



PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

PROFILE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Plymouth Congregational Church
Miami, Florida

Senior Pastor

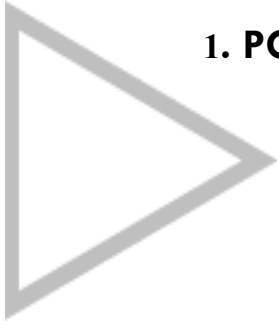
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*“God is able to provide you with every blessing, so that
having all sufficiency in all things at all times,
you may abound in every good work.”
(2 Corinthians 9:8)*

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**





1. POSITION POSTING

- a. LISTING INFORMATION
- b. SCOPE OF WORK
- c. COMPENSATION & SUPPORT
- d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

1a. LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: Plymouth Congregational Church

Street address: 3400 Devon Road, Miami, Florida 33133

Supplemental web links: www.plymouthmiami.org

Additional ecumenical affiliations: United Church of Christ

Conference: Florida Conference: United Church of Christ (www.uccfla.org)

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:

Rev. S. LaTrell Harrison (lharrison@uccfla.org)

Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call & Congregational Care

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Introduction to Our Church

Nearly as old as the City of Miami itself, Plymouth Congregational Church resides in the leafy, tropical heart of Coconut Grove. A historic coral-rock sanctuary, a modern chapel and a charming preschool are among more than twenty buildings (large and very small) that populate our ungated, 11-acre campus. Dog walkers, joggers and cyclists pass through daily; and, when the side doors of the sanctuary are open, hymns and prayers can be heard from the street.

Plymouth welcomes the community in.

Faith, love and loyalty run deep at Plymouth. Some of our families have worshiped here for generations, building a foundation of Christ-centered connection and tradition. We are also home to a growing congregation with dozens of new members, including many families with young children who have been attracted by the meaningful worship, active ministries, welcoming spirit and beautiful grounds. Our members love any excuse to gather, whether in worship, service to the local community, scriptural study or fellowship with each other.

Plymouth dwells in the heart of one of the most vibrant and rapidly growing areas of Miami, within walking distance of the center of Coconut Grove – with restaurants and activities, amid historic landmarks and just blocks from Biscayne Bay. For a future senior pastor, Plymouth offers an enticing mix of energy and opportunity.

Plymouth has met every goal of our most recent, ambitious long-range plan. We completed a \$5 million capital campaign and are well underway with associated renovations of major buildings on campus. We also hired a third full-time pastor; placed additional focus on youth ministries, mission and outreach including mission trips, and church life; strengthened our preschool; and added an executive administrator. Two associate pastors are in place, ready to walk in joyful partnership with our next senior pastor. Plymouth's active and intentional focus on faith, mission and fellowship has brought three years of record-breaking annual giving and consistent growth.

Our members and visitors appreciate Plymouth's focus on welcoming, learning, serving and evolving. The next senior pastor will be invited to build on momentum to inspire and imagine boldly in a community ready to chart the church's course for the next century.

Summary Ministry Description

The next senior pastor at Plymouth will find the warmth of a love-filled church seeking to continue growing while also elevating its outreach and ministries in service to Christ. Well past the challenges of the pandemic, the church has gratefully welcomed a period of blessing and optimism. Since largely winding down its successful, \$5 million capital campaign, Plymouth's annual fund (now at \$1.1 million) continues to set records; new members are welcomed two times per year; and the current senior pastor is departing on a high note. Two years ago, an Associate Pastor with expertise in youth ministries arrived; that helped to hasten the opening of a new youth house and a recent expansion of Plymouth's youth programming, including the addition of annual youth mission trips, along with more focus on mission/outreach, and church life engagement.

Plymouth's hopes and dreams include continuing to grow our children/youth ministries and strengthening connections to youth and families. At the same time, we emphasize worshipping as one community of all ages at 10 a.m. on Sundays. We are also focused on enhancing Plymouth's local and global service and outreach, and investing in adult education. Members are eager to support a new senior pastor who seeks to get to know them personally and deeply and who is also skilled at preaching and teaching, passionate in the pulpit and able to make God's Word engaging and relevant to their daily lives. Members would like to see the next senior pastor participate in strategic thinking and the next long-range plan. As shared above, the next senior pastor will be invited to lead creatively and imagine boldly at a historically important church seeking Christ-inspired direction.



**What we value about living in our area**

Coconut Grove “village” offers the opportunity for impactful ministry in a beautiful and unique setting characterized by a sunny climate, lush and tropical foliage, occasional preening peacocks and the region’s status as one of Miami’s most popular, historic and diverse neighborhoods. A major population hub in an international city experiencing rapid growth, the Grove provides significant opportunities for impact, outreach and engagement, whether by attracting new members who are continually arriving from New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and other cities; by increasing Plymouth’s connection and service to under-resourced neighbors in our community; or by strengthening Plymouth’s longstanding partnership with the nearby Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, a historically Black church with which Plymouth shares fellowship events, worship and service.

Current size of membership: 550-600**Languages used in ministry:** English only**Position Title:** Senior Pastor

Position Duration: Settled

Compensation Level: Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? Yes, well above.

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

- **Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship** including scripture study, crafting of liturgy, sermon preparation, guiding lay liturgists, planning of music in coordination with musical staff or volunteers, preaching, offering of prayers, etc.
- **Faith formation and vitality** through prayer, Bible study, service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities and helping lay persons to take advantage of them
- **Leadership development** by working with people in the church to create ministry and programs
- **Pastoral care** in collaboration with associate pastors and lay people
- **Community engagement** and leading the way for the church to be an ambassador of God's love
- **Weddings and funerals** for participants in the worshipping community
- **Strategic planning** for current and new directions in ministry
- **Attend meetings** and provide leadership as needed to church programs, in collaboration with lay leadership
- **Participate in wider church activities** such as conference and association meetings
- **Administration oversight/responsibilities** with regard to emails, website, church supply purchasing, etc., that are directed by Plymouth's Executive Administrator
- **Faithful financial development** and stewardship
- **Responsibility for supervision** and leadership of staff
- **Availability to wider community** for funerals, weddings, special worship programs and as a representative of the church to local organizations.
- **Counseling**, listening and referral
- **Study and prayer** to increase faith and to improve skills as a leader, teacher, preacher

- **Energizing and deepening the spiritual connections** and faith understanding of others in all they do.

Core Competencies

In our recent church survey, members expressed a desire for a senior pastor with a broad set of core competencies. They are seeking an engaging, insightful preacher who practices genuine hospitality, builds meaningful personal connections, offers pastoral care and counseling, and contributes to strategic planning that safeguards the mission and health of the church and its expansive property and grounds.

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis: Well above Conference guidelines.

Benefits:

Salary plus Benefits: Well above Conference guidelines.

Vehicle Allowance: Yes

What is the expected living situation for your next minister: The Manse: 5-bedroom, 2-full and 2-half bathrooms, approximately 5,000-square-foot home with two porches and privacy provided by extensive hedges, across the street from the church and next door to the church office.

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference:

The UCC offers communities of practice (COPs), a monthly gathering for clergy in the Miami area hosted at Coral Gables, a monthly online check-in with the conference minister, and an annual clergy retreat.

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

Plymouth envisions that the next senior pastor will partner with staff, the two associate pastors and lay leaders to continue the church's mission: "faith-filled worship, prayer and study, hope-filled service and outreach, love-filled fellowship." This includes supporting efforts to continue to enhance children, youth and family ministries and educational opportunities for adult members of all ages. Plymouth members are seeking a pastor who can help to bring to life the Sunday worship experience through relatable, personal, intellectual and inspirational sermons. They are also seeking the next senior pastor's input and participation in the exciting work of strategic, long-range planning to ensure that Plymouth remains a Christ-focused center of influence in Coconut Grove and broader Miami for years to come.

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

Many Plymouth members invest their time and talents in service and outreach, and those efforts are strengthened when the senior pastor stands fully behind them and participates in them. There are three parts to our mission ministry efforts. Through the Board of Outreach and Mission

(BOOM), Plymouth participates in monthly service at a food pantry; conducts resume workshops at a downtown homeless shelter; joins local home rebuilding efforts; and offers youth and adult mission trips in addition to other hands-on service events. Plymouth's Cobb Family Plymouth Emergency Relief Fund provides support and resources for nearby and more distant communities and churches when natural disasters strike; recent efforts have included mission trips to support those churches and communities. And through Plymouth's This 'N That Thrift Shop, located in the heart of the Grove, we raise significant funds that support dozens of local organizations and ministries, and also the church's ministries. The thrift shop ministry is run by church members and attracts more than 50 church volunteers. More generally, Plymouth also partners with neighboring churches for ecumenical events and services that strengthen community bonds.

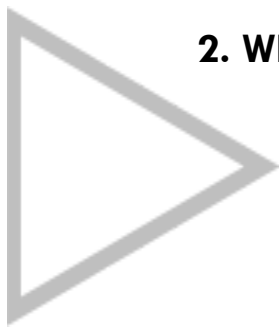
Specify language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling.

Plymouth Congregational Church currently offers services, classes and other activities in English. A pastor proficient in Spanish or Portuguese would open opportunities for even deeper connections in our diverse Miami community. This is not a requirement, however.

Based on what you have learned about who your church is, who your church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, describe four areas of excellence from *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry* that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

Selected "marks" based on the church survey:

1. Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice
2. Building Transformational Leadership Skills
3. Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions
4. Strengthening Inter- and Intra- Personal Assets



2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

Because of its strategic location and central place in our city’s formative history, Plymouth has always aspired to serve as a beacon of Christ’s light in Miami. Through our ministries, our service, our worship, our welcome and our love, our hope is to shine so brightly as an energized, united and caring Body of Christ that we routinely attract new members, bring joy and healing to our community, and help to win souls for Christ.

Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.

In recent years, Plymouth has successfully implemented the initiatives outlined in its 2021 long-range plan, including adding a second Associate Senior Pastor in summer 2023 with a focus on mission and outreach, youth and church life; creating and opening a dedicated youth center; and establishing a Church Life Committee that has strengthened fellowship and congregational engagement. In line with those objectives and as stated above, the church also has enhanced programming across all age groups and revived mission trips for adults and youth.

Plymouth achieved a major goal with the success of a capital campaign that has exceeded its \$5 million goal. Capital projects funded through this campaign are underway, with roughly 70 percent complete. Plymouth has nearly completed significant upgrades to its preschool classrooms, completed full upgrades to sanctuary bathrooms, converted an aging house on the campus into a beautiful home for one of its associate pastors, completed a youth center (with meeting space, a kitchen and patio) and finished other property upgrades. Next up: the renovation of our fellowship hall – Davis Hall and a new location for the thrift shop team to do their extensive inventory management and associated work.

In addition, and flowing directly from the Long Range Plan, Plymouth has significantly strengthened the preschool finances and also strengthened church administration by creating the position of Executive Administrator and building the office team. See the attached organization chart.

3. WHO ARE WE NOW?



“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

- a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS
- b. 11-YEAR REPORT
- c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS
- d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING
- e. CHURCH FINANCES
- f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation’s life of faith

Our congregation consists of people from many denominational backgrounds. Based on a recent anonymous survey of 175 members, 29 percent have a background in the Congregational Church/UCC and 24 percent, the Roman Catholic Church. Nineteen percent of respondents said they previously attended an Episcopalian church, and 19 percent said they previously attended a Presbyterian church. Fifteen percent previously attended a Methodist church; 13 percent, a Baptist church and 10 percent, a Lutheran church. Seven percent said they have attended a non-denominational Christian church and 6 percent said they attended no previous Christian church. Smaller numbers noted other selections.

What beliefs and commitments are stated in your congregation’s purpose statement or membership vows? How is God most often described in worship liturgy?

Plymouth’s Mission Statement, approved in 2021:

With welcoming hearts,
Plymouth seeks to share the transforming love of Christ through
Faith-filled worship, prayer, and study
Hope-filled service and outreach
Love-filled fellowship

Plymouth’s “What We Believe” Statement:

We are a community that seeks to:

- Praise our compassionate Creator, who in Jesus Christ walked among us and continues to dwell with us in the Holy Spirit.

- Gather for worship celebrating God's Word as a source of light and direction for our lives.
- Extend a warm embrace to all people, affirming that, regardless of our place in life's journey, we are all children of God.
- Walk in covenant with one another, valuing the diverse faith heritages and the differing theological and political perspectives of our members.
- Welcome all to the Lord's Table.
- Embody the Great Commandment, striving earnestly to love God and our neighbors as we love ourselves, through service and all aspects of our lives.

In worship, we frequently describe God as forgiving, generous, loving, affirming.

In what ways would you describe the Holy Spirit in your midst?

The Holy Spirit is in our midst during Sunday worship and in the myriad activities that fill our church calendar and bring members together frequently and joyfully – whether through service activities, social events, educational opportunities or Bible studies.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

Our members seek to be welcoming, loving, supportive and generous with their time, talents and resources – whether by providing care to our own members as they navigate various challenges and stages of life, or by serving under-resourced neighbors in Coconut Grove or beyond. We are an open and affirming congregation. Our members reflect a broad spectrum of theological, cultural and political backgrounds and beliefs. We seek unity amidst our differences and celebrate this as a source of strength.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

Worship most often takes place in the sanctuary at 10 a.m., with all ages worshipping together; however, on Easter Sunday, we offer a sunrise service in the garden and two family services. We have two candlelight services and a young family service on Christmas Eve and special services during Advent and Lent – including a community collaboration brunch and service with another historic church in the neighborhood on Good Friday. Worship is organized around the hearing and preaching of God's Word, with the congregation playing an active part throughout. The hour-long service includes the singing of hymns, a Call to Worship and the unison recitation of the Lord's Prayer. After the first reading, children are welcomed to the sanctuary steps for a Children's Moment; the children then proceed to Nurturing Faith (Sunday School) in a nearby building. The second reading is followed by a sermon and then the morning prayers, followed by the offertory, closing hymn and benediction. While by no means rigid in our liturgy, we do usually have the same basic structure, although words differ week to week. We participate in the sacrament of communion – the distribution of bread (including gluten free) and grape juice by

deacons, meant to emphasize that all are welcome – once a month. Our music consists mostly of traditional hymns, but we thoughtfully inject special selections and themes on various occasions, such as during Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, etc.

What was a recent baptism like? Baptisms are central in Sunday liturgies, and involve an accessible explanation of the sacrament and the participation of the congregation. Children are invited to the sanctuary steps for a personal, up-close look. Baptismal water is placed on the heads of those being baptized. Most baptisms are of younger children, but occasionally teens (often related to confirmation) and adults.

What are some words used to describe good preaching? The people who responded to our survey are seeking sermons that are 1) Engaging and incorporate humor and storytelling, 2) intellectually challenging and thought provoking, and 3) relevant to their daily life. They also expressed a strong interest in these sermon characteristics: Positive and encouraging, spiritually moving, and solid biblical foundation.

Describe the educational program/faith formation vision of your church.

The framework is deeply rooted in generations of people who have journeyed together in Christ and faith. Plymouth seeks to bring people, no matter the age, closer to God through growing our relationship with Jesus Christ. Recognizing the spectrum of faith heritages as well as cultural and political perspectives in our pews, our pastors in particular, and lay leaders as well, endeavor to speak and minister in ways that respect and are meaningful to that spectrum. Our message aims to be Christ-centered, encouraging of open minds, hearts and arms.

Starting with Nurturing Faith (Sunday School) classes during Sunday services, our youngest congregants are introduced to the love of Christ and joy of Christian fellowship, including a special opportunity for Alphas (4th-5th graders) on Sunday afternoons. Youth opportunities on Sundays for junior high and high school students in our Youth Group offer age-appropriate Christian education and fellowship, as well as Confirmation classes. Through Vacation Bible School and chapels at the preschool, we provide a faith entry point for children who may not yet be part of a church and growth opportunities for other children who are part of the Plymouth community.

Adults at Plymouth have access to popular bible studies led by our (departing) senior pastor on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday mornings (the Tuesday and Thursday studies are held at a local restaurant). An ad-hoc women's bible study that is member-led recently studied the first 10 books of the Old Testament (Genesis through 2 Samuel); this study proved extremely impactful for those involved, many of whom had never previously studied the Old Testament. Our Adult Education Committee provides Christian education

events after services about once a month; recent topics include an Art & Christianity series led by a member who works at a local art museum, and an up-close analysis of Handel's Messiah by another member who is a professional musician and music educator. Plymouth was also fortunate to host Mockingbird Ministries founder David Zahl, author of *The Big Relief*, for a Saturday night discussion and Sunday event after a recent service. These events were very well received, and members have indicated a desire for more adult education opportunities.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission:

Our basic governance is as follows:

Council: meets monthly and is responsible for the overall church and its ministries. The Moderator (or Co-Moderators) are the leader(s) of Council, and the senior lay leaders of the church.

Trustees: meets monthly and is responsible for the overall financial health of the church. The Chair of Trustees is the leader of Trustees and President of the corporation.

Various other Boards and Committees, including: Children, Youth and Families (CYF), Board of Outreach and Mission (BOOM), Diaconate, Personnel, Nominating, Church Life, Music.

The church, via a separate 501C-3, also has an endowment, called the Plymouth Congregational Church Foundation, Inc. The board of the Foundation is comprised of church members. The Foundation gives to the church based on a spending formula (currently 4.75% per annum).

The church by-laws prescribe boards and committees and lay-leadership thereof. Some ad-hoc committees have been established in consultation with clergy, professional staff, the council moderator, and the chair of the board of trustees. A Cabinet consisting of council / clergy / staff members meets by conference call monthly, and the moderator / co-moderators meet weekly via conference call with the senior pastor. Members receive information in the weekly *ThisWeek@Plymouth* e-newsletter and in a printed bulletin distributed on Sundays, in addition to occasional emails. Other emails invite members to events taking place. Lay leaders and other members occasionally make announcements at the pulpit, and Plymouth's pastors also keep the congregation informed by highlighting important announcements. The church also provides members access to a directory, group/team messages, information about their pledge fulfillment and more via Realm, a church management and communications platform.

- **When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?** Trustees, church council and various volunteer church committees each meet monthly for about 60-90 minutes. Staff meetings take place weekly. In our recent church survey, 37 percent of the 175 respondents said they attend church events at least once a month, and 44 percent said they participate several times per year. Eighty-six percent of respondents said their participation in church activities has either increased (26.3 percent) or stayed the same (59.4 percent) in the past year. Based on about 350 giving units, we estimate active membership to be in the range of 550-600.
- **Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?** A great example of how things work in a disaster or crisis is the disbursement of our Cobb Emergency Response Funds and deploying of support teams in the aftermath of hurricanes or other crises. Meetings via conference call or Zoom and email voting allow Plymouth to move quickly to help distribute resources in a timely fashion.
- **Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance?** Yes: the church bylaws and annual report are readily available.

3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

[Plymouth's 11-year Report](#); see Appendix I

3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:		550-600 (estimate based on approx. 350 giving units)
Number of active non-members:		50
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):		650

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>This is an estimate, based on 175 recent survey respondents</i>
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More than 10 years:		59 percent
Less than 10, at least 5 years:		14 percent
Less than 5 years:		28 percent

Number of total participants by age (per recent survey):

We estimate that there are approximately 115 members serving on a board or committee.

Ages	0-4	5-8	9-12	13-17	18-29	30-49	50-65	65+	<i>Total: Are these numbers an estimate? (YES)</i>
Nos.	33	14	16	20	38	88	70	113	392 total
%	8%	4%	4%	5%	10%	22%	18%	29%	
	21%				32%		18%	29%	Estimates / survey of 175 members

3d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

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	150-200 over course of year	Pastors, musicians and lay leaders of selected groups.
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	Member – 5-10 Non Member – 60	Pastors and involved parents or adults being baptized
Children's Groups or Classes	75 over course of year	Associate pastors, director of children's ministries
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	900 – Christmas Eve 800 - Easter	Pastoral staff
Church-wide Meals	Potlucks – 100-200 over course of year	Lay leaders and pastoral staff
Choirs and Music Groups	40	Choir Director
Church-based Bible Study	40-50 regular attendees across 3 different weekly bible	Senior Pastor and lay leaders

	studies plus a lay-led group	
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	20 different members serve (once a month)	Pastoral staff and lay leaders (Deacons)
Community Meals	60 (homeless shelter)	Pastoral staff and laypeople
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	6-21/year every other year over last decade	Pastoral staff
Drama or Dance Program	Planning plays in coming year or two (when fellowship hall upgrade complete)	Music director, pastoral staff and lay leaders
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	50-60	Pastoral staff and music team
Intergenerational Groups	Most events at Plymouth are intergenerational	Church Life, Adult Education, Board of Outreach and Missions
Outdoor Worship	Easter Sunrise - 100	Pastoral staff and music team
Prayer or Meditation Groups	See bible studies above	Pastor, lay leaders
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	75-90 per year (5-10 member weddings per year)	Pastors, wedding director, couple
Worship (time slot: 10 a.m.)	200-250 incl. online participants	Pastors, deacons
Young Adult Groups or Classes		Associate pastors, Lay leaders (Children Youth and Families)
Youth Groups or Classes	20-30 (Middle School and High School)	Pastor, associate pastors, lay leaders (Children Youth and Families)

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a ministry beyond a congregation).

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Rev. Hollie Schmidt	Associate Pastor who oversees Mission,	Disciples of Christ, UCC	N	Rev. Hollie Schmidt

	Church Life and Youth (plus other roles)			
Rev. Moira McGuinn	Associate Pastor who oversees Pastoral Care, Liturgy, Adult Ed (plus other roles)	UCC	N	Rev. Moira McGuinn

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

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Interim Senior Pastor	Yes	Above conference ministerial guidelines	Board of Trustees and Council	Full-time service as of September 2026
Associate Pastor		Above conference ministerial guidelines	Senior Pastor	3 years
Associate Pastor		Above conference ministerial guidelines	Senior Pastor	21 years
Director of Music (PT)			Senior Pastor	4 years
Organist (PT)			Music Director	1 year
Director of Children's Ministries (PT)			Senior Pastor	5 years
Executive Administrator	Yes		Senior Pastor	2 years
Controller			Executive Administrator	30+ years
Office Manager			Executive Administrator	3 years
Assistant Office Manager (PT)			Executive Administrator	1.5 years
Head of B&G (2 FT B&G staff report to head of B&G)			Executive Administrator	2 months
Director of Weddings (PT)			Executive Administrator	1 year
Preschool Director			Senior Pastor	4 years
30 teachers and staff			Preschool Director	

REFLECTION

Reflection: After reviewing the congregational demographics and activities above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's overall ministry?

Our church community reflects a meaningful blend of stability, growth and opportunity. We are anchored by a strong and faithful base of members aged 50 and above, whose commitment to weekly worship, generous giving and long-standing investment in the life of the church continues to sustain and guide our shared mission. Their presence provides both spiritual depth and continuity, shaping a culture of dedication and care.

At the same time, we are experiencing a growing pipeline of young adults, particularly those joining us in their post-college years – and a few students from area colleges such as the University of Miami. This emerging generation brings energy, questions and a desire for connection and purpose. Their presence signals not only growth, but also the potential for long-term vitality as they begin to establish roots within the church. Church ministries and activities have been evolving to meet their growing hunger for fellowship and spiritual growth.

We are also witnessing an increasing influx of families with young children. This development is especially significant as it strengthens the intergenerational fabric of our congregation and points toward a hopeful future. An in-demand and highly regarded pre-school helps to stimulate this growth. Our weekly children and youth activities play an important role in this, offering both Christian education and opportunities for fellowship that nurture faith in age-appropriate and engaging ways. These ministries are helping to build a strong foundation for the next generation while also supporting parents in their role as primary faith leaders at home.

Our congregation's commitment to worship remains a defining characteristic. Regular participation in weekly services reflects a shared priority of spiritual formation and communal life. Alongside worship, opportunities for ministry – such as serving at local shelters and engaging in outreach to those in need, and international and domestic mission trips – demonstrate a lived expression of faith that extends beyond our walls. These acts of service not only meet tangible needs but also strengthen bonds within our congregation as we serve together.

Moments of celebration, including weddings and baptisms, further highlight the vibrancy of our church. These sacred milestones remind us that we are not only sustaining a community, but actively growing one – welcoming new members, marking life transitions and deepening our collective identity in faith.

Taken together, our demographic profile and ministry life reveal a church that is both rooted and renewing: grounded in the faithfulness of long-time members, while increasingly shaped by

young adults and families. As we look ahead, we are presented with a clear opportunity – to continue nurturing this intergenerational community, strengthening pathways for belonging and discipleship, and remaining attentive to how God is calling us to grow, serve and flourish together.

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$1.1MM goal
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, currently 4.75% of the value of the invested funds over the trailing 12 quarters</i>)	\$350-430K
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”</i>)	See above. We do not draw from the corpus
Fundraising Events	\$25-50K (but not every year)
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$700K running balance of Restricted Funds
Grants	\$20-40K
Rentals of Church Building	\$25-75K
Rentals of Church Parsonage	N/A going forward. All pastors live in a parsonage and several other staff members live on our 11-acre campus
Support from Related Organizations (Thrift Shop and Preschool, both of which are part of the church’s 501C-3)	Thrift Shop: \$150-200K Preschool: \$275-300k
TOTAL	

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$ 2.3M

[Budget passed at Annual Meeting in January 2026](#); see Appendix II

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church? No

What is the church's current indebtedness? \$0

Total amount of loan debt: N/A

Reason for debt: N/A

Are capital and other payments current? Yes

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.

Capital fund projects already described above.

If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
		\$ 5MM	\$ 5.3MM (at present)	Pilgrim house complete (home for our newest Associate Pastor) New Youth center complete (we repurposed another house on campus) "Pit" filled in to create a backyard for Youth center 3 Entirely Remodeled Sanctuary bathrooms complete Pre-school upgrades in progress – 70% complete (Phase 3 possibly this summer) Other projects noted above (Thrift Shop workspace, Davis Fellowship Hall upgrade) are about to start Misc. other such as work at Park House and in Plymouth Hall Campus Preservation Fund Note that 6 years ago we completely renovated and upgraded our Sunday School building (McNaughton Hall)

Describe the prominent mission component(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign:

To update major facilities including associate pastor residences; create a center for youth ministry; provide improved space for church life events via a refurbished fellowship hall; continue to support the AA and scout troops that regularly meet on our campus. (We regularly rent out our buildings to non-profits at modest rates.) Our campus is open and welcoming to members, friends and neighbors alike.

Does your church have an endowment? Yes Plymouth Foundation Corp.

What is the market value of the assets? \$10.8M

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? Regularly based on established formula/protocols. Disbursements go to the annual giving fund, which supports the annual operating budget and several ministries. As noted above, the spending formula is currently 4.75% of the value of the invested funds over the trailing 12 quarters.

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? It has been at 4.75% the past two years, lowered from 5%. And Plymouth will likely lower the percentage again over the next year or two.

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: See above.

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? Perpetuity. To draw on the corpus, a vote of the congregation is needed.

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$10.8M endowment and \$700k in restricted funds. Additionally the preschool has reserves that fluctuate around \$1M

Investments (other than endowment): \$13-14M including operating funds

Does your church have a parsonage? Yes (known as the Manse, plus two other parsonages for Associate Pastors)

Fair market rental value of the parsonage: We have not put a precise value or estimate on any of these buildings.

How is the parsonage used? Residence for Senior Pastor (and separate residence for each Associate Pastor)

Street / City / State / Zip: 3429 Devon Road, Miami, FL 33133

Finished square footage: Approximately 5,000 square feet in each parsonage

Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms: 5 Bedrooms, 2 full/2 half baths, 12 total rooms

Assessed real estate value: We have not put a precise value or estimate on any of these buildings

Available for minister residence: Yes

Expected minister residence: Yes

Condition of structure, systems and appliances: Manse and newly renovated house are in very good shape. The additional parsonage will need to be upgraded.

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs: Chair of Trustees and Buildings & Grounds Committee, reporting to the Trustees

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

11-acre campus including the following:

600-seat coral rock sanctuary - built in 1917 in the Spanish Mission style and expanded in 1954 to accommodate its significant growth, including a classic pipe organ, sound system, listed on the National Register of historic places.

Plymouth Hall - used for fellowship and storage and brides room

Historic one-room schoolhouse (museum) - the first in Miami-Dade County built in 1887

Administrative office building - (Mead House)

Martha Clinton Plymouth Preschool - 12 Classrooms and office with playground

McNaughton Hall - four-room Sunday school, remodeled in 2019

Edson Chapel - 3000-square-foot supplemental space for worship, church life activities...

Davis Fellowship Hall, open hall with stage and kitchen, due for renovation as part of capital campaign,

Park House - residence for associate pastor, 5,000 square-feet

Pilgrim house - residence for associate pastor, 5,000 square-feet

Longshore Youth House - newly renovated with kitchen, living room, activity room and porch for youth activities

Other small homes, cottages and storage building

This 'N That shop - storefront located nearby in downtown Coconut Grove

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? All public accessible spaces are accessible.

Reflection: We are in solid financial condition, enabling the church to fund without borrowing our many ministries and the full scope of our operations.

3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation.

Plymouth has been home to countless significant faith and community meetings over its 139-year history.

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

Plymouth voted to be Open and Affirming in 2007 and approved same-sex marriage in 2015 when it was approved nationally.

Describe your congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict:

We are quite proud of the diversity of thinking in our congregation. This is not by mistake. In a time when even the smallest of political, philosophical or theological differences can lead to division, we believe that Christ specifically calls us to keep people of difference together and to welcome and serve with those who disagree with us. Each Sunday we say in worship, "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." We seek to live out that as a calling from Christ. Or, as our mission statement begins, "With welcoming hearts, we seek to share the transforming love of Christ..."

Ministerial History (*include all previous ministerial staff for the past 30 years*):

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev. Alvin Bunis – Senior Pastor	2014 to 2026	Yes
Dr. Thomas Niblick – Senior Pastor	1998 to 2013	Yes
Dr. Richard Stanger – Senior Pastor	1991 to 1998	Yes

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

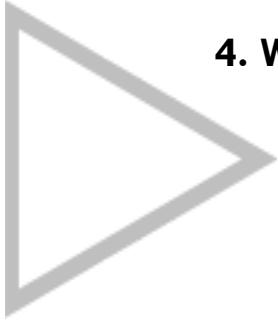
No

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

No

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

No



4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

- a. COMMUNITY VISION
- b. MISSION InSite

4a. COMMUNITY VISION

How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?

Plymouth routinely and consistently participates in service and outreach activities. Since the arrival of our second Associate Pastor in 2023, we have commenced annual mission trips for youth and adults. Through our Board of Outreach and Mission, members participate in monthly food service at Miami homeless shelter, they contribute groceries monthly for the Coconut Grove Crisis Food Pantry, and they join other less-frequent but meaningful service events including rebuilding local homes with Rebuilding Together, reading to local children throughout the summer at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church (38 members or Plymouth friends participated in 2025), putting on a resume workshop for men at Miami Rescue Mission and more. Our Cobb Emergency Response Fund organizes trips and donations to provide quick assistance after hurricanes, devastating floods or other natural disasters. Dozens of members volunteer their time at the This ‘n That Thrift Shop, which sent more than \$250,000 in donations last year to a multitude of worthy organizations across Miami.

Plymouth’s scholarship committee, a subcommittee of the board of trustees, is in the process of awarding a full-tuition scholarship to a candidate for a Master of Divinity in Central Florida who could otherwise not afford to attend Eden Theological Seminary; this scholarship is supported by an endowed fund called the Eva S. Dickey Scholarship.

Describe your congregation’s participation in meetings, relationships and activities

connecting the wider United Church of Christ: Associate Pastor Hollie Schmidt is a member of the Committee on Ministry for the Florida conference. While we have not had the opportunity to participate in meetings or activities as a congregation that connect to the wider UCC, we are open to do so in the future. Our focus has been on our local churches/community irrespective of denominational association – see just below for more details on those engagements.

Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional). We have a long and deep relationship with the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church mentioned above and gather with their congregants on Good Friday and for special events, such as their 30th Anniversary Brunch Celebration at their church last fall – many members attended both events. Members of Plymouth annually participate in the Coconut Grove Ecumenical Network's special service/events as actors and actresses for dramatic productions on Martin Luther King Day – this year's event took place at Greater St. Paul AME Church in the Grove – as well as Juneteenth. We also participate actively in the Coconut Grove Crisis Food Pantry, which is housed at Christ Episcopal Church just a few blocks away from our church. We collect donations monthly and members deliver the items directly to the church. We have also supported kitchen/stock room refurbishments to the Christ Episcopal Church kitchen donations from our Board of Outreach and Mission; and several members have participated in greater depth as board members for the pantry.

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

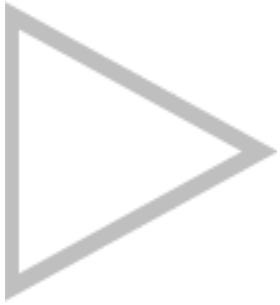
Our Mission Statement: With welcoming hearts Plymouth seeks to share the transforming love of Christ through Faith-filled worship, prayer, and study; Hope-filled service and outreach; Love-filled fellowship

We have outlined many of the ways Plymouth fulfills its mission in previous sections above; we note here a few items not previously mentioned: the church is supported by our active Prayer Partners, a group of committed members who pray for members who submit requests or are known to be experiencing grief, loss or medical problems. We are also proud of the cheerful fellowship that takes place every Sunday in the church garden, where members gather after services for conversation, cookies and our specialty: coffee with ice cream.

Reflect on the scope of work assigned to your pastor(s). One of our associate pastors oversees our youth ministries, church life and mission/outreach ministries, events and activities – among other things (ie, preaching, etc); the other is entrusted with pastoral care, liturgy planning, and adult education – among other things (ie, preaching, etc). Community ministry is deeply embedded in both of their roles with the church, and both serve willingly and joyfully.

What do new people in the church say when asked what got them involved? First and foremost, members cite our welcoming community as the main driver for their attendance at church. They also cite the sermons, the liturgy, our many fellowship and service opportunities, the beautiful grounds, the music and their desire for spiritual growth as key factors that drew them to Plymouth and keep them coming back.

5. REFERENCES

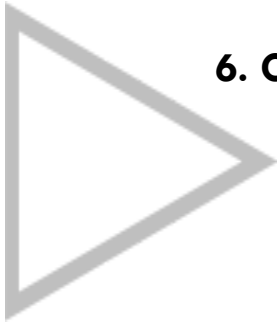


REFERENCE 1

Rev. Al Bunis / Retired Former Senior Pastor /
(Telephone / Email / Relationship to the Congregation)
786-213-0751/alvin.bunis@gmail.com

REFERENCE 2

Carolyn Donaldson / Finance Officer / Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church
305-519-7100 carolyn9453@gmail.com



6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

- a. CLOSING PRAYER
- b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT
- c. CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

6a. CLOSING PRAYER

Jeremiah 29:11-13

¹¹ “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹² Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”

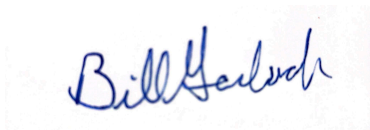
6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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.

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile? *Co-Moderators Amy Shipley and Bill Gerlach*
2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile: The content of this profile reflects the most available data and information about Plymouth Congregational Church at the time it was prepared.

Signed:



Bill Gerlach
Co-moderator



Amy Shipley
Co-moderator

6c. 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:

Name / Title:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

**UNITED CHURCH
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This document is created through support to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and is only possible through the covenantal relationships of all settings of the United Church of Christ.

"Jesus answered them, 'Have faith in God!'" – Mark 11:22