Experience & Preparation

**Preliminary Fellowship:** 2017

**Final Fellowship:** N/A

**Ordination:** 2017

**Seminary:** May, 2017 MDiv, Meadville Lombard Theological School

**Congregational Ministries Served:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2018-Now | Affiliated Minister | Church of the Larger Fellowship | Boston, MA |
| 2016-2017 | Intern Minister | The Unitarian Church in Westport | Westport, CT |

**Other Ministries and Work Experience:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2015-2016 | Intern Minister | 3 lay-led UU Fellowships in Amsterdam, Geneva and Basel | The Netherlands and Switzerland |
| 2018-Now | Entrepreneurial consulting Minister to Unitarian and liberal religious groups in Europe | Multiple congregations and sites around Europe | Switzerland, France, Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, Czech Republic |

**Other Education:**

Transitional Ministry Fundamentals, Minneapolis: August 2018

MDiv, Meadville Lombard Theological School; 2017

Certifications in ToP Facilitation methods 2015 & 2016

Clinical Pastoral Education, Winnipeg, Manitoba; 2015

Nursing Diploma - Registered Nurse, Hamilton, Ontario 1999

**Other noteworthy work experience outside of UU ministry:**

Registered Nurse, worked in several hospital and clinical settings in Canada and United States, 1999 - 2005

I held various positions before going into nursing: Managing Editor for medical journals, office administration, Managing a disabled sailing program, several volunteer leadership roles in community organisations.

**Denominational and Community Activities:**

2009 - Started UU Fellowship in Basel, Switzerland

2009 - 2014 - Lay-leader in Europe (EUU) until beginning seminary

2013 - 2018 -Executive Committee of International Council of Unitarians and Universalists

2018 - Keynote speaker at Eco-Spirituality conference in Prague

2017- present - Preaching, vision and action-planning workshops, leadership and congregational development training, leadership consulting, pastoral care, rites of passage - with multiple congregations and regional gatherings in Europe and Canada.

Background

**Give a story that embodies your ministry:**

Just 2 days after the deadly attacks in Paris, November 2015, I was leading worship for a shocked and grieving lay-led fellowship in Geneva. I instictively adapted my prepared service to create a space to hold all the emotions and concerns people carried with them. We listened to each other voice grief, anger, fear, loss, pain. My ministry that day was pastoral and intentional in providing strength and safety to allow space for vulnerability that might bring healing and renewal. My source of hope, however, was the congregation itself. In the conversations following our worship service, they made an action plan to assist the Muslim refugees camped at the border, transforming their pain and fear towards love and justice. This is the work we do together.

I have ability to read a situation, listen, and adapt creative solutions which empower people to take leadership towards their goals. I can be simultaneously pastoral and firm, flexible and direct. I can inspire others to share in a vision, seeing and believing in their futures.

**Why are you seeking ministry now?**

It has been rewarding and interesting to offer development workshops, training, consulting support and preaching to many different communities around Europe these past two years of entrepreneurial ministry. However, I have found myself longing for a full-time church community to serve, to know and to love and to be a part of. The congregations I have contact with are small, far apart and mostly lay-led, so there are limited opportunities or resources for providing ministry. I am at my best when immersed in an active, complex, larger congregational system where there are many ways to serve and minister. I have so much more to give, and want to serve a thriving community where my skills can be fully used and stretched. I am also missing being connected with the UUA's network of congregations and colleagues with whom to share, collaborate and grow. For these opportunities, to serve a congregation and to connect more deeply with our denomination, I will move back to the United States from my home in Switzerland.

**What ministry do you hope is ahead for you?**

Serving as an Associate minister in an active congregation would provide an opportunity for me to focus on special areas of ministry, like pastoral care, social justice and educational programs, while also preaching and being involved with worship. I would be very happy to collaborate with a senior minister and staff, and do not feel the need to be in a lead minister role at this time. Transitional ministry also calls to me. This delicate and critical period where communities are finding a new way of understanding themselves and moving intentionally towards who they wish to become. This transformative and generative work inspires me, draws on my gifts and skills, and also challenges me to continually grow and be engaged. I love being able to help congregations to develop and work towards their mission, to equip leaders to achieve their potentials, providing resources and frameworks for groups and individuals to deepen their connection to their faith and spirituality. Ministry in transitional settings also calls on my ability to nurture, provide a non-anxious presence, build systems of trust and emotional connections, navigating through difficult times.

There is so much opportunity for Unitarian Universalism in the world right now, and I believe that we can make a real positive difference. After serving North American congregations for a time, I hope to focus again on working internationally with Unitarians and interfaith partners. I wish to support the development of UU communities around the work and create opportunities for people to engage in dialogue, to seize opportunities to use our voices and privilege to call for justice, and to step back and listen with an open mind, empowering and equipping others to do this work – this is what I see for my ministry, in congregations and in our interconnected, fragile and beautiful world.

**Describe your call to ministry:**

I am a second-generation UU minister. This faith has shaped my life and understanding of the world. It is the air I breath, so I took it for granted for many years, not being involved in a congregation. I was living my faith through patient care as a nurse and serving in communities where I lived. After moving to Switzerland I found a deep need in the community for a liberal religion, but there were only traditional Catholic and Protestant options. I started a new UU fellowship in Basel, and then became increasingly involved in regional, then global UU leadership. My call to ministry came when I realised that the work I had become involved in required skills I could only acquire through seminary training. Re-engaging with the faith tradition of my childhood had awakened in me a sense of homecoming and belonging that I wholeheartedly embraced. I felt called to develop and support our faith communities and to bring UU values into the world. Since venturing into these waters, seeing and feeling the very real impact and potential of ministry, my calling has only become louder and more urgent.

Ministerial Roles & Functions

**Share your ministerial presence and leadership style:**

I have a warm and welcoming presence as a minister. I have a non-anxious presence and am approachable. As a leader my general style is facilitative and collaborative, rather than directive. I believe much of the work of the congregation lies within its membership, and strive to identify and nurture skills and to mentor and empower leaders. To foster commitment and caring in the congregation and committees, I make sure to not only focus on the challenges, but to celebrate the successes and show appreciation. The ministry of a congregation is done in partnership with the minister, and in relationship with the Board, key lay-leaders and other ministry professionals all functioning as a team, rather than in silos.

**How do you function with church staff? What are your thoughts on staff relations and supervision?**

The minister's role with staff and volunteers is very dependent on the size and culture of a congregation, and any structure needs to be adapted to a congregation's unique circumstances. In a mid-size or large church, I believe it is important for the minster to be the head of the staff group, and to delegate management as appropriate.

I love being part of a collaborative team, where creative synergy can happen, as people tackle challenges and opportunities from multiple points of view. Transparent communication, clearly defined roles, responsibilities and expectations allow staff members to be confident in their work. I'm comfortable helping staﬀ set individual and team goals and giving feedback about their performance. I also welcome feedback from colleagues, staﬀ and lay leaders about my work with them. Are we listening well to each other, understanding each other, feeling valued? I have an open door policy and want staff to feel comfortable bringing ideas, or concerns to me. I encourage innovation, as I also model adaptive leadership. With change, challenge and innovation, things are bound to not always end up as planned or hoped for, but I believe that without trying and failing, we can never move forward. My job as a supervisor is to help clarify and articulate goals, remove obstacles where possible, communicate clearly what I see in their work - both successes and areas needing further development, and celebrate their triumphs. I value transparency and clarity, setting and meeting expectations, encouraging boundaries to not overwork or expect the impossible, and also believe in having fun at work. While all voices and ideas are heard, and collaborative team approaches are valued, ultimately, the minister is responsible for the functioning of the staff group.

**Regarding shared ministry what do you see as your work as minister? What do you see doing in partnership with the congregation? What do you see as the work of the congregation?**

My primary task as minister is to be the spiritual leader of the community, to remind us of our connection to the holy - however we may each experience that-, to each other, and to the larger world that so needs our saving message.

So much of what the minister does is best done in partnership with the congregation:

Worship - I like to include many voices in worship, this allows the congregation to hear diﬀerent perspectives and allows leaders and potential leaders to develop their skills. Collaborative worship crafting with RE and Music leaders brings more life and innovation to our services.

Leadership - my role is one of casting and holding a vision and trusting the lay leaders to help make the church work, oﬀering them all the support I can to enable them to develop as leaders.

Mission - The congregation needs to understand their true mission beyond a mission statement, I mean that everyone should have a deeply held sense of why there must be a "First Parish" or "UU Society..." in this particular place and time. Why are they here now? Who are their neighbors? Who needs them and whom do we need? I as minister can't deﬁne that for the congregation. I can give them spiritual guidance, a connection to our shared history, and I can say what I see in terms of the needs around us and among us, but the mission we all serve must be theirs.

**What role would you see yourself playing in the larger community?**

I love that we Unitarian Universalists are known for our work for justice, and justice work is part of my ministry, especially in the areas of anti-racism, environmental justice, and LGBTQ rights. The focus of my justice work will be largely determined by what is most pressing the community where I am serving,

No matter where I serve, as a UU minister, my role in the larger community is to represent our denomination and faith to the best of my ability. This means showing up for justice issues, being active in community events, developing relationships with inter-faith partners and other community leaders. It means staying on top of what is happening and impacting the larger community, building bridges and opportunities for our congregation to engage in ways that serve its mission.

**How have you seen change happen in a congregation or community? What role would you see yourself playing in congregational change?**

Change is constant. It is in our reactions to events that we can choose which direction change will take us. This is true as individuals and as communities. In a congregation, the minister’s role is to help navigate towards an outcome that will best serve the congregation’s mission.

The 450-member congregation I served as Intern minister changed their governance structure from many entrenched siloed parts into a (relatively) smooth-running policy governance. There is no one-size fits all structure, and mapping out this shift in ways people communicate and that decisions were made was not as intuitive or textbook as I thought it would be. There was also the inevitable resistance to change and concerns about loss of power in some areas. However, with due process, lots of conversation, consulting and workshopping, the board, staff, committees and ministers settled into a new way of functioning together that truly serves the mission and potential of the congregation. It will take vigilance and little tweaks to maintain it, but I am now a believer in policy governance! In this situation, the role of the minister is to support the work of the congregation, not to do it for them. Without the process there would be no ownership or investment in the new structure, and it would fail. Sometimes the minister needs to be hands-off, watching, listening, present but apart.

I've watched many congregations transition from the departure of a minister through an interim period where they adjust, heal, transform, recommit to their mission and purpose and move ahead in celebration with a new ministry. I have seen congregations struggle about use of religious language, worship styles, money, identity issues, and social justice engagement, then eventually move ahead with a new understanding and agreement about who they are or want to be as a community. I have seen congregations grow and decline and grow again by choosing to focus on health, rather than numbers. Therein lies the role of the minister. To maintain a view of the larger purpose of the community, oﬀerring theological context for the change we are working toward, linking it to our connection to the sacred, to creating the beloved community. With sensitivity, patience, flexibility, creativity and love.

**Describe how you handle being in a conflicted situation:**

First, breathe. Take my own pulse. Be absolutely clear where my stuﬀ begins and ends so that I can be present for all parties involved in a conﬂict without bringing my own baggage or assumptions into it. The greatest gift, I think, is to listen. To listen without interruption, without thinking about the next thing I'm going to say is, but to simply listen. Modeling this for people in conﬂict can be very powerful. If I am part of the conﬂict, that is, if someone is upset with me, that listening without defensiveness is so important. Part of being a community of covenant is being able to say "ouch" when we are injured and to accept our accountability for the impact when we have caused injury, and then to begin again in love. I don't do this perfectly, of course, but it is my goal, and I have colleagues and a mentor and other wise ones in my life who help me stay centered and calm so that I can be that loving presence in times of conﬂict.

Taking sides, getting in the middle - is not helpful. I am able to take a step back and consider different angles of a situation. I also try to find the underlying cause of the conflict. So often, what seems like the "thing" is really masking another "thing" or pattern that is part of a larger system. Rather than go for a quick solution, I see if there is a more holistic approach that may prevent the problem from arising again.

As the minister, my role in conflict situations is also to consider the overall health of the congregation, and to protect it if necessary. By this I mean to be able to set boundaries around behaviours, situations and individuals who negatively impact the community by limiting time, energy or access. Having good policies and covenants in place is important, as is being consistent in applying them.

**Tell a story that deepened your understanding of what ministry is:**

There was this one special Sunday, in my first year as Intern Minister.

I had been working on getting over my fear of public speaking and pushing myself to share personal stories and show vulnerability in my preaching. My sermon that day was about recognising my place of privilege in a system of of white supremacy, it was about waking up. The feedback was generally positive, some older folks were uncomfortable, some others appreciated hearing hard truths. Then, a small, 8-year old, red-headed girl came to stand beside me, waiting to speak with me. I knew her well, as I had delivered the memorial service for her father earlier that year. She was shy, but she said to me, "Do you think that someday I will be able to stand up and tell people things like you do?". This was one of my proudest and most affirming moments. If the only thing I have ever done in ministry is to give this one little girl the confidence to use her voice, it is enough.

**Tell about a mistake you've made in ministry and what you've learned from it:**

There have been many "learning opportunities" during my formation and early years in ministry. The most outstanding mistake I recall is actually one that spurred me to go into seminary, to be able to recognise where I went wrong and to learn how to not make the same mistake again.

When I founded the Unitarian Universalists of Basel, we were really starting from scratch, with no sponsorship or affiliation to other UU groups. One of my roles as President was to shape our worship and organisational structures. Under my leadership, within the first year, this emerging group had a mission, legal bylaws, leadership covenant, pledges, budget, governing board, religious education for adults and children, local media advertising, membership affiliation with local UU organization and we were awarded a grant to purchase a keyboard for our music program. It was a busy year!

And I was tired, resentful and judgemental of the leadership group around me who just wasn't carrying their share of the load. But how could they? By taking so much control, micromanaging and imposing my own vision of how things should be, I had made it impossible for anyone else to feel empowered to do anything. I had over functioned, which set a very poor precedent for the leaders who followed me and developed unrealistic expectations within the congregation. To this day, they struggle with clarity around responsibilities and trust in leadership. What we do as ministers and congregational leaders has lasting impact. I used to feel that it was simply easier to do something myself than to explain or give someone the freedom to do things differently than I might. I have learned to step back and create a space for people to grow and let things develop in their own way, to let go of outcomes and delight in the process instead. This isn't always easy, still working on being able to let things drop or be less than my idea of "perfect". Through this, I have found the beauty of imperfection and the joy of seeing others marvel at their own accomplishments.

**What needs do you have to strengthen your ministry and how might a congregation assist you in this?**

What I have been really missing, living in Europe, is being connected to our larger faith tradition. Unitarian Universalism is a faith lived in community. I need to be able to share in congregational life activities, to engage in conversations regularly with other UU's, to have a network of colleagues nearby to share and consult with, to have access to resources and trainings through regional associations. A congregation may assist the strengthening of my ministry by being active participants in its own programs, working with me to achieve its mission, encouraging and supporting ministerial development and engagement with denominational and community activities.

As a newer minister, there are some areas where my experience is limited. I want more exposure with educational programs, for example, lifespan RE, path to membership, OWL or Coming of Age. Every congregation has its own teaching resources and preferred curriculums. It would be helpful to me to sit down with church leaders, to learn what programs have worked well and why, and to be involved in planning and implementing educational activities for the church-year.

**Describe briefly your ministerial approach to the following:**

* **Worship and preaching:** Worship is our deﬁning act; it's what makes us a "church" as opposed to a non proﬁt or social justice agency, or a discussion group. Worship should be as complete an experience as possible, engaging mind, body, heart, with each element weaving and connecting with the central message. My preaching is still evolving, and I like to experiment with different styles. Story is at the heart of my worship services, story as an illustration of some larger truth or challenge. My messages tend to be grounded more in spirituality and envisioning than deeply intellectual or academic, seeking a balance with head and heart, creating an emotional connection..
I believe in challenging and inspiring people but also giving them something to do, a call to action or learning a new way of thinking.
Building worship collaboratively with a team of leaders is a true joy, bringing the pieces together into a transformational experience.
* **Pastoral Care / spiritual guidance / counseling / home and hospital visitation:** There is no more sacred task than attending someone in a moment of grief, loss, pain, or fear. I loved my work as a hospital chaplain. Sitting at a bedside, holding a hand, I watched as a nurse entered to perform her duties and leave. As a former nurse myself, I was so grateful that I could stay and serve the person's spiritual needs, to truly be with them, rather than attending only to physical needs. Providing pastoral care is, to me, probably the greatest gift of ministry. I mean, it is a gift to me. Being able to accompany a person along their life's journey is humbling and extraordinary. I take this part of my ministry seriously, and I love that congregants also minister to each other in this way, often with food, rides, company - all of it beautiful and needed. If the congregation I serve is too large for me to attend to all the pastoral care needs on my own, I would prioritize creating a lay ministry of pastoral care if there isn't already one. This is sacred work.
* **Children's religious education:** This is a growing edge for me, but people in the congregation I am serving tell me they love watching me with the children in our time for all ages. I am not one to read a book to children; I prefer to have a conversation with them or tell a story on the topic of the worship service. It is diﬃcult to spend as much time with the children as I would like since religious education generally happens while adult worship is going on. My strategy is to have a close working relationship with the director of religious education and to do some collaborative planning so that there is overlap between what is happening in RE and in adult worship and regular intergenerational services. My dream is that kids and their parents go home and talk about what we all did in church that day.
* **Youth work:** One of our great challenges, holding on to our kids once they are old enough to stay home alone on Sunday mornings. I think one key is to ﬁnd projects and activities that the youth care about and engage with them there outside of Sunday morning and maybe invite them to come back and tell the story in worship or at some other gathering. Of course, I would love for them to come to church, but I think we have to be more willing to bring church to them. It is so important for young people to know that they belong and are valued. I would prioritise working with the youth leaders to find ways to keep our young folks connected to their spiritual community.
COA programs are a great opportunity for ministers to connect with young congregants, and I look forward to these opportunities to get to know them and to listen to what they have to say so that their fresh, young ideas can inform my ministry, with the aim of "doing church" that will attract young adults.
* **Adult religious education:** Small groups have incredible value for connecting people. Limited only by constraints of time, space and leadership, there is no end to the possibilities for people to come together. Church is the place for people to go deeper, to explore important topics like anti-racism or immigration policy or exploring their own theology. The small group setting allows for greater intimacy and helps to build connections across the obvious aﬃnity groups, that is, parents of young children tend to gravitate toward others, but when people read poetry together or talk deeply about white supremacy, the ﬁnd new companions on the journey. I love the energy in these meeting rooms, where people intentionally come together to share deeply with one another. Nothing moves me more than to walk into a parish hall after worship and see people connecting with one another, people whom they would likely not encounter anywhere else - across divides of class, age, gender expression, race and ethnicity, educational background.
* **Incorporating music, the arts, and creativity into congregational life:** I am not a natural artist or musician. I like to say that my talent is being the appreciative audience and cheerleader. I am in awe of people who create beautiful sounds and sights that transform the worship experience. I do have an eye for aesthetics, and know there is power in how a space can welcome people into it, how the care of the building and grounds effect people, and how the thoughtful beauty of an altar becomes a precious focal point.
Beyond Sunday mornings, creativity is found in many aspects of congregational life. Choir practice is often as much about the community as it is about singing, and even preparation of food is a creative task that fosters community, giving people an opportunity to give back as well.
* **Community building / facilitation skills / coffee hour and social times:** This is why ministers often need a nap when we get home on Sundays! Coﬀee hour is important, an extension of worship and an opportunity for pastoral relationship building, and it requires deep listening. I strive to be available and open to members following the service, valuing the opportunity to connect with members and to pick up on what is happening in their lives and in the congregation. Facilitation skills are at the heart of so much of what I do, even in worship, I'm not just oﬀerring something that I've created on my own; it is a conversation, an interaction, and exchange of energy and attention. My connection to the community and much of my authority derives from my presence in worship; do they feel me with them, or am I just talking at them?
* **Committee / Task force work:** Ministers can't be on every committee, but they should have a sense of what each group is working on and be a resource to them, to help them link the work they are doing to the larger mission of the church.

Task force work is usually for a clearly deﬁned goal, something that can actually be completed in a ﬁnite amount of time. I can see myself being involved in some task force work, but my preference would be help identify and equip lay leaders to lead those eﬀorts and committees with me as a back up and cheerleader.
* **Leadership development:** This is crucial to ministry and congregational life. Helping people see their own gifts and watching them grow is one of my greatest joys. So much of this is about recognising those gifts and helping people ﬁnd ways to use them. I'm also aware that there are many resources within our UUA (books, classes, colleagues to speak with), and I love connecting congregational leaders with leaders from other parts of our movement. We don't have to invent everything within our own walls.

Another part of leadership development, though, may mean guiding people away from areas where they really aren't having great success. Sometimes we let people serve in crucial roles because we don't want to hurt their feelings, or it seems no one else is interested in a role. As minister, I may sometimes have to be the one to have that hard conversation with someone and/or to help other leaders share those questions and concerns. This models good process and boundaries to promote healthy community.
* **Long range planning / mission / vision / covenant:** Recognising that change happens whether we plan it or not, being able to move forward together with intention and purpose is part of what defines a healthy congregation. This has been a large part of my consulting ministry work with congregations. Helping to articulate mission and vision - why must this congregation be here? - what do we have to oﬀer? - how can we do this? - is absolutely the role of a minister working together with lay leadership. Covenant is at the heart of us; how we are together, and my role is to help name what we are willing to promise to each other.
* **Membership and membership growth:** It is the congregation that a person joins, not a minister or a building. As minister, I work to develop and inspire a strong membership team who help newcomers move along the path to membership, and also support the ongoing development of existing members. Numerical growth is the byproduct of doing church well, not necessarily a goal in and of itself. I believe that every member has a role to play in creating a welcoming space and inviting people to become more involved in their community.
* **Anti-oppression work:** This so often falls by the wayside for those of us who don't face oppression on a daily basis. I am grateful to those who have helped move the conversation front and center. Ministers are in a unique position of authority in their communities and in public, and so have a responsibility to be role models and active allies in anti-oppression work. I have preached about white supremacy in a mostly white church and it was met with great support and some predictable grumbling. I believe folks are hungry to do this work but they worry about getting it wrong. My job is to model that risk taking and to keep educating myself so that I can be a good ally, to make space for marginalised voices to be heard, and encourage others to work with me on making this world and our faith more inclusive and more just.
* **Social justice / social action:** I think I have two different roles in social justice and social action - one is to lead worship that engages and encourages people to act, and the other is to walk that talk myself, to show up, march, call, write letters and be a voice for those who can not raise their own voices (trauma survivors, people with tenuous immigration status, or those who don't have the means to travel to the state house or the White House). As a minister, I have some inherent authority and influence that can be used in the public sphere to support causes. It is humbling and an honor to do this important work.
* **Interfaith / community work:** We cannot live our UU faith in isolation. This is true of us as individuals, and also of our congregations, needing to engage with a larger community. We understand ourselves better in relationship with others, we grow ourselves as we learn more about others, we are more effective and able to do our work in the world in partnership and allied with others. Interfaith and community work is critical and fostering relationships with religious and community partners is a key ministerial responsibility.
* **Denominational activities:** There are many benefits to being part of a larger organisation, and participating in denominational activities strengthens a congregation's ability to serve its own membership and community. There are countless ways to be involved for youth and leaders at many levels to develop skills & connections, and to have an impact by serving on committees or providing other services. No system is perfect or free of conflict. having a strong relationship with the denominational structure allows congregations to support and be supported by an association of congregations.
* **Stewardship:** One role of the minister is as a fundraiser. Some ministers shy away from anything having to do with money, and some congregations would prefer that ministers not be involved in matters involving money, but I see stewardship as a spiritual practice. Part of creating and sustaining community means sharing what we have and oﬀering it with a glad heart. No one should be made to feel less than because they can't aﬀord to make a contribution to the church, but neither should those who have wealth to share be made to feel ashamed of their good fortune. My hope for us as a faith community is that we could grow more comfortable talking about our relationship to money. I am comfortable preaching about money and encouraging people to be generous.
* **Finances:** It is very clear, looking at a congregation's finances, what the community's priorities are or have been. A minister needs to be aware of the church ﬁnances and involved in some level of budget decision-making to make sure the mission priorities of the congregation are reflected in its finances. In some systems the minister may create a budget or directly oversee a staﬀ person who does this. In other congregations, a volunteer treasurer or VP of ﬁnance creates and monitors the budget. As minister, I need to be knowledgeable about the income and expenses and to serve as a resource, but not to micro-manage the day-to-day operations.

**How do you build trust with a congregation and individuals?**

People form impressions quickly, so ﬁrst and foremost I will be be open, honest and approachable. I will listen and be present. Deeper trust takes time to build, especially if it has been recently broken. I will be patient, learn what I can about what happened before, and be willing to talk with people about their experiences and demonstrate that I will be there for them. I communicate with sincerity and am open to feedback.

As minister, part of my role is modelling accountability to promises and expectations and providing transparent and consistent communication with staff and congregational leaders.

I endeavor to communicate clearly, to be as open about what is happening and why as I possibly can, to avoid surprises, to check out my assumptions, to avoid triangles, that is to speak directly with a person not about them. To model the trust in people that I hope to gain from them.

**Describe your theology and the role of the ministry in a congregation that has multiple theologies:**

My theology is open and evolving. Often when I hear someone speak of their theology, I ﬁnd myself saying, "yes, and that, too." I do not feel the need to ascribe to a single label to define my theology, That is not to say that I have no theology of my own at my core but rather that there will always be another way to describe that which cannot be fully described. I often resonate with humanist and naturist theologies, not because I don't believe in "God," but because I experience what some call God in relationship with other humans, with other beings and in the natural world, and with Nature itself. I am also a follower of the teachings of Rabbi Jesus and find meaning in ancient texts. My most common experience is that of wonder and awe ... at the beauty around us, at our capacity to love and care for one another, and of course, my heart is broken quite often by our capacity for cruelty. I don't believe in a supernatural being, but I do believe that there is a love that holds us all.

When I am at my best as a theologian and preacher, I manage to capture experiences and ideas in a way that invites people in whatever their personal theology. I try to provide new ways for people to connect to their own sources, to find inspiration, comfort or an invitation to grow while broadening understandings and building bridges to one another. This is what I so love about our faith, that we draw from many traditions and ﬁnd what is at the core of each and honor and lift up that.

**What questions do you hope our congregations are asking themselves and discussing?**

Who are we today and who are we called to be?

What makes us a spiritual / faith / religious community?

Who are our neighbors?

How is my relationship with my Spirit?

Who is missing, and how might we invite them in?

What kind of leadership will best help us serve our mission?

**How do you give and receive feedback?**

When I give feedback, I ﬁrst and foremost wish to communicate respect, and that means not just giving praise but also sharing concerns or questions and doing so directly.

I find that feedback is best given and received in a structured way, so people understand the process, what to expect and to be able to create plans and steps to move forward. Of course this isn't always possible, outside of staffing situations, but I find the principles of .....

I invite feedback and hope that it will be given with respect, and I work to receive it openly and without defensiveness. I assume good intentions, that the person oﬀering feedback wants what is best for the congregation and believes I can do better or more or something diﬀerent. I try to listen without arguing. I may ask a clarifying question or two, but mainly I listen.

**How do you suggest your ministry with the congregation is evaluated?**

As mentioned above, I find it useful to have a framework to give and receive feedback, so that those involved know what to expect. A Committee on Ministry/ministries can be very effective for ongoing evaluation of not only the minister, but all areas of programming and service that encompass the ministry of the congregation. This committee is tasked with providing feedback in different areas based on a rubric provided by the UUA, with the congregation's mission at the heart of any evaluation. Is this ministry and this minister helping us to serve our mission? What is diﬀerent - better or worse this year as compared to last year? What were our goals? Have we made progress on them? How have they changed? What do we need from our minister to help us keep moving toward those goals?

As I would also be managing and evaluating staff, I would ask for annual evaluations of my leadership in the staff group. Recognising that there are always ways to improve performance, and keeping a respectful, trusting, open dialogue can only enhance the working environment and create a solid team.

**What do you hope for the future of Unitarian Universalism?**

That we will live more fully into our values of inclusivity, fairness, love, and compassion. That we will ﬁnd a way to focus more on the world around us and less on our own shortcomings. We must do both, but I worry sometimes that our focus has become much too inward looking. We have gifts to oﬀer the world, imperfect though we may be. My hope is that the vision we oﬀer will be so compelling that more and more people from all kinds of backgrounds and theologies will join together to help heal our beautiful, aching world.

**What else would you like to say about your ministry and ministry skills?**

As a life-long UU and daughter of a UU minister who served as a district executive and in many interim ministries, I was steeped in ministry even before entering seminary for my own studies.

As a lay-person, I had started a congregation in Switzerland, and became a leader with the international UU (ICUU). I have served many congregations as Intern and consulting minister sized from 20 to 450 members. I enjoy complex systems, where there are multiple moving pieces and lots going on. I am creative and like to work collaboratively, supporting and empowering others to rise to their abilities and interests. I am skilled at reading and adapting to different situations, at communicating in multiple ways, at listening and hearing often what isn't said, at creating connections with people, providing pastoral care, and I am organised, consistent and reliable, and working to let go of my perfectionist streak. I have been told that I have a confident and approachable presence, putting people at ease while also able to tell uncomfortable truths. My preaching, while constantly developing, often elicits emotional responses and feedback indicates the messages are inspiring, thought-provoking and multi-faceted. I am steady and clear-minded in crises or difficult situations, able to prioritise and take action while maintaining a calm presence. I am also very clear about setting and modelling healthy boundaries, practicing self-awareness, grounding my ministerial relationships in ethics and professional guidelines.

Above all, I believe that our UU faith and values are life-saving, transformative and essential, and am dedicated, heart and soul, to a loving compassionate transitional ministry.

Personal

**What should a congregation know about your family situation?**

I've lived in Switzerland since 2005, in a small village with my husband Michael and our dog, Vita. Our holidays generally take us to Canada, where my family and our sailboat are.

I hold both Canadian and Swiss citizenship, and would require a work visa to serve a congregation the United States. To this end, I have begun gathering the documents that will be required and hope to expedite the application process. Michael would visit regularly, and we are used to long periods apart.

**What should a congregation know about your health?**

I am in good health. I take medication to treat intestinal disease, and have had abdominal surgeries, but no problem in recent years. Other than occasional back pain, I have no physical complaints or concerns at the moment.

**How do you take care of yourself so that the congregation does not have to?**

I have spiritual practices that ground me, endeavour to eat consciously healthy foods, remain physically active with daily exercise and to sleep when my body tells me to sleep. I know my physical limitations and signs to watch for with my health. I prioritize time with my beloved, and I stay in touch with close friends by whatever means. Being a good friend and maintaining connections with people outside of my church life is important to me. I also have a group of close colleagues that I communicate with regularly. We oﬀer each other support and space to check in about our ministries. I feel my work-life balance is good.

**How long do you hope your next ministry lasts? What's the minimum commitment you would make?**

I would be happy to serve a congregation for a minimum of 6 weeks sabbatical/sick coverage, but immigration issues would limit this possibility to serving in Canada. For a move to the United States, I would want to make a commitment of at least 2 years, preferably 3 years. How long I stay would depend on the nature of the ministry. An interim period of 2-3 years or developmental ministry up to 5 years.

Additional Information

I do not have a website to profile my ministry, as I am not searching for a called or settled position. This is a link a short video of me preaching March 3, 2019, on a visit in Winnipeg, Canada. This was a shared service with the senior minister to begin their pledge drive. The clip begins with my short sermon (13 minutes) and a meditation.

https://www.facebook.com/UUWinnipeg/videos/324630374855317/

I would be happy to provide full service scripts, orders of service, sermons, etc.

I can also provide personal reference letters or contacts from:

Rev. Jeanne Pupke

Ms. Annette Marquis

Rev. Dr. John Morehouse

Rev. Dr. Lee Barker

Rev

* [Contact Info](https://ministrysearch.uua.org/minister/2022/#mr_contact)
* [Experience & Preparation](https://ministrysearch.uua.org/minister/2022/#mr_experience)
* [Background](https://ministrysearch.uua.org/minister/2022/#mr_background)
* [Ministerial Roles & Functions](https://ministrysearch.uua.org/minister/2022/#mr_roles)
* [Personal](https://ministrysearch.uua.org/minister/2022/#mr_personal)
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