



# Senior Minister TRANSITION

Through a membership vote and board appointment the Fellowship selected 7 members for the Senior Minister Search Committee. Members of the committee are: Terry Dawson, chair; Marti Wheeler, Dave Wallace, Lauren Thompson, Tim Watson, Theresa Hannah and David Powling.

The following is a short summary of the committee tasks June, 2016 – May, 2017.



The search committee was selected and began to meet and get to know each other. We worked to understand our duties, the schedule and how we'll need to interact with the Unitarian Universalist Association's transitions office to exchange information with prospective candidates. We selected the roles we would each take in pursuit of accomplishing our goal of locating the minister who best fits our congregation.



We interviewed our current ministers and lay leaders. We also met with board members to discuss how to dovetail our need for information and opinions with the board's desire to gather opinions about revisions to our mission & vision. We discussed interviews, how to create a survey and what to ask, how & when to schedule times for listening sessions. A negotiating team was named by the governing board.



Work on our survey and our packet (information about us to be shared with prospective ministers) began in earnest. We made decisions about types of information to include in the packet and spent hours pouring over survey questions to make them focused and easy to answer while still providing valuable information. Those questions were revised and revised again before we felt the result was as good as we could make it.



During September the search committee worked to learn all we could about YOU (Fellowship members & friends). We did this through an on-line survey, listening sessions and interviews with staff, lay leaders and long-time members. Discussions continued about the packet and about our “congregational record” a set of standard information every congregation in search must make available to UU ministers.



Survey results are reviewed and incorporated into the congregational record. We meet with Rev. Keith Kron director of the UUA transitions office and attend his Beyond Categorical Thinking seminar. The congregational record is drafted, reviewed and tweaked. We requested assistance from several staff and members to write information for our packet. The Fellowship’s story will be told through the work of many hands.



Our final draft of the congregational record is sent to our UUA representative for review. It will be made available to ministers beginning Nov. 25. Our packet will be a digital file that includes many photos, video interviews and descriptions of most aspects of our congregational life and our region of the world. We’ll add many quotes gleaned from interviews, listening sessions; even Facebook posts about the Fellowship.



The packet should be ready for review by December 1. Ministers may begin to request access to this document beginning January 2. We’ll spend this month finalizing the packet and preparing our plans for video interviews, in-person interviews and our candidating week. We’ll also spend time enjoying the holidays as we anxiously anticipate the next couple of months which hold a flurry of activity for our team.



We hope to be very busy reviewing information about ministers who wish to be considered for our position. We'll receive a "minister packet" prepared by each introducing themselves. These include biographies and sample sermons. From these we'll select some for phone/skype interviews and, hopefully, identify a few with whom we want to delve deeper into determining our compatibility.



During February we'll continue reviewing applicant information and begin interviews. We sincerely request your patience and understanding during this time. Though we know you are wondering about the search and are anxious for a successful result, to protect the confidentiality of ministers who are inquiring, we can not discuss any specifics with other members of the congregation. Thanks for not asking us to do so.



March will again have us talking to candidates and working to narrow our choices. Once again we ask your understanding when we don't answer your questions. By the end of March we should have identified a very short list and will be ready to extend an offer if we find an ideal candidate. If, for whatever reason, we should fail to find a match there is a second round of interviews (often including new applicants) in April.



If the applicant we select accepts our invitation to candidate you will see joyful announcements about our choice. We will announce the dates for "candidating week" the time when our candidate will come to the Fox Cities, preach for us on 2 weekends and meet with as many committees, small groups and members as possible. The candidate and family will tour, and learn about, our area as well.



Candidating week will happen near the beginning of May. After our candidate preaches for the second time we will ask that they leave the building while our members vote. We will require a quorum of members participating and will need a minimum of 90% approval to call this new minister (The candidate may, in fact, require some higher level of positive votes). If the result is positive our new minister will start in August.