

Dear Members and Friends,

The Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer is moving to a new position and our hearts are heavy as we grieve what has been. The UUCK community has always known we were special. We knew we were a loving crucible where individuals found a home and found ways to be more loving, kind, and inclusive. We have surprised ourselves with our abilities to grow in spiritual depth, in outreach, and in service. All these processes and ways of being will continue as Melissa has taught us well, and we will honor her by continuing this growth, this outreach, and this service.

The Board of Trustees has begun to plan our new future. Melissa is helping with this process as is the Regional Group and the UUA. First the Board of Trustees will appoint an Interim Search Committee/Transitions Team. Our very capable Leadership Development Committee is already at work on creating a slate of dedicated active members. This group will work with the UUA Transitions Department, our regional consultant, and our transitions coach to engage in the work of leaving one ministry and welcoming a new one. They will meet with prospective ministers and recommend a match: congregation to minister, minister to congregation. An interim minister will arrive, ready is to help us heal, to appreciate what we had, to envision what more we can be, and to help us create a welcoming environment for a new settled minister.

Melissa will be with us this fall. She will work as usual in September. October 1st, she will begin part-time ministry and lead her last worship service the Sunday before Thanksgiving, November 20th .

We will be blessed with services by our commissioned lay ministers, the Rev. Christie Anderson and Lori McGee and by the Rev. Renee Ruchotchke in December. They will be assisted by our wonderful worship assistants and other volunteers.

At this time, we anticipate the beginning of our interim ministry in January 2017 and anticipate it continuing through spring of 2018. During the Church year, 2017-18, a settled minister search committee, elected by the congregation, will be convened. Their work, supported by the UUA and Regional consultants, will culminate in the presentation of a ministerial candidate for congregational vote in the spring of 2018.

Let this letter close with the beautiful words of Dani Beale, our new assistant moderator,

“We will be whole again, on our own, as a church body is always more than just the minister and our love for her. I hate even writing that, as the words don’t seem adequate to express how much she has meant to us and to me, but I know it is true. We are a diverse, vibrant, and amazing group of people, and we will thrive through this change as well. I already loved the UUCK community before Melissa came, and she seemed to complete the circle for us. That was such luck and providence and also hard work to discern a good match, and it will happen again for us, as we have so much to offer to a new minister. Love and thoughtfulness and consideration for what is good for all. And hopefully, a trust we can demonstrate in the process, as it is this same process that called her to us. So many talented and gifted people with love on our minds and hearts, and we will find our way to call a new person with whom we will share a new and dynamic ministry. I can’t picture it yet, as I can’t yet see past the grief for this thing of beauty we have lived into, but I know it is

out there and will have its own gifts yet to be uncovered.

This will be a tumultuous time for everyone, with the groundbreaking for our new space and the transition in ministry for our children and now our congregation as a whole, and the unknowns are so clear and present for everyone. I keep coming back to the word 'trust,' and I know that it is what we will need to find to work our way through the next few years. We have a lot of work to do, but I have so much faith that we will do this work well, together."

In faith and trust,
Kathie Slater
Moderator,
Board of Trustees