Associate Minister for Early-Life
Asylum Hill Congregational Church

Title: Associate Minister for Early-Life

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

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

Overview:
This pastor is charged with a full range of ministerial duties with respect to: Worship Leadership, Pastoral Care, and Faith Formation / Growth for parishioners from 5 years of age through and into young family-life (for the purpose of discussion thought to be in mid-to-late 40’s).

As the Early-life Minister, it is expected that this pastor will endeavor to:
- Be a spiritual and collaborative leader in all aspects of congregational life within AHCC, but with primary focus on: Pastoral Care, Worship and Faith Formation and Growth;
- Form healthy pastoral relationships with parishioners in the early-life age demographic (defined above);
- Help parishioners in this demographic find and form meaningful connections to the ministries and mission of AHCC as well as to other members of the congregation; and
- Represent AHCC appropriately in the wider community as appropriate to the work of the Early Life Ministries and in concert with the directives of the Senior Minister.

NOTE: The definition of Early-life and Mid+Later-life focus is new to AHCC and as such some level of detail in roles to be assumed by these Associate Ministers will be defined within the first two years of its implementation, beginning later in AHCC’s fiscal year of 2019/2020.

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

Critical Qualities:
- Effective preaching and creative worship planning skills
- Effective pastoral care skills
- Superb organizational and communications skills
- Ability to think innovatively and without fear of failure
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- Team leadership and collaboration skills
- Ability to work well with lay leaders and/or volunteers as a spiritual guide and motivator.

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

**Pastoral Care**

The Associate Minister for Early Life Ministries is expected to provide pastoral care to church members and friends of the Church primarily within the early-life demographic (but not exclusively as pastoral care is often provided in multi-generational family settings) as needed. All AHCC clergy bear responsibility for pastoral care of AHCC’s parishioners. It is anticipated that a weekly consultation with other AHCC clergy and staff (Caring Coordinator) will be required to ascertain and assign caring roles ensuring that the needs of parishioners are addressed in a timely and faith-filled fashion. This involves, but is not limited to: personal visits, phone calls, and electronic/written correspondence, as well as providing guidance for outside professional counseling and other referral services.

**Worship Leadership**

The Associate Minister for Early Life Ministries will collaborate weekly with other AHCC clergy and staff members, on creative worship planning and will be an effective partner in the worship practices in the life of the church. Scheduling and assignments will be developed with the Senior Minister and the Worship Planning Team. This may entail:

- Weekly visioning and planning;
- Sunday sermons and recruitment of liturgists or participants;
- Special services in the Church calendar;
- Assistance planning lay-led worship services (Children, Youth or Adult);
- Worship for special occasions: Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms, etc.; and
- Off-site meditations.

**Faith Formation and Spiritual Growth**

Faith formation and spiritual growth for the AHCC parishioner in the early-life demographic is addressed primarily through the programs noted below. In essence, these programs along with their program directors form the Early-life team. This pastor is expected to serve as a spiritual leader, as well as a creative and collaborative thinking partner to this Early-life team, including: the Director of Children and Family Ministries, Youth Director, Director of Discipleship and Director of Music and Arts.

- **Children and Family Ministry** (ages 5 through 5th grade)
- **Youth Ministry** (6th grade through high school, including confirmation)
- **Young Adult Ministry** (post secondary, college age, those in their 20’s, 30’s and into mid life). The Young Adult Ministry is in an evolutionary stage as of FY 2019/2020. More on this at the end of this document.
- **Outreach and Mission Work** - addressing our annual grants to local agencies as well as our works of service and social justice, such as: AHCC’s Thrift Shop; WestMiddle School Tutoring, domestic and/or foreign mission trips;
- **Music + Arts Ministry**
It is expected that this Early-life team will be responsible for:

- Addressing a parishioner’s level of engagement, pastoral needs, spiritual growth and changing spiritual needs;
- Envisioning, planning and implementing programs and ministries noted above as well as new and innovative programs and ministries that speak to those who are not yet present in our congregational gatherings;
- Working with the Later-life team on opportunities for cross generational programs of fellowship, faith formation and mission. It is important to note that AHCC has a history of mission trips for young people and adults in both domestic and foreign settings.
- Engaging the Director of Communications in order to develop and maintain regular and effective modes of communication and appropriate messages about AHCC’s Early-life ministry programs both within the congregation and to the wider community;
- Occasionally during the program year, working with the lay leadership of the Membership and the Stewardship Committees of the church in their work addressing the efforts to grow and sustain the church, while deepening the parishioners’ understanding of their role as stewards.

In the execution of this work, this pastor is expected to model healthy leadership and provide spiritual guidance in the following:

- Communication and the formation of a healthy pastoral relationship with children, youth and their families;
- Participation in planning as well as execution of early-life programs, including mission and outreach opportunities, such as domestic and/or foreign mission trips, etc.
- Bi-annual vision meetings with program director(s);
- Monthly meetings with lay led committees related to early life ministry; and
- Weekly meetings with program director(s) and staff as necessary to implement programs.

**Additional Pastoral Responsibilities**

- Contribute as requested to written submissions for the Sunday bulletin, the Hill Church News, and AHCC website;
- Maintain a working knowledge of the annual church budget, and general operating procedures particularly as it relates to Early-life Ministries;
- Participate in the lay leadership nominating processes particularly as it relates to Early-life Ministries;
- Participate in annual vision and planning meetings with lay and staff;
- Participate in staff meetings (including weekly pastoral meetings, weekly program staff meetings, and a monthly all-staff meeting);
- Participate in Executive Committee meetings;
- Participate in Deacon’s meetings;
- Participate in an annual goal setting and performance review process of self and other staff to be determined in concert with the Senior Minister and Personnel Committee.
- Attend to UCC Association and Conference obligations, clergy gatherings, Annual Meetings, Installations, Ordinations, etc.
- Attend to professional development – clergy groups, conferences, etc.

**End Notes on: College and Young Adult Ministry** – This is an evolving area of ministry at AHCC. Working collaboratively with other staff members the Associate Minister will help to create innovative avenues of ministry to those in their late teens and 20s including college students, as well as those in their 30s and 40s. AHCC has a history of successful Christian Sharing Groups which can be one aspect of this ministry. Additional aspects may include:
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- Examining the spiritual and fellowship needs of our current young adult population who are in attendance at AHCC and design a system comprised of lay leaders and staff to generate spiritual growth and fellowship experiences to attract others in these age groups;
- Exploring avenues for developing relationships with area college and university students that would enhance their college experience, to enable AHCC to become their church away from home;
- Examining and tracking our current college students/young adults (now away from home) so that we can support them while they are away from AHCC;

Attachment: UCC Minister’s Code