

Update from the Ministerial Search Team

Welcome to the second *commUNITY* update on the work of your Ministerial Search Team (MST). As you know, an interim minister will be named to serve Unity Church starting in the fall of 2021. That selection is handled by our Board of Trustees. (The board's transition sub-team is Jackie Smith, Louise Livesay-Al, and Kevin Harris.) In a separate process, the MST was appointed last fall by the congregation and board. We will be working with you, and with the Transitions Office of the UUA, in our search for a settled minister to begin in the fall of 2022.

We are grateful for the UUA's guidance — in the form of a thorough handbook, sample documents, timelines, and staff expertise — which has enabled us to jump right in. With each MST member taking the lead in filling various roles, our team is deciding on protocols and tools for communications, budget management, documents and records, and other tasks coming up this summer. One of these is to contact the UUA Transitions Office on June 15, the date that new searches are formally initiated each year.

Covenanting with one another is another priority as our work gets underway. By this we mean articulating the commitments we make to one another, to the congregation, and to the UUA. Honesty, care, and respect are among the values that will guide us as we serve you, inform and work with the UUA, and honor the needs of searching ministers.

You can keep up to date with our work at the Governance tab on Unity's website, and right here each month in *commUNITY*. We look forward to some intense, lively, and very exciting work!

Staff Transitions Update

Rev. KP Hong, Minister of Faith Formation

As staff assignments adjust and evolve in the course of ministerial transitions and the forthcoming interim year, the ministry of the church remains grounded in the gifts and experienced leadership of our staff. The Rev. Karen Hering has already begun overseeing the pastoral care ministry of the church, ensuring a vital and uninterrupted care for the congregation's well-being through this transition. She will continue the coordination of small group ministries and adult programming from Chalice Circles and Thresholds series to Wellspring Wednesday programming for the coming year. Her current responsibilities for community outreach will be transferred to the newly hired Community Outreach Coordinator beginning July 5. "I see our congregational life as being centered on love in action," reflects Karen. "Over the past year, I've been grateful for the chance to work with Community Outreach Ministry Teams on one aspect of that, and I'm now honored to be focusing my ministry on pastoral care as another aspect of love in action."



In turn, we are delighted to welcome the Rev. Shay MacKay who has agreed to serve as the Community Outreach Coordinator for the duration of the interim year, to coordinate and provide spiritual support for the community outreach teams as they reach for a greater integration of justice work grounded in faith practice. As many will recall, Shay served as Unity's 2015-16 Hallman Ministerial Intern and brought many gifts as a community organizer, active participant in racial justice work, and an inspiring collaborator in our ministry with the wider community. Importantly, Shay will work closely as part of the Faith Formation Team which includes Karen Hering, KP Hong, and Laura Park, to more closely align the community outreach ministry of the church with the deep and transformative ground of spiritual formation.



Covid-19 Plans for Church-Sponsored Gatherings

Like you, we are so eager to return to in-person ministry at the church. As we monitor state and local health guidelines, the Executive Team's decisions about how we open the church building will be grounded in values of equity, inclusion, consent, and the well-being of an interdependent community. Knowing that we will never be able to eliminate all the risk from Covid-19, we will make decisions in the best interest of all and with care and attention to those most impacted by the disease.

Beginning June 1, we will move forward with in-person gatherings at the church for fully vaccinated groups, within limited building hours. Please contact Laura Park (laura@unityunitarian.org, 651-228-1456 x110) if you wish to reserve space. *We expect our guidelines for in-person gatherings to change as we respond to the changing reality. Please watch for ongoing updates.*

We currently hope to return to in-person worship on September 12, 2021, for the Merging of Waters services. We will also make reasonable accommodations for those unable to participate in person. We will continue to livestream our services, and offer online and in-person options to our families to participate in Religious Education, based on how widely vaccines are available to children.

As we remember the joy of being together in community, we are beginning to gradually return to in-person opportunities. This is complex and challenging work with many moving parts, and as a faith community, we will make our way with care and compassion for one another leading the way.

Executive Team and members of the Reopening Team: Barbara Hubbard, Ahmed Anzaldúa, Heidi Birkholz, Teresa Connor, Karen Hering, KP Hong, Laura Park, and Martha Tilton.