

UUCLV Ministerial Search Committee

Meeting minutes

Meeting date: Friday, October 25, 2019

Meeting Time: 4:45pm

Location: Zoom Online Meeting

Attendees: Rick Bleyle, Jim Brustman, Charlie Maria, Karin Metcalf, Larry McAllister, Christine Purcell (UUA)

The committee met with Christine Purcell, UUA's Transitions Program Manager, where Christine walked us through the basic steps of finding and hiring a settled minister. The committee then disconnected with Christine and continued on with our internal meeting for approximately 50 minutes, ending the call at about 7pm.

Key Discussion Points & Decisions

Do we want/need a retreat with a transitions coach from UUA? Christine believes this is not necessary given our accelerated timeline. The committee agreed, at least for now.

Do we want/need to consult with a UUA Compensation Consultant? Committee is tabling this question for now since we already have access to UUA published compensation guidelines and the committee has more pressing issues. This may be revisited later in the process.

The status of UUCLV's website (UUCLV.org) was discussed and Rick agreed to work with Erma to review and update the website to make it more informative and appealing. Due to Rick's heavy work load no work will begin until approx. one week after the meeting. Karin agreed to distribute login credentials and instructions for Weebly, our website authoring tool.

Christine recommended working with the Board to establish a negotiating team including one person each from the Board, Finance committee, Personnel and the Ministerial Search committee. No further action was taken at this time; this remains an open agenda item.

Christine indicated that there are currently about 30 congregations in search for a minister. Typical would be 40-60, so this should work in our favor.

Christine indicated that typically about 85 ministers are in search in a given year and that we could expect anywhere from 7 to 15 applicants for a full time settled minister position.

Larry mentioned to Christine that we are looking for a ¾ time settled minister. Christine informed us that part time settled ministers, while currently supported, will be phased out of transitional guidelines starting next year and she strongly suggested considering a contract minister instead for one or two years. The contract minister can be converted to settled if it's a mutually good fit, and the hiring process is significantly simpler, requiring only a contract and decision by the board (no congregational vote). She estimated that a part time offering for a settled minister might cut the number of applicants in half.

The committee voted to continue our search for a settled minister and if unsuccessful in the first round, consider a contract minister as a plan B during or after the second round. Jim pointed out that in February of next year (after the first round is complete) some ministers will receive their full fellowship and become eligible, when they weren't yet eligible for the first round.

The committee feels fairly strongly that a settled minister would be the best direction for our congregation if we can make the compensation package attractive enough to attract qualified candidates -OR- reduce the work schedule commensurately so that the minister is compensated at the median UUA salary guidelines on a per hour basis. Since we have no reasonable expectation that the budget will expand, the latter appears to be our best hope.

Do we need to take a congregational survey as prescribed by the transitions office? The focus groups from earlier in the year may suffice. Jim is evaluating, and will also create a paragraph or two on the congregation's wishes (sort of a "help wanted poster").

Do we want to do a Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop for our congregation? This is offered by the UUA. The Committee is skeptical that this will fit within our timeline. Larry will investigate and report at next meeting.

The Congregational Record is due by mid-November and is a top priority. Karin is working on this.

Three neutral pulpits should be identified soon as congregations schedule their speakers well in advance. Charlie has received a favorable response from the UU Flagstaff congregation and will contact two local UCC churches as well.

Summary

Decisions made:

1. We will continue to pursue a ¾ time settled minister for phase 1. And consider a contract minister later if this fails.

Action Items

Jim – Continue to review focus group feedback and Committee on Shared Ministries responses for questions and responses that align with questions suggested by UUA for cottage meetings.

Charlie – Help Jim on the survey. Reach out to two UCC churches as neutral pulpits.

Karin – Assemble Congregational Record.

Larry – Assist Karin on Congregational Record as needed. Investigate Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop and report to committee.

Rick – Work with Erma to tune up our website.