



## Taking Time to Connect

Jackie Smith, Board Chair

I'll start with the painfully, beautifully obvious. Winter has set in. We arrive to church chilled, and as we take off the full layer of protections, hats, mitts, scarves, we chat with others doing the same. We learn names, we connect with children. When we leave, the whole event reverses itself, and sometimes I, or someone in my family, will get caught in conversation, unexpectedly extending our time at the Holly Street entrance.

Whatever I was before I walked through the doors of church, after these moments, I approach my fullest self. Connections with friends, new faces, and mentors of all type leave me hopeful, recharged, and a bit closer to wholeness. This is the wholeness that lets me go into the world and do my best, or at least have no excuse not to try.

As our community approaches transitions, I lean on these connections in my interactions at board meetings, in committee meetings, and as I walk through my day. Fears, anxiety, and unknown can loom great, but the connections and wholeness that we create amongst ourselves will carry us through.

I invite you to engage with us in the coming months as we lay the foundation as a community ready for change. Watch for opportunities as they emerge, and please join us on January 12th at 12:30 p.m. for a special meeting of the congregation with Rev. Jen Crow from the UUA, as she outlines our transition process for the months to come. Saying goodbye to Rob and Janne, finding an interim minister, and developing a search team for a settled minister will all be a part of our community's task in the next six months. That is a lot of work, but it is the work of our church.

As we embark on this next leg of our journey, it is all the more important to take time as you enter church. Take off your coat a bit more slowly. Turn to one another. Introduce yourself. Find a connection. The world has led you to this doorway, you have something to share already.

## Everybody In!

### 2020 Pledge Drive Update

Thank you to all who have made 2020 pledges! 652 households have pledged \$1,288,037 to our approved 2020 operating budget goal of \$1,350,000, which puts us \$62,000 from our goal. If we don't come within \$25,000 of our goal by February 1, 2020, we will need to adjust the budget. Please make your pledge today!

You can pledge online at [www.unityunitarian.org/annual-pledge.html](http://www.unityunitarian.org/annual-pledge.html) or call the church office. A pledge of any amount is gratefully accepted!

## Ministerial Transition Update

Board's Transition Subteam: Clover Earl, Jill van Koolwijk, and Jackie Smith

### CELEBRATION

We will celebrate the ministry of Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs on Sunday, May 31, 2020. For anyone interested in being involved with the celebration planning, watch for opportunities that the co-chairs (Pat Fontaine and Lia Rivamonte) will be sharing.

### RECRUITING AN INTERIM

This spring the board will work through the UUA to identify an interim minister to join us for a year, from July 2020 through to June 2021. The interim minister will join our strong executive team that includes Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director; Rev. Lisa Friedman, Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement; and Rev. KP Hong, Director of Religious Education. Along with keeping Unity Church humming and leading worship, our interim minister will help guide the congregation through this transition.

### CALLING A SENIOR MINISTER

Calling a senior minister or co-ministers is the responsibility of the congregation. A search committee will conduct the process and make a recommendation. Search committee members devote considerable time to this work as they weigh what is in the best interests of the whole church. Search committee members keep in mind where we've been as a church, and with our new Ends statements, where we're heading.

**We'll take a big step in forming the search committee and thinking through this process on Sunday, January 12, when Rev. Jen Crow, a trained UUA transition coach, former Unity intern minister, and senior co-minister at First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, will preach at Sunday services, and also lead a special meeting of the congregation at 12:30 p.m., to help build our understanding of how the search will be conducted.** Jen has already been working with the board on the transition effort, and once the search committee is named, Jen will be an ongoing resource.

Forming the search committee starts with the development of a list of candidates. The board creates the list of 15 to 20 candidates for the search committee after reaching out to the whole congregation asking for recommendations. Starting in January, this outreach will include phone calls, small group discussions, and an online submission form.

The members of the search committee will be named by the board from among those on the candidate list. This will happen following the April 26 congregational meeting, where information will be shared about the candidates and votes cast. Voting at the meeting will determine the majority of the search committee members, with the remainder selected by the board with diversity and equitable representation in mind.

Know that we will continue to share more information in the months ahead. And you can always reach out to board members with any questions.