

March 23, 2021

To: Congregational leaders considering a Transitional Minister

From: Emily Smith and Sandy Eskrich
Co-Chair of First Unitarian Society's Ministerial Search Team

Re: Roger Bertschausen, Interim Minister

We have known Roger since July, 2020 when he came to First Unitarian Society (FUS) as our second Interim Minister. This was after the retirement of our Senior Minister after his 30+ year tenure. Roger has provided strong and collaborative leadership with our Associate Minister as our congregation transitions to a Shared Senior Minister model for the future.

This shift in leadership requires diplomacy and confidence in addressing a few historical presumptions that are not serving us well. These include inequitable compensation for our ministerial team as well as staff and a blurred covenant with our previous Minister. Roger has addressed these openly and challenged us to live up to our values in addressing them.

Roger has supported the work of our Search Team in multiple ways. He has served as our voice at the Board of Trustees table and consulted with us on our timeline for search and on the methods of search. These include assistance in writing a Ministerial Agreement for Co-Ministers of Equal Standing and determining the most responsible ways to include our current Minister in the selection of her next professional colleague. Throughout, Roger has served us with pastoral care and support as we've navigated these issues over the last 9 months. We look forward to his continued support and guidance as we move into our Candidating Week and prepare for our new team of Co-Equal Ministers.

We have no hesitation in endorsing Roger for whatever next step he chooses to pursue. The congregation he leads will benefit from his care and wisdom as we have.

Please contact either of us with questions or follow up, we're glad to talk with you.

Sincerely,
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