

March 11, 2022

From: David Mohler, President UUCOB Board

The UU Church of Bloomington is undergoing a ministerial transition not unlike our own. They are a much larger congregation with some 650 members. When we are at our Indiana house, we attend services there. Emily worked there as a childcare provider when she was a student at nearby Indiana University.

On March 5, UUCB hosted a live stream with Rev. David Pyle, the Regional Lead and a Congregational Life Consultant with the UUA MidAmerica Regional Staff. I participated in the livestream. Rev. Pyle reviewed the process of discernment in preparation for determining what kind of ministry a church needs and wants, and the steps for recruiting and selecting a minister once this discernment is complete. From observing the body language of the people who participated in this livestream from the UUCB sanctuary, I believe it was very helpful. Everyone's shoulders seemed to relax.

Mary Ann Mackle, their departing minister, is well loved by the congregation, and made a huge difference in the UUCB community during her tenure. People there are already missing her, even though she hasn't left yet. Rev. Pyle tossed out the idea that as UUCB is planning for a future ministry, they might want to consider a "developmental ministry", which is a kind of interim ministry.

After the livestream, I spoke with our Southern Region UUA congressional life staff. I need to talk with Christine Purcell, the Transitions Program Manager on the Congregational Life field staff team, serving in all five regions (Central East, New England, MidAmerica, Pacific Western, and Southern). She works closely with regional staff, congregational boards of trustees, search committees, and search committee coaches to support ministerial search processes. We will also want to have a conversation with her as a board.

It might be interesting to invite Rev. Nathan Hollister from the UUA Southern District Congressional Life staff, who we know from our planning sessions, to join us on a Sunday, lead a service, and participate in a livestream. More to follow as those conversations take place.