



ASYLUM HILL

Congregational Church

Profile

Associate Minister of Mid/Later Life
United Church of Christ, Connecticut

April 2023

Asylum Hill Congregational Church
814 Asylum Avenue, Hartford CT 06105
www.ahcc.org

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POSITION POSTING

LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: Asylum Hill Congregational Church
Street address: 814 Asylum Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
Supplemental web links: www.ahcc.org

Conference: Southern New England Conference
Association: Hartford Association

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person:

Rev. Isaac Lawson

Regional Minister

South Central Region, South New England Conference UCC

lawsoni@snecucc.org

Current size of membership: 1462

Languages used in ministry: English, American Sign Language and some Spanish

Position Title: Associate Minister of Mid/Later Life

Position Duration: Settled

Compensation Level: Full time

Package meets conference compensation guidelines: Yes



MINISTRY CONTEXT

Asylum Hill Congregational Church (AHCC) in Hartford, CT has evolved over its 158-year history from a church serving solely the residents of the Asylum Hill neighborhood in Hartford, to a regional church drawing its membership from much of central Connecticut. We have members from both cities and suburbs, each with their own gifts and needs. As we strive to strengthen and support our members on their faith journeys, and live into our mission of *“helping people grow in faith and love as disciples of Jesus,”* we seek an associate minister who can assist our existing clergy team in leading and inspiring us

to become a welcoming, caring and loving congregation that uses its time, talent, and treasure to become true disciples of Christ and stronger witnesses to God's message in the world.

LOCATION CONTEXT

Hartford is Connecticut's capital city – sitting halfway between Boston and New York. As the seat of state government and as an employment center, Hartford is a great place to live, work, and play.

Hartford is home to some of the largest corporations in Connecticut that provide over 65,000 jobs in the city. Hartford is the center of the Capitol Region's arts and entertainment. Hosting hundreds of events each year, and the home of dozens of restaurants, bars, clubs, theaters, museums, and other attractions. Sports fans enjoy year-round competitions at both the college and professional levels.

Hartford is home to a large Spanish-speaking population which celebrates its culture at events such as the Three Kings Day Parade and the Puerto Rican Day Parade and Festival. West Indian heritage is celebrated each year during West Indian Week. Hartford also hosts an annual LGBT Film Festival.

We are pleased you are considering the Hartford, CT area. We will be happy to share our experiences with you!

SCOPE OF WORK

This pastor is charged with a full range of ministerial duties with respect to **faith formation, justice and outreach, pastoral care, thriving in pastoral ministry, and worship leadership** for parishioners, and their families, in the middle to later phases of life (for the purpose of this document thought to be in their early 50s and older in age).

As the Mid/Later Life Minister, this pastor will:

Be a spiritual and collaborative leader in all aspects of congregational life within AHCC, with primary focus on faith formation, justice and outreach, pastoral care, and worship; and

Form healthy pastoral relationships with parishioners, and their families, in the middle and later-life age demographic (defined above); and

Help parishioners in this demographic find and form meaningful connections to the ministries and mission of AHCC as well as to other members of the congregation; and

Represent AHCC in the wider community as appropriate to the work of the Mid/Later Life Ministries and in concert with the directives of the Senior Minister.

Qualities that are of the highest priority are as follows:

- Visionary
- Creative
- Empathetic
- Organized

- High EQ

Skills that are of the highest priority are as follows:

- Ability to communicate effectively
- Ability to think innovatively and creatively
- Ability to lead a team, as well as collaborate within a team
- Preaching and creative worship planning
- Technologically savvy with a mastery of Microsoft Office, Zoom, Teams, etc.

See job description attached [Appendix, Item 4].

COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis: The range of Salary Basis, which includes a housing allowance, is competitive for this geographic region and will reflect, among other things, the experience of the successful candidate.

Benefits: Salary + Benefits

The Total Compensation package range is \$104,000-\$110,000 and is guided by the UCC's 2022 Authorized Ministers' Compensation Guidelines for a Full-Time Call, and currently includes pension/annuity, life and disability insurance, health and dental insurance, and a flexible spending account. A sabbatical leave, pursuant to church policy, is currently available after 5 years.

Expected living situation of successful candidate:

It is expected that the associate minister will live within the Greater Hartford region and will receive a housing allowance as part of the compensation package.

Residential/commuting expectations:

A reasonable commute for one living within the Greater Hartford region is 15 - 30 minutes.

Describe peer and professional supports available:

It is expected that the associate minister will take advantage of whatever peer and professional support is available through the UCC.

MINISTRY GOALS

The work will require the minister to collaborate with the full spectrum of AHCC program areas in order to be effective. This minister will work with all AHCC staff in a manner that fosters and facilitates creativity, collaboration, respectful and supportive teamwork.

Faith Formation

Faith formation and spiritual growth for the AHCC parishioner in the Mid/Later Life demographic is addressed through a wide range of programs. This pastor is expected to serve as a spiritual leader.

Justice and Outreach

The Minister of Mid/Later Life will empower the congregation and AHCC groups to focus on justice, outreach, and opportunities to serve the community.

Pastoral Care

The Minister of Mid/Later Life is expected to provide pastoral care to people primarily within the Mid/Later Life demographic, in collaboration with the clergy team. This involves, but is not limited to, personal visits, phone calls, and electronic/written correspondence, as well as providing guidance for outside professional counseling and other referral services.

Worship

The Minister of Mid/Later Life will collaborate weekly with clergy and staff members to create and execute meaningful worship experiences.

WHO WE ARE NOW

Congregational Reflections

Asylum Hill Congregational Church is a “big tent” church and recognizes that there are many paths that lead to living the Christian faith. We are an innovative community, and we seek to create a safe environment for people to worship, serve, develop in faithfulness, and study together. We believe that racism, sexism, ageism, and all the “-isms” that separate us from seeing each other as full humans are assaults against God, and in faith and scripture, we are called to stand up against them.

We strive to be loving, caring, and accepting of all God’s people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, educational and economic status, and political views. People will know and feel that they are cared for by this church, and that our community is opening as many portals as it can for people to engage with one another.

The Mission of Asylum Hill Congregational Church is to help people grow in faith and love as disciples of Jesus.

Our Vision is one of Inquiry, Acceptance and Impact. As we open our minds and hearts to new ways to understand our calling as Christians, we approach the future not with a rigid set of beliefs, but with an openness to explore important spiritual and societal questions together, and lovingly accepting all who would join with us as we seek to make an impact on our community and in the world.

Statement of Faith: We believe in God, our Creator and Sustainer, infinite in wisdom and goodness, and in Jesus Christ, our Lord, in whom God’s will is most perfectly revealed. We believe in the Holy Spirit which, working through us, enables us to respond to all in life that makes for healing, beauty, and love. We affirm the Bible, diligently and prayerfully studied, as the basic authority for our faith. We profess support for Christ’s Church, where in a caring community we proclaim the crucified and risen Christ. We

commit ourselves to serve this Church, to take the gospel into the world, and to share with all our hope in life, in this world and in the world to come. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Statement of Inclusiveness and Diversity: Because Jesus has taught us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and to love our neighbors as ourselves: We are open to and affirming of all who wish to share our faith journey, and we welcome people of every race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, economic circumstances, and physical and mental ability into the worship, rites and sacraments, fellowship, and leadership of our church. We recognize and love each and every individual as a child of God. Our faith in Christ Jesus calls us not only to respect our differences but also to work for inclusiveness of all humanity, and to challenge ourselves individually and as a congregation to overcome prejudice, injustice and exclusion.

Strengths & Positive Qualities

In addition to the blessings of our diversity and our pastor's inspirational sermons, our strengths include (1) Faith Lab Kids (Sunday School Program), (2) our music and arts program, (3) our outreach ministries, and (4) our volunteerism.

Faith Lab Kids is our faith formation program for elementary age students. It is a one-of-a-kind program developed and launched at AHCC in the fall of 2021. It is a program developed on the idea that we are at our best when we are together. We believe the experience we have with each other is as important as the content, and often experiencing it together provides more excitement and passion to grow. Our Minister of Early Life and Director of Early Life Ministries create the content and interact, experience, and work with a volunteer team to bring quality programming to our children.

The multi-faceted **Music and Arts** program at AHCC offers a variety of programs to appeal to the creativity of our members: a sanctuary choir, two children's choirs, an adult handbell choir, a drama ministry and visual arts ministry, and an annual Arts and Spirituality Retreat. The sanctuary choir is the adult choir that sings for Sunday services, as well as presents major works for special services at Christmas and Good Friday. The choir has sung for the Hartford Prayer Breakfast, joined with other faith communities in collaborative services and concerts, and sung at special events with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra.

Our annual Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival is a pageant with music, dancers, live animals, and magnificently costumed characters recounting the Christmas story and presented on Epiphany weekend. Almost 4,000 visitors attend the performances each year and many have commented that their holiday season is not complete without this spiritually uplifting event. The Festival has also attracted many new members to the church.

Our Music for Humanity Concert Series presents concerts whose proceeds are donated to selected charities. The costs of the concerts are entirely covered by the interest from a dedicated endowment fund. While these last two events are organized and presented by the Music and Arts Committee, they also serve as outreach opportunities opening the church to our neighbors or financially supporting local charities.

Our **Outreach Ministries** are, likewise, multi-faceted. We have an Outreach Committee that evaluates and provides grants to local charities and community non-profits annually – with a focus on housing, food insecurity, and education. Besides these grants, our annual Angel Tree Ministry collects thousands of dollars' worth of gift cards for children and families being served by these organizations during the holiday season. Additionally, since July 2020, in response to the pandemic's impact on food insecurity and financial uncertainty for Hartford residents, we have served a weekly, free community meal in our parking lot for our Asylum Hill neighbors. Each week, we serve 150 meals and have cultivated meaningful relationships with our community. We also support local businesses by intentionally sourcing our food and other items through local social enterprises and BIPOC owned businesses. Throughout the year, we participate in special projects such as school backpack collections, coat and jacket giveaways, and assembling bags of toiletries to give to our neighbors.

Our building is one of our greatest assets, as we donate space to at least three different organizations serving children and teenagers in the community.

Members of AHCC are extremely generous with their volunteer efforts. It's an important part of who we are as a faith community and we are always looking for ways to be involved in our neighborhood, the Greater Hartford area, and beyond.

Educational Programming & Faith Formation

At AHCC, we believe that faith formation takes places at every age and stage of life.

Honesty and humility are guideposts in our interactions as we teach, serve, and spend time together. Questioning the status quo is welcome. Acceptance of each other's divine uniqueness is standard. Faith formation, spiritual practice, community service, and friendship are mainly cultivated outside of a traditional classroom setting to facilitate genuine connections and to inspire growth in one another.

Early Life Ministries: Early Life Ministries exists to inspire our children, teens, and young adults to discover their immense God-given value to live well and love others like Jesus. We recognize that we are privileged to be a part of the life stories of amazing young people, and our desire is to walk with them on their journey to becoming compassionate persons of positive influence in this world.

Groups: Faith Lab Kids, Confirmation Class, Middle and High School Youth Groups, and Young Adult Ministry

Adult Faith Formation: Adult Faith Formation aspires to offer programs featuring enlightening presentations and lively discussions. Programs are led by talented outside speakers, members of AHCC's clergy, or knowledgeable church leaders. Many programs are focused on socially relevant issues that are discussed in an open and civil manner so that all voices can be heard and respected. Programs are offered on a variety of topics such as conversations about race and justice, climate change, and exploring other world religions. Bible study programs are spiritually engaging and probing. Our programs are open to people within our family of faith as well as anyone from the wider community who wishes to participate.

Groups: Adult Christian Education, Women's Spirituality and Fellowship, Men's Ministry, and Prayer Groups

How Church Is Organized for Ministry & Mission

Our senior minister is the spiritual and organizational leader of the church and is responsible for worship planning and implementation/preaching, pastoral care, personnel/head of staff, and supporting and implementing the church's vision and mission. Together with the associate ministers, staff and lay leaders, the senior minister works with Membership and Stewardship Committee chairs to create and implement strategies which lead to church growth and vitality; works with the Chief Operating Officer and lay leaders to ensure the financial health and well-being of the institution; and works in community engagement with the UCC, the City of Hartford, as well as national and international endeavors as they arise.

In addition to pastoral care, worship planning and preaching, the associate ministers work with various Ministry Teams e.g. Early Life Ministry, Nurture & Engage, Adult Faith Formation, and Justice & Outreach.

AHCC has been blessed with engaged and highly capable lay leadership. Annually elected by the congregation, the lay leadership includes the moderator, vice moderator, secretary, assistant secretary, treasurer, assistant treasurer, and committee chairs. The officers, along with the senior minister, designated committee chairs and deacons-at-large comprise the Board of Deacons, which is the governing body of the church.

There are 9 standing committees and 3 sub-committees whose members and chairs are elected at the AHCC Annual Meeting by the congregation. Additionally, task forces, ad hoc committees and affinity groups are formed from time to time to address specific matters and/or respond to member interests. [See Appendix, Item 3]

We can you provide a copy of an organizational structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance.

WHO ARE WE BECOMING

Reflections from a sermon preached by Rev. Erica Thompson on 11/22/20 about **AHCC Roadmap 2024**

All my life I have had an incredible love of maps. In fact, I can lose hours looking at and studying maps. They speak to me about unknown adventures, they reveal to me dreams I didn't know I had, they tell me tales of places I have yet to know. But they do something else as well. Maps help me contextualize not just locations but also events. They help me understand and sort out history as well as plan for the future.

Therefore, it shouldn't come as a surprise that from the nadir of the pandemic, when my fear & anxiety levels were at an all-time high, I ended up turning to maps as a way of buoying and calming my spirits. As early as the spring and summer of 2020 – almost as an act of defiance, I began dreaming about our future together as a community of faith. I began trying to envision what our life together, on the other side of this crisis, might look like. I became curious about what we are learning and how we are changing as people. And I began asking questions about what it would take to make these dreams and visions real.

As a labor of love, what was birthed was **AHCC's Roadmap 2024!**

Now, I want to be clear about one thing right up front – when we talk about priorities or destinations as they are deemed for us ... there isn't a hierarchy of importance ... there isn't a 1, 2, 3 with 1 having the greatest value and 3 the least. Rather each of these [TOGETHER] will get us to where we want to be and who we want to be in the world, which is a community of faith that is living into the call to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly. Friends, we are a well-blessed community, we have resources to share to be sure, and this Roadmap will help us positively impact the world – near and far – not for our edification, rather because God calls us into this work.

One of our destinations (*where and who we strive to be in the future*) **is a growing, robust community, committed and seeking to deepen our faith and our faith community.**

If the pandemic has shown us anything – it is the power and necessity of community. And, we have recognized that community looks a little different than it did at the start of the pandemic. One of the gifts of this crisis has been our ability to connect in meaningful ways with people even when that hasn't been in the flesh. And the work ahead, I believe, is to discern how we take what we've learned (all that has been revealed to us) and continue to build upon it. How do we continue to nurture one another, engage one another, help one another grow in faith and love?

Another destination we have set our sights upon – is being a catalyst for real justice in our local community. I believe this means we must be real with ourselves and with one another – confessing our shortcomings and building upon our strengths.

- Looking back on the past, celebrating the programs and projects which have been incredibly transformative, while being honest about our missteps and bad calculations.
- Looking out on the future, recognizing that when we talk about the Asylum Hill neighborhood, we are not talking about “them” – rather we are talking about “us” ... all of us, together, needing each other in ways we may not even know.

You see, justice isn't just about me creating equitable spaces for you. Rather justice, real justice, takes root when I finally realize that my very own liberation (the freedom to be the awesome human God created me to be) is bound up in your liberation. Justice is about understanding at the core of our being, that we are inextricably bound together ... for better/for worse, for richer/for poorer, in sickness and in health, 'til death do us part.

Another avenue we would like to pursue is expanding our impact in a world that I believe is being led woefully astray by those peddling a version of Christianity that has nothing to do with

Christ. You see, it's not enough for us to gather in the safety and security of the sanctuary or as a virtual community and proclaim the love and affirmation of our God for all people. Not when there are people in the world who are literally dying because they are being told that who they are isn't enough in God's eyes. It's about humbly pouring God's love and light, justice and grace, out into the world in ways that speak louder than the false prophets of our time.

Beloveds, I can promise you that the journey ahead will not be easy. Where we want to go and what we want to do is countercultural – and that will bring some condemnation and certainly comes with a certain amount of risk. And we won't agree on which way to go at every crossroad. But what I can promise you is that this journey – it's worth every mile.

[See Appendix Item #5 – AHCC Roadmap 2024; Item #6 Roadmap 2024 Year 1]

What We Need to Get There

In this polarized world we want to be a different kind of community — one that values different expressions of discipleship, knowing that there are multiple ways and approaches to following Jesus. We are on a learning curve about the relationship between charity and justice and the role of public policy. To this end, the following are a few of the things we value and deem important for the future.

Worship is central to who we are, and what binds us together. We want worship that is comforting and challenging, traditional and innovative/creative. We want to be inspired to follow Jesus, knowing that his call often puts us at odds with the world. We want worship that is relevant with liturgy, that is stylistically varied, including formal, informal, traditional, and contemporary. We are always open to moments that connect the sacred and the ordinary.

We are committed to taking our faith and witness outside the walls of AHCC. We encourage people to be in ministry and to discover and further God's work in the world. Whether it is through established church programs or in creative new approaches, we recognize with humility that there is often more than one right way, and we are both learning and leading while we work to make a difference.

We want to grow and continue to be a vital part of our city because we believe that the Spirit is alive and doing wondrous things in and with our community.

Our Mission

Asylum Hill Congregational Church (AHCC) in Hartford, CT has evolved over its 150+ year history from a church drawing members and friends almost exclusively from the Asylum Hill neighborhood in Hartford, to a regional church drawing its membership from much of central Connecticut. As we strive to strengthen and support our members on their faith journeys and live into our mission of “helping people grow in faith and love as disciples of Jesus,” we seek an associate minister who can assist our senior minister and associate minister in leading and inspiring us to become a welcoming, caring and loving congregation that uses its time, talent, and treasure to become true disciples of Christ and stronger witnesses to God's message.

Our church profile is meant to reveal who we are and who we believe God is calling us to become. We have challenged ourselves to be a church that is affirming and joyously diverse, always open to expanding the tent of welcome. Our journey has us looking outward to evangelism, in service and in advocacy, on behalf of those Jesus called “the least of these.”

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Church participation:

Number of active members:	1462
Number of active non-members:	325 <i>(est.)</i>
Total participants:	1787

Participants have been participating:

More than 10 years:	81%
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	16%
Less than 5 years:	3%

Participants by age:

Ages 0 - 11	10%
Ages 12 - 17	2%
Ages 18 - 24	6%
Ages 25 - 34	11%
Ages 35 - 44	6%
Ages 45 - 54	9%
Ages 55 - 64	15%
Ages 65 - 74	18%
Ages 75+	23%

What does racial and ethnic diversity mean in your context?

We do not track ethnicity, gender identity or the like. A growing number of our members are African American/Black, and there is small percentage of people who identify as Hispanic/Latinx or Asian. The majority of our congregation is Caucasian/White.

In 2007, we adopted an Open and Affirming policy that specifically calls for racial and ethnic diversity: “We are open to and affirming of all who wish to share our faith journey, and we welcome people of every race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, economic circumstances, and physical and mental ability into the worship, rites and sacraments, fellowship, and leadership of our church.” We continue to hold ourselves accountable to this proclamation.

We also provide disability access and have American Sign Language interpretation available during every Sunday morning worship and for many other programs and events.

Our senior minister is fluent in Spanish and is an asset we utilize to extend our reach.

Congregational conversation(s) about welcoming diversity

From 2004 to 2006, an Inclusiveness Task Force discussed AHCC’s position on diversity. After a “Season of Conversation” which allowed for church-wide dialogue, a Statement of Inclusiveness and Diversity was presented to the congregation and adopted at the annual meeting in February 2007. In 2018, members of committees, deacons and staff attended an Anti-Racism Workshop presented by the National Conference for Community and Justice. This Statement of Inclusiveness and Diversity is provided above in the first section under Congregational Reflections. In addition, the phrase “Open to and affirming of all God’s people” is used in internal and external communications where appropriate.

Participation & Staffing:

<i>Ways of Gathering</i>	<i>Est. number in attendance or # of events</i>	<i>Who plans each of the listed gatherings?</i>
Adult Groups or Classes	15-200 attendees	Pastors, other staff, lay leaders
Baptisms	20 events	Pastors, other staff
Children’s Groups or Classes	40 events	Other staff

Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	1,109 (3 services) 519 (Covid impacted attendance)	Pastors, other staff
Church-wide Meals	4	Pastors, other staff, lay leaders
Choirs and Music Groups, estimated for all groups	>60	Director of Music & Arts, Organist, Volunteers
Church-based Bible Study	13 events	Pastors
Communion	98	Pastors, lay leaders (on the first Sunday of each month)
Community Meals	1x a week	Other staff, lay leaders
Confirmation	14	Pastors, other staff
Drama or Dance Program, estimated for all activities	> 300	Director of Music & Arts, Organist, Volunteers
Funerals	20 events	Pastors, other staff
Intergenerational Groups		
Outdoor Worship	50	Pastors, other staff
Prayer or Meditation Groups	55	Pastors, other staff

Public Advocacy Work	60	Pastors, other staff, lay leaders
Retreats	15 - 45	Pastors, other staff, lay leaders
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community		Pastors, other staff, lay leaders
Weddings	15 events	Pastors, other staff, musicians
Worship	105 (does not include livestream)	Pastors, other staff, lay leaders

Current Staff:

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Full Time, Part Time, Volunteer	Supervised by	Length of Tenure in this position
Rev. Erica Thompson, Senior Minister (2019) Acting Sr. Minister (2017 - 2019) Assoc. Minister (2006-2017)	Head of Staff	Full time		4 years 15 months 12 years
Rev. Jordan Rebholz, Minister of Early Life		Full time	Erica Thompson	3 years
Jack Pott, Director of Music & Arts		Full time	Erica Thompson	7 years
Susan Carroll, Organist & Music Associate		Full time	Jack Pott	8 years

Helena Carvalho, Chief Operating Officer	Head of Operations Staff	Full time	Erica Thompson	8 years
Rhonda Mitchell, Director of Communications		Part time	Erica Thompson	15 years
Tobey Aubert, Director of Early Life Ministries		Full time	Erica Thompson	7 years
Kyle Cannon, Volunteer Coordinator		Part time	Jordan Rebholz	21 years
Denise Doran, Administrative Assistant		Full time	Helena Carvalho	17.5 years
Mary Way, Administrative Assistant		Full time	Helena Carvalho	28 years
Glenn Olson, Administrative Assistant		Part time	Helena Carvalho	.5 years
Jorge Fuentes, Facilities Assistant		Full time	Helena Carvalho	28 years
Jeremiah Sullivan, Security Guard		Part time	Helena Carvalho	3 years
Thulani Davis, Sunday Kitchen Assistant		Part time	Helena Carvalho	3 years

Reflection on how demographics affect AHCC's overall ministry?

Our large congregation is both typical and atypical – our demographics suggest we are not unusual for most mainline protestant churches, yet, because of our size we are diverse beyond race and ethnicity. For example, in recent years we have become more economically diverse. We are looking to attract more young adult members as well as families. We have a burgeoning young adult ministry and Faith Lab, our children's program, has been cited by new members as one reason they joined the church.

One of the issues facing a large congregation, especially one that draws from outside the immediate area, is a lack of familiarity among the members. This means small groups are of the utmost importance. We need to continue to find ways to bring people together to form bonds of friendship and caring.

Choirs, Bible study, small groups, retreats, and committee work help facilitate the sense of congregational intimacy we desire, but we are always looking to find more ways to make this a loving, caring community where people feel connected to one another.

CHURCH FINANCES

Current Annual Income:

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$950,000
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy)	\$782,272
Endowment Draw (beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal")	\$0
Fundraising Events	\$0
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$7,000
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$120,502
Support from Related Organizations (e.g., Women's Group)	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$357,819
Other (specify): program income	\$102,760
TOTAL	\$2,323,353

Current annual expenses (as budgeted for fiscal year ending June 2023): \$2,321,916
 Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, ministerial support is 16.5%

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church? No
In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? The proportional giving is calculated annually
What is the church's current indebtedness? None

Capital Campaigns:

Is a building program projected or underway? No
Has the church had capital campaigns in the last ten years? No
Is a capital campaign underway or anticipated? We will likely do a capital campaign in the next 2-3 years

Describe the prominent mission components involved in the most recent capital campaign.

Our last capital campaign was in 2004. Besides doing some needed expansion, repair and updating of our building, some of the money raised went to replenish the \$750,000 we had previously borrowed from our endowment fund and given to the Boys and Girls Club for their new facility, and a lesser amount was used to set up a revolving building fund to help our building ministry revitalize and stabilize the neighborhood.

Endowment:

Does your church have an endowment? Yes
What is the market value of the assets? \$16,629,650.94 (as of 12/31/2022)
Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? Quarterly
What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? 5% of the 20-quarter trailing average of asset values
Draw on endowment for the most recent year and the past five years: Between 4.75% - 5%
At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? Into perpetuity

Other Assets:

Reserves (savings): Yes
Investments (other than endowment): No
Does your church have a parsonage? No

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

AHCC's facility consists of the sanctuary, a chapel, two large meeting rooms, a large multi-purpose choir room, one large and one small kitchen, and multiple classrooms and offices.
Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church: None
Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? All spaces are wheelchair accessible.

After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's mission and ministry?

The finances and assets at AHCC have been expertly managed, allowing for outstanding programming for the congregation as well as generous and substantial outreach to the community and beyond.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

Who are we seeking to join us on this part of our church's faith journey?

We are seeking a spiritually wise, confident, and kind pastor who engages and enjoys congregational ministry with a proven ability to work collaboratively, empower others to lead; someone who inspires others through preaching, teaching, and acts of witness in the world.

We want a pastor who, as part of a team, is warm-hearted, relatable, approachable, and who is comfortable with people from all walks of life. We seek an associate minister who will be charged with focusing on the mid to later life demographic of our congregation. We need a pastor to be a part of a ministerial team who can grow the congregation, proclaim our vision beyond our immediate membership, and provide the care and programming to bring our vision to life in a world that needs community more than ever.

Freedom of the Pulpit is a religious freedom that has long been upheld at AHCC. It affirms that our preachers are free to preach the gospel according to their understanding of it. We also believe that our ministers can be prophetic and provocative without being alienating, and that sensitive issues demand sensitivity.

Our vision for how the associate minister will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls:

AHCC has a long history of creating change beyond our walls, from our beginnings in 1860 as a Sunday school to the creation and support of numerous inner-city programs as well as ministries elsewhere in the world, many of which are continuing to make a difference today. We want ministers who will collaborate, who will listen with open minds and open hearts to differing approaches to social solutions, and who will work with us to create new visions and expand our charitable and social justice ministries.

We seek pastors who can bring out the best and brightest ideas from us to sustain our commitment to follow where God is leading, whether in service or in giving. We wish to not only serve those in our church community, but those in the larger community as well. We seek ministers who are models of

compassion for our neighbor, regardless of who our neighbor is, and who can lead us in using our time, talent, and treasure to bring these new visions to fruition.

Preferred language requirements or culturally specific capacities:

Our services are in English and American Sign Language. We incorporate a variety of worship traditions, through music and the arts, to not only broaden our worship experience, but to reach a diverse, culturally rich community. Our senior minister is fluent in Spanish, which can serve as a comfort and draw to Hartford's large Latino community. We are looking for someone who will help broaden our reach.

COMMUNITY VISION

The relationships and activities of our congregation extend outward in service and advocacy:

From the very beginning, AHCC has been a community committed to outreach. **Church members have founded several charitable/justice-seeking organizations** that have, in some cases, become the largest in the state in their area of concern. Examples include:

Loaves and Fishes Ministries – an agency that feeds 100 to 150 individuals daily and provides job counseling and training to its clients; Interval House – a shelter for battered women and children; ConnectiKids – an after-school program that provides tutoring for almost 300 students, five days a week during the school year plus more than 100 students during its summer program.

Through its Outreach Committee, AHCC has annually granted approximately \$195,000 to fund charitable organizations and activities in Greater Hartford and beyond. The local agencies' missions are primarily concerned with housing, food, education, and human services. Many of these agencies have participated in "Community Conversations" during church services to raise awareness among congregants of the issues facing our neighbors and how we can partner with them. Many of our congregants volunteer with these organizations.

Our helping hands have reached not only outside of Asylum Hill and Hartford, but also outside of Connecticut and even outside of the United States. **Adopta Una Familia**, founded by Rev. Erica Thompson, helps to build houses and provide other support services in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Building mission trips within the United States have been made in response to natural disasters. Over the years these efforts have reached 21 states.

In addition to these charitable activities, other groups within the church "do justice" by building relationships with other local organizations. **Justice In Action**, an affinity group within the church, actively collaborates with local organizations for advocacy, education, and supports efforts to end violence and to reduce racial bias in Hartford.

GHIAA (Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance) – In 2016, the Christian Activities Council (now the Center for Leadership and Justice, CLJ) extended invitations to houses of faith throughout Greater Hartford to explore establishing a broad-based justice initiative for churches, synagogues, mosques, and meeting houses. The goal was to build a diverse organization of lay leaders and clergy from across bounds of race, class, gender identity, religion, and geography to build relational power to address justice issues in local communities and beyond.

After three years of building relationships and learning about the history and practice of faith-based community organizing, this group of diverse faith communities and allied institutions officially launched the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA) on October 28, 2019. AHCC has the honor of being one of the founding organizations of GHIAA and we continue to support and work with the coalition.

Each congregation involved forms a trained core team of lay leaders who engage in leadership training provided by GHIAA. The role of the core team is to engage in individual meetings in the congregation, host house meetings to learn of congregants' justice concerns, participate with other GHIAA members in determining the organizational priorities, and represent the congregation during key decisions.

In addition to the core team, AHCC is involved in Racial Justice Activation Training (through GHIAA). Pastor Jordan and four AHCC members took part in a six-month intensive training on racial justice issues to learn how to empower and encourage our community to create equity and authentically be a more diverse church, and are now working with AHCC on how to intentionally be an anti-racist church.

The AHCC Roadmap 2024 calls us to look for ways to engage more deeply and meaningfully with our community. To that end, the **Neighborhood Vision Task Force** was created in early 2021 to help us look inside and outside the church for ideas and inspiration to plan for this deeper engagement with the community.

The task force engaged in one-on-one conversations and electronic surveys with AHCC members, and participated in meetings related to the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association's (AHNA) strategic planning process. Using the information gathered, and the priorities set in AHCC Roadmap 2024, the task force identified elements of AHNA's strategic plan where AHCC might lend support or become a champion.

Several principles guided the task force and will continue to guide AHCC as the church considers next steps. These principles include:

- Recognizing that neighborhood residents know their neighborhood best
- Seeking ways to get to know and support our neighbors in building the "Beloved Community"
- Demonstrating humility and hospitality as we build relationships
- Discerning what the Spirit may reveal about paths to pursue

[See Appendix Item #7 Neighborhood Vision Task Force Report]

Congregational participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ:

AHCC's delegates and clergy attend Southern New England Conference United Church of Christ annual meetings, as well as send delegates to the General Synod. They also attend Hartford Association Annual Meetings and participate in Ecclesiastical Councils and installation of area UCC clergy.

The following statements apply to our faith community.

Accessible to All (A2A)

God Is Still Speaking

Open & Affirming (ONA)

These statements are adopted and lived out with conviction. They serve to guide our ministry both within the AHCC community and in the world at large.

Our congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities:

- Joined with Catholic Charities in the Refugee Resettlement Program;
- Attend the annual Greater Hartford Multi-Faith Prayer Breakfast;
- Invite Muslim and Jewish leaders to participate in worship and other educational activities;
- Participated in Good Friday Procession with seven Asylum Hill neighborhood churches;
- Plan and participate in ecumenical Easter Sunrise services;
- Joined with Mothers United Against Violence in memorials, rallies, and marches;
- Worked with Immanuel Congregational Church to help "returning citizens" reclaim their lives after incarceration;
- Founding member of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA)

The scope of work assigned to our pastors, specifically community ministry and ministry in and on behalf of the wider church:

Currently our ministerial team is involved in community ministry and various ecumenical and inter-religious activities, and we are always looking for ways to expand our reach.

Our congregation's Mission Insite report with data for your neighborhood:

The church's Outreach Committee has used outreach data to inform its outreach activities.

Internal demographics as compared to the neighborhoods adjacent to the church, and other neighborhoods we connect with:

AHCC membership is drawn largely from the Greater Hartford area. About 5% of members live in the Asylum Hill neighborhood and/or Hartford. The largest component lives in West Hartford and towns further west, with smaller numbers coming from as far as 30 miles north, south, and east. For those coming from farther away, the attraction is worship and preaching, the music and arts program, the programs offered for children, teens, and young adults, and the reputation AHCC has for its outreach activities, charity, and social consciousness.

Community demographics currently shaping ministry:

The demographics of the community continue to shape our mission. We recognize Christ in each of our neighbors and the needs of our community as basic needs of all people, especially those who are marginalized and living within unjust systems. The issues people are dealing with are dynamic and we strive to stay relevant.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Three significant happenings in the history of our church:

AHCC celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2015. Significant happenings at AHCC follow the course of history and have all contributed to the rich heritage we honor and uphold. Three that we think are particularly relevant to who we are:

AHCC is located in the Asylum Hill neighborhood of Hartford. Asylum Hill has changed dramatically over the last 150 years, from a farming suburb to one of affluence, to one of the poorest neighborhoods in one of the 10 poorest cities in the U.S. In 1959 and again in 1971, faced with the question of leaving the city to move to one of the affluent suburbs in the greater Hartford area, the congregation voted to remain a “church in the city with a heart for the city.” This decision was significant in shaping our outreach programs and the opportunities we see to impact a city that needs to experience God’s love and the generosity of God’s people. We were the first faith-based institution to create an “I Have a Dream” program to ensure that an entire class from our neighborhood school would be guaranteed money for higher education upon their completion of high school. Church members served as tutors and mentors to facilitate this achievement.

In 2004, a major capital campaign raised money for a large addition to the Parish, making the church fully accessible and providing more classroom and meeting space. One use of this new space was the creation of a “School for Young Children on Asylum Hill” where pre-school classes were held for children of socio-economic, cultural, and racial diversity.

Beginning July 2017, the congregation began the process to truly discern who we wanted to become for ourselves and the community. Our members devoted hours to courageous conversations addressing many areas, including governance, justice, inclusivity, and race. These soul-searching meetings, meaningful conversations, and good-faith efforts shaped our congregation to choose leadership that is reflective of our present and future selves.

- December 2, 2018: the congregation unanimously called Reverend Erica A. Thompson to serve as Senior Minister, the **first female senior minister** in our church’s history
- May 19, 2019: the congregation unanimously elected the first African-American female moderator and openly-gay vice moderator
- In the beginning of 2020, the congregation called two female associate ministers, making this all-female clergy team truly unique, even by national standards.

Change & Conflict:

A major change the church managed was the departure of the senior minister in the spring of 2017. Despite the divisiveness that had grown in the congregation, the response of the members was remarkable. Under the strong leadership of our then acting senior minister, Rev. Erica Thompson, we embarked on a journey of self-discovery, healing and reconciliation where we acknowledged our shortcomings as well as our strengths. During this time of reflection and conversation, the congregation drew upon its strength as a body of believers to reconnect with each other and our mission. This process took nearly a year, but it was not only vital for us to be ready to call a settled senior minister, but to heal and draw us closer as a body serving God.

Ministerial History:

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing
Rev. James Kidd, Senior Minister	1979 - 1998	Yes
Rev. Peter Grandy, Senior Associate Minister	1980 - 2012	Yes
Rev. Patricia Felletter, Associate Minister	1987 - 1994	Yes
Rev. Carl Becker, Minister of Youth	1988 - 1991	Yes
Rev. Richard Grobe, Minister of Youth	1991 - 2001	Yes
Rev. Karin Fowler, Associate Minister	1996 - 2000	Yes

Rev. Gary Miller, Senior Minister	1999 - 2011	Yes
Rev. Sarah Verasco, Associate Minister	2000 - 2005	Yes
Rev. Erica Thompson, Associate Minister	2006 - 2017	Yes
Rev. Matthew Laney, Senior Minister	2012 - 2017	Yes
Rev. Donna Manocchio, Associate Minister	2013 - 2016	Yes
Rev. Erica Thompson, Acting Senior Minister	2017 - 2019	Yes
Rev. Erica Thompson, Senior Minister	2019	Yes
Rev. Jordan Rebholz	2020	Yes
Rev. Tracy Mehr-Muska, Associate Minister	2020-2022	Dual Standing

The church's relationship with ministerial leaders:

The history of preaching at AHCC has been one in which well-constructed and skillfully delivered sermons on a wide variety of topics with informed biblical and theological grounding have been highly valued by the congregation. It has frequently been a source of pride and appreciation when AHCC sermons have been heard, read, and discussed both by the congregation and by the wider Hartford community, especially sermons that motivate us to reach out to those both within and outside our church walls.

AHCC values being a place of openness, where everyone is comfortable expressing their opinion and feels included, welcomed, and loved by God. Further, AHCC values the importance of transparency and communication. In practice, it is vitally important that we recognize this work be ongoing and that AHCC must continue to make our congregation a sacred place that values openness, transparency, and God's guidance and love to build an unshakable foundation that will support us through any conflict we may face. AHCC leadership is committed to "freedom of the pulpit" and being supportive of the pastors, encouraging and facilitating open, honest, healthy and respectful feedback and discussion of sermons.

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

REFERENCES

See references attached [Appendix, Item 1].

Reference 1

Rev. Dr. Michael Piazza, Professor, Hartford Seminary

Dr. Piazza, minister, author and teacher, has had a long relationship with both AHCC and our ministry team. He has been guest lecturer and consultant to AHCC.

mpiazza@hartsem.edu

(214)-207-8102

Reference 2

Dr. Reza Mansoor, M.D, Founder, Muslim Coalition of CT; President, Islamic Association of Greater Hartford

Dr. Mansoor has participated in interfaith discussions at the church representing Islam.

Mansoor111@aol.com

(860) 794-4011

Reference 3

Ms. Olivia Ilano Davis, Founder, Spectrum in Motion Dance Theater

Ms. Davis' dance company works out of the church providing dance classes during the school year and a six-week summer program for neighborhood and city children.

spectruminmotion@gmail.com

(413) 218-0013

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 associate ministers for Asylum Hill Congregational 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.

Associate Minister Search Committee
Senior Minister
Chief Operating Officer
Associate Minister of Early Life
Director of Music and Arts
Personnel Committee

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: *Rev. Isaac Lawson*

Name / Title: Area Conference Minister, South Central Region, SNEUCC

Email: lawsoni@sneucc.org

Phone: 860-861-7198

Date: April 11, 2023

APPENDIX

ITEM #1: Reference Letters

Reference 1: Rev. Dr. Michael Piazza, Professor, Hartford Seminary

Dear Gentlefriend:

It is my great privilege to recommend Asylum Hill Congregational Church for your consideration. After a recent event at which I spoke, I asked Rev. Thompson, only half-jokingly, if I could apply to be her associate pastor. The history, mission, staff, and future of Asylum Hill are remarkable and something of which I personally would love to be a part.

In addition to being a part of an outstanding and storied church, you will work with one of the most gifted and noteworthy pastors I know. I esteem and value her as a colleague as much as anyone with whom I have worked. Beyond our work together, I have grown to love her as a person. She was deeply kind and supportive when my partner died, and, in those moments, I saw the truth about her heart and the heart of her ministry. There is much you can learn from Erica, but the true gift will be having an amazing woman as your partner in ministry.

My most recent visit to Asylum Hill was for Erica's installation as senior pastor. Although she had been on staff for many years, the spirit of that moment made it clear to all who were present that this old and historic church was being reborn in a powerful way. I know you will want to be a part of that, because I do.

In addition to working at a great church with an outstanding pastor, I believe you will come to love Hartford as a diverse and affordable place to live. Through the years I have taught at Hartford Seminary, I have wished many times that I was able to live there full-time.

If you have any questions, or if I can encourage you further, please don't hesitate to contact me directly at mpiazza@hartsem.edu or 214-207-8102.

Blessings,



Rev. Dr. Michael Piazza

July 5, 2019

Reference 2: Dr. Reza Mansoor, M.D., Founder, Muslim Coalition of CT; President, Islamic Association of Greater Hartford

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for allowing me to help with your review.

1. Strengths of AHCC:
 - a. The large congregation that is heavily involved is a real strength. There are many committed members that contribute and attend services regularly.
 - b. Traditional interfaith involvement. The Muslim community has traditionally been very involved in connecting our communities. Aida and I have spoken to the AHCC congregation many times in the past and the youth have attended masjid events in the past.
 - c. Involvement with refugee resettlement is a real strength. Working with Catholic charities as does the Muslim community.
 - d. Local recognition in all major faith based organizations in the greater Hartford area - from the Hartford Seminary to the Connecticut Council for Inter-Religious Understanding (CCIU).
2. Ways the church can improve:
 - a. Involvement in interfaith events strengthens us all. Under the leadership of the late Rev. Gary Miller there was a vibrant involvement with the Muslim community. This included having visiting Muslim lecturers that addressed community concerns. We would love to have AHCC take on more of this leadership role it played in the past.
 - b. A vibrant exchange of youth discussion would be welcomed by all. We would be glad to partner with AHCC on events where we can work together in furthering education of each other and doing community service projects together.
 - c. I understand that there have been some changes in leadership, but please do make interfaith outreach a large part of the minister's roles.
3. My involvement with AHCC:
 - a. I like to view myself as a friend of AHCC. I have visited frequently in inter-faith discussion meetings as well as meetings at AHCC of other organizations, in particular CCIU.
 - b. I cherish the times when I have spoken at services on the need to work together in an often very fractious world.

Thank you for your consideration of my input.

Best wishes,

Reza (Reza Mansoor, M.D.) Founder,
Muslim Coalition of CT; President, Islamic
Association of Greater Hartford

Reference 3: Olivia Ilano Davis, Founding Artistic Dir., Spectrum in Motion Dance Theater

August 29, 2018

My name is Olivia Ilano Davis and I am the founding Artistic Director of Spectrum in Motion Dance Theater Ensemble. Currently, the ensemble is in residence at the Asylum Hill Congregational Church.

Founded in 1982, Spectrum in Motion celebrates 36 years of dancing – raising dancers, making dances, and building community. The ties between Spectrum in Motion Dance Theater Ensemble and the Asylum Hill Congregational Church formulated during my years at Hartford Ballet (as far back as 1996) when I was the Director of the Dance Program for City Youth (DPCY) and Community Outreach. It was my mission to open the doors of what was often looked upon as beyond the capacity of neighborhood children and young adults and their families to enter and enroll due to inability to afford the tuition and additional cultural and socio-economic barriers.

During this time, I received an invitation to a luncheon for community partnerships from the church. Eager to meet others in the neighborhood within walking distance and be a guest to a grand banquet, I was quick to say, “Yes.” Upon arrival, I acknowledged immediately that this church was and is the hub for bringing the neighborhood together.

As Hartford Ballet transitioned to Dance CT and ultimately closed its doors in 2003, I was persuaded that year to stay in Hartford. A handful of folks from the Greater Hartford Arts Council, public school principals and teachers, community organizers, members of AHCC, and my families of students and dancers - together we pondered and prayed about how to continue my life’s work here. Once the decision was made to take that leap of faith, here is where I have stayed, setting up home bases from place to place; since the beginning, the one consistent home base has been the church.

In 2001, I was commissioned to choreograph Rutter’s GLORIA for Asylum Hill Congregational Church for the Annual Boar’s Head and Yule Log Festival. It was the first time I was given the opportunity to bring to the stage the second generation of Spectrum Dancers, primarily teens at the time and to this day, many of the original cast return and join new dancers for the festival. This coming 2019 festival will celebrate our 18th anniversary joining the cast of The Boar’s Head and Yule Log Festival. There have been additional commissioned works from the church with the choir. *Ubi Caritas* remains in Spectrum’s repertoire and whenever the church calls for it, we are ready. Additional immersion has been our participation in the church’s Arts and Spirituality Retreat. This year we have been commissioned again to do a new piece by Paul Halley for Homecoming Sunday 2018.

By 2012, the church opened its doors for Spectrum in Motion to hold our annual seven week summer dance intensive, Instruments of Culture. At the beginning of the 2017 school year, the church lent support by giving us residency, a full year teaching residency, not only for the summer intensive but also Stretching for Life, the pre-professional educational program running in conjunction with the school year.

Asylum Hill Congregational Church from the beginning has defined home for me and Spectrum in Motion Dance Theater Ensemble – a place of belonging for our families made up of neighborhood residents and commuters from the four corners of our city and beyond via school buses, public transportation, car-pools, and simply walking, an annual mass of 300 plus students, young adults, and their families.

As a linchpin to AHCC's proclamation to I am the Church / We are the Church, we at Spectrum in Motion Dance Theater Ensemble prescribe to the Ubuntu (South African) teaching of I Am Because We Are. The basic tenet that binds us together is that each of us are interconnected and our strength is in our unity. We are part of a whole – we belong, we participate, we answer the call.

Spectrum in Motion Dance Theater Ensemble is forever beholden to the kindness and inclusivity – the blessings, the many years of love and support, embracing us into the fold and keeping us whole. We are welcome here. We are at home here. We strive to be the best of ourselves and here in this church is where we are able to grow and seek and make a difference.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to share.

Respectfully,

Olivia Ilano Davis

Founder/ Artistic Director

Spectrum in Motion Dance Theater Ensemble

ITEM #2: 11-Year Report

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC
YEARBOOKS



Church#: 781573

Assoc: 918 Schedule: 0 Asylum Hill Congregational UCC Hartford CT 06105

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2011	2102	822	795	21	3	29	36	34	-17
2012	1961	774	843	16	8	35	65	135	-141
2013	1871	768	514	14	5	37	34	112	-90
2014	1585	767	645	14	4	40	21	323	-286
2015	1440	542	210	17	2	21	25	160	-145
2016	1656	551	160	23	3	19	18	4	23
2017	1626	493	127	10	1	13	21	33	-30
2018	1610	459	95	12	3	11	25	17	-16
2019	1524	430	148	15	1	20	44	30	-38
2020	1524	430	148	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	1493	135	262	10	0	11	20	32	-31

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2011	\$1,733,269	\$35,190	\$19,870	\$30,015	\$49,885	\$339,015	\$388,900	1.15	\$2,157,359	\$1,384,581
2012	\$1,723,925	\$87,355	\$20,031	\$49,790	\$69,821	\$343,633	\$413,454	1.16	\$2,224,734	\$1,453,706
2013	\$1,701,832	\$0	\$21,370	\$28,777	\$50,147	\$210,416	\$260,563	1.26	\$1,962,395	\$1,455,570
2014	\$1,776,300	\$155,000	\$22,226	\$47,000	\$69,226	\$7,000	\$76,226	1.25	\$2,007,526	\$1,545,279
2015	\$1,985,282	\$0	\$21,314	\$30,000	\$51,314	\$182,997	\$234,311	1.07	\$2,219,593	\$1,328,065
2016	\$2,221,000	\$12,500	\$7,694	\$25,200	\$32,894	\$7,694	\$40,588	0.35	\$2,274,088	\$1,382,984
2017	\$2,157,417	\$29,020	\$7,000	\$18,974	\$25,974	\$11,390	\$37,364	0.32	\$2,194,781	\$1,245,414
2018	\$2,146,911	\$25,547	\$7,000	\$16,560	\$23,560	\$11,535	\$35,095	0.33	\$2,182,006	\$1,041,979
2019	\$2,030,631	\$302,581	\$7,000	\$16,136	\$23,136	\$230,915	\$254,051	0.34	\$2,284,682	\$975,180
2020	\$2,030,631	\$0	\$16,100	\$0	\$16,100	\$0	\$16,100	0.79	\$2,046,731	\$0
2021	\$2,049,388	\$123,309	\$16,100	\$0	\$16,100	\$200,859	\$216,959	0.79	\$2,266,347	\$1,025,343

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2016-2021	-9.84	-75.50	63.75	-53.33	136.36	-7.73	-51.05	-0.34
2011-2021	-28.97	-83.58	-67.04	-60.38	-25.71	18.24	-67.73	5.05

Please note: Zero values ("0" or "\$0") may reflect missing information in some years. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 2007.

ITEM #3: Boards, Committees, Groups and Organizations

Group	Purpose of Group	# of Members/ Primary Leadership Roll		Frequency
Board of Deacons	Overall policy and direction of church life; primary governing body	20 members	1, 3	Monthly
Personnel Committee	Oversee personnel functions, assisting senior minister; sets personnel policy	6 members	3	As needed
Executive Committee Nominating & Governance Subcommittee of Executive Committee	Recommends policy and direction of church life to Board of Deacons Devise procedures for ensuring that members on the Board of Deacons, as well as each committee and subcommittee is broadly representative of the church's membership and diversity	6 members	2	Monthly
Administration & Finance Committee	Responsible for physical property and financial aspects of AHCC; sets or recommends administrative policies and procedures	5 members + Chief Operating Officer	3, 5	Monthly
Investment, Sub-committee of Admin. & Finance	Oversees the management of the church's endowment	6 members + Chief Operating Officer	3, 5	Quarterly
House, Sub-committee of Admin. & Finance	Oversees interior decor and refurbishment of the building and contents	5 members + Chief Operating Officer	3, 5	As needed
Stewardship Committee	Responsible for developing the philanthropic support of the church, in consultation with the Board of Deacons and Administration and Finance Committee, overseeing the Annual Stewardship Campaign for operating support of the church, development of major gifts for programs and facility needs, as well as a planned giving program to encourage long-term gifts to the church	3 members + Senior Minister + Chief Operating Officer	1, 3, 5	Monthly/ As needed

Legacy Fellowship, Subcommittee of Stewardship	Encourages and honors members who provide legacies via planned bequests	2 members	2	Quarterly
Adult Christian Education Committee	Strives to engage, enliven and deepen the faith of adults in the congregation wherever they are on their faith journey	8 members + Assoc. Minister liaison	3	Monthly
Early Life Committee	Oversees faith formation programs, holy day celebrations and family activities that serve children from infant through grade 5	7 members + Dir. of Youth & Children & Family Ministries	3	Monthly
Women's Spirituality & Fellowship Committee	Provides opportunities for women to gather for spiritual growth and fellowship	13 members + Assoc. Minister	3	Monthly
Outreach Committee	Encourages and oversees social outreach programs; solicits and allocates outreach grants; coordinates volunteer activities	6 members + Assoc. Minister	3, 5	Monthly
Membership Committee	Cultivates potential new members; conducts new member orientations; new member Sunday brunches; coordinates Welcome Table and church tour volunteers; member retention activities	8 members + Senior Minister	3	Monthly
Member Engagement	Work with new, perspective, and existing members to engage them in the spiritual life of the church	6 members + Assoc. Minister	3, 5	Monthly
Music & Arts Committee	Coordinates and supports the music and arts programs of the church for worship, concerts, workshops and exhibitions for the congregation and wider community.	6 members + Dir. of Music & Arts	3, 5	Monthly
Boar's Head Committee under Music & Arts oversight	Produces annual Boar's Head & Yule Log Festival, involving over 200 participants.	Numbers of members varies + Dir. of Music & Arts	3, 5	As needed
Sanctuary Choir	Volunteers and professional musicians sing at worship services; concerts	45-60 members + Dir. of Music & Arts	3, 5	Weekly
Handbell Choir	Performs at worship services throughout the year	12 members + Dir. of Music & Arts	3, 5	Weekly

Cherub Choir	K-2nd grade performs occasionally in worship services throughout the year	8-10 children + Dir. of Music & Arts	3, 5	Weekly
Children's Choir	Grades 3-5 performs occasionally in worship services throughout the year	35 children + Dir. of Music & Arts	3, 5	Weekly
Visual Arts, Sub-Committee of Music & Arts	Revolving art installations; classes/instructions; workshops	3-5 members + Dir. of Music & Arts	3, 5	Varies in frequency
Prayer Shawl Ministry	Prayerfully creates and distributes shawls to members and community	75 members	3	Monthly
Hill Quilters Ministry	Creates quilts, hats and pillows for members and community	10 members + Dir. of Music & Arts	3, 5	Monthly
Christian Sharing Groups	Meet regularly to support one another on their spiritual journey	225 members in 27 groups	3	Monthly
Justice in Action, Affinity Group	Works in conjunction with other community groups to end the culture of violence and racial bias	20 members + Dir. of Discipleship	3, 5	Monthly
Crisis Food Support, Affinity Group	Delivers groceries to families in immediate need	10 members + Dir. of Discipleship	3, 5	As needed

For Leadership Role use:

- (1) = clergy takes primary initiative and responsibility;
- (2) = clergy and laity share responsibility;
- (3) = laity take primary initiative and responsibility;
- (4) = the pastor's presence is expected periodically/occasionally;
- (5) = staff member

ITEM #4: Job Description

Minister of Mid/Later Life Asylum Hill Congregational Church

Title: Minister of Mid/Later Life

Position Type: This is a full-time, salaried position functioning within a team of clergy, programmatic and administrative support staff.

Reporting and Accountability:

- Direct report – Senior Minister
- Accountability – As a minister called by the congregation, the minister is accountable, through the Personnel Committee, to the congregation. The annual goal setting process and performance evaluation will be done in concert with the senior minister.
- All ministers of AHCC have freedom of expression in the pulpit as well as freedom to express his or her views on faith issues outside the pulpit. They are expected to follow the Ordained Minister’s Code as set forth in the UCC Manual on Ministry.
- Each minister called to AHCC will protect and build his or her relationship with God and attend to self-care, taking full advantage of vacation time as well as opportunities for personal and professional development through clergy groups, conferences, and continuing education.

Overview:

This pastor is charged with a full range of ministerial duties with respect to faith formation, justice and outreach, pastoral care and worship leadership for parishioners and their families, in the middle to later phases of life (for the purpose of this document thought to be in their early 50s and older).

As the Mid/Later Life Minister, this pastor will:

- a) Be a spiritual and collaborative leader in all aspects of congregational life within AHCC with primary focus on faith formation, justice and outreach, pastoral care and worship; and
- b) Form healthy pastoral relationships with parishioners, and their families, in the middle and later-life age demographic (defined above); and
- c) Help parishioners in this demographic find and form meaningful connections to the ministries and mission of AHCC as well as to other members of the congregation; and
- d) Represent AHCC appropriately in the wider community as appropriate to the work of the Mid/Later Life Ministries and in concert with the directives of the Senior Minister.

Qualifications:

The Minister shall be an ordained minister in good standing with the United Church of Christ (or with dual standing with an affiliated denomination) and hold at least a Master of Divinity degree.

Qualities that are of highest priority are as follows:

- Visionary
- Creative

- Empathetic
- Organized
- High EQ

Skills that are of the highest priority are as follows:

- Ability to communicate effectively
- Ability to think innovatively and creatively
- Ability to lead a team, as well as collaborate within a team
- Preaching and creative worship planning
- Technologically savvy with a mastery of Microsoft Office, Zoom, Teams, etc.

Performance Expectations:

The work will require the minister to collaborate with the full spectrum of AHCC program areas in order to be effective. This minister will work with all AHCC staff in a manner that fosters and facilitates creativity, collaboration, respectful and supportive teamwork.

Faith Formation

Faith formation and spiritual growth for the AHCC parishioner in the Mid/Later Life demographic is addressed through a wide range of programs (several listed below). This pastor is expected to serve as a spiritual leader, as well as a creative and collaborative thinking partner to these ministries.

- Adult Christian Education (and affiliated affinity groups)
- Men's and Women's Fellowship
- Prayer groups and sharing groups

Justice and Outreach

The Minister of Mid/Later Life will empower the congregation and AHCC groups to focus on justice and outreach through the following ministries and opportunities to serve the community.

- Community Meals – a free weekly meal that serves 150+ meals to our neighbors
- Justice in Action – an affinity group that organizes opportunities for education, advocacy and engagement around local and national justice issues
- Outreach Committee – AHCC's grant-making ministry
- Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance – coalition of local faith communities that advocate for meaningful systemic and legislative change
- Community Engagement – identify new and innovative opportunities to engage/partner in the community

Pastoral Care

The Minister of Mid/Later Life is expected to provide pastoral care to people primarily within the Mid/Later Life demographic, in collaboration with the clergy team. This involves, but is not limited to, personal visits, phone calls, and electronic/written correspondence, as well as providing guidance for outside professional counseling and other referral services.

Worship

The Minister of Mid/Later Life will collaborate weekly with clergy and staff members to create and execute meaningful worship experiences. Activities include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Weekly planning

- Preaching and liturgy
- Special services (Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Longest Night)
- Worship for special occasions: Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms, etc.

Additional Responsibilities

- Maintain a working knowledge of the annual church budget, and general operating procedures
- Participate in staff meetings, executive committee meetings, Deacon's meetings and any regularly scheduled meetings with lay leaders and committees/groups
- Attend to denominational obligations and professional development
- Other duties as assigned

AHCC is an equal opportunity employer with an inclusive workplace in which we embrace diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives for the benefit of our staff, congregation, and community at large.

ITEM #5: AHCC Roadmap 2024

AHCC ROADMAP 2024

Our spiritual journey is taking us to inspiring places, some familiar and some new. To guide our journey over the next three years, AHCC clergy, staff and lay leadership have created a road map to guide us to make a big, bold, positive impact on the world as we strive to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly as a compassionate church community with resources to share.

We look forward to traveling this journey with you!

The Journey

Nurture and Engage

Welcoming and nurturing an engaged, generous, thriving, inquiring, and diverse membership around the world.

Pursue Justice

Promoting, inspiring, and engaging with our neighbors in the work of justice and collaborative community development in our local area.

Expand Our Impact

Using all our resources – tangible and intangible, human and financial – to engage with and serve the world as a source and force of light, love, and justice.

Destination 2024

Nurture and Engage

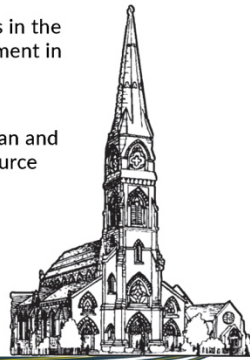
AHCC is a growing, robust church community, committed and seeking to deepen our faith and our faith community

Pursue Justice

AHCC is a catalyst for justice in our community.

Expand Our Impact

AHCC is recognized nationally as a leader in positive, purposeful and proactive Christianity.



Key Tools

Technology
Internal Staffing/External Services
Financial Health & Growth
Congregation & Community Commitment

Frequently Asked Questions (and the answers)

Why are we doing this?

This is an exciting time at AHCC – the perfect time to chart a path to guide us in making the biggest impact possible. With a full complement of settled ministers, establishing a vision now that gives us a road map for where AHCC aims to go over the next 3 years will help stretch AHCC to reach its full potential and to energize and engage members in the mission of the church.

When do we start?

Now! We are jumping in immediately to inject new energy into longstanding directions such as membership growth, education, and engagement. Additionally, a task force has been formed to explore new ways AHCC can make significant contributions to our community, in the form of one or more projects, collaborations, and/or partnerships. We will continue to communicate about plans as they are developed.

Who is leading AHCC Roadmap 2024 and how can I get involved?

Everyone who is interested can play a role. Under the direction of the senior minister, the clergy team and staff are developing plans in each of the areas of strategic priority. The lay leadership, specifically the moderator, vice moderator and the Executive Committee, with the Diaconate and others, are working on planning and implementing the AHCC Roadmap 2024. If you are interested in a particular area, please talk to any of the ministers or anyone on the Executive Committee.

Does AHCC Roadmap 2024 chart a new direction for the church?

Yes and no. In many ways, AHCC Roadmap 2024 reaffirms long-standing priorities of the church to clarify and focus us in ways that will help guide us over the next three years. But some of AHCC Roadmap 2024 points us in new directions. For example, AHCC Roadmap 2024 highlights our ability and desire to play a role in important national and international conversations about Christianity. We know that our reach can be very broad, and that technology, as well as the power of our clergy's messages, can extend AHCC's voice into areas that were not previously possible.

Will this plan affect stewardship?

AHCC Roadmap 2024 and stewardship are both central to the work of the church. Belief in the church's mission is one of the most compelling reasons why members give. AHCC Roadmap 2024 provides a path for how AHCC will continue to bring our voices, values, and resources to bear to drive positive impact – both in our community and throughout the world. It is our hope that enthusiasm for our mission will inspire members to engage in stewardship to support these strategic priorities as generously as possible.

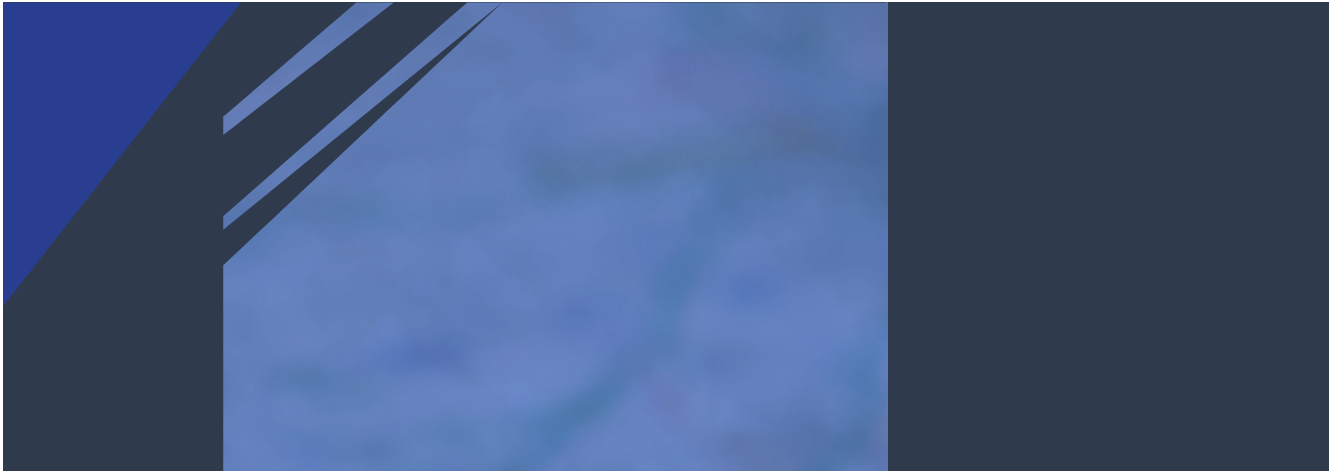
How does AHCC Roadmap 2024 relate to the church's role in the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA)?

AHCC Roadmap 2024 makes clear that seeking and promoting justice is a core priority for AHCC, and aligns with GHIAA's work on justice-related initiatives.



Asylum Hill Congregational Church
814 Asylum Ave | Hartford Connecticut

ITEM #6: AHCC Roadmap 2024 Year 1



**PLAIN FOR THE CT HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**REV. DR. MEHR-MUSKA IS AN
ADJUNCT INSTRUCTOR AT
HARTFORD INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY AND SOUGHT-AF-
TER PRESENTER AND WORK-
SHOP LEADER**

**HIRED OPERATIONS & DE-
VELOPMENT CONSULTANTS
TO MOVE INTO THE FUTURE
WITH INTENTIONALITY AND
STRENGTH**

ITEM #7: Neighborhood Vision Task Force Report

AHCC and the Asylum Hill Neighborhood

Potential Areas of Connection and Involvement

Background: The AHCC Roadmap 2024 calls us to look for ways to engage more deeply and meaningfully with our community. Toward that end, the Neighborhood Vision Task Force was created in early 2021 to help us look inside and outside the church for ideas and inspiration to plan for this deeper engagement with the community. The core members of the task force included: Jim Grigsby, co-chair; Brent Robertson, co-chair; Dean Amadon; Ted Carroll; Abby Charamut; Sandy Wood Forand; and Nancy Kirchmyer. The task force has been thoughtful and dedicated, and the church community offers deep thanks for their work seeking ways to fulfill important parts of our mission.

The task force engaged in one-on-one conversations and electronic surveys with AHCC members, and also participated in meetings related to the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association's (AHNA) strategic planning process. Using the information gathered, and the priorities set in AHCC Roadmap 2024, the task force identified elements of AHNA's strategic plan where AHCC might lend support or become a champion.

Several principles guided the task force and will continue to guide AHCC as a whole as the church considers next steps, and these principles include:

- Recognizing that neighborhood residents know their neighborhood best
- Seeking ways to get to know and support our neighbors in building the "Beloved Community"
- Demonstrating humility and hospitality as we build relationships
- Discerning what the Spirit may reveal about paths to pursue

Potential Opportunities for Expanding AHCC's Involvement with Asylum Hill Neighbors:

The proposed action steps come largely from the neighborhood strategic plan that Asylum Hill residents and stakeholders developed and represent opportunities for church members and neighborhood residents to work on together to achieve common goals.

Actions Requiring Small-Medium Investments of Staff/Volunteer Time and/or Financial Support

Arts and Culture	<i>Ensure that AHCC events are included in any Asylum Hill promotional efforts</i>	<i>Promote AHCC as a venue for theater, dance, music and exhibits</i>	<i>Promote Arts and Spirituality Retreat, Boar's Head and other annual events more widely in the neighborhood</i>
	<i>Continue support for the Hartford Creative Contest, encouraging church members to participate, promote & donate to the effort</i>	<i>Working with Voce, Voices of Hartford, Boys and Girls Club and others, to form a neighborhood youth chorus</i>	<i>Offer fun, hands-on creative experiences for neighborhood youth AND church youth together</i>
Economic Development	<i>Enlist AHCC members to serve as advisors to new, struggling, or growing businesses</i>		
Employment	<i>Leverage member connections to area employers to register in centralized job posting</i>	<i>Make AHCC available as job fair site</i>	<i>Enlist AHCC members to serve as trained mentors and coaches for jobseekers, guiding them through the search, hiring, on-boarding</i>
Environment	<i>Publish articles and educational materials on ahcc.org & in the weekly newsletter on environmental issues</i>	<i>Work with Sustainable CT, and others to help fund and plant a pollinator garden on church grounds</i>	<i>Establish a Green Committee or Affinity Group to oversee green initiatives, as the UCC recommends</i>
	<i>Conduct an energy audit of the AHCC campus through the HES program of Energize CT</i>		
Housing	<i>Enlist AHCC members to volunteer with NINA, Rebuilding Together, Habitat for Humanity, to maintain properties & build homes for new/ struggling homeowners</i>		
Human Services	<i>Identify church member(s) to serve on the Human Service Leadership Council being formed to share information & form partnerships. Ensure that area funders (Hartford Foundation, United Way) are on the Council</i>	<i>Working through AHCC's Outreach Committee, consider how AHCC can continue to support neighborhood nonprofits & the targeted goals of Roadmap 2024</i>	<i>Working through Justice in Action and GHIAA Core Leadership Team, advocate for more government support of proven services that meet residents' social, health and economic needs</i>
Youth Services	<i>Work with AHNA to increase youth & family engagement with groups like the Boys and Girls Club, Hartford Youth Scholars, Hartford Promise, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and others</i>		

Actions Requiring Larger Investments of Staff/Volunteer Time and/or Financial Support

<p>Environment</p>	<p>Work with The Hartford, Sustainable CT & others to set up & fund a food composting system for scraps from AHCC & surrounding neighborhood <i>Note: Upfront investments could be partly recouped by energy conservation grants, users of charging stations and savings in heating costs.</i></p>	<p>Work with PACE (People's Action for Clean Energy) to install solar energy and heat pumps at our building</p>	<p>Secure State funding to establish EV charging stations in our parking lot <i>[Note: many of these now offer funding structures that avoid "significant" upfront investments.]</i></p>
<p>Public Safety/Quality of Life</p>	<p>Commit to holding church services monthly or quarterly with other faith groups in Sigourney Square Park that could include multi-generational park clean-up with food & entertainment</p>		
<p>Youth Services</p>	<p>To serve an increased population of young people in the Asylum Hill neighborhood, trusted organizations will need significant funding to which AHCC could both contribute and act as a lead fundraiser</p>	<p>Take a leadership role in helping Voce develop an Asylum Hill Neighborhood Youth Chorus. Est. Ann. Budget: \$200,000 for musical & admin. staff & public performances. Consider making a substantial ongoing contribution as part of Outreach funding</p>	<p>Working through the Outreach Committee, AHCC would need to examine current grant-making policies, priorities, and practices</p>

Key Questions to Consider:

In presenting these opportunities, the task force suggested the church consider the following key questions:

1. To what extent is AHCC able and willing to make its physical space and technology available to outside groups? Neighborhood residents are interested in identifying venues for various efforts, from showcasing performing and visual artists to providing access to computers, WiFi, and/or landline phones.

2. To what extent is AHCC able and willing to dedicate and/or increase staff to support its neighborhood initiatives? AHCC could serve our neighbors through engagement and deployment of trained volunteers. To strengthen our member engagement capacity, AHCC would need to assign or hire staff to identify the skills and interests of our members, connect them to potential volunteer opportunities, and find ways to nurture our members spiritually as they serve others.

3. To what extent is AHCC able and willing to make financial investments? The church should consider making a significant capital investment to establish itself as a leader in the environmental sustainability movement. From solar panels on the roof, EV charging stations in the parking lot and/or to investments in off-site solar farms, AHCC could make a powerful statement about its commitment to preserving God's creation.

4. Organizationally, what changes may be needed to support an expanded neighborhood outreach effort? Staff is needed to plan, oversee, and evaluate these efforts. To the extent the church decides to address climate change, how will this neighborhood outreach effort intersect with those efforts? How can this effort be integrated into a larger restructuring of our governance?

5. If AHCC were committed to invest space, staff, and resources toward these activities, what would need to be true to call those investments a success? What metrics will be used to measure if we are getting closer or have reached our destinations?