

First Congregational Church of Chelsea UCC, Chelsea, Michigan

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1. POSITION POSTING

1a. LISTING INFORMATION

Church: First Congregational Church of Chelsea UCC

121 E Middle St, Chelsea, MI 48118 (734) 475-1844

chelseafcc.com

Search Committee Chair: Cheryl Kaiser (734) 558-8428

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Conference: Michigan Conference United Church of Christ

Contact Person: Karen Metcalf, Communications Associate

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Summary Ministry Description: Our congregation is committed to growing in faith and becoming a stronger, more vibrant presence in our community. We hope to welcome more people—especially young individuals and families—into our church family. To support this vision, we seek new energy and fresh ideas, along with a pastor who leads by example and inspires everyone to get involved in church activities, committees, and outreach efforts.



What we value about living in our area: Chelsea is a small city that embraces the values of a close-knit community. We take great pride in and actively support our excellent schools, athletic teams, arts and music events, outdoor activities, community hospital, district library, and historic downtown. Conveniently located near the larger city of Ann Arbor—and just about an hour from Detroit and Lansing—Chelsea benefits from easy access to a wide range of cultural opportunities and outstanding universities throughout the region.

Current size of membership: 65 members

Position Title: Pastor

Position Duration: Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister moves church membership to the congregation and moves standing to related association

Compensation Level: ½ - ¾ Time

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

Core Competencies:

- Provides spiritual leadership that helps us grow in faith, deepens our relationship with God, unites in service to others, and works together for justice and mercy
- Clearly understands and effectively explains the message of Scripture
- Demonstrates strong communication skills and is a compassionate, attentive listener

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis: \$50,500

Benefits: No Benefits, except 4 weeks paid vacation

Expected living situation for your next minister: Living elsewhere to commute as needed

Describe how your church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment: This is open to negotiation. We are flexible and very supportive of bi-vocational employment.

1d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

Describe the ministry goals you envision your next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve: Collaborative leadership that values listening to all voices in our congregation is essential to us. While we hope our minister will help grow our church, we also seek someone who is attentive to the individual needs of our members—whether through visits to shut-ins or by taking the time to build meaningful, trusting relationships within the church community.

Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls: Our outreach efforts have made a meaningful impact on Chelsea and the surrounding area, and we are committed to continuing this vital work. We are seeking a minister who will support all mission and outreach initiatives. Our strong and dedicated Mission & Outreach Committee looks to our minister for support, encouragement, and shared leadership in serving the wider community.

2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation? We believe God is calling us to be a caring, loving congregation—one that is genuinely welcoming to all and dedicated to sharing our time and talents both within our church and throughout the wider community.

Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation: God is calling us to serve our community through outreach that meets both practical and relational needs. Our FCC Diaper Bank, launched in 2022, continues to grow—providing baby and adult diapers to those in need, supported by fundraising and donations. We have expanded our storage and are reaching out to neighboring communities to increase our impact. Additionally, our Community Appreciation Initiatives—like thank-you notes and gifts for teachers, first responders, and senior residents—help us build stronger, more caring connections across our community.

Vision Statement - We are committed to:

1. Assisting people in growing spiritually
2. Being a caring, responsible congregation
3. Reaching out to our members and the larger community—easing burdens and helping others find faith in their own lives, knowing that God loves each of us

3. WHO ARE WE NOW?

3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation's life of faith: In our worship, God is experienced as loving, forgiving, and ever-present. We remain open to the voice—and the gentle whispers—of the Holy Spirit, which continue to move among us, guiding and inspiring our journey of faith. From our Constitution: We believe in God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ. We believe in Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, who has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death, and reconciling the world. We believe in the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races. We are called into Your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be Your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the Gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at His table, to join Him in his passion and victory.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation: We are a friendly and welcoming congregation, filled with caring members who support and look out for one another. Our church feels like a big family, with strong fellowship throughout the week and lively coffee hours following Sunday worship. We are deeply committed to serving our local community through a variety of mission and outreach projects that reflect our faith in action.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers: We hold one worship service each Sunday in our beautiful sanctuary, which is also live-streamed and available online for later viewing. Our music is thoughtfully selected to complement the lectionary, and we are often blessed with inspiring special music that enhances the worship experience. We especially value sermons that connect the teachings of Scripture to everyday life—leaving us spiritually nourished, uplifted, and ready to carry our faith into the week ahead.

Describe the educational program/faith formation vision of your church: While few young people regularly attend our worship service, we make a special effort to include children whenever they are present. This may involve a Children's Moment during worship or inviting them to participate in the offering or other elements of the service. We offer a nursery for our youngest attendees and use a multi-age children's curriculum, *Growing in God's Love – A Story Bible Curriculum*. Occasionally, we offer

book and Bible studies for adults. We held a well-received Lenten study using *The Art of Lent: A Painting a Day from Ash Wednesday to Easter*, which featured open dialogue and engaging discussions around both Scripture and art.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission: As a Congregational Church, we are guided by a leadership team composed of officers and ministry team leaders. Our Church Council includes four officers—President (Chair), Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer—along with the Pastor and the leaders of our ministry teams: Worship, Mission & Outreach, Member Caring, Finance, and Facilities/Operations. Most decisions are first discussed and made within individual committees, then brought to the Council during monthly meetings for further input and coordination. Communication of decisions takes place through Council updates, pulpit announcements, weekly emails, monthly newsletters, and postings on our website.

3b. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church: Currently, we have an average of 25 in-church attendees and 5-10 on livestream. We have 6-8 active non-members. More than 60% of our membership is retired. Our adult members come from a variety of backgrounds, including farmers, tradespeople, blue-collar workers, and professionals. Major sources of employment within our community include Chelsea Community Hospital, Chelsea Milling Company (Jiffy Mix), Chelsea School District, and Chelsea Retirement Community. Additionally, many members are employed at companies, hospitals, and universities in the nearby Ann Arbor area.

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. What does diversity mean in your context? Chelsea is a small, predominantly white community, and our congregation reflects that demographic. Yet, we believe that diversity goes far beyond race. In our church, it means embracing all the ways God's love is expressed—through different life experiences, family stories, ages, abilities, and faith journeys. As a UCC congregation, we affirm that God is still speaking, and we believe that when we honor each other's uniqueness, we hear that voice more clearly. Everyone is welcome here—just as they are, fully loved and fully included in the life of our church. While we face challenges with growth, particularly in attracting and retaining young families, we remain committed to creatively and faithfully engaging our community in an ever-changing world.

3c. STAFFING and CHURCH FINANCES

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill.

Staff Position	Compensation (full, part)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure (current person)
Office Administrator	Part Time	Pastor	Recent hire
Church Musician	Part Time	Pastor	20+ years
Music Coordinator	Part Time	Pastor	1 year
Custodian	Part Time	Pastor	20 years

Current annual income (dollars used during most recent fiscal year)

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$111,083
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy</i>)	\$10,000
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond permitted, “drawing down the principal”</i>)	\$0
Fundraising Events – July \$900 and December \$3522	\$4,422
Rentals of Church Building	\$900
TOTAL	\$126,405

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$120,250

What is the church’s current indebtedness? 0

Does your church have an endowment? Yes

What is the market value of the assets? \$402,277

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

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? 4.5-5% last year, would have been a bigger percentage 5 years ago but we were blessed with a substantial donation.

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year:
We draw 2-3 times a year to meet operating budget expenses.

Please comment on the endowment: As long as the endowment fund continues to generate income of 5% or more, we should be able to maintain our principal. We continue to monitor all our funds.

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$0

Investments (other than endowment): \$212,923

Does your church have a parsonage? No

Describe all buildings owned by the church: We are blessed to own our historic brick church building, completed in 1895, featuring Romanesque architecture and a rich sense of heritage. Our sanctuary is semicircular in design, highlighted by warm wood features, an 8-rank Moehler pipe organ, and a 7-foot Yamaha concert grand piano, creating a beautiful space for worship and music. The main floor includes kitchen, fellowship room, nursery, office area, pastor’s office, conference room, and two accessible restrooms. The basement offers a large kitchen and gathering room used for meals and social events, two accessible restrooms, an office/classroom, and a large classroom currently serving as our Diaper Bank room. Our facilities are well-used and adaptable, supporting both congregational life and outreach ministries.

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? Our church is committed to being inclusive and accessible. We strive to ensure that everyone can fully participate in the life of our church, regardless of mobility challenges. The following spaces are wheelchair accessible:

- Worship space (sanctuary)
- Fellowship and gathering spaces (both upstairs and downstairs)
- All restrooms (upstairs and downstairs)

After reviewing the church's finances, what does this information reflect about your congregation's ministry? In July 2021, we made the difficult decision to adjust our budget, reducing the full-time pastor position to a three-quarter time position, due to financial constraints. This shift reflects our fiscal responsibility and our commitment to ensuring the church's long-term stability while still maintaining an active and engaged ministry. Our congregation's mission remains strong, and we are dedicated to maintaining a vibrant ministry through careful stewardship of both our financial and physical resources.

4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities: Our congregation is actively engaged in ecumenical and interfaith efforts, partnering with other faith communities to serve and support shared goals. We participate in Faith and Wellbeing Alliance meetings, co-plan and join the Church World Services Crop Walk to combat global hunger, and host the community Good Friday Service with local church leaders.

Describe your mission statement: Our Mission Statement is a work in progress, but our goal is to:

- Connect people to God – worship and Bible study
- Connect people to people – fellowship and member caring
- Connect people to community – mission and outreach

How is the pastor's community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time? Currently, we have Pulpit Supply, but as we look ahead to calling our settled pastor, we have identified key areas of focus for their ministry. Our expectations are that the pastor will balance both community ministry and their role in the wider church effectively. The following areas are especially important to us:

1. Worship Leadership: Ensuring meaningful and engaging worship services that nurture the spiritual life of the congregation.
2. Integration into Our Church Family: The new pastor should focus on building relationships and feeling at ease within our church family, fostering a sense of connection and belonging.
3. Visitation and Pastoral Care: Regularly visiting shut-ins, the sick, and those in need, providing care and support to all members of the congregation.
4. Pastoral Care: Offering counseling, prayer, and support for individuals, ensuring the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of church members.
5. Church Growth: Actively working on initiatives and strategies to grow FCC and reach new members while maintaining a vibrant, active congregation.
6. Engagement with Congregational Needs: Making time for conversations, consultation, and prayer with members, nurturing a deeper spiritual connection within the church family.
7. Community Outreach: Representing the church as UCC clergy in local outreach activities, building the church's presence and service in the broader community.

How do your congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects? Our church is rooted in a community that's growing, with more young families moving into nearby neighborhoods. While we have not yet fully connected with many of them, we see this as a key opportunity for outreach. Our congregation remains largely older, reflecting both the town's demographics and our church's deep-rooted membership. This presents both a challenge and a calling: to honor the wisdom and commitment of our longtime members while actively creating space for new voices and younger families in our community life.

What do you hear when you talk to community leaders about how your church is known? Community leaders often describe our church as warm, welcoming, and deeply rooted in Chelsea. We were once best known for our popular summer chicken BBQ during the Classic Car Show. This event was a beloved tradition, but as our capacity has changed, we are no longer able to support such a large undertaking. In recent years, however, our identity has begun to shift. We are becoming increasingly known for our FCC Diaper Bank, a mission that serves families in Chelsea and surrounding communities, providing essential support for children and the elderly. This ministry reflects our commitment to compassionate, hands-on outreach. We are also known as a welcoming space for community gatherings, regularly sharing our facilities with local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce for events. This openness reflects our desire to remain a vital and integrated part of the Chelsea community.

What do new people in the church say when asked what got them involved? People often mention our friendly and welcoming congregation as the first thing that drew them. Visitors feel genuinely accepted, which creates a strong initial connection. What keeps them engaged and leads to deeper involvement, however, is our church's active commitment to outreach. Many are inspired by the opportunity to participate in hands-on projects that make a real difference—serving people in our local community, surrounding areas, and beyond. Whether it's the Diaper Bank, food donations, or seasonal giving programs, these efforts reflect our values and invite new members to live out their faith through action.

5. REFERENCES - Reference letters are available upon request.

1. Rev Dr Barbara Edema / Retired Clergy
(616-780-1105 / barbara.edema@gmail.com / former FCC solo pastor)
2. Melissa Archer / President of Jasmynn's Voice, non-profit
(734-260-7997 / melissaarcher5@gmail.com / attended FCC for 3 years)
3. M Thomas Long / Baritone / University of Michigan MM Vocal Performance 2025
(602-432-1661 / mtlong0403@gmail.com / visiting soloist)

“God bless you and keep you, God smile on you and gift you, God look you full in the face and make you prosper.” — *Numbers 6:24-26* (The Message)