
Ministerial Profile for Serene Davis

Statement of Consent

"The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls certain of its members to various forms of ministry in and on behalf of the church for which ecclesiastical authorization is required." United Church of Christ Constitution, Article VI, paragraph 21.

Use of the UCC Ministerial Profile signifies that an individual has an Association's ecclesiastical authorization to seek a call as a minister in and on behalf of the church; has completed background check screening and fitness verification; has attested to certain statements in a document of self-disclosure; and has gained three references which speak to their practice of ministry. The Profile is a tool of testament and transparency, meant to demonstrate covenants of supportive cooperation and appropriate sharing of information among national offices, Conference and/or Association personnel, calling bodies, and the minister, as expressed in paragraph 25 of Article VI of the United Church of Christ Constitution.

It is essential that information contained within this document be sensitively and responsibly reviewed and interpreted. All those seeing the document have the responsibility to maintain or dispose of its contents confidentially.

Any practice by calling bodies of routinely rejecting profiles on a perfunctory basis without a complete and individualized assessment, including a thoughtful review of commentary offered by the candidate, is strongly discouraged. In particular, criminal history information, including the conduct underlying that history, should be evaluated in terms of the nature and gravity of the offense or conduct, the time that has passed since the offense, conduct, and/or sentence, and the nature of the position sought by a candidate, so as to foster call and hiring decisions that are based on an individualized assessment that is job/ministry related and consistent with ministry/business necessity.

Relationships between calling bodies, authorized ministers, and those holding ministerial standing and fitness oversight rely upon practices of discernment and dialogue. Because such relationships require integrity and an honest exchange of relevant information, for the health and mission of the church, this minister pledges the following:

1. I attest that the information contained in the UCC Ministerial Profile is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for a calling body's declined consideration for, or termination of, a ministry position. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely manner to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that a response or information was incorrect when given or if the response or information, though accurate when given is no longer accurate.

2. I understand that I may designate certain Conference and/or Association staff and other persons and entities, to receive and circulate my UCC Ministerial Profile. I authorize all such persons and entities, and/or their agents, to make inquiries regarding all statements contained in my UCC Ministerial Profile. I also authorize all persons, entities, former employers, committees on ministry and their agents, courts, law enforcement and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me and to supply verification of the information provided in my UCC Ministerial Profile. I understand that such persons may comment on and state their opinions regarding my background and character to those who execute the search process, such as members of a calling body or judicatory staff persons. To encourage such persons to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses and comments made in good faith and without malice.

Signature*On File***Name**

Serene M. Davis

Timestamp

Wed Feb 16 2022 19:57:36 GMT-0500 (Eastern Standard Time)

Contact Information

First Name

Serene

Middle Name

Monique

**Preferred Name**

Serene

Last Name

Davis

Suffix**I Prefer To Be Contacted By**

Email Address

Address

123 Main Street
Cleveland, OH 44115
United States

Phone Numbers/Emails

PHONE

Business

987-654-3210

EMAIL

Primary Email Address

exploringuccpolity@gmail.com

Ecclesiastical Authorization for Ministry

I am a member of Mount Zion United Church of Christ Church in Cleveland, OH US.

Authorized Minister

I am an Ordained Minister with full standing in the United Church of Christ. I was ordained on Apr 1, 2022. My current standing is held in the MESA Conference by the ProfilesOffice Association.

Verification

- The minister's standing is current and the candidate is deemed fit for ministry in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ.
- A current criminal background check is attached at this time.
- To the best of my knowledge, current employment information is accurate.
- To the best of my knowledge, the background disclosure statement is accurate.

My signature below attests to the above four items.

Signature

On File

Name

Jeff Nelson

Title

Minister for Ministerial Calls and Transitions

Conference

MESA

Association

ProfilesOffice

Timestamp

Wed Feb 16 2022 14:59:01 GMT-0500 (Eastern Standard Time)

Standing

Conference

MESA

Association

ProfilesOffice

Ministry Essays

Some essay questions reference *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers* at the United Church of Christ

The United Church of Christ recognizes *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers* in the formation of ministers, in the practice of active ministry, and throughout life. For the purposes of completing a denominational Profile, ministers are asked to spend some time with the *Marks*.

My sense of being called to ordained ministry by God and the Church (from the “Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice” section).

My sense of call was fostered at an early age by my home church, an American Baptist congregation in San Francisco, California, which encouraged the participation of all members in the work of ministry. As a young adult, I was blessed with opportunities to teach and preach in the church; these invitations and affirmations from the congregation, in addition to the mentorship of my pastor, convinced me of God's call to commit my life to the faithful service of the Living Word and the Body of Christ. Thus called and committed, but uncertain of my precise professional direction in ministry, I continued my vocational discernment through the Master of Divinity program at Andover Newton Theological School. My studies in practical theology and my internship years with Eighth Congregational UCC revealed my passion for congregational life and leadership as lived expressions of Christ. Now with almost thirty years of pastoral experience, it is still the ongoing transformation of the Body of Christ that energizes my work and renews my sense of call.

My concept of covenant and how it informs UCC history, polity, and theology (from the “Nurturing UCC Identity” section).

Because God has aligned God's well-being to humanity (Exodus 6:7, "I will take you as my people, and I will be your God"), we commit ourselves to one another in imitation of God's covenantal commitment to humanity. Bound to one another by covenant -- like oxen bound by a wooden yoke or children bound together for a three-legged race -- we strive to live in such a way that the entire world is blessed by the knowledge of the love of God. The United Church of Christ, which I joined during my undergraduate years, has established covenantal relationships between ministers and churches, Conferences and Associations and national offices, deeming us equal and necessary partners in the work of loving God and all neighbors. Authorized ministers in the United Church of Christ are joyfully burdened with the responsibility of creating and fostering partnerships within their ministry settings, as well as in and on behalf of the wider church.

I am passionate about ...

I am passionate about community as a living expression of Christ. While the Church has its share of flaws and skeptics (among them, institutionally-wary Gen-Xers and a rising trend in Spiritual-but-not-Religious aficionados), I believe that we are called to practice the teachings of Christ within and extending out from

covenantal communities, rather than striving to emit "This Little Light of Mine" entirely on our own as individuals. Thus from Council meetings to church bylaws, Sunday worship to Saturday breakfast group, in all that we do as a faith community, we aim to embody the fullness of Christ's love and grace.

Reflect on your personal and professional formation for ministry in light of any Mark from another section.

Section 3, Mark 10: "The ability to take initiative in leadership, and to frame and test a vision in community." In my experience of pastoral ministry, the discipline of leadership is a daily and prayerful practice of holding a vision that I do not own. The vision of who/what a faith community has been, is and will be, belongs to the people of that faith community itself first of all, and it belongs to Jesus Christ most of all. As the pastor, I lead the community in naming its vision, telling its stories and dreams, and living into Christ's ever-renewing call, always mindful that my leadership does not make the vision "mine"; rather, it is my privilege to catch sight of the vision in cooperation with the congregation and by the inspiration of Christ.

Educational Formation of Ministry

In the following section, I include a record of my College and Graduate Education, any Regional Education Training Programs, or other formative educational experiences I have completed, as well as Continuing Education.

College and Graduate Education

Chicago Theological Seminary
Chicago , US
2006-2009
Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Transformation

Andover Newton Theological School
Newton Centre , US
1993-1996
Master of Divinity

Ohio State University
Columbus , US
1989-1993
Bachelor of Arts in History

San Francisco City High School
San Francisco , US
1985-1989
High School Diploma
There are none completed.

Professional Development

Continuing Education

No response

Community and Wider Church Involvement

Led Annual Youth Mission Trip with Habitat for Humanity (2000-2014); Organized Ecumenical Community Meal Program (2009-2014); Initiated Interfaith Pride Worship Service (2015-2022); Served on Association Committee on Ministry (2021-2022)

Awards, Honors, and Publications

"Alumni Excellence in Pastoral Ministry" Award from Andover Newton Theological School (2013); Blog called "Living as Church" (2017-2022); Book of poetry entitled "Step by Step" (Cleveland Publishing, 2020)

Vocational History

Mt. Zion United Church of Christ
Shaker Heights , US
2015-2022
Senior Pastor
Full-Time

Lakeside United Church of Christ
Evanston , US
2004-2014
Pastor
Full-Time

Hilltop Congregational United Church of Christ
Waltham , US
1997-2004
Associate Pastor for Youth and Families
Full-Time

Eighth Congregational United Church of Christ
Newton , US
1994-1996
Student Pastor
Part-Time

Key Accomplishments

Location / Setting

Mt. Zion

Description

I'm proud of the vision work that is underway at Mt. Zion UCC, driven by the question "What does it mean to be the Body of Christ to our local community?" Responses thus far focus on hospitality: the congregation hosts an annual Interfaith Pride Worship Service, participates in an ecumenical clothing bank, and shares space with a Spanish-speaking congregation. In addition, Mt. Zion is learning to "vision" our faith in our budget; the Church Council recently committed funds to hire an ASL interpreter for worship and the congregation has increased its OCWM giving.

Location / Setting

Lakeside UCC

Description

At Lakeside UCC in Illinois, the work of faith formation was key to the church's revitalization. The congregation and I examined its traditional faith formation goals before daring to dream in new ways. An intergenerational faith formation program was initiated, incorporating the study of scripture with the love of neighbor; the congregation transformed its belief in justice to a practice of justice (exemplified in its participation in the ecumenical community meal program).



Location / Setting

Christ's

Description

Across my years in ministry, I am proud of my consistency in preaching and pastoral care. I believe firmly in the impact of excellent pastoral care to foster congregational vitality by demonstrating Christ's presence at bedsides and firesides, across communion tables and kitchen tables. I continue to invest time and energy in the development of my preaching through both informal and formal education, so that I can be the best vessel possible for God's word.

Skill Sets

Anyone who has marked a Credential below should be able to provide corroborating information in the profile beyond just a basic unit of training.

NAME	PASSION	DEMONSTRATED EXPERIENCE	CREDENTIAL
Church Growth and Size Transitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Committee on Ministry Experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabilities Ministry / Accessible to All	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ecumenical Dialogue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interfaith Dialogue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Large Church Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open and Affirming	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pastoral Care / Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth Group Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

References

Reference from Jeff Nelson

Completed

Feb 15, 2022

Contact

13290 Summerfield Ave. NW

Uniontown, OH 44685

nelsonj@ucc.org (Email Address) **Primary**

revjnelson@hotmail.com (Email Address)

2167363838 (Business)

3306359851 (Mobile Phone)

ROLE AND RELATIONSHIP TO MINISTER

Serene has been a friend and colleague for the past 5 years.

AREAS OF STRENGTH

Serene is a deeply centered minister and spiritual caregiver, no doubt nurtured by years of faithful service, dedicated pursuit of justice, and commitment to her own spiritual development.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Serene's passion often has her over-commit to projects, and she would be well-served by partners in ministry who remind her to rely on others for some tasks and to take proper care for her own needs.

SIGNIFICANT EXPERIENCE

I was grateful to be a part of a weekly prayer group that Serene organized for local clergy. This time exhibited the deep spiritual well from which she draws, and I and the other participants greatly appreciated her leadership.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Any ministry setting that calls Serene will gain a thoughtful and prayerful spiritual leader.

Reference from Elizabeth Dilley

Completed

Feb 15, 2022

Contact

1432 W. 81st St.

Cleveland, OH 44102

liturgygeek@gmail.com (Email Address)

dilleye@ucc.org (Email Address) **Primary**

liturgygeek@yahoo.com (Email Address)

(216) 736-3841 (Business)

7127899253 (Mobile Phone)

ROLE AND RELATIONSHIP TO MINISTER

I have known Serene since she first was invented by our team as a sample minister for use in training and reference in 2013.

AREAS OF STRENGTH

Serene is a wise and capable pastor whose leadership is faithful and steady. She is a thoughtful preacher whose messages are tailor-made for her context, and she has a true gift for pastoral care. At the same time, she also has deep gifts for helping discern and cultivate a congregation's vision, and translate that into action. Serene also has the ability to communicate across difference, and helps congregations in conflict learn how to listen and talk to each other in healthy ways. In fact, Serene is particularly gifted at helping congregations in conflict address what is dividing them and help them root themselves in their core values as they make decisions.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Like many clergy, Serene's passion for ministry sometimes leads her to overcommit or to work on her days off. She is diligent, and she runs the risk of burnout if she does not keep her expectations for herself realistic.

SIGNIFICANT EXPERIENCE

Serene once led a congregation that was extremely divided about how to use the abundant space they had. One faction was convinced that their glory days were right around the corner and there would very soon be a need to use all the classroom spaces again. Another faction wanted to rent out some of those rooms to community partners, some of whom had beliefs very different from the church's values. Still another faction wanted to vet potential renters based on their theology. Serene was able to help the congregation identify their values, their present needs, their future hopes, and bring them together to develop policies that aligned with their values and addressed the concerns of all. It was not easy, and not everyone got everything they wanted, but everyone was able to commit to the shared decisions made.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Serene is a gifted bridge-builder and has plenty of experience in pastoral ministry settings. Her heart is in the local church.

Reference from Tara Barber

Completed

Feb 15, 2022

Contact

14069 Hilltop Ln NW

Seattle, WA 98177

barbertara@hotmail.com (Email Address) **Primary**

425-213-9335 (Mobile Phone)

ROLE AND RELATIONSHIP TO MINISTER

previous colleague and friend of six years

AREAS OF STRENGTH

Serena has a passion for justice and a commitment to supporting those harmed by systems of oppression. She can be found on the front lines advocating, protesting, bringing others alongside to engage in transformational ministry. She is engaging and inspirational in the pulpit, and connects with youth and older adults.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

She sometimes shows her impatience with the slow moving changes within the church. She has ruffled the feathers of established church leaders. This area of improvement is also a part of her giftedness, it just needs some nuancing.

SIGNIFICANT EXPERIENCE

Our town had news that refugees were coming and needed everything to get a fresh start. Serene organized our church and worked across the community to find housing - and all the household goods, possible jobs, and support services. It was incredible to watch her work with people to serve the newest members of our town.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

You'd be lucky to have her as your pastor.

Self-Appraisal

Some Areas of Strength in My Practice of Ministry

Perhaps most outstanding in my practice of ministry is my dedication to the work of congregational vitality (regardless of a church's numeric size, annual budget or community context) through the identification of gifts and passions already present in the faith community and an inclusive invitation for all to invest their creative gifts in the congregation's life.

Some Areas for Growth in My Practice of Ministry

I believe that a minister is never finished in her learning, through formal and continuing education opportunities, but most of all through maintaining a teachable spirit in leadership.

A Meaningful Experience I Have Had in Ministry

During my pastoral service at Mt. Zion, I have been moved and inspired by the inclusion of ASL interpretation in worship. The visual representation of language, the dance-like quality of ASL, not only calls my attention to the continued need for greater worship accessibility at Mt. Zion but also teaches me that language -- like community -- is at its best when we invite all of its dimensions into conversation together.

Additional Comments

In addition to the joy that I continue to find in pastoral ministry, I have been blessed by the joy of parenting two children, now adults. A rescue dog named Gustav keeps me active and helps me meet neighbors on our long walks each day.

Self-Disclosure

In your response to the "Vocational History" question in the profile, did you omit any ecclesiastical employment?
(Required)

No

Have you ever been the subject of a fitness review in any entity affiliated with or setting of the United Church of Christ that resulted in:

Censure (Required)

No

Suspension (Required)

No

Termination of Ministerial Standing (Required)

No

Are you currently engaged in a program of growth as the result of a fitness review in the United Church of Christ? (Required)

No

Are there any fitness reviews pending against you at this time by any setting or entity of or affiliated with the United Church of Christ? (Required)

No

Have you ever been the subject of an official disciplinary proceeding by another denomination, professional association, credentialing body, guild or employer that resulted in disciplinary action? (Required)

No

Are there any official disciplinary proceedings pending against you at this time by another denomination, professional association, credentialing body, guild or employer? (Required)

No

Have you ever been the subject of a civil law suit alleging that you attempted or actually engaged in sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct; which has ever resulted in a judgment being entered against you, settled out of court, or dismissed because the statute of limitations had expired? (Required)

No

Have you had your driving license suspended or revoked within the last 5 years? (Required)

No

Have you ever been found guilty of, pled guilty to, or pled no contest to criminal charges? (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated; any misdemeanor conviction for which probation was successfully completed; offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in the state in which you are seeking a position; acts of civil disobedience. With respect to driving record, only include matters of reckless driving, driving while intoxicated and/or driving under the influence of a controlled substance.) (Required)

No

Has your employment, a volunteer position, or professional credentials, ever been terminated or revoked, or have you been asked not to return to employment or a volunteer position in the future because you attempted or actually engaged in:

Sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation or misconduct (Required)

No

Physical abuse (Required)

No

Child abuse (Required)

No

Financial misconduct (Required)

No

Have you ever terminated your employment, a volunteer position, or professional credentials in order to avoid facing or to avoid being terminated because of charges of actual or attempted:

Sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation or misconduct (Required)

No

Physical abuse (Required)

No

Child abuse (Required)

No

Financial misconduct (Required)

No

Are there any facts or circumstances involving you or your background that should be disclosed and/or further reviewed before you are entrusted with the responsibilities of ministry on behalf of a calling body of the United Church of Christ? (Required)

No

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, please provide detailed explanation for all such affirmative answers. In addition to providing other relevant material, be sure to include dates and information for related official decisions, actions, reviews, etc. (by you and/or other parties) that affected your employment and/or ministerial standing and/or professional credentials. (Required)

n/a

Criminal Background Check

Attached

Status: Completed

Report Date: Feb 16, 2022

Expiration Date: Aug 16, 2023

Supplemental Material

Interpreting The History

No response

Additional Comments

No response

Optional Web Presence

<http://www.living-as-church.com>

Type: Blog

Primary

Interim Ministry (Optional)

Not Selected

Closing Thoughts

May the LORD bless you and keep you, may God guide us both in wisdom and in mystery, and may the Spirit spark something new through our fellowship.



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FINAL REPORT CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK

February 16, 2022

UCC Ministerial Excellence, Support, & Authorization
ATTN: Rev. Elizabeth Dilley
1300 E. 9th St.
Cleveland, OH 44115

RE: Rev. Serene M. Davis
Location: Clergy

Dear Rev. Dilley:

We have completed our investigation of the above-named person in accordance with your request. We are reporting results with the following services performed:

National
State
Local

This report is submitted with the understanding that it is to be held in strict confidence. Except as may be required by law, no information may be revealed directly or indirectly to any third parties not involved in the decision-making process.

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