regional community as well as members in support of worthy causes. Additionally, we are a 5-for-5 church, meaning that we support all five of the mission areas of the MACUCC.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Since 2004, we have seen steady increase in membership by a wide range of people: families with children, those who identify as LGBTQ, and residents from beyond our local community. We have members who were raised in mainstream Protestant churches, and those who identify as Jewish, Catholic, Quaker, Muslim, or Buddhist, as well as some who may not call themselves Christian but nonetheless identify as followers of Jesus. The three events we are describing helps to tell the story of how this church family has evolved.

Close or continue? The Saints decide.

The church was founded in 1850, but by 2004 its membership had dwindled to 15, and the building had deteriorated such that the sanctuary was all but unusable. The remaining members recall flakes of paint "snowing" from the ceiling during services, which were eventually held in the chancel. They had a daunting choice to make: close the church, merge with another congregation, and sell the property, or keep going in

the hopes of rebuilding the congregation and the building. They chose to keep going and called the remarkable Rev. Dr. Andrea Ayzazian to be their pastor. Her visionary leadership, as well as the steadfast faith of the remaining members, led to the rebirth of Haydenville Congregational Church. Two more members left when the church and its new pastor immediately declared HCC to be Open and Affirming, leaving 13 members and Reverend Andrea. Essentially, they were the start-up of the church we are today. In 2008, the growing church community celebrated those 13 members by naming them the “Saints.” They continue to hold a special status in our congregation, and those who are still alive play a critical role in the life of our church, helping us remember our history, and providing us with their leadership, persistence and vision as we face new challenges.

Faith on our feet.

HCC demonstrates its values with a lot of shoe leather. We are often the largest single contingent in the Northampton Pride parade each May. Our church was present at the last two Climate Marches in Washington; the Women’s March in Washington, Boston and several local events; and many local, regional and nation demonstrations for social justice. We changed our Sunday service the first Sunday in December to support the Hot Chocolate run, a fundraiser to support domestic violence programs in the region. We march into the church dining room once a month to write letters to congress on a range of issues. We organized a “Circle of Care” which will provide material, moral and social supports to refugee families in Northampton.

Blessing of Names.

In 2015 HCC offered its first Blessing of Names to transgender members. Similar to baptism, the ceremony affirms the struggles faced by transgender siblings and to be recognized for their true selves. It’s a powerful reminder that we are all perfectly made and inseparable from God’s love. Each time we do this ritual, we sing, “I will change your name” by D.J. Butler, whose lyrics remind us that God’s love transforms *all* of us from wounded and outcast to one who seeks God’s face.

Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.

The largest change HCC has managed in our recent past is the retirement of Andrea Ayvazian, ensuring her “good good-bye;” crafting a plan for interim leadership; and designing the process by which we will identify our next settled pastor. Associate Pastor Chris Mereschuk was named Acting Pastor. This mitigated the sense of loss and maintained our commitment to our radical welcome as we planned next steps. While mindful of the guidance offered by the MACUCC, the Leadership Transition Team recognized that MACUCC’s decision-making protocols didn’t adequately address the need by membership for high-level transparency and participation, and our fierce protection of our church’s radical welcome. This meant a lot more work on the part of the Leadership Transition Team - more meetings, more reflection, more one-to-one and small group meetings to review the options and processes before us. It meant recognizing and dealing with the grief and trauma that is natural but challenging when a beloved leader moves on. It meant acknowledging how change can trigger feelings of trauma connected to other experiences in the lives of many members. Finally, it meant naming the ways that HCC is living its radical welcome, claiming our wish to continue to move forward.

With Pastor Chris’s decision to leave at the end of his one-year contract, we are managing this transition well, and we are doing well as a church family. The strong “container” built by our HCC community over the years to handle the stresses of transition means that most members have felt “held” during this time of change. During the Spring of 2018 we are planning a church-wide retreat to reflect on where we have been, and where we are going. Throughout the process we have come to a deeper appreciation of the concept of discernment versus decision-making, and this has deepened our faith as we navigate into the future.

Conflict Management

In 2013, the Deacons drafted HCC’s Covenant of Right Relations. This grew out of conflict that developed as Ladies’ Aid was losing membership, and as simmering tensions from their tag-sale fundraiser boiled into several incidents of hurtful finger-pointing and blaming. Too much work had been shared by too few people. Like many family conflicts, however, the tensions and hurts ended up being more critical than the incidents that birthed them. As a pastoral church just beginning our transition to a

program church, we didn't yet have structures in place for dealing with such conflict, so everyone looked to the pastor to sort things out. The pastor came to the deacons for help, and the Covenant was born. It's a fairly straightforward document that reiterates HCC's values, including our radical welcome rooted in Jesus's teaching. Each member ratified the covenant, and each new member agrees to it. The Covenant doesn't prescribe what to do, but rather how to be with each other.

The Covenant itself became a sort of lightning rod for hitherto hidden tensions, arguments, hurts and conflicts. An ad hoc group of church leaders, people with skills in mediation and conflict resolution, were appointed to address these issues. For about a year they were available to address conflicts between members, or between members and the pastor. That group has now been laid down, and formation of a Pastor Parish Relations Committee is in progress. This will provide a more formal setting and process for members to bring forward a conflict or concern.

Ministerial History

Name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Yes/No)
Rev. Chris Mereschuk	4, (3 as PT Associate, 1 as FT Acting Pastor)	Yes
Rev. Dr. Andrea Ayvazian	11	Yes
Rev. Joanna Graves	7	Yes
Rev. Phil Hall	2	Yes
Rev. Jim Moore	*	*
Rev. Helen Galazka	*	*
Rev. Steve Halsted	*	*
Rev. Robert S. Hopkins	*	*

*Unknown. All are prior to 1990.

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

As we move through this transition, we are learning that our strength lies in our community, not one leader. Each week we hear a variety of lay voices from the pulpit, and we witness skillful leadership of the teams that are crafting worship, managing the facilities, doing pastoral care, and so much more.

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

HCC has not been involved in a Situational Support Consultation. No previous pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at our church.

WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

Community vision

As noted in other parts of this document, Haydenville Congregational Church is known in the community as a progressive, engaged, and welcoming church. A large contingent of Haydenville Congregational Church members walk with our banner in the annual Pride march in Northampton. We show up for peace, justice and environmental rallies and demonstrations and organize buses to similar demonstrations in Washington. Members serve regularly at the Cot Shelter, the Cathedral in the Night outdoor service and meal for the homeless in downtown Northampton, and have organized a Circle of Care to assist refugee families.

As noted in other parts of this document, often our longer-term response to local and national issues has been education. HCC has a rich recent history of programming about Islamophobia, Black Lives Matter, climate change, transgender issues, issues of class, white privilege, and more.

This activism has meant that we are a destination church for many, and suggests that we could do more to invite the nearby community to join us.

HCC's participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ (association/conference/national setting).

We have three elected Lay Delegates and at least two of them have been at most of the MACUCC events including the Annual meetings and Super Saturdays, Ecclesiastical Councils, and Ordinations. They report to the Church Council with relevant news and information. We have had other members who have attended workshops or gatherings in their particular area of interest. Members and staff attend General Synod. The Moderator for the Hampshire Association is a member of HCC, and another HCC member is on the Committee on Ministry and another on the Hampshire Association Executive Committee. We have participated in a number of joint services with Edwards and First Churches in Northampton, often along with St. John's Episcopal Church.

Check all of the following "statements of witness" that apply to your UCC faith community.

- Accessible to All (A2A)
- Creation Justice
- Economic Justice
- Faithful and Welcoming
- God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
- Immigrant Welcoming
- Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)
- Just Peace
- Global Mission Church
- Open and Affirming (ONA)
- WISE Congregation for Mental Health
- Other UCC designations:
- Other similar designations in affiliated denominations
- None

Haydenville Congregational Church voted to be ONA when Andrea Ayvazian started here 13 years ago. Our current Peace & Justice (P&J) Steering Committee emerged from the 2013 vote to explore becoming a Just Peace church. Members found the process of achieving that designation overly complicated and decided their energy was better dedicated to actually leading the church in peace and justice work, which has been significant and ongoing. In 2017 P&J presented to Church Council a proposal to sign on and be part of the Western Massachusetts Sanctuary and Solidarity Network.

We also explored the A2A designations, and though no congregational vote was taken, an active A2A committee initiated policies and changes to make the church more accommodating and accessible. With most of its goals achieved, the group disbanded in 2016.

Haydenville Congregational Church members are deeply committed to being welcoming and accessible to all, working for social and economic justice, and fighting for environmental policies that safeguard the planet for generations to come. Church members were frustrated that the individual designations didn't reflect the intersectionality among the issues listed, and we prefer direct action as opposed to lengthy deliberation to achieve designations.

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

- Cathedral In The Night
- Interfaith Cot Shelter of Northampton
- Circle of Care
- Several joint services throughout the year
- Support of undocumented citizens currently in sanctuary in local churches

If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities?

The Mission Statement is on our web site at <http://haydenvillechurch.org>

"Haydenville Congregational Church - United Church of Christ is a dynamic, growing, diverse and welcoming faith community. We are on a jour-

ney together to experience who God and Jesus are for us and our World. We are deeply committed to love, service, justice, peace, and care of the earth. We mean it when we say, whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, YOU are welcome here!"

It's difficult to measure the time engaged in action, but it's common for us to remind ourselves to maintain balance in our efforts toward a more just world and a healthy planet. There is always a sense of urgency as we meet each other on Sundays and throughout the week. Our time together in worship and reflection is critical to maintaining our energy for the work beyond our walls.

Scope of pastor's work in the community ministry and on behalf of the wider church.

We encourage our pastor to be involved in the ministry of the community and the wider church. The specifics of that involvement will depend on the pastor's passions, interests and schedule. That being said there is an expectation that the majority of their time will be focused on the ministries of the Haydenville church.

Mission In Site

Our local community has a declining population, including the number of families with children. Our area is not especially diverse. The population is highly educated. We see opportunities to make the community around us more aware of our presence in Haydenville. We have discussed how we might do this: more rallies on our property rather than in Northampton; opportunities to get community people in our door like concerts; programs; and maybe fund raisers. We have also discussed better communication between us and the local community.

HCC's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects?

HCC's internal demographics are much more diverse than the neighborhoods adjacent to our church but slightly less diverse than the larger community of the Pioneer Valley.

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

Local demographics shape our ministry as we become more aware and welcoming of several emerging and growing communities in the Pioneer Valley. These include a small but growing refugee community, an emerging Transgender and non-binary community, as well as the growing Latino, Black and Asian communities in the region. We have embarked on study on issues such as Islamophobia, Black Lives Matter, the growing world refugee crises, and understanding our Trans and non-binary siblings. Our church is part of a Circle of Care that will soon welcome another new refugee family to the area, and commit to providing ongoing material, social, and moral support for that family. The recent presidential election opened another way to embrace our demographics. While we are a proudly progressive church community, many members had family, friends and neighbors who support more regressive policies and leaders, and we continue to search for ways to remain in loving relationship and to open dialogue. We are beginning to use the phrase “white supremacy” to better understand and more accurately reflect the impact of the privilege many of our members enjoy, and to help us engage our growing commitment to dismantle the systemic, institutional basis of racism and bigotry both locally and in the larger community.

What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

Quotes about Haydenville Congregational Church from community leaders

“I think it belongs in the community.” --ND

“It’s very welcoming.” --ES

“I have heard that it’s welcoming and affirmative.” --PJ

“Don’t know much about it, but I have always liked the Church.” --RL

“Concern about local and international affairs and a welcoming open-door policy.” --WS

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

There are as many reasons as there are members, but at the heart of it there is really only one reason why people got involved in Haydenville Congregational Church - our radical welcome.

- Every single person who walks through the door and is noticed, welcomed, introduced to others, and invited to sit down for a cup of coffee and a great lunch after Sunday services.
- Young families join us because they want to raise children to know the Jesus who cares for the poor, the sick, and the marginalized with loving kindness.
- LGBTQ+ members find a real welcome here when they had been rejected or judged by other churches.
- HCC's choir often performs moving original compositions by our Minister of Music, and as well as a broad range of other musical traditions and styles.
- Socially aware young people looking for an authentically spiritual approach to social justice and Earth care find it here, as do retirees looking for the same thing.
- Many members who were rejected, judged, wounded or called sinners by other faith communities for simply being themselves and loving who they loved find genuine welcome at HCC.
- We are joined by spiritual travelers for whom HCC represents one part of the path on their journey, as well as those who were raised in Christian traditions and want to deepen their faith.
- Those who had given up on church altogether heard about HCC and decided to try one last time. We are a "last chance church" for a lot of people.



Black Lives Matter buttons were added to nametags.

REFERENCES

Jean O'Connor, grew up in church, family still involved.
jeankoc@aol.com
(did not send letter but agreed to serve as reference.)

Kelly Gallagher
Associate Conference Minister
[413-210-1124](tel:413-210-1124)
maucc@maucc.org
(We have letter to attach)

Ivy D. Tillman
First Congregational Church, Amherst
[413-538-3379](tel:413-538-3379)
(We have letter to attach)

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Esther 4:14New International Version (NIV)

¹⁴ For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position *for such a time as this?*"

Romans 8:31-39New Living Translation (NLT)

³¹ What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? ³² Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? ³³ Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. ³⁴ Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.

³⁵ Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? ³⁶ (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep."^[a]) ³⁷ No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

³⁸ And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^[b] neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. ³⁹ No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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

Signature:

Date: _____

—

Name & Title

VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

The congregation is currently in good standing with the association/conference named.

Staff Comment:

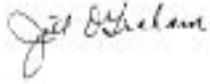
To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete.

Staff Comment:

To the best of my knowledge, available church financial information is presented thoroughly.

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.



Signature:

Date: Sept. 12, 2017

will update when finalized

Name & Title Rev. Jill D. Graham, Associate Conference Minister

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“Jesus answered them, ‘Have faith in God!’” - Mark 11:22

Appendices

2017 HCC Budget

Member's stories

Why I became a member of HCC

Mariel Elise Addis

I walked in the front door, found a pew in the back, and sat down. A woman came to the back of the sanctuary, came to my pew, introduced herself as Pat (James), took me by the arm and took me to another pew. She indicated that the woman sitting on the opposite end was her wife Karin, and that I was going to sit right between them, which I did. Peter Ives, my former pastor at First Churches, saw me and came over and joined our little party. He was no doubt surprised by the fact that I was identifying myself as transgender and was using the name Mariel, but he didn't give much indication of it. Soon, the Pastor came over to welcome me. It was a bit overwhelming, but it felt good at the same time. I would soon learn that that's how things are done at the Haydenville Congregational Church, where my friend and now "sister" Pat wrote once, "We make progressive churches look conservative."

After that service, I wasn't sure if all this wasn't all a little too much for me, and maybe this would be my first and last service there. But I came back the next week, and the week after that, and by March, I was a member of the church and had made some of the best friends I've ever had. I had come home, and I had a new family, my family of choice, to prove it.

On September 25, 2016, I had my renaming ceremony at the Haydenville Congregational Church. It was a beautiful and moving ceremony and I felt that Sunday was one of the happiest days of my life. I was told that I could pick Godparents if I wished, but at 51, felt I was a little old for that. Instead, I chose my wonderful friend Pat to be my God Sister, and how could I not have Peter as my God Brother?

Jan and Bob Varnon

Why we are involved in Haydenville Congregational Church - Jan Varnon.

My husband Bob and I moved to Greenfield, Massachusetts from a small town in Northeast Ohio. I grew up in a UCC church and my husband grew up a Methodist. We have been actively involved in a church for about 30 years, in Florida and Ohio. We had most recently been at a very large very vibrant UCC church in Ohio and we knew that it was going to be hard to replicate all that we loved at that church. We started visiting churches and looking quickly after we moved to the area in April 2013. We visited three churches before we started going back to one. We loved the pastor and some people were friendly but we felt like we were being pushy to try to be included. We met with the pastor and she said that if we hadn't visited the Haydenville Congregational Church we should. She said that it was probably more like what we were looking for. We visited the Sunday in June before the last Sunday that they were open in June. The church closes for part of July each year. We felt welcomed from the very first moment we walked in the door. We loved the sermon, we loved the music, people made us feel welcome, and they had stuff going on during the week.

Since Haydenville was closed for three weeks in the summer and we travel quite a bit in the summer we kept going to the other church when we were in town (because we loved the pastor's sermons) until the Sunday after Rally Day then we returned to Haydenville hoping it was as we remembered it, and it was. We went to a Living the Questions Gathering the next Saturday and left knowing many people's names so when we went to church on Sunday we truly felt like we belonged. To make a long story short, we joined that December, I agreed to be Vice-Moderator the following March and became Moderator the February after that. We have been elected Lay Delegates since shortly after we joined. We have both ushered, greeted, read scripture, and participated in the Sunday services in various other ways.

Not too many weeks after we became regular attenders, someone asked us if we were aware that Haydenville had a reputation as a "gay church." We were really sort of surprised because it did not come across that way at all. Haydenville to us was a very welcoming, open church. We attended adult Sunday school when we could, we joined a book group that met monthly, and Bob joined the stewardship committee. The two of us have since gotten involved on the Association level. We have enjoyed the Super Saturday presentations and the Association Annual Meetings and the Conference Annual Meetings.

We travel about 35 minutes to get to Haydenville Congregational Church. We pass near at least three other UCC churches each Sunday on our way. When I was explaining our new church to my old pastor in Ohio I told him that Haydenville was a smaller version of his church. He and I had discussions in the past about how my feeling is that people often have to settle when they decide on a church. People look for at least four things in their church; good music, good sermons, welcoming people, and a church that does church more than one day a week. We did not have to settle at Haydenville, we have found all four of those things here and we love it.

Pat and Karin

We were done with church in 1987 when we came out as a (lesbian) couple in a progressive urban church, part of a denomination who claimed to “love the sinner but hate the sin.” We felt pushed out of a community that had loved and valued us individually (before we came out), but as a couple could see only sinners. It is soul-killing to be rejected by your faith tradition. The grief was deep and long-lasting. Our few, wary investigations of other churches suggested that, at best, we could expect lip-service, but not a deep understanding of what it means to be open and affirming. We gave up. Then in 2012 we moved to Haydenville, and that fall we took a deep breath and gave it one more try at our local UCC. We’ve never stopped going. The welcome was extravagant, boisterous, personal and persistent. In 2013 we had a recommitment ceremony, our “church wedding” after over 25 years together, and it was our greatest joy to share it with our families of origin and our new church family.

Our story isn’t unique. There are many HCC members who’d given up on church, or, more accurately, whose churches had given up on them. For many of us, HCC was our “last chance church” and if they didn’t want us, we were finished trying. HCC is a church that really stands by its welcome and by its commitment to continually broaden that welcome!