

## **BCC Prospectus**

Barre Congregational Church (BCC) in Barre, Vermont, is looking for a minister who will meet us where we are and recognize and celebrate our strengths. We value welcoming everyone to worship, serving the poor and homeless, and maintaining strong alliances with neighboring churches. We want a new leader to empower and guide us to become lay leaders. We want to share the responsibilities with him or her in caring for each other, carrying out God's work outside of the church, and maintaining our building.

We deeply desire our members to feel connected to each other and to our new minister, who, in turn, commits to and invests in the congregation. We intend to seek out and attract newcomers, broaden our welcome to them, and sustain that welcome to those who choose to join our church. The poor, addicted, and homeless experience few of life's essential joys while they struggle to meet their basic needs. We want to find new ways to serve and advocate for them.

Central Vermont is a beautiful place to live. We marvel at the lakes, rivers, mountains, forests, rolling hills, and farmland that surround us. Nature blesses us with lots of outdoor activities, including hiking, biking, skiing, boating, fishing, hunting, and more. We have a lively arts community that offers dance, theater, and contemporary and classical music, along with plenty of opportunities for artists and craftspeople to develop and share their gifts. The beautiful landscape for which Vermont is famous creates the background of our lives. We live as most people do: engaged in work of some sort, pursuing creative endeavors, and often serving in a civic or volunteer capacity. Our families and friends keep us busy and make our lives meaningful.

Every person who joins BCC has a unique story that led them here. People walk through our red doors for hundreds of reasons. More importantly, what inspires a newcomer to dig in, get involved, and eventually join BCC? Each person must feel welcome. They need to connect to one, then a few, and soon to more members, who reach out to them with acceptance, genuine care, and friendship. We know it can be challenging for new folks to find a niche at the BCC. Most long-term members recognize our responsibility to reach out to these people and encourage them to get more involved in ministries and activities within the church. We are getting better at this.

People find what they are seeking at BCC. They feel God's presence at Sunday services. The sermons, the singing, the stirring organ and piano music, the shared prayers, the community, and the Holy Spirit here inspire them. They leave our beautiful and peaceful sanctuary feeling fortified, assured, enlightened, and ready to spread the love of God through their words and deeds in the week ahead.

Members of BCC look at our church with pride. We strive to uphold our solid reputation in Barre. At this pivotal point in our history, poised between settled ministers, we are enjoying a resurgence of enthusiastic commitment to the church and each other. We have a keen sense of openheartedness about our future and what we might become.

While researching and writing the church profile for our search and call process, the search committee talked to church members, local residents, and community leaders. We discovered and formulated provocative, God-driven questions about how we might move forward as a vibrant and evolving church with a new minister. How do we help our parishioners become effective lay leaders according to their gifts? How do we improve on making our church available, accessible, and satisfying for our elderly members? What are the best ways to grow our membership with an enthusiastic and sustained welcome? What more can we learn and understand about addiction, poverty, and homelessness that allows us to serve these groups better?

Our church is ready to tackle challenges, try new approaches, and find some God-given answers to how we can “be the church” in Barre, Vermont. The search committee is committed to finding the right minister to join us, honoring our strong history, foundation, and traditions.

Could that be you? We hope so. We look forward to meeting you.

*The Vermont Conference search & call process calls for all interested candidates to receive the Barre Congregational Church’s local church profile from the Conference office. Please contact Operations & Ministries Coordinator Jesse Davis at [ministriescoordinator@vtcucc.org](mailto:ministriescoordinator@vtcucc.org) to receive the local church profile.*

***To have your profile submitted to the Barre Congregational Church search committee, you must first contact the Vermont Conference office.***