

RESOURCE GUIDE

for Ministerial Search Committees

Department of Ministry and Professional Leadership

Unitarian Universalist Association

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Section I of this manual is David Pohl's work.

Sections II-III and VI-VIII were compiled by Daniel D. Hotchkiss from many sources. Polly Guild is acknowledged for designing the search committee retreat plan; the United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership for perspectives and ideas from a kindred religious movement; the Selections Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta for their excellent but out-of-print guide, *So You're Looking for a Minister?*; and Peter Raible for his ministerial classic *How To Case a Church*.

Sections IV-V and IX-XVI were compiled by John H. Weston.

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How to use this guide

The *Resource Guide for Ministerial Search Committees* is a smorgasbord of practical resources for the ministerial search committee. It is a supplement to the *Ministerial Settlement Handbook*, which explains the recommended procedures of the Unitarian Universalist Association for the ministerial search process. One member of the committee will most likely hold the *Resource Guide* and parcel out or copy sections of it to committee members according to their roles (for suggested search committee roles, see the *Settlement Handbook*, pp. 31-32).

The *Resource Guide* does not claim to be the final or official word on anything. It is a collection of materials, most of them originating in the work of search committees, edited and distributed by the UUA. You may feel free to use or ignore any of the resources found here as you judge best in the light of the unique character of your congregation. If you produce anything you think might be of value to others, please send it in to be considered for the next edition.

I. The Ten C's of Ministry

In 1853, the Secretary of the American Unitarian Association wrote a series of open letters to Unitarian congregations in the pages of the association's Journal. Ministerial settlement was the subject of one of those letters. While today his language may seem quaint, his observations and advice appear to me strikingly sensible, and in many respects still valid. Among other things, he urged congregations weighing ministerial candidates to consider first and foremost "their religious qualifications, their desire to serve people, their piety." Congregations would be well advised, he said, to seek "the solid rather than shining parts in a minister." Congregations were advised not to be mesmerized by intellect, charisma, or smoothness of manner, but to look first for the specifically religious qualities: piety, love for others, enthusiasm, and conscience.

Having served as a student minister for four years, a full-time parish minister for seventeen years, and ministerial transitions director for the association from 1971 to 1985, I find that my thoughts on our ministry are in substance those of the AUA secretary a century and a quarter ago.

If I were serving on a ministerial search committee or were a member of a congregation about to seek a new minister, what expectations would I bring to that search? What qualities would I would like to see in our next minister, and what priorities would I assign to them? There are at least ten specific qualities of "the solid rather than the shining" kind that would have priority for me. It happens, with my fondness for alliteration, that all these qualities begin with the letter "c." Alliteration, like illustration, can be a helpful teaching and preaching device, and so I use it here without apology, but with the admission that it took a little straining to come up with words to maintain the alliterative consistency.

What I would look for, first of all, is CHARACTER. I do not have in mind here either eccentricity or self-righteousness, but moral consistency, stability, and reliability. All of us know persons we can count on, to whom we feel free to go for help, in whom we can confide, from whom we expect both candor and concern. Ministers of character also have what might be called personal authenticity, genuineness or transparency, the absence of phoniness, airs and self importance. A person of character is, to borrow Betty Ford's apt phrase, "more real than role." Unitarian Universalist ministers never did possess the authority of a priestly role in the same sense as, say, a Lutheran or Anglican cleric. But those of us in the liberal ministry know from experience that a kind of authority accompanies the role of minister in certain situations, such as counseling, rites of passage and preaching. In recent years we have seen an erosion of that authority of role, so that what limited authority ministers do have must and should come from their own authenticity and reliability as men and women of character. The minister, by being a certain kind of person, should be able to speak with authority "and not as the scribes," and also be in a position of being able to preach what he or she practices. No amount of professional skill or intellectual acuity can compensate for the absence or inadequacy of character.

I would, in the second place, look for a minister with a sense of CALLING. The ministry is not apart from or superior to other careers, but, as in all genuine vocations, there should be a compelling urgency to do one's best because what one is doing is important and holy under the aspect of eternity as well as in our own eyes. A sense of calling motivates us to do our work well, to be a worker "who needeth not to be ashamed." It shares with us a vision of reality and of life's possibilities that infuses us with enthusiasm. As Emerson wisely observed, "nothing great is accomplished without enthusiasm." It energizes us for our work, enabling us to work hard and to work well — not in a frenzied, driven sense but in a clearly focused, self-directed way. It humbles us, not only with an awareness of our shortcomings, but with the knowledge that we are accountable to a heritage and a reality that transcend the local congregation, personal ambition and a particular job.

In recent years ministers have sought to professionalize our calling, a needed but perilous venture. As we have sought to be treated in a more business-like manner regarding decent financial compensation, employment benefits, sabbatical leaves, etc. — all in a "letter of agreement," we sometimes encourage a climate where a covenant of trust is replaced by a contract of law. Similarly, some laypersons, propelled prematurely to parish leadership positions and lacking experience with our congregations and movement, import attitudes and practices incompatible with a called ministry. They may in fact view ministers as hirelings accountable to them. Both ministers and congregations need to strike a healthy balance so that the best qualities of professionalism and calling are strengthened. For example, ministers might remember that a sense of calling renders talk about forty-hour work-weeks inappropriate and unprofessional. The minister who invokes the response, "that's not my job," when asked by lay leaders to lend a hand with administrative and institutional tasks, may lack this sense of calling. For us who practice it, the profession of ministry should be something we love, not loathe — something that enriches rather than demeans us, a calling, not a chore. All of us need to remind ourselves that ministers are called, not hired — the difference is significant.

I would, in the third place, hope for a minister who is a person of CULTURE. I don't want sermons written in textbook jargon or conversation heavy with grim, pretentious intellectualizing. But it is reasonable, I think, to hope a minister will be cultured in the sense of being reasonably learned, informed and interesting as a person. A minister ought to cultivate a catholicity of tastes and avoid becoming either a boor or a snob. A cultured minister is acquainted with the arts and sciences, with religion, politics, sports and television. How else can there be contact and communication with people where they are? How else can one learn from people with varied and differing tastes? (I was speaking in this vein to a group of our ministers several years ago, and indicated that a cultured person would, for instance, be able to identify both Beverly Sills and John Havlicek. One obviously cultured minister interjected, "that's easy. Beverly Sills is a forward for the Boston Celtics.")

A fourth quality to look for in a minister is that of CARING. He or she should be genuinely interested in, and concerned for, other persons — neither excessively self-preoccupied nor interested in others only to the extent that they meet his or her needs. This is especially crucial in personal counseling where there always lurks the temptation to play god, to dispense divine wisdom, or to create an unhealthy dependency. Caring is

healthy and liberating when it is rooted in a vision of others as our brothers and sisters, flesh of our flesh, kin for whom we feel kindness and empathy. An extension of the caring ministry is concern for the larger community, especially for the voiceless, the dispossessed, those who do not have, or do not believe they have, any power to change their situation of suffering or oppression. Simply put, care needs prophetic as well as pastoral expression, impelling us to “comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. How deeply does he or she *care* about the struggle for peace, justice and bread in the world? Is there only rhetoric about caring, or is there evidence of trying to learn more about, and do something constructive to solve, the social problems that afflict our local communities, the nation, the world? The solid minister reconciles the pastoral and prophetic, since both spring from a spirit of caring and a resolve that what we claim for ourselves we wish for others.

A fifth quality I seek in a minister is the capacity to be CREATIVE. Most of us may not be creatively gifted, however much we harbor fantasies about writing the great novel, painting a memorable work of art, or being the chef of a gourmet restaurant. We can hope, however, to cultivate a first-hand relationship to reality, to be original in the sense of listening to our own response to life and being courageous enough to share it. We can be open to new and disturbing ideas and ways of doing things — not venerating either the new or the old, but being willing to hear out the person with a new idea, or to try something to see if it works, or to deliberately shape something new with the stamp of our character on it. A healthy capacity to innovate is every bit as important as the capacity to conserve and transmit “the tried and true,” the continuity of the human pilgrimage.

Again, a minister needs to see his or her role as CATALYTIC, helping to make things happen, galvanizing people into action, sometimes providing just the impetus to bring to pass what had previously been but latent. As one who has always had an aversion to chemistry, I am wary of pushing the metaphor of catalytic agent very far. Yet I have this conviction that the effective minister is a lever or agent, neither a do-it-all figure of paternalism nor a passive technician. The catalytic minister works to develop a ministry of the laity, laypersons who participate in worship, teaching, counseling and witness, and who work with the called professional leader to build a caring and redemptive community.

A seventh quality worth seeking in ministry is a leadership style that is CONSULTATIVE and COOPERATIVE. It is a given of our movement that leadership be democratic, not authoritarian. Nonetheless, democratic leadership is still leadership; it is the willingness to be out front and up front in risking initiatives, in suggesting tactics and goals. Democratic leadership is not an abdication of either initiative or advocacy. I don't want a minister to tell me what to do, but I do want him or her to tell me what he or she believes ought to be done. I would like to see a leadership style that is neither diffident nor arrogant, just as I would like to see congregations that are neither anticlerical nor clergocentric. The consultative and cooperative minister represents the middle way of Aristotle: listens as well as speaks, learns as well as teaches, shares the challenges and burdens of leadership rather than monopolizing or relinquishing them.

There is an eighth quality I would look for in a minister, summed up by the word COLLEGIAL, a word that points to the need to relate personally and professionally to

colleagues — both in one’s own denomination and in the interfaith community. There are “loners” who succeed in ministry, but I think they diminish their own richness and short-change their colleagues by an essentially private practice of ministry. I cannot begin to say how much I have learned from my colleagues, and how much I have been strengthened by them. All in all, it has been one of the highlights of my life to know and be known by my colleagues — in the north Middlesex, Meadville, and Iroquois chapters while I was a parish minister, and in all chapters across the continent since coming to 25 beacon street. We need one another for support, for learning, for fellowship, and for straight talk.

A ninth hope I have — it should be an assumption, I suppose — is that the minister will be professionally COMPETENT. Like other professionals, a minister ought to possess the theoretical knowledge and practical skills of the craft. Congregations have a right to expect that their minister will have mastered, for example, the art of communicating; a minister should project, not mumble; and shape a coherent message, not ramble! He or she should have something to say, and be able to say it well and with power. Teaching, counseling, witnessing, managing parish business, and empowering lay people constitute the balance of what Lyle Schaller calls “the kit-bag of parish skills.” Competence, by itself, is morally neutral. It simply the ability to do one’s work well. But in combination with the other qualities of a good minister, it represents the capacity to *deliver*, to be the agent of our faith’s heritage and vision so that the greatest number of men and women and children know it and see it and can be empowered by it, too.

Finally, I believe a minister should have a sense of the COMIC, if for no other reason that to take what I have said with a large grain of salt. A minister, no less than other people, and perhaps more than most, needs a healthy sense of humor, and an awareness of his or her own limits. Life is rent with absurdity, incongruity and foolishness. It is also witness to our tragic and amusing tendency to take ourselves and our work too seriously, resulting in either an unbecoming self-importance or an overdeveloped sense of responsibility. We need to be able to laugh, or at least smile, both at our own and others’ foolishness. Humor has been defined as the absence of logic; since we, our work and our expectations are often illogical, we need a sense of the comic to keep realistic and sane — especially in a calling that can too easily become solemn, utopian and all-consuming. Beyond that, it helps us to cheer the hearts of all whose joy in living has grown jaded.

My model minister, in summary, is a person of character and culture; he or she has a sense of calling to the ministry, seeks to be caring, creative, catalytic, consultative, collegial, competent, and, to survive under the heavy weight of all these expectations, comic. How such a minister comes into being is beyond the scope of these remarks, and frankly beyond my own understanding. Perhaps it is a gift of the grace of god. But these are what I believe to be “the solid rather than shining parts of a minister.” Our ministerial search committees are giving increasing priority to them rather than to a special skill, a charming manner or an assumed ability to “deliver” the institutional success symbols of increased membership and budget. While we may be tempted to regard the “ten c’s” as perfectionistic or pollyanna-ish, the truth is, I believe, something different. A good many ministers do embody these qualities in their personal and professional lives, disproving the argument that such a model of ministry is a fantasy. What congregations and ministers need is the wisdom to give such qualities priority, and to do what can be done

to encourage their development and to deepen their screening, interviewing, auditing and deliberative procedures. With a truer, surer knowledge of potential candidates they will be in a good position to affirm and recognize those who manifest “the ten c’s of ministry.”

David C. Pohl
Ministerial Transitions Director, 1971-85
Director of Ministry, 1981-93

... And one more “c”

A dozen years after David Pohl composed his “ten c’s of ministry,” I offer, with regret, one more “c” for the 1990’s. Today CONDUCT merits special mention. Ministers meet people at their most vulnerable. A few ministers have abused their office, violating confidences, influencing counselees for personal gain, or harming people psychologically or sexually. True ministers wear the power of their office lightly, but remember that their power is given as an opportunity to strengthen others, not to control or exploit them. When UUA ministerial fellowship committee identifies a serious offender it ensures that his or her name will not appear on search committees’ recommended lists. Still, careful search committees ask potential candidate to speak about their understanding of professional ethics, about specific boundaries they set for themselves in ministry, and about the things they do each day to keep themselves physically and mentally and morally alert. A minister who sustains a satisfying personal life and practices self-care will also be able to respect the rights and boundaries of others.

Daniel D. Hotchkiss
Ministerial Transitions Director, 1990-1997

II. Beyond Categorical Thinking

UUA Equal Opportunity policy

Fair participation by everyone in social and economic life has been a cherished Unitarian Universalists vision for centuries. Prophetic leaders of both denominations were among the foremost advocates of abolition, women's suffrage, civil rights, and prison, hospital, and labor reform. Today we lead in welcoming of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered persons into our membership and ministry. We can take pride and inspiration from this heritage.

At all times, however, Unitarian Universalists have practiced the very evils we sought to reform. We are not immune from prejudice and bigotry. Self-interest, fear, and ignorance may lead us to shun the "other" who is different or seems threatening. Sometimes it is hardest to act on our principles when our own congregations, not "society," will be affected.

In 1989, the UUA General Assembly adopted a resolution making Equal Opportunity in ministerial settlement the policy of the UUA. In that resolution, the GA supported the Department of Ministry's policy of sending lists meeting Equal Opportunity criteria. At the same time, the GA urged member congregations to accept assistance from the UUA in achieving Equal Opportunity in ministerial selection. The goal is not to wipe away prejudice by passing a resolution; it is to call on everyone concerned with ministerial settlement to be fair *in spite* of prejudice.

The UUA Board of Trustees implemented the GA's intent by creating a program called "Beyond Categorical Thinking." BCT is a program of the UUA Department of Faith in Action that helps congregations confront prejudice before it limits their ministerial search. It encourages congregations to trust that they, too, can break old barriers and stereotypes. All congregations, whether or not they think they have a "problem," are encouraged to avail themselves of this important service of the UUA.

The UUA Board also asked that search committees include, on the congregational survey, a question similar to this one:

The bylaws of our association of congregations say: "The association declares and affirms its special responsibility, and that of its member societies and organizations, to promote the full participation of persons in all of its and their activities and in the full range of human endeavor without regard to race, color, disability, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, age or national origin... (C-2.3)"

Do you believe that your congregation can affirm this principle in its search process? If not, please elaborate.

If these results, or other signs, suggest that your search may be discriminatory, you will be encouraged to schedule a BCT program.

The "Beyond Categorical Thinking" Weekend Program

The "Beyond Categorical Thinking" weekend program designed to promote inclusive thinking and to help prevent unfair discrimination in the ministerial search process. It is one of several efforts that the UUA is making as part of our institutional intentional effort to attract, affirm, and serve a diverse membership.

Because the ministerial search is a refined selection process and involves a certain amount of discrimination, search committees and congregations should be aware of the ways in which they may inadvertently make discriminations that are unnecessary and unjust.

These discriminations are those made on the basis of a minister's age, physical ability, race, gender, or sexual orientation. These aspects of a minister's identity are not indicators of a minister's skill, leadership style, or probability of a good match with a congregation. Therefore it is important that congregations entering the search process understand the risks of discrimination so that they may select the best minister they can, and make such a selection congruent with our corporate commitment to non-discrimination and inclusiveness.

The weekend includes a Sunday morning worship service and a three-hour workshop. The workshop is designed to help participants examine their own ableism, ageism, heterosexism, racism, and sexism.

Visits are made by teams of two trained Beyond Categorical Thinking leaders who themselves represent some of the diversity we advocate. These individuals (ministers, seminary students, lay persons, and UUA staff) have examined their own fears and prejudices about racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism. They have learned effective methods to address these fears in themselves and in our Unitarian Universalist congregations, and are committed to increasing the diversity of our movement.

Travel costs for the team are paid by the UUA; we ask that each congregation contribute \$250 towards the honoraria paid to team members.

The approach that Beyond Categorical Thinking seeks to explore is the healing of oppressive dynamics that divide us and prevent us from sharing our real gifts with each other.

Some Questions and Answers About the Program

When is the best time for a visit?

Ideally, visits should be scheduled between the time of the congregational survey being completed and before pre-candidating visits begin.

How are visits scheduled?

Visits should be requested from the UUA's Transitions Office with at least six weeks lead time. It helps if the congregation can offer three possible dates, avoiding holiday and/or vacation weekends. Dates chosen should be ones on which the entire Search Committee will be available.

When will we know the date of the visit?

Scheduling a visit generally requires that the program's administrator contact several people to find a team available for one of the proposed dates. This can take 10 to 14 days. After the team is selected, you will be notified both by phone and in writing of the date and team members.

Who should attend?

Our expectation is that the entire Search Committee will attend both the workshop and the worship service. Members of the governing board and committee chairs are urged to attend, and an invitation should be extended to the entire congregation.

What about the worship service?

The team will provide the sermon, and choose both the hymns and reading(s). The congregation is responsible for the welcome, announcements, chalice lighting, candles of joy and concern, offertory, and all choral and instrumental music for the service. Details of the service will be arranged between the team contact person and the Search Committee coordinator.

When should the workshop be held?

Most congregations choose to have both the workshop and the worship service on Sunday. They generally schedule lunch shortly after the service, and then move right into the workshop. Some congregations choose to have the workshop on Saturday afternoon or early evening, and may offer congregants the opportunity for a brief discussion period with the team after the Sunday morning worship service.

What are the congregation's obligations?

Send a sample order of service to the Team Contact Person.

0. Provide lunch for the team if workshop is held on Sunday.
1. Supply newsprint, easel, markers, pencils and/or pens for the workshop.
2. Publicize the program through congregation newsletter, announcements, etc.
3. Mail a check for \$250, payable to the UUA, with the Visit Request form.

More information and an application for a visit are available at <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leadership/transitions/bct/index.shtml>

1. [Beyond Categorical Thinking](#)
2. [BCT History](#)
3. [BCT Scheduling](#)
4. [BCT Application](#)
5. [BCT publicity](#)

III. Congregational Record

All congregations in search are asked to complete on line a Congregational Record for posting on a section of the UUA web site available only to ministers and UUA staff. To initiate, update, or edit your Congregational Record, go to <http://www2.uua.org>. Here is the information requested. Please note that the on-line form will permit your committee's responses to the open-ended questions to be as lengthy or brief as you choose.

Congregation name: _____
 Congregation city: _____ State/Prov: _____ Web site address: _____
 Contact person: First name: _____ M.I.: _____ Last name: _____ Title: _____
 Mailing address: _____ City: _____
 State/prov: _____ Zip/postal Code : _____
 E-mail address: _____ Phone (home): _____ Phone (office): _____

Please go to the Application section of the Ministerial Settlement System to complete the following information. It will appear in the spaces below.

S&H Offered: _____
 Do the benefits and professional expenses provided for this position meet (or even exceed) the Transitions Office Compensation Guidelines update of March 1, 2007 or later? _____
 For a description of how to qualify, see the Transitions Office publication, "The Settlement Handbook" online; *the S&H code for a congregation which does not qualify will receive an asterisk.* For an explanation of Salary plus Housing and the S&H letter codes, see the Compensation section of the Office of Church Staff Finances web page.

Congregation size: _____ Congregation Wage Rate Area: _____ S&H Code: _____

If there is a range in the S&H, describe the objective, measurable criteria you will use in categorizing a potential candidate

High \$ _____
 Mid \$ _____
 Low \$ _____

Position description
 Title: _____ Anticipated starting date: _____

Full time/part time: Describe expectations of part-time minister:

Is the minister expected to occupy a parsonage? _____
 If so, how much of the S&H is attributable to rental value? _____ To utilities? _____

Number of adult members _____ Av. Sunday attendance _____ Children & youth enrollment _____ Av. children & youth attendance _____
 Total operating expenditures _____ Total operating pledge income _____ Number of pledge units _____

How many Sunday services? _____ Others during the week? _____ How many months per year is the church at full operating capacity? _____

Describe the character of the surrounding community:

UUA District _____ District Executive _____ APF contribution _____ Fair Share? Y / N

Ministerial Settlement Rep. _____ Compensation
 Consultant _____

Provide here your profile of the minister you seek (500 words recommended):

Provide your profile of your congregation (500 words recommended):

Congregational History

How and when was the congregation founded?

Note the three or four most important events in the congregation's history:

List, most recent first, all clergy who have served since 1950 and earlier ministers of great importance, and interim ministers since 1980:

Minister	Date Arrived	Date Departed	Reason for Departure
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Current Clergy And Church Staff (include all paid staff and interim minister, if any):

Position to:	Supervised by/ (Y/N)	member?	Date of Hire/Call	F/T or Hrs. per Week	Covered by . . . health a church plan? (Y/N)	member also retire't plan? (Y/N)	Annualized Compensation (S&H for clergy)	reports
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Please complete Tables I-III quinquennially since 1975 and annually for the last five years.

Table I Membership, Attendance, and Pledging

Year Ending	Church Year Pledge per of x Months Pledge Unit	Operating Adult Members	Average Sunday Attendance	Children & Youth Enroll't	Average Children & Youth Attendance	No. of Pledge Units	Total Operating Pledges
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Table II Sources of Operating Income

Year Ending	Total Operating Income Total Pledges Endowment	Other Contributions	Fundraising Events	Endowment/ Investment Income	Building Rentals	Other Income	Total (sum of 1-6))
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Table III Operating Expenses

Year	Building, Grounds Expenses	Minister's (s') Benefits & Professional Total	Other Staff	Religious	Social Justice/ Debt	Other Current
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Ending & Utilities (s') S&H Expenses Compensation Education Service Service Expenses
(sum of 1-8) Debt

Explanation of any anomalies:

Current Congregational Life

Does the congregation have a mission--not a mission statement, but a glowing coal at its center--and if so, what is it?

Congregational Strengths:

Congregational Challenges:

What congregational issues are likely to be most pressing within the next couple of years?

What congregational issues are likely to be most pressing over the next ten years?

What congregational issues may never be resolved?

To what degree does the congregation possess a dominant theology?

Describe the role of music and the arts in the life of the congregation:

Describe the religious education program for children, youth and adults:

Lay Leadership

In practice, are responsibilities for governance widely shared or confined among relatively few members? Give some examples:

Describe the process you used to complete this form:

Committees:

Name the committees that have recently had the greatest success.

Name the committees that have recently been most challenged.

Major Financial Support

List the dollar amounts of the ten largest operating pledges received in the most recently completed fiscal year

1.	2.	3.	4.
5.			
6.	7.	8.	9.
10.			

Give the dates of the last two capital fund drives, and the funds raised (a) by contribution and (b) by debt.

What is the condition of the church buildings, and what funds may need to be raised in the future (note accessibility issues)?

Ministry

Describe the process by which the minister will be called:

Describe the process by which the Ministerial Search Committee (or its equivalent) was chosen:

Ministerial skills and enthusiasms most needed by the congregation:
 4-Crucial 3-Significant 2-Modest 1-Of little consequence

(Note: use no numeral but "1" more than four times)

- () Administration () Adult religious education () Children's religious education ()
 Committee work
- () Community bldg. () Denominational activities () Facilitation
 () Stewardship
- () Home visitation () Hospital calling () Leadership
 () Membership growth
- () Music and liturgical arts () Personal counseling () Preaching
 () Scholarship
- () Social action () Spiritual guidance () Staff relations
 () Worship
- () Youth work () _____ () _____
 () _____

Assess the capacity of the congregation to exercise forbearance and nurture in assisting a minister's development:

What expectations, however silent, may there be about the minister's family and personal life?

Describe the worst mistake your new minister could make:

Your community:

1. Please describe the community your congregation serves.
2. How is the congregation involved in the wider community.
3. What groups in the wider community does the congregation work/partner with?
4. Please list the demographics for your community:
 - Population (current total and information about how that has changed over the last several decades)
 - Racial/Ethnic Make up of your community
 - Age demographics on your community (especially as they relate to children, youth, and elderly)
 - Other demographic information you feel are important about your community
5. How do the demographics of your congregation and your community compare to one another?
6. Are there stereotypes about your community that may not be accurate? (Give details.)

Possible sources of information include <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>

And www.wikipedia.org

IV. MINISTERIAL RECORD

This record provides information about a minister during the ministerial search process. It is made available to member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association and to UUA staff. It is not intended to substitute for a complete resume. Search committees receiving this record are cautioned not to share it. When a committee has completed consideration of the minister, all records are to be deleted and destroyed.

BASIC INFORMATION

Name

Mailing Address

E-mail address

Telephones: (Home)
(Office)

Website address

Present Position

since

U.U. Fellowship (date)

Ordination (ordaining body, place, date)

Why are you seeking a ministry now?

Describe the new ministry you hope for:

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION:

Degree	College/University	Area of concentration
Date		

Awards, honors, and published writings:

Personal and family situation:

BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT: from your late teens forward, describe your higher education, the three or four most important events in your life experience, the context in which you felt called to ministry, and your professional development, continuing education, and work history; include every ministry (include dates by month/year) and what you bring from it and your other work to a new ministry:

DENOMINATIONAL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES: describe with dates active membership in and significant volunteer service to local congregations, the UUA and its districts, and civic, political, social service, and interfaith organizations and programs):

NON-PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS:

MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT: what are your current developmental needs, and how might a congregation assist you in addressing them?

Describe a mistake you have made in the past, and how you have addressed it:

MINISTERIAL ROLES AND FUNCTIONS:

How would you wish to function with lay leadership? Comment on your leadership style:

How would you wish to function with (paid) church staff?

How would you wish to function as part of a ministry team?

How would you wish to function in the communities beyond the local congregation?

MINISTERIAL SKILLS AND CURRENT SPECIAL INTERESTS:

In the Skill column, mark with a “4” those functions in which you are gifted and expert, “3” those in which you are accomplished, “2” those in which you are adequate, and “1” those in which you are least competent.

In the Interest column, mark with a “4” those functions on which you are urgently moved to focus, “3” those to which you wish to give energy, “2” those to which you will pay only adequate attention, and “1” those which you wish to ignore.

Skl	Int		Skl	Int		Skl	Int		Skl	Int
()	()	Administration Committee work	()	()	Adult religious education	()	()	Children's religious education	()	()
()	()	Community bldg. Fund-raising	()	()	Denominational activities	()	()	Facilitation	()	()
()	()	Home visitation Membership growth	()	()	Hospital calling	()	()	Leadership	()	()
()	()	Music and liturgical Scholarship arts	()	()	Personal counseling	()	()	Preaching	()	()
()	()	Social action Worship	()	()	Spiritual guidance	()	()	Staff relations	()	()
()	()	Youth work	()	()	_____	()	()	_____	()	()

What is your approach to the religious education of children, youth and adults?

What do you see as the role of music and the arts in the life of a congregation?

What involvement do you desire in the stewardship of a congregation, most particularly in its financial affairs?

THEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION: what is your dominant theology, and how do you deal with other Unitarian Universalist theologies with which you may not be in sympathy?

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Finish introducing yourself in any way you would like to.

V. Sample Newsletter Articles

Confidentiality is not secrecy! You need to be discreet about your search committee's work, but the congregation has a right to know how their search is proceeding. Ministerial settlement itself, with its rules and procedures, needs to be explained as well. You will want to report regularly on your work in a variety of ways. The following newsletter columns, which you may want to use as you create your own, do a good job of keeping confidentiality while shedding light on the search process. The first piece, from Belmont, Massachusetts, gives an overview of the process as a report on a seminar for search committee members. The remainder of the pieces are based on ones used in the UU Congregation of Atlanta, followed by a reprint of newsletter articles from the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, New York.

Report on Settlement Seminar

On the last Saturday in August, two members represented our search committee at the UUA's all-day Ministerial Settlement Seminar. We met UUs from throughout the Northeast and heard at length from Dan Hotchkiss, the UUA's Transitions Director. Dan talked about the search process as an undertaking that should be guided by four principles: Fairness, Collegiality, Relationship, and Unity.

FAIRNESS means that the process places every prospective minister on an equal footing before the committee. It also means protecting the prospective minister's standing with his or her present congregation, who may not be aware that he or she hopes to move.

RELATIONSHIP means that each prospective minister is treated as the one with whom we plan to have a lasting relationship of trust and good faith. Selecting a minister is like falling in love, Dan said. You don't grill your dates to find out if they will make good mates. Nevertheless, you do find out everything you can about each person, in a respectful but thorough way.

UNITY means that the search process avoids dividing the congregation among competing candidates. The search committee considers many ministers, gathers behind one candidate and presents that person to the congregation to consider. Though the committee may sometimes refer to "the candidates" (shorter than "the prospective ministers" by several syllables), there is only one Candidate.

"Serial candidating leads to multiple churches." Dan told us. Where the practice is to present two or three candidates and have the congregation vote for their favorites, churches splinter as each faction follows its candidate.

Fairness, Collegiality, Relationship, Unity: you'll hear more about how this works in practice as the search proceeds.

First meeting of the ministerial search committee

The ministerial search committee met for the first time on December 20. Roger Comstock and Jean Highsmith were elected co-chairpersons; Emily Adler, corresponding secretary; Roger Johnson, treasurer; and Carol Taylor, recording secretary. Todd Taylor is the Ministerial Settlement Representative for the UUA.

Todd explained the steps involved in the selection process and outlined the procedure for announcing a “vacant pulpit.” An announcement will be published in the *World* magazine.

Keeping mum: from the Settlement Handbook

Your congregation is entitled to know the process you are following and how far along you are at every point. At the same time, you need to keep confidential both the names of the ministers under consideration and the details of committee business. There are several reasons for the rule of confidentiality:

- * Ministers settled in a congregation may not have told their present parishioners that they are contemplating a move. These parishioners are entitled to hear the news from their own minister at the appropriate time. To “leak” a minister’s name can undermine his or her ability to serve the present congregation, and will almost certainly damage your chances of attracting that potential candidate.
- * When the identities of unsuccessful applicants are known, it heightens the competitive aspect of the search process. This hurts collegial feeling among ministers and (when neighboring congregations compete for the same minister) also can create hard feelings among congregations.
- * It is harder to resolve differences among the members of a search committee when factions of the congregation are looking over your shoulders. It is better to resolve your differences in private.

An open book

Our ministerial search committee’s Search Packet is now complete (It’s the packet we send to prospective ministers) and is available for viewing in the church office. Stop by and see in how glorious and true a light our congregation is presented.

Search committee retreat successful

At the retreat over the weekend, the search committee heard from the prior search committee, shared personal information and prejudices, made procedural and voting rules, and worked on the time-line for our activities.

Some of the rules we adopted are:

- * Members are expected to say why they choose to vote in a particular way, if asked.
- * Major decisions require a 2/3 vote of those present. A simple majority rules otherwise.
- * Any member may veto a candidate. This veto is to be used with care and tolerance. No candidate receiving a “no” vote will be presented to the congregation. Any candidate vetoed will be notified immediately.
- * On the final vote to select a candidate, no abstentions will be allowed. A point system will be used to ensure solid, enthusiastic support for the successful candidate.

* The committee intends to remain “open” to discuss all procedural matters with members of the congregation. We are not able to divulge names or personal information about the candidates.

We have a list!

We have a list of candidates supplied by the UUA Ministerial Transitions Office in Boston. While we cannot related details about the individuals on the list, we can say that the candidates seem excited about us. Fifty percent of them responded within a week of receiving our packets, and their letters indicate that they consider us to be one of the most attractive churches in the denomination. We look forward to meeting with them. Though confidentiality must be preserved, the committee would like to share information about the search process. This Sunday, after the service, the search committee will be at a table in the social hall to answer your questions.

Help requested

What would you like to know about our candidates for Senior Minister? We can't tell you who they are, but we can use your questions during our interviews. So please tell us: What would you like to know about their philosophy of church leadership, or Sunday worship, or programming, or outreach, or social action? What are your concerns? We appreciate the good ideas we've received so far, and we'd like to have more. Just contact any member of the search committee, or leave a note in our box in the church office. Thanks!

What's “in” a ministerial search interview?

Each candidate is invited for a weekend. Each one arrives on a Friday for an informal evening. Saturday is reserved for formal interviewing. Sunday the candidate presents a service and then meets briefly with the committee. The interview format and content are worked out cooperatively with each prospective minister, but each interview includes the following elements:

- * Introduction of ministerial search committee to candidates;
 - * Discussion of minister's professional history — including any statement or questions from the search committee as well as those from the candidate;
 - * Discussion of important areas of church life. Time is allowed in each area for questions from the candidate as well as the committee. Areas covered include: Religious philosophy and worship; pastoral care and working with people; church programming; leadership roles; religious education and youth; and financial and contract matters.
- The Search Committee has prepared questions for each area to be used by members as guidelines. Advance preparation for each weekend includes review of the candidate's packet, checking of references, consultation with the Ministerial Transitions Director in Boston, and coordination of the weekend's activities. Every interview has a facilitator who is responsible for time-keeping, question coverage, and other general business. The list of general questions asked of each candidate is available in the church office.

Why can't we present more than one candidate?

The question most frequently asked by people who are not thoroughly acquainted with the UUA search process is: “Why can't we meet all of the top candidates for Senior Minister and hear them preach? Isn't it undemocratic for the search committee to present us with only one final candidate? The reason that serial candidating — the process of

presenting more than one candidate to the congregation — is frowned upon is that it tends to be destructive to the candidates and to the congregations to which they are presented.

Suppose one group likes and politics for Candidate A, another is for Candidate B, and still another for Candidate C. The congregation could be split asunder before the process has been completed and it is unlikely that any candidate would receive the vote of confidence needed for a successful ministry. From the point of view of the candidates, the confidentiality of the process would be broken and their effectiveness in their current congregation seriously impaired.

So, at the end of a long process of interviewing, evaluation, reference-checking, and consensus-building, your Search Committee will present you with the one candidate who is, in their opinion, best for our congregation. Then, after a full week of Sunday services, meetings, and social engagements, when you will be able to meet and size up the candidate for yourselves, you will make the final decision in the congregational vote to call or not to call.

The Ministerial Search Committee responds to questions

Q: Are you still maintaining an information table in the Social Room on Sundays?

A: Yes and no. The table is there every Sunday. Members of former search committees have taken over and they welcome your interest and questions. Most of the members of the current Search Committee are busy weekends interviewing candidates.

Q: Will a new Senior Minister take over planning adult activity programs and ancillary groups?

A: If your questions means just what it says, “take over,” the answer is “No.” The lay leadership in our congregation have always initiated, orchestrated, and produced the great majority of our adult programs and activities. A Senior Minister could suggest and enrich what is already here and add new dimensions, but “take over”? NO.

Q: You mean the congregation is going to get to meet only ONE candidate? We aren't going to hear and see several and then choose?

A: You are correct about the congregation hearing and seeing only one candidate. The selection process recommended by the UUA and UUMA entrusts the search committee with the responsibility of presenting one candidate who it thinks best meets the needs of the whole congregation.

Q: Do you have some good — really good — candidates?

A: No question here. We have a fine candidate list. Our most difficult decision may be to decide who's best among the best!

Search committee update

Interviewing of candidates for Minister has been completed. The search committee now retreats to evaluate and set up a second round of interviews with the most viable potential candidates.

The talents and personalities of all our prospects are strong; all are compelling and are well qualified — and they are very different! There is a wide diversity in speaking and leadership styles, in major concerns and visions for a liberal church community.

Prospective ministers have expressed concerns about our salary package, staffing, unrealistic expectations for a “workable schedule,” and adequate time for scholastic and spiritual investigation. The committee is working on viable alternatives for these areas.

The ministers have also expressed excitement about us. One candidate said, “Are you for real?” Some of our plus factors are: our organizational abilities; the professional quality and numbers of lay leaders; geographic location and the potential for meaningful contributions to liberal religious concern in the city, state, and country.

Search update: the three-part process

In its quest to find the best possible Senior Minister for UUCA, your search committee has qualified for the Guinness Book of World Records in the following categories:

Most miles traveled to attend Sunday service: over 1200 miles, one way,

Most pot-luck dinners, bagels, and coffee consumed over a three-month period by any nine people,

Most renditions over the same period of “Morning Has Broken,” and

Most improved souls as the result of reading sermons.

In the course of the course of the UUA-approved three-part process of evaluating ministerial candidates (reading a packet of sermons, biographical data, and information on the minister’s current church; participating in an intensive two-way interview with the minister; and attending a service conducted by the minister in a nearby neutral pulpit, your search committee has managed to survive:

- * A flight canceled on account of a snowstorm,
- * A weird variety of Southern-Chinese cuisine,
- * An empty gas-tank on the way to the Atlanta airport,
- * A weekend debriefing interrupted by a fashion show,
- * Silences because the musician failed to show up for a service, and
- * Near heart failure when the minister’s car got lost and its occupants came within minutes of missing the service. (A member of the committee began preparing a substitute sermon, but — fortunately for all concerned — was spared just in time.)

White smoke?

From our ministerial search committee, with unanimous enthusiasm:

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE WE HAVE INVITED A MINISTER TO
CANDIDATE WITH OUR CONGREGATION.

In mid-November, the candidate will spend a “candidating week” with us — in the pulpit, meeting our members, talking with us. The week will provide an opportunity for our congregation to decide whether to “call” him or her, as well as an opportunity for the minister to evaluate before deciding to accept. It’s a week we anticipate with excitement as a way to introduce an extraordinary person to an extraordinary congregation.

In a few weeks, when the candidate has had time to discuss this decision with the leaders of his or her current church, we will be free to share more information with you.

First Unitarian Church of Rochester NY

Settled Parish Minister Search Committee Newsletter Articles

From May 2003 through a successful call in May 2004

(republished with permission)

May 12, 2003

Have you got it yet?

That big white envelope with the congregational survey?

Can we get 100% return rate? We hope so!

Read it, think about it, fill it out, and return it to church.

If you never complete out another survey, do this one – it's important to us, the Search Committee, to you, the congregation, to our new minister!

It's *your* voice we need.

Thank you, from the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee

parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

May 26, 2003

Why do we keep asking for your input? Because it matters – to us, to our new minister, to you. Your responses count, every one of them. The survey and cottage meetings are an incredibly important part of the search process. During the summer we'll compile results and put together a Congregational Record, which we'll post on the web for interested ministerial candidates. What we say about our congregation makes all the difference in who becomes interested in us. Later, as we hear from candidates, the Search Committee will be guided by your wishes as we try to find the best match for our parish minister, given what you've told us. So, attend a cottage meeting if you haven't already, complete that survey (we're still looking for 100% return), and return it to the church. And thank you, thank you, for your participation. We can't do this without you! The Settled Parish Minister Search Committee (parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org)

June 22, 2003

From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee: A major part of our job this summer is to put together a Congregational Record which describes the life and history of this church. Potential candidates will read this document online in the fall to decide whether they're interested in the First Unitarian Church of Rochester. As we work on the CR, we find ourselves wrestling with weighty questions about the church's vision, the way we run this church, and the open second ministerial position. To do a thorough job, we're seeking input from the Board, the Transition Team, and a diverse group of cottage meeting attendees. Our hope is that these necessary conversations about the future of our

church will both inform the Congregational Record, and, by continuing through next year, help us move forward toward calling the right candidate. The Search Committee can't do it alone. We trust that all the thoughtful discussions we're having as a congregation will only make us a better church. We appreciate all the support and input you give us.

parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

June 29, 2003

Search Committee Update: What a wonderful response! We received 506 surveys and talked with 160 of you at cottage meetings. Your strong response sends a powerful message to prospective candidates. Thank you! Summertime will NOT be slow for your Parish Minister Search Committee! We will be busy analyzing the data to report back to you in September. We will also begin work on a Candidate Packet. This will be a colorful binder given to potential candidates, telling them all about us in words, photos and perhaps even a video. By the way, the best way to consistently reach us until September is individually by phone or at Parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org.

August 24, 2003

From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee: In the midst of vacations and lovely time spent by – or on – the water, the Search Committee has had a busy summer. We've been analyzing the abundant data from last May's congregational survey and cottage meetings and we've completed the Congregational Record which tells prospective ministers about our church. We're eager to share the results with you.

Please plan to attend one of four information sessions we'll host during the week of September 14. (Look for details about times and places in the next newsletter.) After an overview of the survey results, we'll have a conversation about the picture we've painted of our congregation and the qualities we'd like in our new minister. (The complete survey report will be available on-line, for those of you who would like all the details.)

As always, please contact us with questions or concerns. Look for us on Sunday mornings, call any of us, or e-mail us at parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

Steve Brown, Joy Collins, Larry Eldridge, Mark Jackson, Cynthia Looney, Libby Moore, Nancy Warren-Oliver, John Weas

September 23, 2003

<p>From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee:</p>
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Here's a quiz about the congregation, from last week's information meetings about the results of the survey and cottage meetings:

1. *What is the median age of the respondents to the congregational survey?*
 a) 41 b) 59 c) 75
2. *What percentage of our congregation holds graduate or professional degrees?*
 a) 34% b) 49% c) 64%
3. *How many respondents have children in Religious Education?*
 a) 30% b) 50% c) 70%
4. *How pleased were we at the turnout for these meetings?*
 a) very b) extremely c) enormously

Answers will be in next week's newsletter. If you can't wait until then, or you'd like more details, check out the complete survey report at www.rochesterunitarian.org or look for the full report in the church office.

September 30, 2003

From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee:

Mark your calendars for October 19! During the Survey Report-Out meetings, many of you heard us mention the *Beyond Categorical Thinking* Workshop, to be held on October 19. Our survey showed that we are somewhat open to our next parish minister being from any category of gender, race, age, sexual orientation etc. But a surprising number were not, or were unsure.

Consciously or not, our survey showed that our picture of our ideal minister most likely fits into specific categories. Come participate in this UUA-sponsored program which will include the Sunday service, lunch, and a 1-4 pm workshop afterwards. We will be talking about our concerns, hopes and expectations for our next minister, as we open our hearts to choosing the best candidate. We'll be there along with the Transition Team, who are co-sponsoring the workshop. Please sign up at church on the first two Sundays in October to reserve a lunch or to request child care. Contact Anne Perry or Joy Collins for further information.

BTW, the answers to last week's quiz are: 1. b (59 is the median age of respondents); 2. c (64% hold graduate or professional degrees); 3. a (30% have children in RE); 4. all of the above.

As always, you can reach us at parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

October 14, 2003

From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee

We are moving into a new phase of our search: REAL CANDIDATES! We're reviewing those who responded to our Congregational Record and contacting ministers who were suggested by members of the congregation. BUT, we're not going to be able to divulge names under consideration or details of our discussions. There are several good reasons for this rule of confidentiality:

- Ministers settled in a parish may not have told their present congregation that they're contemplating a move. Their parishioners are entitled to hear the news from their own minister at the appropriate time. "Leaks" of information can damage a candidate's relationship with the present congregation and could jeopardize our chances of attracting that candidate.
- When the identities of successful candidates are known, it heightens the competitive aspect of the search process. It hurts collegial feelings among ministers and can create hard feelings among congregations.
- It is harder to resolve differences within the Search Committee (yes, we're human) if the names are public. It's better to resolve any differences in private.

Other than that, we're always happy to answer questions about the process and to listen to your concerns. Look for our flashing red lights after Sunday services or e-mail us at parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org.

October 27, 2003

Did you know...of the approximate 125 Unitarian ministers seeking new positions, it is estimated that about 3-6 are people of color; 15-20 are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered; 2-3 have disabilities; and 43% are female, 57% are male? These are some of the fascinating statistics we learned at the Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop on October 19. About 70 of us attended, including the entire search committee. Thank you! We experienced thought-provoking exercises and faced our own personal biases, as we tried to open our hearts and minds to the variety of ministers who may apply to be our next settled parish minister. As the facilitators said, "the diversity in our ministry enriches our religious community, offering gifts to be celebrated and honored."

A special thanks to the Transition Team, headed by Anne Perry, for coordinating with the terrific facilitators, organizing a dinner for them to meet church leaders, and putting on a lunch for the workshop participants.

Do thank them when you see them.

Feel free to contact us at parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

November 4, 2003

You may be wondering what we're doing these days when we're not standing around wearing flashing red lights. It may not look like it, but we're busier than ever. In the beginning of the search process, we gathered lots of information which resulted in the survey report, congregational record, and a packet of information for ministers. We're also putting together a video for ministerial candidates and potential new members. We're grateful for all who helped with the video, and for all your thoughtful and helpful input during this first part of our process.

Now we've moved into a different phase of the search. We've received some candidates' packets (we expect more as we get closer to December) and we are narrowing the field to those we want to get to know better. In November we'll conduct phone interviews with the most promising candidates. From that group, we'll choose a few to preach in "neutral pulpits"—churches where neither we nor they are known—in January and February. From that group, we'll select the one final candidate who will come to our church in late April to meet congregants and preach on two Sundays. We'll ask you to vote to call that minister at a congregational meeting on May 2.

Until we announce the final candidate, we won't be able to give you any information about candidates, but we'll be happy to talk to you about any other aspect of the process. Please look for those flashing red lights. We'll be at a table in the gallery every Sunday after both services and would love to talk with you. As always, you can also contact us at parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org.

December 16, 2003

At this darkest time of the year, we are starting to see light at the end of the proverbial tunnel. Our gift to you will come next spring, when we offer you our selection for the position of parish minister in our beloved church. Your gift to us goes on and on, in your enthusiasm and support and love for our church community. We thank you for that. All of us on the Search Committee wish you a season of joy and peace. May we all find light in the darkness. Steve Brown, Joy Collins, Larry Eldridge, Mark Jackson, Cynthia Looney, Libby Moore, Nancy Warren Oliver, John Weas

January 20, 2004

From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee: On schedule, we're moving into the critical phase of the search process. Within the next two months, we'll make our final choice from an impressive pool of candidates. We want to remind you that we will present only one choice at the end. Why only one? For a successful ministry, any candidate will want an overwhelming affirmation in the final congregational vote. If we presented multiple choices, no candidate would receive the almost unanimous "yes" vote that signifies that affirmation, and the congregation might find itself split into camps. We

value the trust and confidence you have placed in us to make this momentous decision. By the time we present you with our choice, we will have reviewed a significant number of applications, checked dozens of references, interviewed candidates for countless hours, and discussed the candidates in depth. At every stage, we hold in mind the hopes, dreams, and concerns of our congregation. When it comes to the final decision, we will offer our selection for an up-or-down, yes-or-no vote. We're confident that you'll be as enthusiastic as we are about the choice. Thank you for your input during this process.

parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

February 3, 2004

From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee: After extensive review of an amazing pool of ministerial candidates, we have selected the "pre-candidates" for the position of parish minister of our beloved church. As we get to know these ministers in depth, through interviews, informal talks, reference calls, and sermons, it seemed a good time to review the ministerial attributes you, the congregation, defined last spring through the survey and cottage meetings. We heard that you value strong preaching, warmth, caring and openness, acceptance of our theological differences, intellectual stimulation, enthusiasm, humor, excitement about religious education and social justice, and a cooperative, yet visionary leadership style. The ministers on our short list seem to fit the bill, we're happy to report. The congregation's participation in this process has helped us stay on target, and we're looking forward to the day, several months from now, when we can announce our final choice. parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

February 10, 2003

From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee: It may seem as though our committee has gone underground for a while, but we're working as hard as ever. This is a weighty decision, requiring all our attention and discernment. Our hope is to announce our selection in late March or early April, the exact timing to be coordinated with the candidate. After the announcement, we will provide lots of information about how our choice fits the church's criteria, and we'll offer opportunities for you to ask questions. The final candidating week will have to be confirmed with the candidate, but our tentative plan is for the candidate to preach at both services and be available at receptions after each service on Sunday, April 25. During the following week, we will hold meetings and social gatherings so you can interact, ask questions, and feel comfortable with our choice. Sunday May 2 is the big day. After the candidate preaches at both services, there will be a congregational meeting to vote on calling the minister. (We'll provide lunch beforehand, of course.) By then you will have had ample opportunity to make your own decision. We hope you'll agree we've made the right choice and vote "yes" in overwhelming numbers. parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

March 2, 2004

From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee: It's our anniversary, a whole year since our election to this awesome task! Before last March, few of our committee had ever used the word "discernment" in a sentence. We began to notice it cropping up in ministerial records last fall and chuckled a little at what seemed like overuse. As we approach our final decision, though, the word has taken on depth and significance. *Discernment*, according to one dictionary, means the act or process of exhibiting keen insight or good judgment, exactly what we are called upon to do now.

All of the ministers in our final pool of candidates offer great gifts and unique strengths along with human realities. We as a committee must reflect together on those qualities and evaluate them against the congregation's needs and desires. We take our task very seriously. You have placed great trust in us, and we respect that. In less than two months, we will present our candidate, and you will have the opportunity to discern for yourselves whether we have made the right choice for our congregation. We hope that you will agree and that you will vote "yes" in overwhelming numbers to call the minister we present. In the end, it is this affirmation by the congregation that matters. This is truly a time of deep discernment for all of us. Steve Brown, Joy Collins, Larry Eldridge, Mark Jackson, Cynthia Looney, Libby Moore, Nancy Warren-Oliver, John Weas parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

March 16, 2004

From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee: By now we hope you've heard our joyful news: we recommend the team of the Reverends Kaaren Anderson and Scott Tayler to be our settled parish co-ministers. When you get to know them as we do, we think you'll be pleased. Before and during Candidating Week (April 25 – May 2), we'll do all we can to help you understand why they are such an outstanding choice.

We came to this decision after an exhaustive search. After the survey and cottage meetings last spring, we produced our congregational record, packet, and video for prospective candidates. We've written 32 newsletter columns to keep you informed. We followed up on all the suggestions from congregants about potential candidates. We read 30 ministerial records and countless sermons, exchanged packets with 10 ministers, held 6 phone interviews with candidates and made dozens of reference calls. We hosted our top candidates on three weekends (including Valentine's Day, which created some situations) plus an extra Sunday. By one estimate, we've each logged at least 450 hours on this project, but none of us really wants to count. We exchanged 2267 e-mails, give or take, and met once a week, often twice, at Joy's house. We adopted Joy's chocolate lab Toblerone and discovered a mutual fondness for red wine, chocolate, and stick shift cars. We got to know and respect each other.

And in the end, we all agreed on this decision. We'll be available to answer your questions after both services and we're looking forward to introducing you to Scott and

Kaaren. Steve Brown, Joy Collins, Larry Eldridge, Mark Jackson, Cynthia Looney, Libby Moore, Nancy Warren-Oliver, John Weas. parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

March 23, 2004

From the Settled Parish Minister Search Committee:

So, we've made our selection and announced the news to the congregation. What's left for us to do, you ask? Now we come to the fun part, when we can drop the confidentiality and tell you what we're doing. Our big project now is Candidating Week, Sunday April 25 through Sunday May 2. Let us try to answer some of your questions:

Who are the candidates? The Search Committee has selected the Reverends Kaaren Anderson and Scott Tayler as our choice to share the one position of Parish Minister. They are referred to as "candidates" until the congregation calls them as Parish Co-Ministers of our church.

What does it mean, "call the minister?" The Search Committee has worked long and hard to select our candidate, but the congregation has the final say. At the congregational meeting on May 2, the congregation votes to affirm the Search Committee's choice. With an overwhelming yes vote, Kaaren and Scott will know that the congregation has truly "called" them to be our ministers.

What is Candidating Week, anyway? It's when you'll get to know Scott and Kaaren up close and personal, and they'll get to know the people who make our church so special. We've told them a great deal about our congregation, but this is a time of mutual discovery, a time to get to know the real people. They'll serve in worship on both Sundays, attend meetings, and participate in informal receptions and gatherings where you'll have time to get to know them and they'll have time to hear your ideas and concerns. Their children will be here for at least part of the week.

We'll provide a detailed schedule of events within the next few weeks, after we've confirmed our plans with Kaaren and Scott. In the meantime, look for our flashing red lights (yes, we're baaaack!) after both services every Sunday. We'll have pictures and information about Scott and Kaaren at our table. Please feel free to call any of us or e-mail us at parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org

Steve Brown, Joy Collins, Larry Eldridge, Mark Jackson, Cynthia Looney, Libby Moore, Nancy Warren-Oliver, John Weas

Candidating Week Is Coming!!

April 25 through May 2, 2004

In the life of our church, calling a minister ranks among the most significant acts of our congregation. We on the Search Committee feel wonderful about the candidates we have chosen for the position of Parish Co-Ministers, Scott Tayler and Kaaren Anderson. You'll find lots of information about Kaaren and Scott at our table after Sunday services and on the First Unitarian Church website www.rochesterunitarian.org. The more

exciting news is that in just a few weeks, we will present them to you in person during Candidating Week. Our hope is that by the end of that week, you will know them and appreciate them as we do.

Candidating Week provides many opportunities for interaction. The congregation and the candidates will have time to share what we love about this church, talk about our passions and concerns, and tell our stories. Kaaren and Scott will lead worship services on both Sundays, April 25 and May 2, and will attend many events, listed on the other side of this page. The culmination of Candidating Week is the congregational meeting to call the ministers on May 2.

During Candidating Week, we hope that you will attend at least one event with Scott and Kaaren and come to one or more worship services before the vote to call. Kaaren and Scott will each preach at one of the services on the two Sundays. For these two weeks only, the early and late services will be different in both sermons and music, so that you can get a good sense of what it will be like to have these co-ministers sharing worship. They will also participate in the family service on May 2.

We have planned receptions with light refreshments, open discussion times, and meetings with key committees and groups. At these events, Scott and Kaaren will be available for informal dialogue and a question and answer period. On Friday evening, they and their children will attend the Doing Plays performance and the ice cream social afterwards. We have left their schedule open on Saturday, when they will be making final preparations for the Sunday worship services.

We are thrilled to be coming to the happy conclusion of this most amazing year of search. After the second service on Sunday, May 2, our congregation will gather together to make a momentous decision, whether to call Kaaren Anderson and Scott Tayler to be our Parish Co-Ministers. Before this meeting, we hope you will get to know them and learn to treasure their strengths as we do. You have put great trust in us to choose the best for our church, and we are grateful for that trust. We want to hear your excitement and your concerns, before and during Candidating Week. Please contact us at our table on Sunday mornings, or through e-mail (parish_search@rochesterunitarian.org) or by calling any of us. Steve Brown, Joy Collins, Larry Eldridge, Mark Jackson, Cynthia Looney, Libby Moore, Nancy Warren-Oliver, John Weas

VI. Plan for Ministerial Search Poster

To keep your congregation up-to-date on your progress, you may want to create a poster. As you progress through your search, indicate on the poster the stages that are complete. This might be done by checkmarks in boxes, or by coloring the sections of the poster. One way of dividing the search process into stages is as follows:

Our Ministerial Search			
1	UUA Ministerial Settlement Representative visits	5	Congregational Survey distributed and tabulated
2	Ministerial Search Committee selected	6	Information packet about our congregation completed
Members: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____		7	Search committee begins considering potential candidates
		8	Search committee interviews 3-4 candidates
3	Search Committee meets with MSR and plans its work	9	Search committee recommends one candidate
4	Search Committee holds retreat	10	Candidating week and congregation vote on candidate

VII. Ministerial Profile

The ministerial profile is one of the most important pieces of information you can supply to the Transitions Director and prospective ministerial candidates. The following are real profiles drawn by real search committees. They show what is wanted in terms of length and subject matter. The success of your profile statement depends not on how much it resembles one from another congregation, but how clearly it distinguishes your congregation and its unique needs.

Example #1 - a small congregation

Our next minister will be a scholar, possibly, a healer, hopefully, and a leader, certainly. We want a visible leader with a sense of direction. But our congregation will not be led by a forced march. We need a leader by example, a leader by persuasion. Our next minister will be a *spiritual* leader, one whose vision for us matches our own, but who challenges us to open our hearts and minds to new possibilities, also. Our congregation wants a leader in the pulpit who will energize our church with inspiring and meaningful sermons. We need to empower more of our members into helping to develop and carry forward the church's programs and institutions.

At the same time, our new minister must lead by consensus. Passionate and diverse viewpoints need to be heard and blended. Our desire for growth must be reconciled with our fear of losing the intimacy we share now. We have a rich diversity of lay leaders who want to remain involved in the ministry of our church. Our next minister must be someone comfortable with him/herself and capable of working productively with strong individuals with diverse outlooks. And we want a minister who is accepting of all the various viewpoints and lifestyles that members of our congregation embrace.

Finally, we seek a minister experienced in working with complex congregational dynamics. Ours is a church dealing with issues still lingering from the last 25 years of ministry. As a group we are struggling with the natural conflict between getting things done and acting *compassionately*. We want to be better, but may require some guidance. We need a person who will help us to focus our vision for the church and to unite our various energies into a harmonious chorus.

Example #2 - a mid-sized congregation

Our minister will stimulate us intellectually, inspire us spiritually, and motivate us to be socially responsible. He or she will be compassionate to those of us in need. It is important that the candidate have "pizzazz." Sunday services must attract our members and motivate our guests and visitors to return.

When asked for the most desired personal characteristics in a new minister, the congregation cited leadership skills first, followed by personal warmth and understanding, then philosophical and intellectual emphasis. Spiritual depth and a sense of humor are also important characteristics.

In exercising leadership, the primary focus will be a shared ministry within our congregation. In addition, our new minister will maintain good connections with the wider religious community and help define our Unitarian Universalist presence in our

city. Of various possible "styles" of leadership (e.g., authoritative, collaborative, facilitative, submissive), the congregation most strongly pointed to "collaborative" and "facilitative" as desirable.

Survey respondents ranked desired areas of ministerial focus as "delivering meaningful sermons," "encourage spirit of fellowship" and "provide spiritual leadership" as by far the most important of competing options.

Not surprisingly, the congregation reported wide variance in what religious orientation "we" have and the orientation we seek in our settled minister: agnosticism, humanism, ethical religion in general and ethical Christianity were all very well supported in survey responses. Our minister must speak to a wide range of beliefs.

This is an exciting time for our congregation. Join us in our journey.

Example #3 - a large urban congregation

The individual profiles submitted by members of the committee show the diversity of approach and style which one would expect from its diverse membership, yet three common themes unmistakably emerge: the senior minister must be a *great preacher*, a *creative leader*, and a *warm and open human being*.

In the pulpit he or she must reflect a moving but searching and scholarly eloquence, a critical and courageous conscience (that yet perceives some shades of gray as well as black and white), and both depth and breadth of insight. Recognizing the tension of sustaining such a burden, the congregation contemplates that other ministers or (occasionally) lay persons may fill the pulpit one Sunday a month.

Out of the pulpit, the minister must be versatile and creative, strong yet catalytic for members and staff alike. As the senior member of the professional staff, the senior minister is responsible for coordinating the operations of the church under the policy direction of the Board of Trustees. Vital, but possibly sensing a lack of purpose in an era of rapid change, the congregation seeks renewed challenge and direction. It would welcome a generalist in interest and education who responds to the urban challenge and who does not fear to face the future.

In personality, the minister must genuinely relate to people. This demands a warm and open spirit — a person who likes people, who inspires enthusiasm and devotion, who listens and who hears the voices of differing ages and groups, whether these are soft or strident. Our minister must be a leader whose goal is not to sweep the congregation by force of personality, but whose passion is for making the democratic process work. He or she should feel fulfillment in leading members and groups to confront problems squarely, to engage in open dialog, and to reach responsible decisions. In a word, our minister must be a person whose style says "we," not "I."

Comment [DH1]: Unitarian Church of All Souls, Washington, DC, 1968-69.

VII. Congregational Profile

Example #1 – a small congregation

Although we are now a church, we are proud of our status as the first UU Fellowship established in the state and retain the idea of fellowship in both our hearts and name.

The Fellowship is a growing liberal religious community and has had all the accompanying signs of growing pains. After many years of using other meeting places, we with much trepidation built our own meeting house. This moved us forward for several years as we worked on our new home: raising money and raising spirits, learning the true meaning of consensus, hearing our many voices, speaking with one.

Our congregation consists of many elders (the average age of the survey respondents was 59) and we seek to nurture our youth and young adults through various programs designed to meaningfully incorporate them into the fabric of our fellowship; while also educating our adult members in the history and principles of our UU heritage, both Sunday morning and beyond.

Our Fellowship reflects some interesting numbers due in part to the seasonality of our resort area. We see about a third new friends and visitors in summer as people vacation here, and about 30% of our members go south for the winter. This can be an interesting challenge.

About 20% of our members have been with us almost from the beginning, 50% have been with us for 8-10 years, and we have a very active group of newer members who are now energizing our committees and activities. We feel this mix is a very positive indication of our openness to change. 59% have also had some experience with other UU congregations.

Because the diversity of thought often seen in a UU church is present here (UUs have always been known for their willingness to express their own individualistic views on almost every subject!), we have felt the lack of a strong mediating presence to listen and lead through example and experience the energetic and exciting group that embodies the Fellowship and we hope that you are the person we seek to fill this challenging position.

Example #2 – a midsize congregation

We are a congregation on the move. A congregation in flux. With the assistance of our current interim minister, we have made a congregational decision to grow in every way - spiritually, financially, and in membership.

Our long range planning theme is "505 in '05." Our goal is to grow from a congregation of 250 to over 500 in the next five years. We seek a minister to accept the challenge of guiding us on that journey.

During the next five years, we expect to have moments of great joy and triumph mixed with the pains of growth. Our survey and anecdotal experience demonstrate that there are several divergent theological viewpoints strongly held within our church community.

For the first time, we have a full-time church administrator and a three-quarter-time director of religious education. Our 2000-2001 budget increased twenty percent over the previous year. This fall, we added a second Sunday service, for the first time. This is a huge leap for our church, and we need someone to go with us to the next level. For these reasons, there are some specific characteristics we seek in our next minister.

Example #3 – a large congregation

Our congregation has a short history but one of long and stable parish ministries. Our first called minister served for 13 years, our most recent 22 years.

We have loved and celebrated our ministers. With them we have grown and prospered as a church community, growing not only in membership but also in our physical facilities, our finances, our staffing, our programming and, most important to us, our ministry. We feel good about our church. We have liked our leaders. We are financially sound, we have a new highly functional as well as esthetically satisfying physical home. The arts are especially important to our members who enthusiastically participate in and support a tradition of fine music and the fine arts. And we like each other. While we are not afraid to express our differences, we have been relatively unfactionalized through our history. Through practice and tradition, a constantly rotating leadership keeps our lay leadership from becoming entrenched.

The status quo is not where we wish to be. In announcing his decision to retire, our most recent minister noted that there are cycles of ministry and that we were at the end of one (our rebuilding and becoming established following our disastrous 1990 fire) and on the verge of defining a new one. We started a visioning process in 1999 which continues. Already we see many ways for us to grow, improve, adapt and prepare for our continuing ministry to each other and those who would join us.

Our ministerial structure has worked well for us in the past. But as we are now a large church, we are exploring whether a team or shared ministry would be a better structure to meet the needs of the church and its members.

As we continue to grow, we become more diverse; we need to find ways to be more sensitive and responsive to and skillful at dealing with differences.

While we are reviewing our professional clergy leadership, should we be reassessing the effectiveness of our governing structure that has served so well all these years?

We built a beautiful and functional facility after our disastrous fire in 1990; but it's just about filled to capacity and then some most Sunday mornings. Should we be looking to expand? spin off?

Our finances are sound; but could we be doing much more if we raised our sights?

We care a lot about social justice and we have six task forces. But what about our own personal commitments to doing first-person action? How can we reconcile our commitment to furthering social justice with the daily demands in our personal lives? Is our commitment more vicarious than productive?

We have been instructed, inspired and challenged from the pulpit over the past four decades; have we become insular in our thinking? Have we valued the intellectual, perhaps at the expense of the spiritual?

There are skills, energy, vitality and vision within our congregation but they have, for the most part, been inner-directed. Many feel that we are approaching a transition

where we can expand our horizons and take some new risks in furthering the principles that guide us.

As we ponder these questions we are very aware that we want to maintain what has been at the core of our church community: a spiritual home in which we care about and value one another, where worship services inspire and challenge us, bring us together; where there are common bonds of our Unitarian Universalist principles.

IX. Pre-candidating Weekend Schedule

The following schedule was followed during a recent pre-candidating weekend.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Search Committee Member in Charge</i>
Friday Feb 22	6:00 pm	Pick up at airport	HW
	7:00-9:00	Social time/coffee/dessert at Caroline's	CR
	9:00	Convey to Inn for the night	HW
Saturday Feb 23	8:45-9:00 am	Pick up at Inn	LS
	9:00-noon	Meeting/Interview at Caroline's	CR
	noon-1:00 pm	Lunch	CR
	1:00-3:00	Tour of church	BT, CF
	3:00-5:00	Tour of area homes with agent	LS
	5:30-6:30	Convey to Inn for rest & relaxation	LS
	6:30-9:30	Dinner at Caroline's	BT, LS, CR
	9:30	Drop off at Inn	LS
Sunday BT Feb 24	8:00-10:00 am	Travel to neutral pulpit	FD,LS,
	10:00-11:00	Preparation time	
	11:00-1:00 pm	Service and coffee hour	
	1:00-3:30	Lunch and discussion at restaurant's private dining room	BT
	3:30-5:30	Return to town	
	6:30	Drop off at airport	HW

X. Questions, Questions

1. [Questions for references](#)
2. [Questions for pre-candidates](#)
3. [Questions for candidates](#)

<p><i>Questions, First Group</i> <i>Search Committee Questions for References</i></p>
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A search committee recently asked these questions of the references of its potential ministerial candidates.

1. How long have you known _____?
2. As far as you know does _____ have clear personal and professional boundaries? i.e. can they say no when too many demands are put upon her/his personal time?
3. Does _____ tend to have a strong support system?
4. Does _____ have strong family ties?
5. Is _____ warm and available to her/his congregants?
6. Is _____ a strong leader?
7. Does _____ implement the vision of the congregation with clarity?
8. Is _____ strong on pastoral care? Describe please.
9. Have you known of personal life crisis that _____ has had and how did he/she handle it?
10. Have you experienced or do you have a perception of how _____ would handle a difference of opinion issues with a congregant?
11. Have you experienced or do you have a perception of how _____ would handle a difficult pastoral care issue?
12. What is the most significant contribution that _____ has made to the UU ministry?
13. What has been the greatest challenge presented to _____?
14. Is there anything in his/her personal and professional life that we should know?
15. Would you want _____ as your minister?

At this point ask the Reference to add whatever they wish to the reference.

Questions, Second Group
Search Committee Questions for Ministerial Pre-Candidates

A search committee recently asked these questions of its potential ministerial candidates.

1. *Pattern* (Member A)

Give us a chronological verbal resume in 10-15 minutes. (Observe how well the person articulates biography.)

Why moving on or why desire a change?

Why interested in our church?

2. *Vision* (Members B&C)

Based on the reading of our packet, what do you feel you can do for our congregation?

(Need specific answer--this is most key)

What has been your major contribution to your present congregation? Did you envision that when you started there?

Said another way: In what areas of your congregation's programs do you believe you have been most effective? In which least effective?

Would your goals be to deepen members' experience, or grow in membership size?

Follow on question if appropriate: Describe your successes, both in leadership of congregational activity and in individual contacts, or helping individuals grow and develop.

How would you deal with the congregation's diverse visions?

What is the right length to stay in a pastorate? Is stagnation inevitable?

Minor: How do you envision your relationship with this congregation in one year, and in 5 years?

What participation do you envision in the community?

What should be the relationship of the UU church to other religious organizations? How do you get involved in that?

What experiences have you had with the media?

How much do you participate or want to participate in the denomination? With other local churches?

How do you reconcile unity and diversity in a UU context?

3. *Theology, religious orientation, minister's religious journey* (Members D&E)

(The objective is to understand their theology, how and when they arrived at it, and how it fits our church members.)

Why did you choose the ministry as your profession?

Summarize your theological beliefs and how you got there.

Why do you feel you fit the theological profile of this congregation?

Give an example of how you would use UU heritage and apply it to a crisis. How do you define crisis?

4. *Worship Services* (Members F&G)

Describe the climate or distinctive quality you seek to develop in planning Sunday services?

What new expressions have you brought to worship?

Describe your typical worship service and a plan of action for implementing it.

What responsibility-would others have in assisting with this development?

i.e. the DRE? Music Director? Worship Committee? Board of Trustees?

Have you worked with a music director? How do you integrate music into the service?

What involvement of individuals in the worship service, i.e. lay leaders, children?

How do you view participation by others?

How do you feel about a Worship Committee being responsible for a certain number of Sunday services?

What has been your relationship to such a committee?

5. *Religious Education* (Members A&B)

What programs have you initiated and sustained for both youth and adults?

Would you see yourself as a leader of classes, workshops, or seminars? If so, what areas of adult education/programming interest you?

Are you comfortable with periodic attendance by youth? Describe your experience.

Rights of passage, life transitions, your experiences.

How do you think children can be helped to feel like an important part of your church community?

6. *Pastoral Care* (Members C&D)

What training and skills do you have in counseling?

What kinds of counseling are you most effective at, and least effective?

How do you feel about counseling?

How do you deal with divorce when counseling?

Have you had any experience with an organized caring committee?

How do you approach the life passages of births, baptisms, weddings, illnesses, deaths?

What is your feeling about doing marriages and funerals for non-members?

How do you feel about performing a holy union ceremony for gays and lesbians?

7. *Social Responsibility* (Members E&F)

How have you been involved in local, state, national, and global issues? Describe your experiences with each area.

How involved should the minister be in social concerns?

How involved should the members be in social concerns?

What successes have you experienced in the area of social concerns?

What failures or disappointments have you experienced in social concerns?

Our church has been a sanctuary church since Jan. 1984. How do you feel about this decision?

What would you do if you had \$20,000 a year to spend on social issues?

8. *Administration* (Members G&A)

Whom do you see as the manager of the church?

How do you work with the Board, the staff, and the committees?

How do you envision the relationship between the minister and staff, and the Board?

What should be your involvement with the Board? With the Program Council?

What is the role of the minister in relation to lay leadership?

How much time do you spend meeting with committees?

Describe a typical work week.

What office hours have you kept?

How much time do you usually spend in preparation of a sermon?

Give examples of your ability to organize, activate, guide and follow through with the congregation.

To what extent do you participate in building maintenance? Daily office routine?

Our office administrator will be leaving us in June after nearly 25 years. Do you feel you should have the authority to hire the new person? To organize the daily functioning of the office?

Any experience with a computer? e-mail? websites?

How do you view the use of the church building? Rental fees? Contracts?

9. *Growth and Outreach* (Member B)

Given the limitation of our facility, should this church grow?

If so, why? Or why not? What would you do?

Are you interested in growth?

What successes and failures have you experienced with growth?

10. *Personal Life Style, Family, Hobbies* (Members C&D)

How do you assure yourself time for reading and study, to reflect, write?

How do you care for your own mental and physical health?

How does your family fit into our area?

How does your spouse relate to your ministry?

How do you relate to the work of your spouse?

(If the minister has been married several times) How would you deal with that when you counsel for marriage and divorce?

11. *Personnel Matters* (Members E&F)

Discuss our compensation package and your salary expectations

What expectations do you have regarding yearly vacation?

professional meetings time?

sabbatical leave time?

and so on

Questions, Third Group
Congregational Questions for Ministerial Candidates

(These are the actual questions a Unitarian Universalist congregation put to a ministerial candidate, for two hours on a Monday night during candidating week. The minister received and accepted the call to the church.)

What proportion of your sermons would you spend talking about philosophical matters, religious matters, social concerns, issues of the day, your personal experiences and feelings and so forth?

Are there any particular parts of the service that you feel strongly attached to and that you would like to bring to our church?

Could you describe what you see as your favorite order of service, or flow of service?

Could you describe what you think the role of your spouse will be in this congregation?

How do you see yourself supervising the other staff?

How do you order your priorities?

What is your approach to counseling?

What are your reasons for wanting to leave the church you are now serving?

What would be your long term objective for this church?

Do you believe that our church should increase its membership and if so how would you go about it?

Our last minister was much older than you. You are a member of the Baby Boom generation. What experiences do you have that help you relate to the needs of older persons in the congregation?

Will you be sensitive to gender inclusive language?

What role do you see for music in the service?

How do you see individuals and yourself being involved in social action? Do you see this more as individual participation or stands the church might take on some issues?

How would you rank social action and community activities in your priorities?

What do you see the role of this church in creating equality for blacks in our society?

Do you think our church should be more active in feeding and sheltering the homeless?

What do you see as a realistic endowment goal for this church over the next five years?

What would be the size of the congregation that you would be comfortable with?

What size of vote would you look for before accepting a call to our church?

How do you deal with people who come to the church that have life styles (single, gay, etc.) that are very different then the commonly accepted life style in our society?

What role do you see yourself having with the children's church school? Has it been your practice to be involved in that in any way?

What experience have you had and how comfortable are you doing other kinds of worship services that might involve dance, or film, slides and so on?

Why do you insist that you be a member of the Religious Education Minister/Director Search Committee? Your being a member can lend itself to a manipulation of that committee. I think that is what our fear is. Shouldn't the committee have a right to meet without the minister?

We had a lot of discussion in the last year or two about the structure of our church and the reporting relationships within the church and where the power lies. Some people view-the minister as a member of the congregation, other people view the minister as the chief executive officer of the church. Where do you fall in there? How do you view the minister of this church?

A ministerial search consists of a very large emotional as well as financial commitment on the part of a congregation and the denomination tells us that the expected average.ministry falls short of ten years. In the situation of you and your spouse representing dual professional careers how would you approach lets say four years from now your spouse receiving an outstanding offer in a distant community that would require both of you deciding how you would approach which direction to take? What factors would you deem in that situation?

Right now we are offering you the position as the Minister. If at some point we decided we wanted a co-ministry in this church, what impact would such a decision have on you?

Would the Minister/Director of Religious Education report to you or to the Board?

How do you feel about the church voting on the issue of Sanctuary for people from Central

America?

Do you believe that the church should have an outreach toward single people, and if so, what direction should that take?

This church has a long tradition of strong lay leadership. What do you see as your role vis-a-vis this lay leadership in the church?

How do you define who "the congregation" is when you say "it depends on what the congregation wants"?

What do you perceive as one or several issues as regards the development of the intellect or development of the spirit of the congregation?

We have had two interim ministers. But there is more healing that needs to be done. What would you do to start that process?

The pulpit committee had a wonderful experience. They became intimate friends. What could you do to give that same experience to the members of the congregation?

Fifteen years ago you faced a marvelous opportunity when you decided to enter the ministry. Then what was your passion to enter the ministry? Is that still your passion?

What are you going to bring to us and how are we going to participate in your growth?

If you had the opportunity to be any person other than yourself, who would you be, and why?

What do you say to a person who thinks that UUism is more of a social club than a religion?

Why is the UU church a necessary institution in our culture?

Do you have any special rituals on Sunday, or Christmas Eve or Easter or some other time that you would hate to part with as you take on a new church?

Could you name a few people who are more liberal than you are and more conservative than you are?

Do you believe that in certain situations the bearing of arms is necessary to protect the interests of our country?

We have few Blacks in our membership, even though the population of the community is 20% black. How would you go about bringing more Blacks into our church membership?

In your work right now what do you consider your strongest points? Where are you most effective?

In your work right now where are you least effective?

In terms of your own professional growth what goals do you have for yourself to achieve in the next ten years?

Generally how do you feel about the relative importance of the ministry to adults and the ministry to children in our congregation?

What do you turn to for your own sense of strength and source of renewal when you feel down?

XI. Candidating Week Schedules

1. [Announcement of candidating week](#)
2. [Information about candidating week](#)
3. [Schedule of events](#)
- 3a. [Notes on schedule of events](#)
4. [Information about schedule of events](#)

Example No. 1
Announcement of Candidating Week

The Ministerial Search Committee
is delighted to invite you to participate in
Candidating Week - May 4 - 12, 1996
for

The Revs. Abraham and Sarah Wanderer,
The Committee's Candidates for Co-Ministers of our Church

After a thorough and very interesting search process, we unanimously present Abraham and Sarah Wanderer for your consideration as co-ministers. The Wanderers have served as co-ministers in Negeb for the past 5 years.

Sarah is a life-long UU and Abraham grew up a rabbi's son. Both are graduates of the Starr King School for the Ministry in California. They also worked together in Harran for the Society of Shepherds. Abraham served as minister in Negeb for one year prior to Sarah's joining him as co-minister. Additionally, Sarah worked as a Family Counselor for 3 years.

Sarah and Abraham are the parents of two children, Ishmael, age 8, Abraham's child by his first marriage, and Isaac, less than a year old. They share parental and household obligations as well as professional responsibilities. Among their recreational activities, Abraham enjoys reading, visiting museums and a good cup of coffee, while Sarah finds pleasure in gourmet cooking, parties, dancing and children.

On co-ministry they write, "...".

We sincerely hope that you will warmly welcome Sarah, Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac when they visit us in May. We encourage everyone to participate in the various opportunities which will be offered that week to meet them.

Brief Schedule for May 4-12, 1996

May 4 Arrival

May 5-12 *Sunday sermon, small group activities (to be scheduled), Sunday sermon*
May 12 *Congregational Meeting after Church*
 The sole purpose of this meeting is to vote on calling
the Revs. Sarah and Abraham Wanderer to be our co-ministers.
 Those present and holding voting membership may vote.

Example No. 2
Information about Candidating Week

The terms "candidate" and "candidating" have long been used in Unitarian Universalist circles. For those who may find these terms unclear, here are a few words of explanation.

The "candidate," in the UU sense, is the minister the church's Ministerial Search Committee has chosen, pursuant to the congregation's charge to them, for the pastoral leadership of the congregation. Our committee's choice is the Rev. Rebecca Laban.

"Candidating" is the process by which the congregation meets the candidate and, as far as possible in the time available, becomes acquainted with his/her personality and professional capabilities. At the end of the candidating period, the congregation, at a formal meeting, votes to ratify or to reject the committee's choice.

During this "candidating" week, Rev. Laban will give the sermons on April 25, and May 2. Between those dates there will be a number of opportunities to meet and talk with her. Our candidate's schedule for that week is outlined on the accompanying sheet and chart.

Keep in mind that Rebecca will not present a program of any kind at the various meetings scheduled, unless noted. Her purpose will be to listen and get to know us and our areas of concern and interest.

There are two main purposes behind the activities chosen for candidating week. The obvious one is for us to meet and get to know the candidate. Equally important is the opportunity afforded the candidate to meet us and learn about our committees, our practices, our whole operating structure. (It has happened, though not often, that a candidate has rejected a congregation—*after* candidating week.) Rebecca's husband, Isaac, will be with her during candidating week.

Example No. 3
Schedule of Events

Schedule Of Events For Candidating Week, April 25 To May 2 (See attached Notes for specifics)

Sunday April 25	Monday Apr 26	Tues Apr 27	Wednesday Apr 28	Thursday Apr 29	Friday Apr 30	Saturday May 1	Sunday
10:00 Service, Dr. L preaching 11:15 Open forum		Church staff with Dr L					10:00 Service, Dr K preaching
1:30 Search		Church	12:30 Cong	12:30			

Ctte luncheon		staff Luncheon	Affairs Ctte luncheon	Women's Alliance			
6:30 Dinner for Social Concerns, Denom Affairs, Communication & Extended Family Ctte chairs LRY Discussion Group on Cttes	7:00 Board and Nominating Ctte Dinner	6:30 RE Ctte Dinner 8:00 Reception for church school teachers	7:30 Circle Dinners	7:00 Dinner for Program Ctte Chairs	6:00 Singles Dinner 7:30 Singles Forum - Dr W visit 8:30 Finance Ctte meeting	6:30 Congregational Dinner All members and friends Of the church welcome Sign up at church Brief talk by Dr L	8:15 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING Vote to call minister

Sunday April 25
10:00 Service, Dr. L preaching 11:15 Open forum
8:15 Congregational Meeting on the calling of Dr. L

***Example No. 3a
Notes on the Schedule of Events for Candidating Week
April 25-May 2***

Sunday, April 25

- 10:00 service, Dr. Laban conducting. After a brief break for coffee those who are interested may join her in the large hall for an open forum.

The intent of the open forum is to give those people who will not be meeting with Dr. L during the week in smaller meetings an opportunity to ask her questions, share their thoughts and get to know her on a more personal level.

- 1:30 p.m. The Ministerial Search Committee will have lunch with Dr. L.
- 5:30 p.m. Representatives of the Social Concerns, Denominational Affairs, Communication and Extended Family committees will have dinner with Dr. L. at the home of _____. _____ will contact the invitees.
- During the rest of Sunday evening, Dr. L will meet with the LRY and sit in on the Discussion Group on Communities.

The several large gaps of time indicated on the attached schedule are provided to Dr. L and her husband to rest, take a good look at the housing market, and familiarize themselves with the community.

Monday, April 26

- 7:00 p.m. The Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee will have dinner with Dr. L at the home of _____.

-

Tuesday, April 27

- The church professional staff will spend the morning and have lunch with Dr. L.
- 6:30 p.m. The Religious Education Committee will have a potluck dinner with Dr. L at the church. _____ is in charge of arrangements.
- 8:00 p.m. There will be a reception for Church School teachers to meet Dr. L in the small auditorium. _____ is hosting.

Wednesday, April 28

- 12:30 p.m. The Committee for Congregational Affairs will have lunch with Dr. L. _____ is in charge of arrangements.
- 7:30 p.m. There will be several circles dinners this evening, Dr. L making the rounds of them. _____ is in charge of these arrangements.

Thursday, April 29

- At 12:30 p.m. at the church Dr. L will meet with the Women's Alliance.

All in the church are invited to attend this luncheon whether or not you are members of the alliance. Please bring bag lunch. For transportation call

_____ at _____.

- 7:00 p.m. The Chairpersons of the Program Committees will have dinner with Dr. L at the home of _____. _____ will contact the invitees.

Friday, April 30

- 6:00 p.m. The Singles Group will have dinner with Dr. L. _____ is in charge of arrangements.
- 7:30 p.m. Dr. L will briefly visit the Forum for Singles.
- 8:30 p.m. The Finance Committee will meet with Dr. L at the church office.

Saturday, May 1

- 6:30 p.m. Congregational dinner at the church, with a brief talk by Dr. L. *All members and friends age 14 and older are invited. Care, including dinner and games, will be provided for younger children.*

Sunday, May 2

- 10:00 a.m. service, Dr. L conducting. After the service Dr. L will remain in the pulpit for a period of discussion.
- 8:15 p.m. Congregational Meeting. The only item on the agenda is the calling of Dr. L to be our new minister. The voting is open to all who are members of the church.

Example No. 4
Information About Candidating Week
and Schedule Of Events

Because our church's committees are clustered by standing committees, we have arranged the Rev. Wanderer's schedule so that he can meet with these clusters one-by-one. If you are not yet part of a committee, we suggest you contact a committee chair and volunteer. In this way you may be able to attend one of the principal committee meetings. There are several large gaps of time indicated on the schedule, intended to allow Jacob and his partner, Esau, to rest, to look at the housing market, and become familiar with our area.

Friday, April 26, 6:00-9:30 p.m. Intergenerational Square Dance in Main Hall. \$5.00 for adults, children under 18 free.

6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Jacob will meet with RE teachers, parents, children and youth at a dessert reception to be served in the Fireside Room.

Saturday, April 27, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Jacob attends lunch meeting with RE teachers and RE Committee hosted by _____. Phone him at _____ 322-4339 for reservations.

6 p.m. There will be a Board of Trustees and MSC dinner at the home of David and _____.

Sunday, April 28, 11: 00 a.m. Jacob will give the sermon:

"_____." Of this subject he writes: ". . .".

12:00 noon. Silent auction and mingling until 2:00 PM. Lunch provided by Young UU's will be available on the patio. Opportunity to meet Jacob.

6 PM. Pot Luck Supper for: Congregational Affairs, By Laws, and Nominating Committee to meet with Jacob at the home of _____. Please call _____ for information /reservations.

Monday, April 29, 10 a.m. Jacob will spend the morning through lunch with the staff of the church.

7:30 p.m. The Board of Trustees will meet with Jacob at the church.

Tuesday, April 30, 7:30 p.m. The Sunday Morning Program Group will meet in the Fireside Room for a potluck dessert. Call _____ at _____ for reservations.

Wednesday, May 1. Jacob's partner Esau arrives.

Thursday, May 2, 6 PM. The Finance Committee will host a pot luck supper at _____ home. Phone _____.

Friday, May 3, 12:00 noon. Jacob and Esau have lunch in town with available UU clergy.

7 p.m. Social Action and Adult Programming will have pot luck dessert in the Fireside Room. Please call _____ at _____ for information.

Saturday, May 4, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Church Work Day. Lunch will be served to workers.

3-6 p.m. All Church Picnic at Mitchell Park. Bring a dish and a drink to share. Barbecues will be lit for those who want to cook.

Sunday, May 5, 11:00 AM. Jacob will give the sermon, "...". He writes: "...".

12:00 noon. Lunch on the patio.

12:45 p.m. Special Congregational Meeting. Agenda: (1) Decision to call Jacob Wanderer to be our settled minister. (2) Elect a member of the Board of Trustees. (3) Elect a member of the Nominating Committee

***Example No. 5
Information About Candidating Week
and Schedule Of Events***

Welcome to a very exciting time in the life of our church! Josephine Wanderer, our ministerial candidate, will be with us for candidating week from Sunday, June 4 through Sunday, June 11.

During this week, Josephine will meet with all the committees of the church and with representatives of the local community outside the church, and will be available to meet the members of the congregation. A list of activities is enclosed. All members of our church are invited to attend any of the meetings listed here, and to attend more than one if they like. Although individual committees will be meeting each day to discuss areas of particular concern, every one is welcome.

Josephine will be conducting the services on June 4 and June 11. Immediately following the June 11th service there will be a congregational meeting to vote on calling the Reverend Dr. Josephine Wanderer to be our next minister.

To assist you in planning to meet and talk with our candidate, following is the schedule of events for. Candidating Week. Evening receptions for members will be sponsored by the Search Committee. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

Saturday, June 4 Coordinator: P.W.

6:00 p.m. Social hour for all members and friends.

7:00 p.m. All-Church Pot Luck Supper. The candidate will be there.

Sunday, June 5 Coordinator: A.H.

11:00 a.m. Worship Service conducted by Josephine Wanderer for all members and friends.

12:00 noon Sunday-Plus Luncheon prepared by the following groups and committees:

Peer Ministers	Caring	Nominating
Welcoming Congregation	Hospitality	New Member
Social	Lay Leadership	Young Adults

1:00 p.m. Meeting with the groups sponsoring the Sunday-Plus Luncheon.

Note: the Young Adults are invited to remain after this meeting for an informal get-together with Josephine.

6:00 p.m. Reception in Conover Auditorium for past and present members of the Board of Trustees and their spouses and partners

7:00 p.m. Pot Luck Dinner with present members of the Board of Trustees

Monday, June 6 Coordinator: L.C.

12:00 noon Lunch with the R.E. Director

5:30 p.m. Reception in social hall for members whose last names begin with the letters A-C.

6:30 p.m. Pot luck dinner and meeting in the small auditorium with the Religious Education Committee.

7:30 p.m. Meeting in social hall with the following committees:

Religious Education	Public Relations	Denominational Affairs
Sister Church	Art Gallery	UUSC
UU-UNO	Folk Dancers	UULGC

Tuesday, June 7 Coordinator: J.M.

12:00 noon Lunch with Rev. D.E. of nearby UU church

5:30 p.m. Reception in the Church Lobby for members whose last names begin with the letters D-J.

5:30 p.m. Pot Luck Dinner and meeting in the Church Lobby with the following Committees:

Forum	Symposium	Library/Archives
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Wednesday, June 8 Coordinator: G.C.

10:00 a.m. Meeting and lunch with staff

5:30 p.m. Reception in small auditorium for members whose last names begin with the letters K-Q.

6:30 p.m. Pot Luck Dinner and meeting in the church lobby with the following committees and groups:

Adult Programming	Bookshop	Ctte. on the Ministry
Pledge Campaign	Memorial Fund	Facilities
Administration	Communications	Budget/Finance
Fund-Raising	Endowment Trust	Art and Property
Personnel		

Thursday, June 9 Coordinator: G.H.

12:00 noon Lunch with local clergy

5:30 p.m. Reception in small auditorium for members whose last names begin with the letters R-T

6:30 p.m. Pot Luck Dinner and meeting in small auditorium the Religious Services & Music Committees

7:30 p.m. Reception in small auditorium with the following committees and groups:

Religious Services	Music	Women's Alliance
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Friday, June 10 Coordinator: L.B.

12:00 noon Lunch with past presidents of the Board of Trustees

5:30 p.m. Reception in small auditorium for members whose last names begin with the letters U-Z and all others who were unable to attend a previous evening reception.

7:00 p.m. Pizza party and get-together in small auditorium with YRUU members.

Saturday, June 11 Coordinator: P.W.

6:30 p.m. Pot Luck Dinner at the church for all members and friends

7:30 p.m. Open Forum for all members and friends--a question-and-answer session.

Sunday, June 12 Coordinators: A.H. and P.W.

11:00 a.m. Worship Service conducted by L.M. for all members and friends

12:00 noon Bag Lunch sponsored by the R.E. Committee

12:30 p.m. Special Congregational Meeting for the purpose of voting to call the Rev. Dr. L.M.

XII. Multi-Staff Considerations

Larger congregations may wish to call a second or third minister, whether to add a new or to fill an existing ministry position. Often such a position is specialized, with particular responsibility for religious education, membership growth, social action, ministry with youth and young adults, or counseling and pastoral care. When a new position is being contemplated, essential questions for a congregation's Governing Board to resolve include:

1. What expectations can we reasonably have for the new minister? A common mistake is to finance a new ministry position by "cashing in" one or more long-standing lay staff positions (e.g. the Director of Religious Education), and then to expect that a minister will do the work of these positions and also satisfy a range of new wishes. It is often wiser to keep the lay positions and add a minister when the money can be raised separately.

2. To whom will this new minister report? A balance needs to be struck between the need for a harmonious and unified staff, and the reality that each minister has different skills and perspectives and attracts different supporters. It is not desirable for ministers to contend constantly for the Board's support. The congregation is responsible for structuring its staff. Vague lines of accountability often reflect unresolved conflicts in the congregation. Unless they are resolved ahead of time, the ministers may wind up as proxies, fighting out the congregation's conflicts.

3. How much will the new minister be paid? It is almost never wise to base a minister's compensation on projected increases in income. The current congregation should be able to afford its staff. Another issue is the relative pay levels of staff members. If there are large discrepancies it should be clear how these are justified and whether they are intended to be permanent.

Assistant or Associate?

The Assistant Minister is normally a recent seminary graduate who works under the supervision of a more experienced minister on the congregation staff. An Associate Minister may have considerable ministerial experience, and carries considerable independent responsibility as part of a staff team. Like senior and sole ministers, associate ministers are called by vote of the congregation after a normal search process. Assistant ministers may be called or, if permitted by the congregation's by-laws, hired by the Board. In the latter case, the ministry agreement ought to include a specific date, generally no more than three years hence, by which the Governing Board recommends to the congregation that the minister be called, or extends to the minister a terminal contract year.

Which Category of Ministerial Fellowship?

Ministerial Fellowship is granted by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the UUA in three categories: Parish Ministry, Ministry of Religious Education, and Community-Based Ministry. Your ministry position should be defined according to the

needs of your congregation. The Ministerial Transitions Director gives priority to ministers who hold Fellowship in the appropriate category, and who have the specific skills and qualities you specify in your Profile Statement. If you select a minister whose Fellowship is in a category other than the one that best matches your position, the minister will be required to apply for Fellowship in the new category.

Search for Assistant Minister: Time and Task Checklist

Phase I—six weeks for steps 2-10

1. Previous minister (if any) announces resignation.
2. District Executive conducts transition interview with governing board (if #1 obtains).
3. Governing board decides how to proceed with search.
4. Ministerial Settlement Representative (MSR) meets with board.
5. Board selects search committee, e.g. one board member, one or more members from each committee with which assistant minister will share responsibility, one or more members at large, senior minister ex officio without vote. [Senior minister to have veto power over selection of pre-candidates and final candidate but may not insist on specific pre-candidates or candidate.] See also guidelines for selection of a search committee in the UUA *Settlement Handbook*.
6. District Compensation Consultant (DCC) makes visit.
7. Board adopts search committee budget, commits to Salary plus Housing Allowance amount and plus standard array of benefits and professional expenses.
8. MSR makes second visit, meeting with the Search Committee.
9. Search Committee goes on retreat.
10. Board appoints negotiating team: one board member, one at large member, one SC member.

Phase II—six weeks

1. Search committee conducts focus groups and/or semi-structured interviews with applicable committees, and may also conduct survey
2. Search committee completes Application for a Minister and Congregational Record (CR) and on line, asking UUA Transitions Office for the unveiling of the latter when it is complete.
3. Search committee begins to create informational packet.
4. Negotiating team prepares draft ministry agreement.
5. Negotiating team presents proposed ministry agreement to board for approval.
6. Search committee completes packet and sends to MSR for review.
7. Search committee sends survey results, Profile Statements and draft ministry agreement to Transitions Director.
8. Search committee requests the list and Ministerial Records (MRs) at least one month after completed CR was unveiled.

Phase III—eight weeks

1. MSR determines in consultation with the Transitions Director whether to deliver list and MRs to the committee in person, or whether the materials can be sent directly.
2. Upon receipt of the list and MRs, search committee members call ministers and exchange packets with those with whom interest is mutual.
3. Search committee receives, circulates, and evaluates ministers' packets, conducts group phone interviews and checks references.
4. Search committee receives additional names (if any) on a regular basis.
5. Search committee selects pre-candidates, requests interpretative file summaries from Transitions Office, and schedules and conducts pre-candidating interviews.

Phase IV—four weeks

1. Search committee selects and contacts proposed candidate, checks additional references extensively, may conduct criminal and other background check.
2. Candidate and negotiating team conclude ministry agreement; candidate and board chair sign.
3. Search committee presents candidate's name and qualifications to governing board, schedules meeting between board and candidate.
4. Board executes final agreement with the candidate.
5. Board announces new hire to congregation; search committee announces hiring of minister to MSR and Transitions Office.

Phase V—as the ministry begins

1. Search committee arranges a small celebration to introduce the new minister to the entire congregation.
2. District Executive conducts start-up meeting with other minister(s), board, search committee, and applicable committees.

XIII. Ministerial Candidate Rating

Form

Minister's name: _____

Search committee member's name: _____

Minister's present position/location: _____

Relevant professional or life experience: _____

Rating scale: 4 = exceptional, 1 = lacking, ? = no information available

CRITERIA

MR & PACKET// INTERVIEWS

COMMENTS

Sermons and preaching			
Worship and theological fit			
Spiritual growth, depth, leadership, and philosophy			
Community building and outreach			
Leadership style, experience, vision, and balance			
Scholarship, writings, and intellectualism			
Social action, experience with diversity			
Pastoral care			
Personal qualities			
"X-factor"			
Other:			

XIV. TIPS on the MINISTERIAL PSYCHE

and

How to Court It

by the Rev. Dr. Peter J. Luton

1. [Communication](#)
2. [The packet](#)
3. [The survey](#)
4. [Precandidating](#)
5. [Conclusions](#)

Good ministers are scooped up quickly! It is important that a Search Committee work as quickly as possible. It is important to do your homework and to gather your information; I urge you to be deliberate but not slow. Be efficient, fast and intentional. Push forward. Meet often. Delays will cost you come springtime when you try to precandidate people. Get your packet together. Start today gathering material. Have several copies on hand. Be ready to send it to a minister when you receive her or his name from the Transitions Office. I suggest you send your packet to everyone on your list. There is no reason to disqualify potential ministers before you know something about them. If at all possible, in December begin scheduling precandidating visits. Even if it is for a late March date. Good ministers will be offered several precandidating opportunities and you do not want someone in whom you are truly interested to be booked up when you call. Remember, most settled ministers only have one Sunday a month out of the pulpit—that translates into only three or four opportunities to precandidate between January and April.

~~~ Communication ~~~

Stay in constant contact. Quick and helpful communication is essential. I liked knowing that my packet had been received. I appreciated when phone calls were returned promptly and answers to my questions were provided. I also appreciated when the person calling was willing to chat and wasn't only business. I focused most of my pre-visit anxiety on the Sunday service. It was helpful to talk with the minister of the neutral pulpit well in advance of the visit. Newsletter blurbs, orders of service, questions about music—all of these take time and communication. Best not to rush on Thursday to get the order of service to the neutral pulpit for Sunday. Now maybe it's just the Luddite in me, but I

much prefer the telephone to e-mail for most of the communication between Search Committees and precandidates. Talk to me, don't talk at me. E-mail is one-sided and impersonal. E-mail can be good when transferring specific pieces of information, though I found I usually had another question that arose from the e-mailed answer to my original question. E-mail is not effective, as far as I am concerned, with deepening understanding and developing relationships—and that is at the core of the dance of ministers and congregations.

~~~ **The Packet** ~~~

The packet prepared by the congregation is a significant piece of information that a potential precandidate receives about the congregation. He or she will read it very carefully. It should give the minister a great deal of information about how the congregation operates, its finances, its expectations, its history, its environment, issues, warts and skeletons, strengths, plans, dreams and purposes. In order to get a minister to read it, the packet must be attractive and easily used. I recommend a three-ring notebook. Plastic covers on each piece of paper help keep the packet neat and readable. Everything in the packet should be three-hole punched or placed in its own well-labeled plastic pouch or folder. It is frustrating—as you will find reading ministers' packets—if stuff continually falls out of the notebook. Put the name, address, telephone numbers, and e-mail address of the Search Committee contact person prominently in the front of the packet. The packet should give the minister a feel for the area the congregation serves. Include maps, brochures from the Chamber of Commerce, information about the cost of living, the schools, local government, cultural and entertainment opportunities and, of course, housing. Color pictures of the church building/s (inside and out) and of the community make the packet more attractive and informative. Include pictures of congregational activities, groups, classes, suppers, etc. Label each picture. Take advantage of color copiers and digital photography. Include letters from the Search Committee, the Church President, the Minister or Interim Minister, and the Director of Religious Education. These letters should describe the congregation from the perspective of the writer—what are the strengths, challenges and future of the congregation. Why should the minister consider coming to that congregation? The letter from the UUMA Chapter President can discuss the quality of collegiality and strengths of the District. Include in the packet orders of service from typical Sundays. I suggest including orders of service from both the past minister and the interim minister. If there is not a typical

Sunday liturgy, indicate the variety of services that have been held. Include brief biographies of the staff and their job responsibilities. (Pictures of the staff are nice.) Include descriptions of the various groups within the congregation and all pamphlets, flyers and brochures you use. Include the Constitution and Bylaws. Send along some newsletters. Do you have an up-to-date vision and/or

strategic plan? Include them. A minister will want to see the last three years' budgets and actuals, as well as the current year-to-date financial report. These should be annotated sufficiently for someone who is unfamiliar with your accounting system and the names you give to everything. What is the Smith Fund, or the Capital Reserve II, or the Emerson Club? The packet should include information about pledging, rate of collection, number of pledging units and canvass history.

Include minutes from the last three or four Annual Meetings and any pertinent reports from the Minister, Religious Education Director, Board of Trustees, Committee Chairs, etc. Include membership numbers and attendance records for children and adults—be honest. Include the budgeted cost of ministry broken down into salary and housing, benefits, and professional expenses. The packet is not confidential. You can use the talents and creativity of the members of the congregation. Make it good. Use it not to brag, but to show you are proud of your congregation and yourselves. It tells the minister how you feel about yourselves and how well you know yourselves. Be honest in your packet, especially about the challenges and issues you think are alive in the congregation.

~~~ **The Survey** ~~~

Often ministers and congregations focus on the survey. I personally did not find the survey particularly helpful. This does not mean that it should be ignored or brushed off, but rather that it should be taken for what it is—a numerical tabulation of a lot of questions. The fact that 85% of the congregation wants sermons that are intellectually stimulating and only 27% likes responsive readings does not tell a minister much. I enjoyed when a packet reported numbers clearly and in different forms, i.e., pie charts, bar graphs, and percentage totals. Computers are wonderful for this kind of stuff. When I read surveys, I read them as the congregation's self-perception and not a factual account of the state of people's spirits and minds. The survey is suggestive—nothing more. I looked for glaring omissions or absences. I looked for contradictions and confirmations. (It says that religious education is important to the congregation, but the budget for R.E. is \$250. The survey says people like adult education and, what'dya know, the packet lists fifteen different adult classes last year!)

One congregation listed all the comments people attached to the end of the survey. I found this list of raw one-liners to be very informative. The challenge for the Search Committee is to distill the tone and tenor of the congregation for the minister. This process of capturing what is going on for people and where the church is headed—or wants to head—is, in my experience, pretty subjective. Trust your intuitions.

~~~ **Precandidating** ~~~

Precandidating is nerve wracking. The whole process feels like one is being judged—not just on his or her performance and skills, but on one’s very person and being. It felt as if a Search Committee was evaluating my very soul. From the minister’s perspective, the church holds all the cards. This is not true, but that is how it often feels. I wanted to know what risks and benefits would come to me if I were to accept an invitation to be their minister. When I precandidated, I wanted to find out if I could love these people. Are these people who respect and value the ministry? Are they selfconscious or caught up in a false self-image? I wanted to know if stylistically and temperamentally we fit. Do I like these people? Do they seem to like me, to welcome me, to be open to me and what I might bring to them, or are they looking for someone or something else? I wanted to know about past ministries. And I had to ask myself, “How willing and able am I to change and adapt in order to meet and honor this congregation’s personality?” The thing that impressed me most during precandidating weekends was how sensitive the Search Committee was to me and my desires, concerns, feelings. Did the Search Committee court me or quiz me? It is a very stressful exercise and everything the committee can do to help the precandidate feel welcome, safe and cared for speaks well for the congregation. Do not cut corners in order to save a few dollars. A minister will not be impressed by unrelenting frugality. An advance itinerary of the weekend is important both for the Search Committee and the precandidate. The temptation is to cram everything possible into a very short time. The minister expects the precandidating visit to be tiring and, like the Search Committee, she or he will want to accomplish a lot. This speaks to using the time well rather than filling every possible moment. Something that made a big difference for me—an introvert by nature—was to be greeted at the airport by one or two people who were knowledgeable about the congregation and the wider community and who were good conversationalists. My hosts were excited about their community and eager to share their thoughts and experiences with me. (I did not feel the necessity of keeping the conversation going.)

Relaxed meals with the Search Committee or individuals from the committee, breaks during the interviews, some time to myself, some time with a realtor, and a comfortable quiet place to sleep helped me enjoy my precandidating visits. I was pleased with the little, gracious things the Search Committee members did. One placed a basket of local goods and goodies and a vase of flowers in my room. Another arranged breakfast with a friend and colleague in the area. I was heartened when committee members asked me what I wanted to see, do, know; and when they checked in with me during the course of the weekend, asked as to whether or not I was comfortable with the process or the content of the visit to date. It may have been petty of me, but it left a bad taste in my mouth when one afternoon I was toured around in a car that was beat up, noisy and rough. The difficulty was that the car created an atmosphere in which it was harder for me to both enjoy the ride and to pay full attention to the conversation with the driver and other passenger. I was not impressed with Search

Committees in which some members seemed not to have read my packet thoroughly. Nor was I impressed with Search Committees that seemed to make up the logistics as we went. (Where should we eat dinner? Who is going to take Peter to the church tomorrow?) I noted when a committee was unable to produce promised materials (e.g., past budgets, Mission Statements) or to explain various elements of congregational governance and finances. I trusted a Search Committee that was able to express differences of opinion, interpretation or emphasis in the course of the interview. I appreciated that the committee members were willing to disagree and be honest with one another and with me, that they were not putting forward an agreed-upon “party line” to create the appearance of unanimity. I was not looking to create fights, but to see how the congregation might deal with diversity and controversy. When a new minister arrives, there will be some disagreement, some rough edges, some tensions and frustrations, and I felt better going to a congregation in which those feelings and thoughts could be expressed openly and with love. Some precandidates may wish to include their partner in the precandidating weekend. A Search Committee needs to be aware of the difficult position in which ministers’ partners find themselves. They are going to be asked to move their lives, families, careers to a new place that they may have never visited, and to become members of a community they know not from atom. Attentiveness to the needs, concerns and interests of the partner goes a long way in presenting the congregation in the best possible light. Ministers want to know that the congregation values ministers and ministers’ families. At the same time, it is important to remember that you are searching for a minister, not a minister’s partner or children. I appreciated the Search Committee’s recognition that accepting a new call is an act of faith.

~~~ Conclusions ~~~

I spent a great deal of time studying packets, looking for clues about what it might be like to serve a particular congregation. I read everything and pored over the financial sheets. I ran up a large phone bill talking to former ministers, interim ministers, district executives, and colleagues and friends in the area. I wanted to know as much as possible about the congregation and the place. But for me, when you get right down to it, I relied upon intuitive knowing and my feel for the place and the people. The places that did not appeal to me were just right for someone else, and the congregations that did not care for me were enamored of someone else. The search process works if congregations and ministers use it properly, being open and honest, staying true to themselves, remaining as non-defensive as possible and as clear as possible about what they need, want, and have to offer one another. I have offered some of my experience of the search process from the minister’s point of view. I have not gotten into questions of what Search Committees can properly expect from ministers or the dynamics of a church that is looking for a minister. A discussion of such things would be most enlightening for ministers, but needs to come from the laity. I am convinced, however, that the better Search

Committees and ministers understand what each other is experiencing, the more successful and enjoyable the process of finding one another will be.

Good luck, and enjoy the journey!

XV. CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY

The following survey illustrates the range of questions that have been found helpful by a variety of congregations over the years. Each search committee should compose its own, with the assistance of thoughtful and expert members of the congregation.

This survey is available to you in its web-based form through the Transitions Office. Please contact us to gain access to the prepared template on Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com). To use this sample template you must have a paid Survey Monkey account and must provide us with your username for that account so that the survey can be transferred to you.

***For Question 7.D.3 (page 13) please consider changing “non-white” to “person of color/member of historically marginalized ethnic/cultural group”*

***this document is only available as a pdf. Please go to http://www.uua.org/documents/mpl/transitions/resourceguide/survey_template.pdf*

XVI. SEARCH COMMITTEE RETREAT GUIDE

*** this document is only available as a pdf. Please go to*

http://www.uua.org/documents/mpl/transitions/resourceguide/retreat_guide.pdf