

Good news! Announcement

On behalf of the Board, I have the pleasure to announce some wonderful, if unexpected, news! The Board has unanimously agreed to recommend to the Fellowship that we call Reverend Russ Menk as our settled, full-time minister!

Now your first question may be: But didn't we pass a budget that included a ¾-time salary for Russ and the understanding that his workload would reflect that?

Yes, that's true. But since then, as Russ has explained to the Board, he struggled with an unexplained weight of having given us the parameter of serving in the coming year at ¾-time, the amount of time that would match our budget.

So he wrestled with that; he continued his own personal discernment, and he found insights through advice sought from his ministerial colleagues at the UUA General Assembly. The process revealed to him a strong desire to not pull back from the "magic" that is happening within our Fellowship, but to continue to be committed full time.

With this realization, he approached the Board with considerations for advancing his compensation to eventually align with a full-time work load. He also invited us to consider calling him as our settled minister.

Speaking for the Board and the Mutual Discernment Committee, on hearing his passion for the future that he has helped us to envision, we felt a similar weight lifted. And we felt joy!

Yet we know that there are sacrifices that must be made and risks to be taken, and a transparent process to move through is needed in order for our Fellowship to accomplish this. Over the next few weeks, the Board will be providing information and background to prepare members for the vote on drawing funds from reserves to pay a full-time salary to Russ.

On August 21st, Russ will be back in the pulpit and will speak directly with us about his deep discernment.

Our target date for a vote to draw from reserves to pay a full-time salary will be September 11. If the vote passes, at a later date we will have a separate vote to call Russ as our settled minister! The call process will be led by the Mutual Discernment Committee.

To be clear, for the moment, the Board is recommending to you that we bring Russ on full-time and install him as our settled minister. But let's begin to imagine the possibilities now! We are ever closer to our vision of a healthy, vibrant and sustainable fellowship that can support a full-time minister!

Carol Schimke

July 24, 2016