

## Search and Call Tools for Congregations

Advancing the Spirit's guidance into God's future

# THE NEW LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Who  
are  
we

Who  
is our  
neighbor

Who is  
God  
calling us  
to become

?

The new Local Church Profile is not just for congregations in search of a pastor. *All* congregations are encouraged to engage in its process of discovery every 3-5 years. The UCC Local Church Profile reflects valuable data, assesses ministry, clarifies change, and helps advance the calling of the congregation. Not just to be completed by a search committee – the more participation, the better!

MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE,  
SUPPORT & AUTHORIZATION  
**UNITED CHURCH**  
OF CHRIST



**First Plymouth Congregational Church  
Englewood, CO**

Senior Minister

Rocky Mountain Conference

**Version 1.3**

**LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS**

- Position Posting
- Who Is God Calling Us To Become?
- Who Are We Now?
- Who Is Our Neighbor?
- References
- Consent and Validation

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

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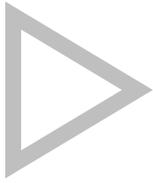
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## POSITION POSTING

LISTING INFORMATION

SCOPE OF WORK

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WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

### LISTING INFORMATION

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**Church name:** First Plymouth Congregational Church

**Street address:** 3501 S. Colorado Blvd, Englewood, CO 80113

**Supplemental web links:** <https://www.firstplymouthchurch.org/>

**Additional ecumenical affiliations** (e.g. denominations, communions, fellowships):

**Conference:** Rocky Mountain Conference

**Association:** Metro Denver

**UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person (Name, Title, Phone, Email):**

Rev. Sue Artt, Rocky Mountain Conference Minister, 303-984-9118, sue@rmcucc.org

#### **Summary Ministry Description:**

In a short paragraph, reflect on where your church is going and what it might look like when you get there. What do you need to get there? Who are you seeking to join you on this part of your church's faith journey?

*We are seeking a senior minister to be the chief executive officer of a church with a significant presence in the Denver Metro Area who has exceptional strengths in preaching and advocacy for social and environmental justice. The congregation is looking to welcome into the life and ministry of the church a younger, more diverse demographic who will provide the ideas, energy and financial resources to meet the goals of being the hands, heart and face of Jesus in the world. Our senior minister must support all ages, but we are especially interested in someone who will shepherd our children and youth and teach them how to be part of the church.*

#### **What we value about living in our area (2 – 3 sentences):**

*Coloradans value their work-life balance and enjoy spending as much time outdoors as possible. Living in the Metro Denver area affords easy access to the mountains and all manner of outdoor experiences. We like to joke that you can drive an hour to ski, then return to Denver and play a round of golf. The area also offers all the entertainment, professional sports, museums, universities and quality restaurants you would expect of a major metropolitan area.*

**Current size of membership:** 606

**Languages used in ministry** (other than English): English is the only language used.

**Position Title:** Senior Minister

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

**Compensation Level:** *Full Time*

**Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?** *Yes*

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

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*(add here the Scope of Work developed by your church using the Call Agreement Workbook)*  
**(40-50 hours weekly / 10-12 units)**

*The senior minister is authorized to delegate duties as necessary and create an organization responsive to the congregation's and community's needs. Generally, the duties fall into the following categories:*

### ***Worship***

- *Offers spiritual leadership by providing varied, meaningful, and challenging worship opportunities for the congregation. Sermons are expected to be biblically based in exploring contemporary issues.*
- *Prepares and leads Sunday worship including scripture study, crafting of liturgy and bulletin, sermon preparation, guiding and sometimes finding lay liturgists, planning of music in coordination with musical staff or volunteers, preaching, offering of prayers, etc.*

### ***Pastoral Care***

- *Provides pastoral care and counseling.*
- *Leads weddings, funerals and baptisms.*

### ***Leadership in Advocacy***

- *Provides ministerial counsel and support to the Mission Team.*
- *Participates in wider church denominational activities at local, regional, and national levels.*
- *Provides leadership in ecumenical and community relationships.*
- *Develops leadership roles and skills by working with people in the church to create ministry and programs.*
- *Participates in strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry.*

### ***Education***

- *Inspires spiritual formation in others, based on their own deep spiritual foundation, energizing and deepening the spiritual connections and faith understandings of others in all they do.*
- *Contributes to on-going Christian education of the congregation including confirmation and new member classes.*
- *Studies and prays to increase faith and to improve skills to lead, teach and preach.*

### ***Administration***

- *Provides executive leadership and administrative oversight to the ministries, programs, and staff of the church in accordance with the Carver Model Governance Policy.*
- *Supports faithful financial development and stewardship.*

## **Core Competencies:**

(List three core competencies that you imagine could be foundational in your next minister's relationship with the church. For example, a church seeking a pastoral care minister might hope to call someone who is caring, sensitive and sociable, while a church seeking an executive minister might want an organized, detail-oriented and time-conscious person.)

1. *Excellent communication skills: The senior minister must communicate effectively in speech and in writing the First Plymouth message; must be a great preacher and have good judgment about how to preach with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper (or relevant social media) in the other; must be scholarly, intellectual, and a theologian; must be an intentional, engaged listener who also follows up based on what he or she hears.*
2. *Creativity and flexibility: Creativity to explore alternative ways to worship – including different forms of liturgy that have integrity for the membership and feed both older and younger generations; to develop different points of entry for new people to find their place at First Plymouth and grow in their Christian life.*
3. *Engaging leadership: Leadership that captures the attention and steers the effort of the lay leadership and members as the driving force of First Plymouth; that communicates and demonstrates the calling to be a transformational church in the 21st century; that allows the congregation to express their love of each other, their church, and the wider community.*

## **COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT**

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**Salary Basis** (from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance): \$100,000 – \$125,000 negotiable based on experience.

**Benefits:** *Salary plus Benefits*

**What is the expected living situation for your next minister** (e.g. parsonage, living nearby with a housing allowance, living elsewhere to commute as needed)? *Living nearby with a housing allowance.*

**Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister.**

*The senior minister should live within a 20-30 minute commute of First Plymouth.*

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

*There are presently two support groups for ministers: a group of local like-minded ministers and a second group with the ministers of the larger churches in the Rocky Mountain Conference.*

## WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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### **Describe the ministry goals you envision your next minister collaborating with the congregation to achieve.**

*As related in the answer to “Who is God Calling Us to Become?”, First Plymouth aspires to become a transformational church in the 21st century. Our ministry goals, at a minimum, include*

- *exciting and relevant worship which speaks to the diversity of the congregation and attracts new members*
- *deep engagement with the community in the areas of social and environmental justice and mission*
- *empowerment of our youth and children and young families in their pursuit and practice of a healthy Christian life*
- *inspiration of joyful sharing of financial resources in support of First Plymouth’s transformational presence in our community*

*Recognizing that the attainment of these goals is ultimately the responsibility of the congregation, our next minister should become acquainted with the lay leadership and members to bring forward the best of First Plymouth and facilitate the accomplishment of these goals. The limited professional staff means that the church members and the Senior Minister rely heavily on lay leadership.*

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

*In recent years, mission has emerged as a paramount function focused largely, though not exclusively, on our impact beyond our walls. Therefore, we envision the individual will be a strong voice and leadership presence in the greater community through continued growth and commitment to our current mission activities and the development of additional, creative community outreach undertakings. As an example, we envision that some of these activities could utilize electronic or social media applications to enable users to participate in mission based social networking or resources.*

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

*First Plymouth does not require language skills other than English. The Denver Metro area, however, does have many churches where Spanish is an important linguistic asset.*

**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.**

**1. CARING FOR ALL CREATION**

- Nurturing care and compassion for God's creation.
- Maintaining a basic understanding of mental health and wellness.
- Practicing self-care and life balance.
- Providing hope and healing to a hurting world.
- Attending to one's own spiritual and pastoral care, including engagement in supervision as appropriate.
- Stewarding the resources of the Church.

**2. WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE AND MERCY**

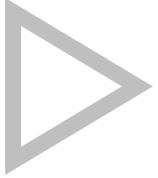
- Drawing on the ministry of Jesus Christ to confront injustice and oppression.
- Practicing the radical hospitality of God.
- Identifying and working to overcome explicit and implicit bias in the life of the Church.
- Understanding community context and navigating change with a community.
- Engaging in mission and outreach.
- Building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence

**3. STRENGTHENING INTER- AND INTRA- PERSONAL ASSETS**

- Developing and maintaining a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life experiences.
- Living in relationships of covenantal accountability with God and the Church.
- Exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity.
- Respecting the dignity of all God's people.
- Understanding and ministering to stages of human development across the life span.
- Demonstrating excellent communication skills.

**4. PARTICIPATING IN THEOLOGICAL PRACTICE**

- Practicing theological reflection and engagement as part of one's sense of ministerial identity.
- Integrating theological reflection in teaching, preaching, and ecclesial and community leadership.
- Expressing and appreciating a variety of theological perspectives.



## 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?**

*First Plymouth has been a “transformational” church for over 150 years. God is calling us to become a transformational church in the twenty-first century. “Transformation” is change in form, appearance, nature, or character. God is calling us to support all the covenants we are currently committed to while facing forward into new dimensions of existing ministry and into new opportunities that we have yet to imagine.*

*This question asks First Plymouth to envision what we should become, as distinguished from who we are now. We clearly want to do more of what we do now, more leadership, passion, and action for mission and social and environmental justice and expand what we do now into new areas:*

- *to empower our youth and children and young families in their participation and through programs to attract and keep them*
- *to attract a younger more diverse congregation*
- *to provide more compassionate caregiving to our caregivers*
- *to explore worship that is accessible and compelling to newcomers, with more-spirit centered, love-infused Sunday mornings*
- *to teach and nourish a spirit of “joyous giving” in our members to enable financial support of our beloved church community*
- *to find more opportunities for outreach and connection to community groups*
- *to regain our high profile with the Rocky Mountain Conference of the UCC and become better known in the Metro Denver area.*

*It is equally clear that we have addressed these matters, with varying degrees of progress. These longstanding challenges need fresh approaches, a new vision, and new leadership. To push our efforts forward, we need a new senior minister to provide transformational leadership.*

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

For example, describe two experiments your congregation has initiated or engaged in the past year, what were the results and where do you see your next steps? Has your church had a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement; if so, where do you see that plan/vision taking you?

*First Plymouth just completed a 6-year planning and implementation cycle and is looking forward to developing a new plan with new leadership.*

### ***Opportunities***

*First Plymouth is very active throughout the greater faith community in promoting social justice and working towards structural change.*

- *Just Faith in Action (JFIA): First Plymouth has been working with several other predominantly white church congregations of the Colorado Interfaith Alliance in their Facing Racism Program. We are also active members of Together Colorado, another faith-based organization active in addressing police Use-of- Force policies and Criminal Justice Reform.*
- *Colorado Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence (CFCU): First Plymouth helped form this interfaith coalition, made up of more than forty congregations of several faith traditions and works year-round advocating for common sense gun safety laws.*
- *FP WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged for Mental Health): A newly formed group is seeking to educate members and the community about the myriad elements of mental health and is offering activities and programs to increase awareness and information about sources of assistance to those experiencing mental health issues and brain disorders.*

### ***Challenges***

*First Plymouth is unique. While largely a mainstream church, we are not dying as other churches are reporting. Good energy and resources are available, but we need new strategy and leadership to promote the First Plymouth message and elevate its visibility, drawing more interest from the community at large.*

*First Plymouth does well in caring for and serving our seniors who make up the majority of the congregation. We are interested in keeping the seniors in our congregation engaged since they have provided consistent financial support and leadership. At the same time, we need to attract different demographic groups, especially young adults and families with children. We have tried different programs, messages and services but have not found an answer that works to fill in the gaps.*

*First Plymouth is adjacent to both a very affluent neighborhood and a more modest middle-income neighborhood. While generally visitors report that they find First Plymouth welcoming, there are those who feel intimidated and downright uncomfortable by the relatively high level of income and education of the congregation. Our new minister should recognize that the demographic make-up of the congregation works both for and against us. First Plymouth hasn't learned how to reach out to and make space for our middle-class neighbors who may be feeling the economic pressures and potentially getting squeezed out of the metro area. Our conversations on diversity typically don't address socioeconomic diversity but we are geographically and theologically positioned to do just that.*



## WHO ARE WE NOW?

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

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

11-YEAR REPORT

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

CHURCH FINANCES

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

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### **Describe your congregation’s life of faith.**

For example, what beliefs and commitments are stated in your congregation’s purpose statement or membership vows? How is God most often described in worship liturgy? In what ways would you describe the Holy Spirit in your midst?

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### **FIRST PLYMOUTH MISSION STATEMENT** *(adopted in the late 1990’s)*

The mission of First Plymouth Congregational Church United Church of Christ is to worship God, to nurture people on their Christian journey, and to witness to God’s love in word and deed.

Relying on the grace and power of God, known to us most fully in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, we aspire to be a community which is biblically based, intellectually open, theologically progressive, and inclusive of all people.

Fostering an atmosphere of joy and celebration that welcomes all people, we commit to provide:

- Varied and meaningful opportunities for worship and spiritual growth.
  - Engaging and interactive Christian education for all age groups.
  - A caring and compassionate ministry to members and friends of the church family.
  - Loving service to the wider community with a focus on human need, social justice, and stewardship of the earth.
  - Generous material and spiritual support for our mission and community.
- 

*A description of First Plymouth’s life of faith as garnered from current input from the congregation: First Plymouth is a welcoming, questioning congregation on a Christian journey. A church of engagement and activism, seeking more of both. It is a church of courage, willing to take a stand, especially on social justice issues. It is a learning church. It is a church with a strong and lengthy tradition and practice of active lay leadership. It is a church which has remained steadfast to its history of supporting the less fortunate in the community for over 150 years. First Plymouth values the arts and music and is known in the community for its art collection and concert performances. First Plymouth consistently recognizes the importance of children’s and youth programs but has struggled to achieve consistency and strength in this vital area.*

*In 2013, a comprehensive report entitled “Weave Our New Tomorrow” about what First Plymouth members value and the legacy they hope to leave to future generations was prepared by a study group and was based on over 250 responses. Among the most important are the following core values: First Plymouth is at its best...*

- *when we participate and become individually involved;*
- *when we unconditionally accept, care for and support our members;*
- *when we reach out to people outside our church community;*
- *when we foster intellectual, personal and spiritual growth;*
- *when we express and embrace our faith;*
- *when we involve and nurture families, children and youth;*
- *when we seek and share diversity;*
- *when we rejoice in our rich traditions and explore new boundaries.*

*Many would agree that God is referred to in worship in an inclusive way which is open to a variety of interpretations such as a personal God, an Eternal Creator or Spirit, a Creative and Loving Cosmic Force, or, simply, Love. The Holy Spirit moves us to be the church we are or can become. Another way we are inclusive is to use both male and female pronouns, and gender-neutral language when referring to God as demonstrated by the version of the Lord’s Prayer we use that begins with Our Creator.*

### **Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.**

*First Plymouth has been home to a congregation that is progressive in many ways and is dedicated to its many missions in the community, such as its decades-long support for the Denver Inner City Parish, affordable senior housing provided by Kentucky Circle Village, and support of Habitat for Humanity home building through the Loaves and Fishes Coalition. First Plymouth also is and has been truly congregational – its strength is in the persistent determination of its members to participate, self-govern, worship, and be the heart and face and hands of Christ in the world. It has maintained a steadfast fidelity to who we have been, who we are, and who we will become in the service of God.*

*As evidence of these strengths and positive qualities, First Plymouth conducted a successful capital campaign from 2014-2018 which raised approximately \$3.2 million to renovate our sanctuary and chapel and improve the building’s energy usage. The construction, which occurred in 2014-2015, has provided us with a 21<sup>st</sup> century place to worship that reflects our progressive future. Ten percent of the total collected was dedicated to the missions of the church.*

*More examples of strengths and positive values, from social justice support to outreach to Community Camp at La Foret and many others are contained throughout this profile and need not be repeated here. Organizational and internal efforts to energize and serve our church community: Web of Care – a volunteer program through which church members visit and connect with other church members on an ongoing basis, recognizing the ministry we have to our own community; the formation and functioning of the Mission Team, the action center of the church, consisting of church leaders of Coordinated Areas of Ministry (CAMs) – the doers and their leaders; the adoption of policy governance, which decreased the size of church council and established the proper roles and responsibilities for governance and executive leadership.*

*First Plymouth has adapted to a changing landscape over the years. Historically, the Outreach Ministry budget was part of the church’s operating budget funded with pledges. As pledges grew smaller so did the Outreach*

*budget. This upset many members. The solution was the Share the Plate model of funding outreach efforts. Each month, a non-profit organization is sponsored as the recipient of offerings collected during the worship service. Worshipers can decide how much to contribute to an organization. A portion of the loose offerings goes to the Outreach Ministry for other outreach projects. For the 2017 fiscal year, \$51,800 was collected from the Share the Plate program.*

*For many years, our efforts to gain new members were challenging and inconsistent. Past new member programs (NMP) were either lengthy (one year) or too superficial, not giving enough grounding, which led folks to join and then leave the church. The program was passed around and presented in several variations. During the last few years, however, new member classes have become much more intentional after being studied by Church Council and a membership task force. The current new member program has emerged as a successful, sustained effort, coordinated by a long-time church member working together with the Pastoral Care staff and senior minister. The NMP has received considerable positive feedback. Before participating in the NMP, those interested have an opportunity to attend an FP At-a-Glance program offered once a month that gives visitors more information with which to decide if they should participate in the more extensive NMP.*

### **Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.**

For example, where does worship take place, and what is it based around? What was a recent baptism like? What are some words used to describe good preaching?

*Worship takes place in the sanctuary and is based on the traditional model: an organ prelude, gathering prayer, hymns and choir anthems, passing the peace and time for community, scripture reading, sermon, pastoral prayer and the Lord's Prayer, offering, and benediction. For the twelve months of 2017, the average worship attendance was 198.*

*Engaging and inspiring preaching is highly valued and for some is the highlight of their Sunday experience. Preaching is presently lectionary based and seems most moving when the preacher is able to engage the congregants by educating and explaining the Bible in ways directly related to the daily lives of the listeners. The congregation wants biblically based but not Biblically bound sermons, so for some, the use of the lectionary text is restrictive.*

*Music of high quality - choral, instrumental, orchestral, various ensembles, and more has been and continues to be a signature element of worship at First Plymouth. The Chancel Choir includes as many as 50 people. In 2016, we accepted a new top-of-the-line midi-capable organ console from a donor which has provided a new dimension to the scope of our musical capabilities. From antiphonal organ to strings to percussion, our new console offers virtually unlimited opportunity for musical expression. Our music program, which is home to some of Denver's premier vocal and instrumental ensembles, continues to attract visitors who then join in church activities.*

*During worship at First Plymouth, one is free to bring one's own image or images or feelings about God to the service, to refine or reinforce them, to add to them or develop new images and feelings, all with the sense that those who lead our worship and those who worship with us are joined in heart and spirit and love, and that one is at peace, engulfed in a community of love.*

*First Plymouth recently asked the congregation to complete a survey on theology. Based on the responses, the easy conclusion is that the membership is theologically diverse. Many members are comfortable saying that they have a traditional understanding of God and Jesus. The church also has members who would call themselves atheists or agnostic. Given that background, the congregation envisions our next minister to be fluent and comfortable with our diversity.*

*There is a sentiment among some of the congregation that there is a disconnection between our rather traditional worship service and our progressive persona. Some members report that the worship service doesn't "feed" them and they choose not to attend but participate at First Plymouth in a variety of other ways.*

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

For example, how are young people in leadership? How do people continue to form their faith over a lifetime? Name a topic studied or curriculum used recently; what was the impact of this study on those who attended?

*Education and learning are foundational at First Plymouth and many members attach the highest value to learning at church.*

**Youth Education and Activities:** *First Plymouth has a supportive and safe youth program, including the following: a youth band, Sunday night gatherings, "lock-in" night, and a variety of outings. Recent youth destinations include Hawaii for a UCC regional youth event, California and North Carolina for environmentally and spiritually focused mission trips including a visit to the Wild Goose Festival in North Carolina. Parents and now grown youth acknowledge the critical importance of having a church youth group during the challenging adolescent years. The Youth Group operates independently and has a limited connection to the congregation or other church activities.*

*For elementary students, the Children's Ministries staff wrote their own curriculum for 1st-4th graders to teach children the foundational stories of the Bible. Each unit focuses on three different learning activities to reinforce the theme of the unit; story-based learning using literature; an art or science lesson, and having the children act out the story for the preschoolers. We also have had a strong Vacation Bible School program for the last seven years with attendance as high as 70 kids ages 3-11 with 30 plus volunteers. Many of the VBS participants are not regular First Plymouth attendees but return year after year because of the program.*

*A middle school Bible study for 5-7<sup>th</sup> graders has been offered the last 4 years for students. This three-year course is designed to provide students with a fundamental understanding of the Bible as a tool to explore and expand their individual faith journeys. Students are encouraged to think critically about their beliefs and begin readying themselves for the formal First Plymouth United Church of Christ confirmation process which typically takes place in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Participation in this class has dropped way off as has participation in confirmation. The kids who do participate in confirmation may not have attended Sunday school and are poorly prepared for this rite of passage.*

*There is a perennial struggle to attract and keep families with kids because of the increasing number of youth sports scheduled on Sundays. Many competing interests keep attendance irregular for most families with children of middle elementary age and older. The preschool classes are regularly well attended. Our middle school age students sometimes choose to come to youth group on Sunday evenings instead of Sunday school in the mornings.*

*We are more of a destination church: some families travel from significant distances and find it difficult to be at church more than once on a Sunday or even within a week. Our once vibrant youth choir has been inactive for years because of waning attendance. We are looking for more leadership from a senior minister to help families connect with church through the children's ministries program.*

*Adult Christian Education and other groups engage on Sunday in Bible and book studies, discussions, classes, presentations and movies on varied subjects. Past classes have included topics such as end-of-life decisions, estate planning, Lectio Divino (holy listening), education and care of orphans of the Rwandan genocide, the science of the Christian Right, and LGBTQ issues and the Bible. Many recent programs addressed racism in America. As a result, Church Council voted to become a "Congregation of Racial Equity." The Whole Earth Ministry hosts at least two classes each year. Topics have included global climate change, the pros and cons of fracking, environmental stewardship, the Pope's Encyclical and the Paris Climate Accord.*

*Theology and social justice studies and discussions on other subjects are provided on week nights. Example: Rev. Dr. Eric Smith, our Teaching Minister, conducted a three-week class on the Dead Sea Scrolls with attendance of almost 80 per class.*

### **Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.**

For example, how are decisions communicated in your church? How are teams or committees organized? Where does your church struggle for vision?

*In 2008 First Plymouth found itself in the position of institutional preservation, serving the institution and not its mission. Church Council created a task force to study the roles of church leadership which were loosely defined. There were 40+ Council members and 156 elected positions with terms which was too cumbersome to manage. In 2009, with the goal of "more doing, less meeting," the task force recommended some significant changes that were implemented.*

- *The Carver Model of Policy Governance was adopted. Detailed policies were written that guide the work of the Senior Minister and the Church Council.*
- *The Church Council became a body of 6 elected members and 4 officers, Moderator, Vice Moderator, Treasurer and Clerk. The Senior Minister and the Director of Administration are non-voting members who report at Council meetings about meeting the church's Ends and compliance with the Executive Limitation Policies.*
- *The existing ministries and committees were redefined as Coordinated Areas of Ministry (CAMs). Each CAM has a chair and co-chair. All other members serve at will and are not elected, which allows for broad participation and flexibility in mission.*
- *The Mission Team was created to connect all the CAM Chairs together so they could work toward common goals and share information. The Senior Minister is designated as the Chief Mission Officer and is present at Mission Team meetings which are chaired by the Vice Moderator.*

*The Church Council communicates with the congregation regularly both in writing and through announcements during worship services. The Moderator writes a monthly article in the newsletter, and weekly emails provide current information. A minimum of two Congregation Meetings are held each year, which enables the congregation to approve the budget and conduct any other church business that requires a vote of the congregation.*

*The Church just finished a six-year planning and implementation cycle and is looking forward to creating a new plan with new leadership. The Church does not currently struggle for vision now that Policy Governance is in place.*

**When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?**

*Both Council and the Mission Team meet once a month for approximately two hours each.*

**Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?**

*Based on our Policy Governance, the senior minister is authorized to make a wide range of decisions on his or her own. When a decision goes beyond the level specified by the Policies, then the senior minister contacts the Moderator. The Moderator may handle the situation or may include the Church Council into the decision making. Transparency is paramount but the need for confidentiality is highly respected.*

**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***

# 11-YEAR REPORT

## 2018 Report (Including 2017 data)

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2007	979	317	70	5	3	42	30	13	7
2008	965	269	70	10	2	35	16	45	-14
2009	500	255	50	10	6	12	17	476	-465
2010	731	233	37	8	3	11	13	0	9
2011	725	230	40	8	0	12	26	0	-6
2012	700	248	325	9	1	10	16	29	-25
2013	687	220	325	7	10	0	13	17	-13
2014	687	220	325	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	687	220	325	0	0	0	0	0	0
2016	621	220	280	2	16	0	23	61	-66
2017	606	215	272	0	9	0	15	9	-15

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	SPECIAL SUPPORT	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2007	\$876,333	\$0	\$50,000	\$17,920	\$67,920	\$28,441	\$96,361	5.71	\$972,694	\$985,369
2008	\$973,185	\$0	\$41,667	\$10,712	\$52,379	\$43,051	\$95,430	4.28	\$1,068,615	\$852,136
2009	\$868,932	\$0	\$17,500	\$5,000	\$22,500	\$50,555	\$73,055	2.01	\$941,987	\$802,782
2010	\$824,184	\$0	\$17,500	\$11,069	\$28,569	\$91,480	\$120,049	2.12	\$944,233	\$704,248
2011	\$817,725	\$0	\$7,000	\$8,681	\$15,681	\$60,000	\$75,681	0.86	\$893,406	\$627,343
2012	\$898,800	\$0	\$17,500	\$19,593	\$37,093	\$120,226	\$157,319	1.95	\$1,056,119	\$793,000
2013	\$854,629	\$0	\$17,500	\$9,900	\$27,400	\$129,058	\$156,458	2.05	\$1,011,087	\$803,544
2014	\$854,629	\$0	\$17,500	\$13,370	\$30,870	\$0	\$30,870	2.05	\$885,499	\$0
2015	\$854,629	\$0	\$18,151	\$7,325	\$25,476	\$0	\$25,476	2.12	\$880,105	\$0
2016	\$822,000	\$800,000	\$17,500	\$32,074	\$49,574	\$40,000	\$89,574	2.13	\$1,711,574	\$800,270
2017	\$873,678	\$1,000,000	\$17,500	\$0	\$17,500	\$69,000	\$86,500	2.00	\$1,960,178	\$776,640

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2012-2017	-13.43	-13.31	-16.31	-55.00	-46.67	-2.80	-52.82	85.60
2007-2017	-38.10	-32.18	288.57	-82.00	-44.19	-0.30	-74.23	101.52

## CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Information in this section is from the 11-Year Report published in 2017 by the Rocky Mountain Conference and includes data through December 2016.

### Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	571 to 591	Estimate. Active households of more than 1 person = 426. Source: 11-Year Report from 2017
Number of active non-members:	15 to 35	Estimate
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	606	11-Year Report from 2017

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

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	60%	Estimate
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	30%	Estimate
Less than 5 years:	10%	Estimate

### Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate?</i>
30 (5%)	60 (10%)		121 (20%)	212 (35%)			182 (30%)		Estimate

**Percentage of adults in various household types:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate?</i>
Single adults under 35:	10%	Estimate
Joint household with minors:	20%	Estimate
Single adults age 35-65:	15%	Estimate
Joint household with no minors:	20%	Estimate
Single adults over 65:	15%	Estimate
Adult couples over 65	20%	Estimate

**Education level of adult participants by percentage:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	28%	x ComparativeInsite Report 3/2017
College and Some College:	26%	x ComparativeInsite Report 3/2017
Graduate/Professional School:	46%	x ComparativeInsite Report 3/2017
Specialty Training:	Nil	

**Percentage of adults in various employment types:**

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	50%	Estimated
Adults who are retired:	50%	Estimated
Adults who are not fully employed:	Nil	Estimated

**Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:**

*First Plymouth's membership represents a significantly higher level of educational and professional achievement than an average congregation and includes retired ministers, college educators, medical and legal professionals, plus upper-level business and governmental professionals. Although the congregation draws from a very large area of suburban Denver with many other occupations represented, only a small minority would be considered blue-collar.*

**Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. Most UCC congregations tend to describe themselves as “diverse.” Yet, the vast majority of UCC congregations are mono-cultural. What does diversity mean in your context?**

*The vast majority of the congregation has been and is Caucasian. There are only a few members who are Hispanic, African American or Asian. At the same time, there is a desire to widen our ethnographic representations. Those efforts are noted in response to the next question.*

**Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one in the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)? Please note the date. Comment after the exercise:**

*First Plymouth has made a clear commitment to understanding and welcoming diversity. In keeping with the life and teaching of Christ Jesus, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome all people of any age, gender, race, culture, ability, or sexual orientation into our community of faith and affirm the worth of all people as unique individuals made in God's image. We are open to the special gifts that each person brings and invite each one to participate in the life of our church.*

*In 1998, after voting to become an Open and Affirming congregation, we struggled with the transition, although those values are now woven into the fabric of our church. We are currently focused on seeking further understanding and pathways to inclusiveness. The conversations and educational opportunities are intentional, ongoing and meaningful. This includes the efforts of the Just Faith in Action (JFIA) committee, which has recently lead First Plymouth to declare that it is joining the initiatives of the UCC to work toward the elimination of racism by being a “Congregation of Racial Equity.”*

## PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>List the specific worship planners, lay leaders, pastors, musicians and other staff are listed below.</i>
Adult Groups or Classes	Groups Range from 10 to 80+ in size	Senior Minister, Minister of Teaching, CE Ministry and a long list of lay leaders from fellowship groups described in the Small Groups Booklet
Baptisms ( <i>number last year</i> )	10	Pastoral Care, Senior Minister
Children's Groups or Classes	Groups Range from 5 to 45+ in size	Director of Children's Ministries
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	CE: 2017 - 792 EW: 2017 - 576	Senior Minister, Minister of Teaching, Director of Children's Ministries, Director of Music, Associate Dir. of Music, Organist
Church-wide Meals	20 to 180	Stewardship, Community Life Ministry
Choirs and Music Groups	Groups Range from 10 to 60+ in size	Senior Minister, Director of Music, Assoc. Director of Music, Organist, Director of Children's Ministries
Church-based Bible Study	10 to 30	Members
Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )	Once per month	Senior Minister, Pastoral Care
Community Meals	400	LOFT
Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> )	1	Director of Teaching, Director of Children's Ministries, Seminary Intern
Drama or Dance Program	NA	
Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )	9	Senior Minister, Pastoral Care

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>List the specific worship planners, lay leaders, pastors, musicians and other staff are listed below.</i>
Intergenerational Groups	10 to 20	LOFT
Outdoor Worship	N/A	
Prayer or Meditation Groups	5-20	Senior Minister, Lay Leaders
Public Advocacy Work	Groups Range from 10 to 50+ in size	LOFT, Outreach Ministry, Reduce Gun Violence Committee, Whole Earth Ministry, Open & Affirming Committee, Just Faith in Action Committee
Retreats	Groups Range from 10 to 150	Men's Fellowship Group Road Trip, Women's Retreat, Community Camp, Youth Lock-in, La Foret Conference Youth Retreats
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	Groups Range from 10 to 30	Book study and theological topics with the Minister of Teaching/Linked to Iliff Theological Seminary
Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )	0	Pastoral Care
Worship (time slot: 10:00 AM)	See 11 Year Report	Senior Minister, Minister of Teaching, Director of Music, Associate Dir. of Music, Organist, Director of Children's Ministries
Worship (time slot: 11:15 AM)	Groups Range from 10 to 40	
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	
Youth Groups or Classes	21	Minister of Teaching, Seminary Intern, Lay Leaders
Sound Technician(s)	3 to 4	One primary paid position
FP Learning Center (preschool)	60 Students	Learning Center Director (1), Teachers/Assistants (6)

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>List the specific worship planners, lay leaders, pastors, musicians and other staff are listed below.</i>
Introduction to FPCC and New Membership Classes	Groups Range from 10 to 20	New Members Program Coordinator, Senior Minister, CAM Chairs
Web of Care	See note below	Web of Care Coordinators

**Additional comments: Inreach Ministry**

*Organized in 2013, the Web of Care (WOC) is a lay-led ministry that works with the First Plymouth Pastoral Care staff to keep all members connected to our beloved community. Before WOC, there was no official way to keep in touch with members. In fact, news about our members was often missed. This oversight left members feeling abandoned by their church. However, to expect four staff members - one pastor, one part time Parish Visitor, and two part time Pastoral Care staff – to keep up with a church membership of our size was impossible. We recognized that this situation was counterproductive to building our beloved community and, in fact, was antithetical to First Plymouth’s mission.*

*We began this ministry with approximately 40 church members who volunteered to be Web of Care Coordinators. Each Coordinator was assigned a group of 5 – 15 family units. Coordinators contact their group regularly (usually monthly or bimonthly) to check in and offer support as needed. All Coordinators receive some initial training on pastoral care, including confidentiality, change and transition, death and loss, and prayer.*

*Since the Web of Care was initiated, Pastoral Care has reported that over 80 members have returned to active status in the church. The program continues today thanks to the dedicated group of members who are Coordinators and the support of the First Plymouth staff. As an extension of Pastoral Care, we ensure members do not “fall through the cracks.”*

*However, we are constantly struggling to add Coordinators. Some folks who have been Coordinators from the very beginning need/want to be cycled out, plus some of them are no longer able to sustain their role due to their ages and own life challenges. Therefore, although individuals and families continue to join the church, thanks to the New Member Program, the lack of new Coordinators makes it difficult to assign them to a WOC group.*

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 (Names are removed for privacy. See separate document for names.)	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? <i>(3 or 4 or No)</i>	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? <i>(Y or N)</i>
1	4			N
2				Y
3		Metropolitan Community Church		Y
4	4	Disciples of Christ		?
5				Y
6		Hospice Chaplain		?
7		Chaplain - Children's Hospital		N
8				Y
9		Disciples of Christ		N
10				Y
11		Licensed		N
12				Y
13		Presbyterian	Ordained	Regular Attendance
14				Y
15				Y
16		Progressive Baptist		?
17		Presbyterian	Ordained	Regular Attendance
18				Y

**If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation:**

*Rev. Dr. Stuart Haskins became the pastor in 1967, a pastorate that would continue for 26 years. Dr. Haskins is now the Pastor Emeritus. Other ministers in membership occasionally preach and provide Christian Education classes.*

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

<b>Staff Position</b>	<b>Head of Staff?</b>	<b>Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)</b>	<b>Supervised by</b>	<b>Length of Tenure for current person in this position</b>
Minister of Teaching		PT	Senior Minister	10
Director of Music		PT	Senior Minister	1
Assoc. Director of Music		PT	Director of Music	1
Organist		PT	Director of Music	1
Director of Children's Ministries		PT	Director of Admin.	8
Intern		PT	Senior Minister	2
Nursery Manager		PT	Director of Children's Ministries	2
Pastoral Care Coordinators 1		PT	Senior Minister	8
Pastoral Care Coordinators 2		PT	Senior Minister	8
Director of Administration		FT	Senior Minister	6

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Office Coordinator 1		PT	Director of Admin.	2
Office Coordinator 2		PT	Director of Admin.	2
Communication Coordinator		PT	Director of Admin.	4
Facilities Manager		FT	Director of Admin.	20
Custodian		FT	Director of Admin.	< 1
Director of First Plymouth Learning Center		FT	Director of Admin.	1

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

*One overall reflection relates to the remarkably high level of activity in the church: it is striking how much goes on in the congregation and how many people participate and how well they are organized. And the congregation appears to want to do more. Can more focus be brought to these activities? Is there a need for priority-setting? Are the church’s energies being used efficiently? Does this rampant activity stress the church staff? We invite our new minister to help us answer these questions.*

*Review of the numbers provided by MissionInsite and the 11 Year Report do not reflect the same numbers seen in our weekly attendance (approximately 200). Based on these reports, our membership is defined as 606 but of active members, there are approximately 240 pledging units (some multi-member households).*

*Our demographics are heavily skewed to those over 60. We conduct many more memorial services each year than baptisms. We are looking to attract younger adults and families and add new programs to serve their needs.*

## CHURCH FINANCES

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### Current annual income (dollars used during most recent fiscal year) FY Ending June 30, 2017

From Operating Budget	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$776,829
Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> )	See Schedule
Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i> )	\$0
Fundraising Events*	\$0
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose (Memorials)*	\$0
5. Grants*	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$94,629
Rentals of Church Parsonage (NA)	\$0
Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )	\$0
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$0
Other: Learning Center Contribution	\$22,380
Other: Miscellaneous	\$1,803
<b>TOTAL - Operating Budget</b>	<b>\$895,641</b>
<i>*Not included in operating budget.</i>	

### Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): *See 2017 Annual Report*

**Reserves (savings):** \$ 89,000 operating reserves (10% of the operating budget)  
 \$ 74,696 building reserves  
\$ 10,486 program reserves  
 \$174,182 Total Reserves

**Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage?**

*Total ministerial support (salaries, retirement, benefits) for both the Senior Minister and the Minister of Teaching is \$163,650 representing 18.2% of the total budget.*

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

**Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? (indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year)**

- Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
- One Great Hour of Sharing
- Strengthen the Church
- Neighbors in Need
- Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross)

**In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? (*recommended 10%*)**

*For the past two years, our OCWM support, which is included within the operating budget, has been \$17,500.*

**What is the church's current indebtedness?**

Total amount of loan debt: less than \$200,000 to be paid in full by the end of July 2018

Reason for debt: *Building improvements*

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.**

*A capital campaign ran from September 2014 through May 2018, titled That All May Be Welcome: Creating an Accessible & Sustainable Future. The goals of the capital campaign were the following:*

- 1. Create a sustainable, healthy facility: to extend the life of our church building for a minimum of 20 years by making the capital investments required to render our facilities safer and more functional for our growing community, morally responsible in the consumption of energy and intentionally cost-efficient in every way possible.*
- 2. Create a sanctuary for beloved community: to enhance our worship spaces to illuminate our heritage, our theology, our evolving spirituality and our avowed intention to address God's mission in this world as a just and vibrant progressive church community in the 21st century.*
- 3. Create a legacy beyond our walls: to enrich and empower our relationship with ministries in the larger community.*

**If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:**

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2014 – 2018	Update sanctuary and infrastructure of building to address needs for the next 20 years	\$3,500,000	\$3,200,000	The Mustard Seed Fund

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

*A portion (10%) of the capital campaign funds collected were allocated to a Mustard Seed Fund for mission use. How these funds should be used has not been completely decided (50% as a grant to Denver Inner City Parish and 50% to fund new mission initiatives which have not yet been identified).*

**Does your church have an endowment? Yes**

What is the market value of the assets? *See below.*

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? *Funds must be requested.*

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? *See below.*

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: *The endowment does not pay or contribute to the normal operating expenses of the church proper.*

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? *Indefinitely*

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

*Calculations are actual not estimates.*

<b>Church Endowments</b>		
<b>1)</b>	<b><u>First Plymouth Endowment:</u> Funds from Outside Grants and Internal Grants</b>	
	Balance 6/30/16	\$ 850,649
	Increase of investments	\$ 79,584
	Draws / Grants	\$ 12,124
	Ending Balance 6/30/17	\$ 918,109
<b>2)</b>	<b><u>Outreach Endowment:</u> Funds Non-Profit Organizations Outside of the Church</b>	
	Balance 6/30/16	\$ 78,975
	Increase of investments	\$ 4,886
	Draws / Grants	\$ 405
	Ending Balance 6/30/17	\$ 83,456
<b>3)</b>	<b><u>Brand Fund:</u> Used only for Building Improvement or Repairs</b>	
	Balance 6/30/16	\$ 769,757
	Increase of investments	\$ 74,622
	Draws	\$ 4,017
	Ending Balance 6/30/17	\$ 840,362
<b>4)</b>	<b><u>First Plymouth Foundation:</u> This is a separate entity from the church. The majority of the board members are First Plymouth members, and most are elected by the congregation of First Plymouth.</b>	
	Balance 12/31/16	\$ 2,610,514
	Increase investments / Contributions	\$ 307,664
	Grants Disbursed	\$ 34,950
	Administrative Expenses	\$ 21,097
	Ending Balance 12/31/17	\$ 2,862,131
	<b>Total Endowed Funds</b>	<b>\$ 4,704,058</b>

**Other Assets**

<b>2016-2017 Outreach/Mission                      Summary of Funds Disbursed from                      Funds Collected Separately from                      Operating/Pledged Income Sources</b>	
<b>SHARE THE PLATE Recipients</b> (from the 2017 annual report)	
Alternatives to Violence Program	\$ 3,158
Bayaud Enterprises	\$ 2,572
Blue Theology	\$ 935
Colfax Community Network	\$ 2,402
Denver Inner City Parish	\$ 4,734
Empowerment Program	\$ 2,898
Family Promise	\$ 2,308
Interfaith Alliance	\$ 2,563
Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative	\$ 1,639
Reach Out and Read	\$ 2,698
<b>Share the Plate Total</b>	<b>\$25,906</b>
<b>OUTREACH</b>	
Bayaud Laundry Truck	\$ 500
Denver Police Brotherhood Youth Grant	\$ 1,000
King Sooper Gift Cards	\$ 1,500
Metro Caring - Can Do	\$ 1,505
RTD Bus Assistance Coupons	\$ 450
Shine Your Light	\$ 1,000
TLC Meals on Wheels	\$ 1,000
<b>Outreach Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,955</b>
<b>OTHER DISBURSEMENTS</b>	
Habitat for Humanity/Loaves & Fishes	\$ 6,911
Rwanda Project	\$30,000
Veterans of the Cross	\$ 3,972
<b>Other Disbursements Total</b>	<b>\$40,883</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$73,744</b>

**FIRST PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC**  
**Statements of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)**  
**and Activities (Income Statement)**  
**for Designated and Temporarily Restricted Funds**  
*(not otherwise reported in this Profile)*

Fund	Fiscal Year 2017		6/30/2017
	Receipts	Expenditures	Balance
<b>Church Designated:</b>			
Adult CE		\$300	-\$30
Arts at Plymouth	\$13,223	\$13,120	\$8,418
Bible Basics	\$0	\$91	\$2,942
Children's Education	\$482	\$268	\$9,259
Choir Fund	\$0	\$0	\$403
Children's Choir	\$0	\$0	\$659
Community Camp	\$27,727	\$40,689	\$21,646
Flowers	\$2,412	\$3,270	\$4,811
Handbell Fund	\$500	\$2,101	\$492
LOFT	\$2,721	\$2,549	\$398
Men's Fellowship	\$138	\$1,045	\$2,342
Sabbatical Fund	\$0	\$0	\$4,669
Thursday Afternoon Circle	\$909	\$880	\$395
Vacation Bible School	\$2,265	\$1,246	\$3,852
Visual Arts	\$0	\$536	\$4,983
Whole Earth	\$3,152	\$2,752	\$4,511
Women's Fellowship	\$817	\$1,277	\$466
Women's Retreat	\$6,129	\$4,445	\$7,162
Youth	\$9,195	\$15,991	\$9,233
Youth Choir	\$0	\$0	\$4,040
Web of Care	\$0	\$25	\$1,112
<b>Temporarily Restricted:</b>			
Church Growth	\$0	\$5,136	\$115,228
Interfaith Projects	\$0	\$0	\$1,566
Intern Fund	\$12,000	\$12,918	\$10,949
Just Faith in Action	\$0	\$2,067	\$4,379
Memorials	\$18,640	\$1,565	\$37,386
Memorial Garden	\$5,550	\$190	\$42,075
Music Donations	\$215	\$0	\$993
Refugee Resettlement	\$0	\$0	\$6,530
Stained Glass Windows	\$0	\$325	\$171

**Other Investments (other than endowment):** *None*

**Parsonage:** *None*

**Describe all buildings owned by the church:**

*The church is a 58,000 square foot building on 5.32 acres located at 3501 S. Colorado Blvd. Englewood, Colorado 80113. The church is on a corner of the highly trafficked intersection of Hampden Avenue and Colorado Boulevard.; both are well-known, primary roads of the Denver metro area. The building has three levels. The church was originally built in the 1950's and had a major addition in the 1990's. The most recent update in 2015 was a significant remodel of the sanctuary and chapel as a result of the capital campaign.*

**Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:** *None*

**Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?** *All facilities are accessible.*

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

*The church's financial condition appears strong, but First Plymouth is not without its challenges. The smaller membership has been accompanied by an increase in the average pledge amount. Prior and current members have been generous and committed to fulfilling endowments for community outreach and special purposes, such as the addition of the midi component to the church organ.*

*For the 2018-2019 Stewardship Campaign, as of June 2018, we have received 226 pledges representing total commitments of \$737,167. That amount includes \$59,073 in increased pledges from last year (a remarkable average increase of 9.5%) and \$22,800 in new pledges. Together, the increased pledges and new pledges qualify for a \$75,000 matching gift given by an anonymous donor to strengthen our financial position going into the senior minister transition.*

*The total amount expected to be raised in this campaign, including the \$75,000 matching gift, is \$825,000. This exceeds the amount raised in previous campaigns for more than fifteen years. The \$75,000 is a one-time gift and not included in the 2018-19 operating budget.*

## HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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*In 2014 First Plymouth Congregational Church celebrated the 150th Anniversary of its founding. The history of First Plymouth Congregational Church, U.C.C., goes back nearly to the beginning of Denver. Efforts were begun as early as 1860 to establish a Congregational church in Denver. Due to the high cost of maintaining missionaries in the “wild-west” the requests were turned down. Finally, in 1863, church officials sent Rev. William Crawford to Denver with an eye towards establishing a Congregational church in Denver. Crawford’s first visit to Denver left him unimpressed and he moved on to the gold mining town of Central City where he established the first Congregational church in the Colorado territory. Crawford returned to Denver and founded the First Congregational Church of Denver on October 9, 1864 with 12 charter members. Rev. Norman McLeod was the first pastor.*

*As with the other newly formed churches in the pioneer city, the congregation had no home and met in various places until they constructed their first church in 1869 at the corner of 15th and Curtis Street, in what was then a pleasant residential area. With the growth of the congregation and the encroaching business district, it soon became time to think about moving.*

*In 1881, the congregation built a fine new structure, seating 900, in the 1600 block of Glenarm Place, (currently the site of the Paramount Theatre). The church had several pastors during its time on Glenarm. Among them was the Rev. Myron Reed, a noted social action minister, who filled the church every Sunday and whose sermons were widely published the next week. By 1907, the business district was again encroaching on the church, and the congregation decided to move “up the hill” to a new building on the corner of E. 10th Avenue and Clarkson Street. On January 13, 1907, after the final service at the Glenarm church, the church under construction was engulfed in flames and heavily damaged. Since the congregation had made arrangements to meet at Temple Emanuel until the new building was completed, they held services there until November 7, 1907, when Rev. Monroe Markley conducted the first service in the new church.*

*In 1884, another group of Congregationalists was getting together in north Capitol Hill and formed the Park Avenue Congregational Church. They built a small church at 17th Avenue and Ogden Street. In 1891, the struggling congregation found themselves without a pastor. However, Rev. Frank T. Bayley was vacationing in Colorado with his family at the time and preached a few times at the little church. The congregation took a liking to Rev. Bayley and offered him the position. In honor of his former pastorate, the congregation voted to rename the church Plymouth Congregational Church. Dr. Bayley would pastor the church for 26 years until his death in 1917. During his pastorate, the congregation began to grow and built a large stone church at E. 14th Avenue and Lafayette St.*

*By 1929, both First and Plymouth churches were beginning to struggle as members moved farther away and other congregations began drawing members away from the center city churches. The “great depression” of 1929 only worsened the situation. The solution was a merger of the two congregations to become First Plymouth Congregational Church, meeting at the Lafayette St. building.*

*By the mid-1950’s, the congregation was again bursting at the seams and traffic and parking in the area was becoming an issue. There was no room to expand and staying on Capitol Hill did not seem to be an option. In 1955, the church purchased property at the intersection of Hampden Avenue and South Colorado Boulevard at,*

*what was then, the edge of the city. A new modern building, the church's current location, was constructed on the site and the congregation worshiped there for the first time on November 30, 1958.*

*In 1961, the congregation voted to affiliate with the recently formed United Church of Christ (UCC), which had been created by a merger of the Evangelical and Reformed churches with the Congregational Christian Church; thus, the formal name First Plymouth Congregational Church, UCC. Rev. Dr. Stuart Haskins became the pastor in 1967, a pastorate that would continue for 26 years. Dr. Haskins is now the Pastor Emeritus. In 2005, the call was issued to the Rev. George C. Anastos, the current pastor.*

**Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.**

- 1. The Rev. Myron W. Reed, pastor of First Congregational Church of Denver (predecessor of First Plymouth) from 1884 to 1894, in cooperation with a Jewish woman active in Denver charities, a rabbi, a priest, and another minister, founded the "Charity Organization" in Denver in 1887. This organization was the forerunner of the Community Chest and the precursor to the United Way national organization.*
- 2. From its inception around 1864, the church, in several forms and for many years, was a downtown Denver church. However, in the mid-1950's, the congregation was bursting at the seams and traffic and parking had become an issue. There was no room to expand and staying on Capitol Hill did not seem to be an option. Thus, in 1955, the church purchased property at the intersection of Hampden Avenue and South Colorado Boulevard at, what was then, the edge of the city. A new modern church, its current location, was constructed on the site, and the congregation worshiped there for the first time on November 30, 1958.*
- 3. In 1998, after numerous lengthy and difficult conversations, the congregation elected to become an "Open and Affirming" congregation. As a matter of statement of faith and mission, the church committed to welcoming all people of any gender or sexual orientation. This commitment had serious consequences: a number of members left, with an associated decline of financial commitment to the church. However, this stand has clearly marked First Plymouth as a leader of inclusiveness in the Denver area.*

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

*As documented in the 2013 "Weave Our New Tomorrow" report, First Plymouth faced "the inescapable reality that our beautiful campus" was "aging and in need of extensive and costly upgrades". The Capital Campaign, titled That All May Be Welcome, was conducted from 2014 to 2018, collecting approximately \$3.2 million to address the upgrades.*

*A second change: In 2010, First Plymouth faced a shaky financial future attributable to a weak beginning to the annual stewardship campaign. This shortfall necessitated the elimination of the position of Associate Minister. The following stewardship campaign resulted in a strong comeback in pledges, which restored our firm financial footing.*

**Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. “Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....” Describe your congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict.**

For example, what is an example of a recent conflict and something your congregation learned from it? Describe an occasion when your church experienced conflict without being able to resolve it well. Does your church have policies, protocols or structures for dealing with conflict?)

*First Plymouth’s history has some significant moments of conflict.*

1. *The 1998 Open and Affirming vote following an extended period of study and congregational conversations ended with a significant number of members leaving the church and a minister stepping down.*
2. *Financial constraints lead to the dismissal of an Associate Minister and elimination of the position.*
3. *Trump Election: criticism of some of the policies of the Trump administration within the congregation and from the pulpit resulted in the departure of a few politically conservative members who felt there wasn’t room for their views at First Plymouth*

*We deal with conflict in a few different ways.*

1. *Dissension among the membership*
  - a. *Congregational Conversations allow members to share thoughts and openly discuss areas of disagreement. We have some skilled facilitators among the church membership.*
2. *Conflict between staff and church members*
  - a. *Policy Governance practices address these kinds of conflicts. The governance of the congregation operates under the Carver Model which delegates strong executive authority to the Senior Pastor within explicit limits (Executive Limitation Policies or “ELPs”). Council regularly receives reports from the Senior Pastor regarding the achievement of the Ends that have been established within the governance policies. The process of discussion and dealing with conflict reside in these policies or governance methods.*
  - b. *Church Council operates by consensus and speaks with one voice.*
  - c. *Pastor and Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) exists to help the ministerial staff deal with concerns from the congregation.*
3. *Conflict between staff*
  - a. *FPCC enlists the help of outside agents such as the Employer’s Council to help resolve disputes.*

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

### Senior Ministers

1. Rev. George Anastos, 2005-present
2. Rev. Gary Bryant, Interim Senior Minister, 2003-05
3. Rev. M. Scott Landis, 1997-2002.
4. Rev. Jim Kirk, Interim Senior Minister, 1996 and 1999.
5. Rev. Roy Smith, Interim Senior Minister 1996-97.
6. Rev. Ben Smith, Interim Senior Minister, 1994-95
7. Rev. Ron Stegall, 1994.
8. Rev. Stuart Haskins, 1967-93.

### Associate Ministers

1. Rev. Jane Ann Ferguson, Associate Minister, 2004-10.
2. Rev. O. Elaine Hinnant, Associate Minister, 1999-2003.
3. Rev. Dianne Prosser, Associate Minister, 1993-98.
4. Rev. Diane Gallo, Associate Minister, 1990-93.
5. Rev. Hollis Bredeweg, Associate Minister, 1986-90.
6. Rev. Mark Bigelow, Associate Minister for Youth, 1986-91

### Minister of Community Life and Teaching

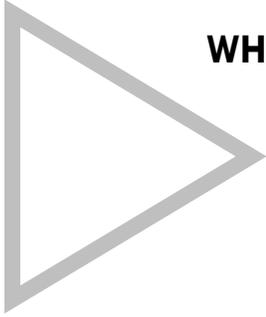
1. Rev. Dr. Eric C. Smith, 2008-present.

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership: *Staffing issues resulting in a change in employment occurred more than 12 years ago before our current senior minister was called. In some cases, legal proceedings involved a non-disclosure agreement. Ethically and legally, First Plymouth is not at liberty to discuss those cases. In other cases where there weren't any legal proceedings, there are some details available for discussion.*

**Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?** *To learn more about our past staffing issues, please ask. Not all details are public and may not be available.*

**Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?** *To learn more about our past staffing issues, please ask. Not all details are public and may not be available.*

**Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?** *To learn more about our past staffing issues, please ask. Not all details are public and may not be available.*



## WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

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

COMMUNITY VISION

MISSION InSite

## COMMUNITY VISION

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

For example, which service activities has your church participated in this past year? Where has the church participated in global connections of care and justice? What is currently transformational in your church’s engagement with neighbors near or far?

*We strive to be the hands and face of Jesus to each other and the world through our ministries and programs. First Plymouth is comprised of many lay lead Coordinated Areas of Ministry (CAMs) which reach out to the larger community to make a difference and to help people transform their lives. First Plymouth endeavors to take a stand against poverty, injustice, intolerance, violence, and homelessness. These experiences have been transformational to our members. Transformation occurs for some as they experience how God's love and grace touches lives.*

### **Service Activities**

***Lotsa Helping Hands:*** FPCC supports members and friends in times of need with meals, transportation to appointments, light housekeeping, snow shoveling, temporary pet care, and other small maintenance and repair tasks.

***Family Promise of Greater Denver:*** FPCC supports homeless families by providing temporary housing, transportation to and from work, breakfast and dinner meals, childcare while parents attend financial management classes and overnight hosting.

***First Plymouth Foundation:*** FPF supports the broader mission of FPCC with grants to various service organizations such as Denver Inner City Parish (DICP), Kentucky Circle Village (KCV), Habitat for Humanity, CHARG Resource Center, and Savio House and Iliff School of Theology.

***First Plymouth Learning Center:*** FPCC runs a self-sustaining childcare program licensed by the State of Colorado. It is comprised of three components - Parent’s Day Out, Preschool, and Pre-Kindergarten.

**LOFT (Living Our Faith Together):** FP members of all ages do service work together including bagging beans and rice for a food bank, helping with river cleanups, assembling personal care kits for the homeless and providing a Thanksgiving dinner at the Denver Inner City Parish for over 400 people.

**DICP (Denver Inner City Parish):** an inner-city ministry with two locations that is a hands-on avenue to provide support in the areas of hunger, education, health and wellness, and community support; First Plymouth helped found DICP over 50 years ago and continues to be a physical and financial presence in both locations.

**KCV (Kentucky Circle Village):** FPCC was one of the founding organizations in 1959 of KCV, an affordable housing community for seniors. FPCC members continue to serve on the Board of Directors to ensure the financial security and well-being of the community.

**Moment for Mission/Share the Plate:** Every month the Outreach Ministry designates a community organization every month that supports our community in various areas of need to receive loose offerings from the Sunday offering. Representatives from these organizations are given time during the worship service to address the congregation and talk about what they do.

**Can-Do Sunday:** A monthly collection of canned goods, packaged food, personal care items, and cash donations which are given to Denver Metro Caring, a local food bank.

**Angel Tree:** The Outreach Ministry sponsors a program at Christmas time, that encourages members to give donations of toys or gifts to residents of the Family Homestead family shelter.

**Outreach Ministry:** This Coordinated Area of Ministry (CAM) searches out where we can be of service to the community and awards monetary grants to organizations who serve those in need. In other words, Outreach not only responds to requests for support, but also seeks out those in need and provides appropriate assistance in any way possible.

**Loaves and Fishes:** FPCC provides outreach to Habitat for Humanity of Denver, through the Loaves and Fishes coalition of twelve churches in the Denver metro area of which First Plymouth was a founding member. Together we have built eighteen houses since the coalition was organized in 1998.

**Whole Earth Ministry:** FPCC is a Whole Earth Church committed to loving God's creation; educating its members about the interconnectedness of all of God's creation; practicing wise stewardship of the Earth; and providing outreach in the community for Whole Earth concerns.

The Whole Earth CAM is a very active ministry with two-thirds of active CAM members having joined the church within the past five years. For more than twenty years, the Whole Earth ministry has been a defining part of First Plymouth's mission. Our Whole Earth ministry is much more than a typical Green Team approach to "Creation Care". During the last five years, the CAM co-chairs have worked closely with our senior minister and Rev. Peter Sawtell of Eco-Justice Ministries with the intention of drawing on the theology which informs our environmental and eco-justice covenants, and now both our ministers regularly include these notions in the pastoral prayer.

*The Share the Plate offering one month each year is dedicated to an environmental education/action non-profit. The congregation has contributed more than \$10,000 to organizations that educate and support “care for creation”. Each year the Whole Earth CAM works with the ministers to bring the congregation a meaningful worship experience for Whole Earth Sunday in April, and we host at least two Christian Education hours each year.*

*Other activities include: sponsored Reach Out and Read to support early childhood literacy as part of the Share-the-Plate program; held a coat drive on Palm Sunday instead of using palms as the offering; participated in the March for Science and the People’s Climate March; worked with the Outreach ministry to support two eco-stewards for Share the Plate in May; participating in the Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative for environmental restoration and education efforts, and Blue Theology, which focuses on protecting the environment; leading the congregation in recycling efforts at the church; organizing an annual community wide e-Waste recycling event which collects and safely disposes an average of 5.5 tons of dangerous electronics; and hosting a Sunday morning Farmers’ Market with the proceeds going to the Metro Caring Food Bank.*

## **Global Connections**

**Rwanda Outreach Project:** *FPCC recently completed its 12-year commitment to support the education of children served by Association Solidarite in Kanombe Village, Rwanda. The goal was to furnish funds for books, school supplies, uniforms, and a nutritious breakfast for the neediest students. Over the course of the 12-year commitment, FPCC raised over \$300,000.*

**World Gift Market:** *Every November FPCC hosts an alternative gift market featuring vendors who sell fair trade, eco-friendly products. Purchasing these unique, handcrafted items supports local non-profit organizations and indigenous artisans from around the world who are passionate about sustaining people and the earth.*

## **Transformational**

**Just Faith In Action (JFIA):** *FPCC stretches its understanding of racial equity and white supremacy to learn, understand, and be introspective about who we are as a beloved community; to acknowledge that our understanding is ever evolving and that we as a community must be open, affirming, welcoming, and inclusive of all peoples. First Plymouth strives to facilitate awareness and education for its members. From such awareness will hopefully evolve compassion and eventually action to change people’s behavior on both personal and systemic issues concerning race.*

*First Plymouth is very active throughout the greater faith community in promoting social justice and working towards structural change. Over the past three years, we have been raising awareness of and concern about racism within our congregation by:*

- *Sponsoring four month-long book studies on the issue;*
- *Facilitating three evening forums led by Iliff Professors sharing their views on racism;*
- *Scheduling ten adult education discussions on racism and white privilege;*
- *Showing bi-monthly movies about racism together with our UU neighbors;*

*We have been working with several other predominantly white church congregations of the Colorado Interfaith Alliance in their Facing Racism Program. We are also active members of Together Colorado, another faith-based organization active in addressing police Use-of- Force policies and Criminal Justice Reform.*

**Reduction of Gun Violence:** *Although FPCC is not officially designated a “Just Peace” congregation, First Plymouth adopted a public statement and position on firearm violence in 2013. The statement says, in part, that we support “legislation at the state and national levels designed to reduce the present level of violence arising out of the improper use of firearms.”*

*That same year, the church’s Reduce Gun Violence Committee, which was created to implement the congregational position statement, helped mobilize church members to speak out and communicate with state legislators during the 2013 legislative session when a package of common-sense gun safety measures was being debated. Five progressive laws were passed, all aimed at reducing the level of gun violence in our state. A First Plymouth representative appeared at one of the legislative hearings to present our position on the issue.*

*In 2014, the committee helped form an interfaith coalition called Colorado Faith Communities United to End Violence (CFCU). This coalition, made up of more than forty congregations of several faith traditions, works year-round to continue advocating for common sense gun safety laws, and presented extensive testimony during the 2015 legislative session when many of the existing gun safety bills were being attacked.*

*The coalition also promotes gun safety messages as a public health issue to the general community, which has included launching a new program called Ask a Doc, to encourage health care professionals to talk with their patients about guns in the home and safe storage of guns.*

*In December First Plymouth participated in a Candlelight Vigil to commemorate the 5th anniversary of the Sandy Hook massacre and in honor of all others lost to gun violence. The vigil was held in cooperation with both the First Universalist Church and CFCU.*

**Describe your congregation’s participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ (association / conference / national setting).**

*We send representatives to the General Synod. The Youth Group participates in the UCC Underground event for teens. Our youth also LOVE attending conference retreats at La Foret, the UCC conference and retreat center in the Black Forest area of Colorado, east of the Air Force Academy.*

*Our Director of Children’s Ministries has been an active member of the RMC UCC Educators group during her eight-year tenure in the role. She has served on the executive planning committee for the Congregations Alive annual conference and is currently the co-chair of the 2019 conference with Rev. Tracey Blackmon, UCC National Minister of Justice as the keynote speaker. First Plymouth has hosted the Congregations Alive educators’ conference several times.*

**Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).) Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible to All (A2A)                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Just Peace                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creation Justice                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA)            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> God Is Still Speaking (GISS)      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other UCC designations: Whole Earth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Border and Immigrant Justice                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Designations from other denominations          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M) | <input type="checkbox"/> None   |

**Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?**

*First Plymouth is currently holding conversations of discernment to determine if our congregation should obtain a Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged for Mental Health (WISE) designation. Members of our congregation share a passion that First Plymouth should provide full welcome, inclusion, and support with and engagement in the issues with people who live with mental health challenges and their families.*

*Because these members wanted to learn more about introducing a WISE Covenant to the First Plymouth congregation, they attended a regional WISE Mental Health Conference in Spring 2017. They shared what they had learned with our Senior Minister and Pastoral Care. With the support of the Mission Team, a mental health task force, entitled FP WISE, was established in Fall 2017. FP WISE developed a mission statement and made plans for the short-term future. FP WISE now meets regularly and is open to everyone: professionals in mental illness, anyone who has been affected by mental health issues, and anyone who is simply interested in the subject. Their open discussions deal with mental health issues confronting all of us.*

*FP WISE has created additional opportunities for the congregation to engage in conversations about mental illness and brain injuries. During our Christian Education hour following the worship service, various individuals and groups have made presentations: people with first-hand experience of living with a mental health condition; members of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI); and the NFL-Approved Clinician and Team Clinician to the Denver Broncos Football Club to discuss how the NFL addresses the mental health issues of football players and how psycho-education and psychotherapy are combined to help the Bronco's rookies maintain spiritual, physical, relationship, mental, emotional and financial health. Guest speakers from the Boulder UCC, which is a WISE-designated church, have also made presentations. Currently, FP Wise is assembling a reading list for the congregation to learn more about mental illness and brain injuries.*

*FP WISE is in its infancy and needs pastoral support to grow in the hopes of First Plymouth eventually adopting a WISE covenant.*

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

- *Annual Thanksgiving Service with Temple Sinai*
- *Founding member Colorado Faith Communities United to End Violence (CFCU)*
- *One of the founding churches of the Denver Inner City Parish*
- *Partnership with Calvary Presbyterian Church which holds worship services in our chapel*
- *Partnership with Calvary Baptist to host homeless families served by Family Promise of Greater Denver.*
- *Cofounder and board members of Kentucky Circle Village*

**If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.**

*First Plymouth's mission statement\* is prominently displayed in our weekly Orders of Worship and on the wall in the entryway. We often recite part of the mission statement during Worship Service. We are ever mindful of our mission and refer to it as we move forward with activities within the church and in the wider community.*

*Our mission statement is reflected through:*

- *Engaging and Interactive Christian Education: Children's Education: Pre-School – Middle School curriculum developed by FPCC Staff and taught by volunteers; Youth (Teens) Group that meets weekly; , Adult Education - Bible Basics and Christian Education Hour organized and taught by volunteers; frequent book studies*
- *Mission Team, Coordinated Areas of Ministry (CAMs) and Council, meet regularly throughout the month; all groups connect back to the Mission Statement.*
- *As shown by the myriad of activities previously mentioned, First Plymouth strives to accomplish our Mission by:*
  - *Seeking innovative approaches to fighting domestic hunger and poverty*
  - *Being involved in identifying problems and needs and in acting to address them*
  - *Being a witness and a vehicle for social, economic, and environmental justice*
  - *Encouraging an appreciation of diversity even as we work to eliminate racism and discrimination of any kind.*

*\*For the complete mission statement, see the section CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS*

**Reflect on the scope of work assigned to your pastor(s). How is their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time?**

*First Plymouth Council designed seven Ends that define us and our understanding of who we are as a people of God: These Ends serve as the guiding principles for our church mission. For our neighbors and community, the tenets include:*

1. A loving community that welcomes and cares for all
2. A servant community that faithfully acts as the face and hands of God
3. A generous community that commits to giving of our finances, talents and resources
4. A whole earth community that cares for God's creation
5. A deeply spiritual community that is transformed by its experiences of God's love
6. A courageous community that stands up to speak God's message of peace and justice
7. A vital and growing community that joyfully invites others into membership

*The duties and responsibilities of our Senior Minister, Rev. George Anastos, directly connect to the church's Ends statements:*

- *Spiritual leadership and inspiration in worship opportunities and spiritual formation;*
- *Administrative oversight of ministries, programs, church staff and ministerial council;*
- *Participation at Council, Stewardship, Finance, and Personnel meetings;*
- *Pastoral care, and counseling, primarily to members;*
- *On-going education of the congregation;*
- *Participation in the wider church denominational activities;*
- *Providing leadership in ecumenical and community relationships.*

*Our Teaching Minister, Rev. Dr. Eric Smith, holds a part-time position. He has three main areas of work: operation of the youth program, teaching adult classes and book sessions, and monthly leadership of worship. His areas of emphasis include race and racism and our national cultural, spiritual, and political crises. His preaching has centered on the 2016 election in the wake of violence and racial tension. He has facilitated classes and book discussion on these topics.*

*There were no expectations for our current senior pastor to spend a great deal of time to become heavily involved with the wider church activities. Recent feedback from our congregants indicates that they would like to see the new senior pastor take the leadership to increase our time and efforts in the Community and Conference as well as within some of the First Plymouth ministries and CAMs (e.g. WISE and Web of Care).*

### **Comment on your congregation's MissionInsite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown?**

*The Front Range is currently experiencing double-digit population growth, which is reflected in the geographic area surrounding First Plymouth. By 2027, study results\* indicate that we will continue to see a 5.5% growth, which translates into approximately 22,700 new residents. However, with one of the most competitive real estate markets in the country, the net effect is estimated to be fewer new families with children moving into our area and a retention of the current older family population. This is an opportunity to expand First Plymouth's membership, which has a 0.1% penetration rate out of an estimated 770,00 households.*

*Our area's average educational attainment is higher than Colorado's average, which is the highest in the nation. More than 50% of adults hold either a B.A. or Graduate/Professional degree. Our Community Diversity Index is moderately diverse when compared to the state. Ethnic percentages are similar with a 70% Anglo to 30% minority rate. The Median Family Income, Poverty level, and Blue-to-White Collar Occupations rates are all reflective of Colorado as a whole. All these demographic categories provide rich opportunities for a new pastor to reach and expand church membership.*

*One final trend is Religiosity. Three themes are significantly higher for our area. More people than average say they are a religious person; that it is important to attend religious services; and that faith is really important to them. When those high church participation factors are compared to First Plymouth's Penetration Rate of 0.1% (388 households out of 770,500 in the study area), it's easy to imagine the growth potential for First Plymouth Congregational Church.*

*\*QuickInsite Report, 1/26/2018, 10-year data projections: Study area is a five-mile radius encompassing zip code 80113.*

**How do your congregation’s internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects?**

*First Plymouth Congregational Church constructed a new building and relocated to its current location in 1958. At the time, it was surrounded by fields and in one of Denver’s original suburbs. The demographics were primarily young middle to upper class families. Today, it resides in one of Colorado’s most affluent zip codes. Compared to the neighborhood:*

	<b>Below Average</b>	<b>Similar</b>	<b>Above Average</b>
<b>Age</b>			
19 - 34	√		
46 - 50		√	
51 – 76+			√
Average Household (HH) age		√	
<b>HH with Children</b>	√		
<b>Income</b>			
Average HH Income			√
Median HH Income			√
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
Caucasian (80%)			√
Minorities (20%)	√		
<b>Education</b>			
No College Degree (48%)	√		
BA and or Graduate (52%)			√
<b>HH Occupation</b>			
Retired (30%)			√
Professional (38%)			√
Blue Collar (7%)	√		

*(Study area is a radius encompassing addresses of current membership, ComparativeInsite Report, 3/22/2017.)*

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

*The demographics of the community aren’t currently shaping ministry. In 1991, the church created the First Plymouth Learning Center as an outreach effort to draw families with young children to the church but very few preschool families found their way to the church.*

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

*"Our synagogue, Temple Sinai, is just down the street from First Plymouth Congregational Church but we're even much closer in friendship. Fifty years ago, First Plymouth opened its doors and provided a home for our congregation. Since then, we have cooperated on a number of projects that spiritually nurture our respective members and contribute to the welfare of our neighbors. One of our most precious programs is the Interfaith Thanksgiving service we hold together. Hundreds of people gather in prayer, setting a perfect mood and tone for Thanksgiving, as well as raising funds for the local food banks.*

*On a personal note, Reverend George Anastos and I have a warm and supportive friendship. I look forward to welcoming to our community his successor. May we be blessed with the opportunities to build on our wonderful history together."*

***Rabbi Rick Rheins, Senior Rabbi Temple Sinai, Denver***

*"First Plymouth Congregational is an important partner with Habitat for Humanity Metro Denver in supporting affordable housing in Denver. First Plymouth is a member of the Loaves and Fishes coalition, a group of churches supporting Habitat with the necessary funds and volunteers for the past 19 years, building 19 homes."*

***Heather Lafferty, Executive Director and CEO, Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver***

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

*Numerous people tell us they come to try our worship because of the banner on the front lawn that reads: Everybody Welcome. Seriously, Everybody.*

*Here are some specific comments from people when asked about what got them involved...*

*"I have to say that it is the warm welcome and also the commitment I see to social justice. We ...have been coming to the World Market for years... we read all your bulletin Boards and saw the outreach programs you have... First Plymouth was one of two churches I considered. Your warm welcome made me come back and your social justice commitment made me want to join."*

*"Since retiring and relocating to Colorado/Denver metro we had searched for a church that has some relationship to being theologically progressive. That was the initial draw. Adding to our interest is FP's excellent music program. Additionally, we are very impressed with the quality of programs and sermons provided by staff and ministers. It's a good fit for us."*

*"We appreciate the worshipful atmosphere during the Sunday service and the thoughtful, challenging sermons. We also joined especially for the excellent adult music program."*

*"I had experience with the bell choir at our previous church. I was delighted that FP had a bell choir and quickly volunteered. The change to a more choir friendly organist a year later got me into the chancel choir. I am so happy to again be worshipping in song."*

*“I joined because, my daughter and her husband are long time members, and my church in WI was Plymouth Church UCC, Milwaukee...and I feel I belong at First Plymouth.”*

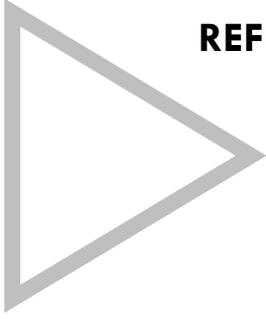
*“As a fairly new member of the church I can say that I was drawn to the church due to its size, programs and progressiveness.”*

*“One of the things that really struck me about FPCC was how involved the members were in the areas of social justice. Whether they supported the homeless, the incarcerated, those people struggling with addictions or issues of gun violence, LGBT rights or climate change, the people that I met in this congregation dedicated their discussions, their money, their talents and most importantly their time to the most compelling issues of our age. I truly believe that is doing God's work. And seeing these folks carve out the time for this in their lives inspires me to want to get involved.”*

*“We joined after hearing some of the sermons by George Anastos and Eric Smith; we found them both thoughtful, illuminating, and intellectually open and challenging, fostering deeper understandings of the biblical texts with regard to language, history, culture—and ways of interpreting meanings and implications more fully. We were also drawn by the music—the singing, organ, concerts, flute choir, etc. Then in my husband's last illness last spring, the visits, attentiveness, support of the pastoral care people and most deeply, of George Anastos, moved us greatly—all followed by the help and support my family and I received for the memorial service; I was so glad we had found a such a fine church home. As a senior, I am not in a position to volunteer much, but I appreciate the spiritual and intellectual stimulation, the music, and the friendship and inclusiveness of the church.”*

*“So we were looking for and feel like we have found a welcoming church with whom we can share the worship of God; a beautiful and active choir in which to participate; a minister AND congregation that espouses a progressive theology; and a minister that gives thought provoking sermons and at the same time preaches the Good News. The national website of our denomination also supports the inclusion of all life styles and gun control.”*

*“I heard about First Plymouth through Frank Perko III who was giving me organ lessons. Since Jay and I were not satisfied with the Broomfield United Church of Christ, due to some politics in the church, we had no church in mind. Jay and I live in Northglenn where there is a small United Church of Christ but since I am interested in the organ and we had attended some concerts at First Plymouth because of Frank, we decided to give First Plymouth a try even though it is across town from us. We were well received at First Plymouth and decided to become members.”*



## REFERENCES

### REFERENCE 1

**Julie Hoebel**, Executive Director, Kentucky Circle Village  
303-756-5218; [jhoebel@kentuckycircle.org](mailto:jhoebel@kentuckycircle.org)

*Kentucky Circle Village provides affordable senior housing and was co-founded by First Plymouth almost sixty years ago. Julie is former employee of First Plymouth.*

### REFERENCE 2

**Brad Berglund**, Spiritual Director and Pilgrimage Guide, Illuminated Journeys  
303-523-7711; [brad@illuminatedjourneys.com](mailto:brad@illuminatedjourneys.com)

*Brad has consulted for First Plymouth relating to membership concerns and staff enrichment.*

### REFERENCE 3

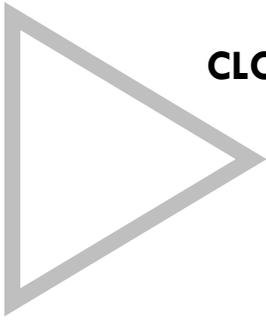
**Rev. Dave Pettit**, Pastor, Calvary Presbyterian Church  
303-756-5042, [davepettit@gmail.com](mailto:davepettit@gmail.com)

*Calvary Presbyterian has been housed at First Plymouth recently.*

### REFERENCE 4

**Joan Chase**, retired professor of anthropology and archaeologist  
303-797-9560, [chasejw@msn.com](mailto:chasejw@msn.com)

*Joan regularly attends Bible study and worship at First Plymouth although she is a member of a Unitarian Universalist Church nearby.*



## CLOSING THOUGHTS

CLOSING PRAYER

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

### CLOSING PRAYER

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*Spirit of discerning Love,*

*may we lean into your presence wrapping around us.*

*May we delight in your presence echoing between us.*

*May we be transformed by your presence within us.*

*We rejoice in the nine strengths of covenant,*

*sustaining us on this journey with you*

*into an abundant future:*

*gathered richness of diverse knowing,*

*firm stability of shared commitment,*

*daring challenge of unfolding vision,*

*holy accountability of maturing discipleship,*

*generous welcome of seeking stranger,*

*courageous trust of truthful reflection,*

*honest repentance of broken choices,*

*compassionate forgiveness of self and enemy.*

*These nine to shape us to sacred work,*

*these nine to nurture us in times of trial,*

*these nine to be roots and unfurling and fruition.*

*Let it be so.*

## STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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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? *(for example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.)*
2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Name / Title / Date:

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***