

The Journey We Face – A Roadmap
Approved by GMUUC's Board of Trustees
May 1, 2025

Updates by Board as of July 2, 2025 – (in blue font)

Identifying and calling a new long-term minister is a life cycle event for any congregation. It's a journey with implications for years to come. This journey is about more than finding the very best minister the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) has to offer. It is an opportunity to build a closer and stronger community as we rise to this challenge.

Every journey needs a clear understanding of its starting point, a well-defined destination (or goal), and a thoughtful plan on how to get there – a **Roadmap**. On behalf of the Congregation, the Board's role is to create a clear Roadmap guided by our principles, our Congregational Covenant (see Exhibit A), GMUUC Bylaws (see Exhibit C), and UUA guidelines.

Since Rev. Charlotte's resignation on April 4, the Board has taken a deep dive into the process of identifying a new minister. This included reading UUA resources (Transitional Handbook, Settlement Handbook, etc.). It has also meant hours spent speaking with the UUA's National Transitions Director, the Southern Region's Congregational Life Director, and other ministers and lay leaders around the country about their personal search process experience.

Even for those who have been long-time UUs, a lot of what we learned surprised us. In the past decade, especially since COVID, much has changed with how congregations select a minister, what ministers are looking for, and the competitive nature of the 'market' for UU ministers. This Board-approved Roadmap includes all of these considerations.

The good news is GMUUC has an excellent reputation in the UUA as an 'up and coming' Congregation. (See Exhibit B – A Quick Profile) The UUA is fully supportive of the Board's plan and is eager and able to assist along the way.

Roadmap Summary

The Roadmap is a dynamic living plan. The details that follow may be revised by the Board in the coming weeks and months with new information or experience.

The Board made detailed presentations of this plan at the May 11 Town Hall and the May 18 Congregational Meeting, answering all questions that were raised.

With the long-term goal of identifying an outstanding ministerial candidate to eventually be called by the Congregation, the Board has approved a Roadmap with three major steps:

1. Bringing positive closure to Rev. Charlotte's ministry.

- o Celebratory Service and lunch on **June 1**.
- o UUA-assisted assessment of Rev. Charlotte's ministry.

The June 1 celebration of Rev. Charlotte's ministry was a great success with 159 attendees (139 on site) for the service, followed by a congregational picnic.

2. A transitional ministry plan during the 1 year 'gap' while the long-term minister search is underway. (Details below)

- o The goal is to reduce the burden on the Worship Team, Care Team, other lay leaders and staff by hiring a temporary minister(s) from August 2025 – July 2026.
 - What this looks like will be determined by the Board in the next 60 days in collaboration with Worship/Care Teams and with Rev. Charlotte's support.
 - This could be one minister half to full time, or two part-time ministers, etc.
 - The Board hires the temporary contract minister(s).

At a June 26 special meeting, the Board approved hiring Rev. David Morgen as our half-time Bridging minister beginning August 1. The Board also approved hiring Rev. John Herberger as our Pastoral Care Counselor starting Aug. 1.

An offer letter was extended and accepted from which an employment agreement was developed and executed by Rev. Morgen and GMUUC on July 1. In summary, Rev. David's duties will include:

- **Worship:** The Minister will lead or co-lead worship 24 Sundays each year, including the following UU Celebrations observed by the Congregation: Water Communion (September) , Thanksgiving (November), Fire Communion (January), Easter (April) and Flower Ceremony (May). In addition, the Minister will lead the Christmas Eve Service on Thursday, December 24, 2025 in the UU Tradition.
 - o The Minister shall preach from the pulpit twice per month (including those months with 5 Sundays), and coordinate and collaborate on these Sundays with the Music Director, Religious Educator, Tech Team and Worship Team.

- o The Minister shall attend monthly Worship Team Meetings (via Zoom), collaborate and plan services with the Worship Team Lead, Service Leaders, Music Director, RE Educator and Tech Team. The Minister shall also collaborate with GMUUC lay speakers for sermon preparation, schedule permitting.
- **Rites of Passage:** The Minister will be available for rites of passage, including weddings, child dedications (during the regular Sunday service), and memorial services for GMUUC members at no additional cost to the family.
- **Pastoral Care:** In consideration of the half-time position, the Minister will not be expected to provide regular pastoral care (crisis intervention, visitation of the homebound, sick, dying, and bereaved members, etc.) to congregants except at the Minister's discretion. However, to identify and support meeting the pastoral needs of congregants, the Minister will collaborate with the Care Ring team with GMUUC's Pastoral Care Counselor during the Bridging year as follows:
 - o Weekly Candles of Community are reviewed by the Minister for knowledge & follow-up if needed.
 - o Care Ring – Receives 1st call from congregants and provides group support for basic needs.
 - The Care Ring Team Lead assesses needs and determines whether they should be handled within the team or referred to the Minister.
 - o The Minister will determine whether to refer the need to the Pastoral Care Counselor, including an assessment of its urgency. The Minister is encouraged to make use of the Pastoral Care Counselor whenever possible to conserve their own hours serving in this role.
 - o In this Bridging year, the Minister will work to identify and resolve potential conflicts in a manner consistent with our Covenant of Right Relations.

Related Note on Pastoral Care: The Board has approved hiring Rev. John Herberger to provide part-time Pastoral Care Counselor beginning August 1. (See details below.)

- **Availability to Members and Lay Leaders:** Schedule permitting, the Minister shall remain at the building after worship for fellowship with the Congregation and to allow for in-person meetings with team leaders or others as helpful. Additional Zoom hours will be provided during the week with team leaders or others.

- **Community Activities:** In consideration of the half-time position, the Minister is not expected to be active in the community beyond the Congregation but can participate at their discretion.
 - However, the Minister is responsible for administering the Minister's Helping Fund to support GMUUC's members and the greater community.
- **Staff Management:** Consistent with GMUUC Bylaws, paid and volunteer staff report to the Minister who will manage and evaluate their performance and make compensation recommendations to the Finance Committee.
 - The Minister is responsible for hiring, terminating and reorganizing staff in the best interest of GMUUC. Prior consultation with the Board's Personnel Committee is recommended.
 - The Minister shall maintain budget compliance over areas for which the Minister is responsible.

Rev. Morgen as an 'inside candidate' for the Contract to Call position:

Rev. Morgen has expressed, and the Board has acknowledged, an interest in the longer-term Contract to Call position. According to UUA search guidelines ([Transitional Ministry Handbook](#)), if our Bridging contract minister expresses an interest in GMUUC's planned full-time Contract to Call minister position, the Search Team must consider the Bridging Minister as an "inside candidate" for this full-time position before the congregation activates a larger national search by posting our profile on the UUA search database. This revises the Search Team role and timetable (see below).

Rev. John Herberger as GMUUC's Pastoral Counselor:

Rev. Morgen's half-time position may not enable him to offer GMUUC members the pastoral care support that would be provided by a full-time minister. The Pastoral Care Counselor role is to provide pastoral care support that might otherwise go unmet.

On June 26, the Board approved hiring Rev. John Herberger as our Pastoral Counselor starting August 1. He may be familiar to some GMUUC members as he provided pastoral care during Rev. Charlotte's sabbatical. Rev. John will report to Rev. David who will make pastoral care assignments. He will be available for visits to hospitals or homes as well as calls, schedule permitting.

If there is an emergency where Rev. David is not immediately available, members of the Care Ring Team will contact Rev. John directly with their request. Rev. John shall keep Rev. David informed of his efforts.

3. The Board hires a long-term minister with a 3-year 'Contract to Call' agreement through a process consistent with UUA guidelines.

- o The standard UUA hiring cycle can take up to a year.
 - Goal: The new minister starts August 1, 2026.
- o The search process will include:
 - Congregation-wide self-reflection to seek input on current and future needs.
 - This input will be collected through organized 'listening circles' where members offer their insights. (These could be a mix of in-person and/or Zoom meetings.) This will inform the search decision.
 - A 6-person Search Team (3 Board members appointed by the Board and 3 non-Board members nominated by the Leadership Development Committee for Board approval.)
 - The Search Team will craft GMUUC's 'story'
 - o Highlight strengths that will be attractive to candidates.
 - The Search Team will discern whether Rev. Morgen, as an inside candidate, should be recommended to the Board as a candidate for the full-time Contract to Call position before the end of December.

If after considering the Search Team's recommendation, the Board decides not to offer the Contract to Call position to Rev. Morgen, the Search Team will:

- o Post GMUUC's profile on the national UUA search database in December or early January.
- o Interview candidates who apply in late 2025 through early 2026 and make a hiring recommendation to the Board in March 2026 with a formal offer and acceptance in early April.
- o This does not change the Congregation's authority to make the final decision on calling a long-term minister. (See Key point below.)
 - **Key point:** While the Board hires a contract minister, only the Congregation may call and settle a long-term minister, which is a mutual decision that will be made after year two of the contract.

Key Roadmap Questions

The questions and answers below will explain why the Board chose a ‘Contract to Call’ rather than a traditional ‘Settled Search and Call’ hiring process for our long-term minister.

How did the Current ‘Landscape’ (or ‘Market’) for UU Ministers shape the Roadmap?

We learned the following from hours of discussion with Christine Purcell (UUA Congregational Transitions Director), Nancy Combs-Morgan (UUA Southern Region Congregational Life Director), ministers and lay leaders from other UU congregations:

Because there is more demand for ministers than supply, ministers are being more particular as professionals. Also, fewer seminary graduates are looking for a traditional pulpit (opting for community ministry, chaplaincy, etc.).

What are ministers looking for in a new Congregation?

- A full-time position with a compensation package aligned with UUA fair compensation guidelines. (GMUUC offers this.)
- A desirable location. Since COVID, proximity to friends and family - a sense of geographic ‘rootedness’ - seems to matter more. Other considerations may include the ability for a spouse/partner to find work and good schools for children. Some candidates would not consider the South while others would see ministry in a non-urban red region as a calling.
- A Congregation that:
 - Has a stable, well-defined governance structure with consistent lay leadership.
 - Has a shared ministry approach that respects the role of its minister.
 - Has its “financial house in order”.
 - Knows its Vision and mission priorities.
 - Can clearly articulate what they are looking for in a new minister to further that Vision.

GMUUC will be in an active competition for highly qualified candidates. Having said that, we stand out in many positive ways (see **Exhibit B – A Quick Profile**).

How are ministers searching for a new pulpit?

Fewer ministers are going through the traditional settled search process. This was a surprise to long-time UUs. Here is a summary of our discussion with Christine Purcell (UUA Congregational Transition Director):

For this year's search cycle, there have been about 50 ministers applying for contract ministries and 29 for settled ministries (only 7 of whom did not also apply for contract positions). Ministers seem to be leaning toward those contract positions. Some even left the settled search to accept contract ministry offers.

For this search cycle, there were only 13 traditional settled search and call efforts. Of those, only 7 successfully resulted in a settled position.
(Rev. Charlotte did a modified settled search and call and was 1 of the 7).

Why are there fewer traditional settled searches?

- Very expensive for the Congregation in terms of time and money.
 - No guarantee of success.
 - Typically used by larger congregations (over 125 members).
- Ministerial candidates see it as very inflexible.
 - Must follow strict UUA guidelines and timetable.

From Christine Purcell (UUA), "Many congregations, particularly those with fewer than 125 members, choose the contract path to ministry partnership because of its simplicity, lower cost, more accessible volunteer commitment, and flexibility (contract ministers can be called, unlike interim ministers)."

What is the preferred path for ministerial candidates?

A 3-year 'Contract to Call' agreement is viewed favorably by ministerial candidates.

Why Contract to Call?

Contract to Call is recommended by the UUA for Congregations like GMUUC. The following is from the UUA Transitional Handbook, p.56:

"Congregations which hope to call the contract minister in the future or those with goals which would be best approached with a longer-term ministry partnership should consider offering a 2-3+ year initial contract. There is low risk to the congregation or minister in doing so since our employment agreements include clear terms for ending a ministry partnership earlier, should the need arise. The process for finding a contract minister is simpler than a settled ministry search. Finding a contract minister sometimes takes longer than congregational leaders might wish, depending on factors such as timing of the search in the annual search cycle, geography, and compensation/percentage of time."

For all of these reasons, The Board decided the Contract to Call path was most likely to result in the best qualified candidates.

How would a 3-year Contract to Call position work?

For a contract position, the Board makes the hiring decision upon considering a recommendation from the Search Team (details below). At the end of approximately two years, the minister and the Congregation mutually discern whether a longer-term relationship is desired. If the answer is 'yes,' the Congregation seeks to call the minister by holding a vote (requiring an 80% majority in GMUUC Bylaws – Exhibit C). If the answer is 'no,' the contract minister serves the 3rd year while the Congregation undergoes another search process.

From the UUA: "In general, a contract minister should not accept a call until the end of at least two years of service, and only after a full and intentional period of assessment and discernment. In some cases, a formal contract-to-call arrangement is in place, usually stipulating that the minister is free to accept a call from his/her congregation shortly before the end of his/her second (or later) year of appointment. The UUA recommends that congregational leaders consider the time remaining on the current contract and the annual ministry search cycle when determining how and when to move toward a call."

We know this process can work. Rev. Charlotte was under a part-time contract with GMUUC for 4 years before she was called by the Congregation.

Why does the Contract to Call hiring process take up to a year?

The annual hiring cycle for long-term ministers is well established by the UUA in collaboration with the UU Ministers Association. Whether for a 'settled call' or a 'contract to call' position, the process is generally the same and takes up to a year as follows*:

- Congregations engage in a process of self-reflection and assessment typically in the summer and fall.
- Congregations submit their profile to the UUA search database before December.
- Most interested ministers start actively looking at profiles in December.
- Ministers submit applications and the Search Team reviews. (In the contract process, Ministers may apply whenever they want.)
- The recommendation of a final candidate is made by the Search Team to the Board by late February or early March.
- The Board makes an offer to a candidate in late March.
- Acceptance and final contract negotiations are completed in early April.
- The typical start date is August 1.

* This outlined process assumes the Congregation is not in need of a formal Interim minister for up to two years to address issues that need attention. The UUA does not recommend an Interim minister for GMUUC as it is a healthy Congregation.

Compared to this timeline, GMUUC has the advantage of introducing its profile earlier in the fall, ensuring we get attention before other congregations.

Search Team Composition and Appointment

According to UUA guidelines, the Board leads the process by appointing and charging a Search Team to hire a contract minister (rather than a 'Search Committee' used for a settled search process as described in our Bylaws – see Exhibit C). From the Transitional Ministry Handbook, Outdated Version (p. 58):

“Since the board hires a contract minister, the board assembles the search team for a contract minister. The search team often has several board members on it. The board should choose search team members who understand the congregation’s ministry needs and context, are trusted in the congregation, work well with others, and do not have a personal or controlling agenda.”

Note: Christine Purcell (UUA) reviewed GMUUC’s Bylaws and affirmed they describe a traditional ‘Settled Search’ process rather than a ‘Contract to Call’ process.

For smaller congregations, there is typically a Search Team of 5 members composed of 3 Board Members and 2 non-Board members.

To ensure a balanced representation of our Community, GMUUC’s Board has decided on a 6-person Search Team – 3 Board members and 3 non-Board members.

The new Board (term starting 7/1/25) will appoint 3 Board members in July after which it will ask the new Leadership Development Committee (term starting 7/1/25) to nominate 3 non-Board members for Board approval.

Search Team Roles and Responsibilities

They:

- Report to the Board
- Are under a Covenant of Confidentiality
- Follow the search process prescribed by the Unitarian Universalist Association.
- Tell the Congregation’s “Story”
 - Complete the online profile. This includes descriptive details, covenant, goals, current ministry, strengths and weaknesses, honest assessment, and important questions: What’s important now? What’s going well? What needs new energy?
 - This input will be collected through organized ‘listening circles’ where members offer their insights. These could be a mix of in-person and/or Zoom meetings.
 - Highlight strengths that will be attractive to candidates.

- Describe our shared ministry governance model.
- Discern whether Rev. Morgen, as an inside candidate, should be recommended to the Board as a candidate for the full-time Contract to Call position before the end of December.

If after considering the Search Team's recommendation, the Board decides not to offer the Contract to Call position to Rev. Morgen, the Search Team will:

- Post GMUUC's profile on the national UUA search database in December or early January.
- Review all applications and interview those of interest.
- Recommend a final candidate to the Board.
 - o Support the contract negotiation process as helpful.
- Provide relevant and transparent information to the Congregation throughout the search process.
- Support the new minister with a great start at GMUUC in August 2026.

The Transition 'Gap' Period

Having considered the landscape for ministers, the reasons for a 'Contract to Call' search process, a typical timetable, and how the search would be organized, let's consider a plan for the approximately 12-month transition 'gap' between Rev. Charlotte's departure at the end of July and a potential future long-term minister who would start August 1, 2026.

From the UUA Settlement Handbook

"It takes longer to say good-bye, and to do it well, to a ministry than most people would imagine. Individuals are likely to say, "I'm ready to move on." But a congregation is a system of people, and moving systems takes longer than moving individuals. Some people may never be completely ready to move on to a new minister, but when "a tipping point" number of people are ready to move forward, the congregation is likely to be ready. Some people just need more time. Allowing people to move at their own pace is an act of community."

"Rushing to 'get back to normal' often holds the myth that normal is a constant. Letting time and process be your allies allows you to improve the odds to get to the new and next normal. Be patient. Be kind. Help everyone to be a part of a good ending to a ministry. This ultimately serves the congregation and departing minister better."

Board Goals for the Transition Period

- Remain in covenant with each other.
- Move the Community to acceptance regarding Rev. Charlotte's departure.
- Offer continuity in quality of worship, pastoral care, and program leadership.

- o Identify clear lines of accountability and reporting for staff and lay leaders.
- Avoid leadership and volunteer 'burn-out.'
- Allow new perspectives and ideas to emerge with 'fresh eyes'.
- Recognize the 'unwritten rules' that may have been built up over nearly 12 years with the same minister.
- Engage the Congregation in a facilitated self-reflection process through small group **'listening circles' led by the Search Team**. Examples of questions:
 - o What are you grateful for in this congregation?
 - o I wish our congregation had more ____.
 - o I wish our congregation had less ____.
 - o What do you hope never changes in our congregation?
 - o What do you think could be improved with fresh perspective and energy?
 - o What in our history resonates or are the "living embers" that ignite us and unite us?

During the transition period, the Board will request that all Teams focus on continuity and stability and refrain from starting new projects or initiatives.

The Role of a **Bridging Minister(s)**

One key goal is to provide consistent professional ministerial support during the Transition period to the Worship Team, Care Team, Covenant groups, staff, and other lay leaders. The Board plans to meet this goal by hiring temporary contract minister(s).

What this looks like in practice will be determined by the current and new Board in the next 60-90 days in collaboration with the Worship and Care Teams, UUA Southern Region, and Rev. Charlotte who has volunteered to assist in identifying qualified ministers that are a good fit.

The Board's Personnel Committee (its officers) will represent the Board in this effort. The Personnel Committee will review applications, discuss & recommend candidate(s) to the Board along with appropriate contract terms.

(See above.) The need might be filled by one minister serving ½ time, ¾ time, or even full-time. It might be filled by two part-time ministers each focusing on a particular element of our ministry, and so on. (Budget note: If we maintain the current compensation package for a full-time minister into FY26, there will be enough funding for whatever configuration we choose. The Board can reallocate among budget line items as required once we know more.)

The temporary contract minister(s) would also support the Ministerial Advisory Team (see below) in conflict resolution. (Note: there is a UUA interim minister training conference this Fall in Birmingham that a temporary minister could attend for skill development).

One key goal in hiring a temporary contract minister(s) is to use significantly less lay leadership time than was required during the Sabbatical. Even so, during the Transition period, more involvement by the Board, the Worship Team, Teams and other lay leaders will likely be required.

Ministerial Advisory Team's expanded role

The Board has asked the Ministerial Advisory Team to expand its role during the transition period to ensure the Congregation remains in covenant and provides necessary support or conflict management when and if our covenant is broken. They will have the support of the contract minister(s) and the UUA as needed.

The current Ministerial Advisory Team has accepted this role. (Nancy Hunt, Burger Vaughan and Frank Youngblood)

Prospective Roadmap Timeline (subject to change with more information and experience). [In line with UUA guidelines and GMUUC's Ministerial Transition Roadmap, the following process is proposed:](#)

2025

April 27	Special Board Mtg - Roadmap approved
May 11	Town Hall - Ministry Roadmap Presentation with Q&A
May 18	Annual Congregational Mtg – Roadmap presentation with limited Q&A
May	Rev. Charlotte's exit interview with Southern Region
May-July	Assessment of Rev. Charlotte's ministry supported by Southern Region
June 1	Rev. Charlotte's Celebration Service & Lunch
May-July	Board collaborates with Teams and Rev. Charlotte on recommending a temporary contract minister-based transition plan.
June 26	Board approves the hiring of a Bridging contract minister and a Pastoral Care Counselor to start August 1.
July/Aug	New Board appoints & charges a Search Team.
Sept-Oct	Congregation engages in "listening circles" to solicit input from the Congregation on the current and future direction of our ministries. (These could be a mix of in-person and/or Zoom meetings.) This will inform the search decision.

[No later than December 31, 2025](#)

The Search Team will evaluate the inside candidate (Rev. Morgen) before GMUUC's Congregational Record is published for potential external applicant review nationally. This will include soliciting feedback from the Congregation.

The Search Team recommends to the Board whether or not to hire the inside candidate. If the Board hires the inside candidate, a Contract to Call ministerial agreement is negotiated, just as originally planned.

If the inside candidate is not offered the Contract to Call position, the Search Team will proceed with a national search by publishing GMUUC's Congregational Record on the UUA National Search Database.

If Rev. Morgen is not accepted as the Contract to Call candidate:

Jan 2026	Search Team creates Profile in the UUA Search Database.
Jan	Candidates apply in response to GMUUC's Profile. 'Contract to Call' candidates can apply at any time.
Jan-Feb	Search Team reviews applications and selects candidates for interviews.
Feb-Mar	Search Team recommends a final candidate to the Board.
Late Mar	Board makes an offer to the finalist.
Early Apr	If the candidate accepts, the contract is completed.
Aug 1	New full-time Contract to Call Minister begins.

END OF ROADMAP

No revisions to exhibits

Exhibit A

Congregational Covenant of Right Relations

Adopted by GMUUC at the May 22, 2005 Annual Meeting.

We promise to:

1. Actively listen to each other, employ flexibility toward differing opinions and thought, using honest, non-hurtful language.
2. Respect each other's inherent worth and dignity in accordance with the principles of the UUA.
3. Honor and utilize existing systems for conflict resolution (e.g. Board of Trustees, Bylaws, Committee on Ministry) and continually re-educate ourselves on these processes as necessary.
4. Accept mutual responsibility of expressing and honoring personal boundaries.

5. Address concerns directly, promptly, and personally in a manner that promotes mutual respect and avoids triangulation.
6. Accept tasks responsibly and positively and seek help if needed.
7. Continue to promote our church and welcome newcomers.
8. Be mindful that individually and collectively we are representatives of the Georgia Mountains Unitarian Universalist Church and the Unitarian Universalist Association and conduct ourselves in public events, small and large, in concert with our principles and covenants.

Exhibit B

GMUUC - A Quick Profile

- 4th fastest growing congregation in the US over the last 5 years (for those with >80 members) having grown from 80 to 120 members today. (8 out of 10 congregations reported a decline over the same period.)
- With 120 members, GMUUC is larger than nearly 60% of UU Congregations. Per UUA criteria, we are a size B congregation (at the low end of that range).
- Average Sunday attendance is 103 (Q1 2025) with 25% online via Zoom thanks to a hybrid worship model established during COVID.
- Over the past 5 years, our budget has increased 50% when 2/3's of UU budgets nationally have either declined or not kept pace with inflation.
- In 2022, GMUUC completed a 4-year project to purchase 4.6 acres and build a new facility at a total cost of \$1.95 million - without debt.
- Has a \$90,000 Sustainable Ministry Reserve Fund available to support the budget and the transition process to a new minister.
- Compliant with UUA fair compensation guidelines.
- Brought our Minister position to full time in February 2023.
- Starting July 1, will have an outstanding new part-time Music Director.
- An outstanding Admin/RE/Communications person budgeted at 35 hours a week.
- A strong core of lay leaders including those with many years at GMUUC along with emerging leaders who have joined more recently.
- Designated as a "Good Trouble" Congregation in 2022 and 2024.
- Revised our Bylaws in May 2023 to change the governance model from 'family' style to 'program driven' under the leadership of a full-time minister.
- Completed and approved a 3-year strategic plan in May 2022 and have been successful in achieving nearly all its goals.
- The Congregation has a covenant of right relations and policies for disruptive behavior, conflict resolution, sexual misconduct and harassment.
- Average age is 67. We recognize and are preparing for a long-term demographic challenge as our "boomer" members age.

- GMUUC is an hour north of Atlanta, but is still in what UUA classifies as Geo 1, meaning our cost of living is appreciably less than the national average.
- Dahlonega is home to the largest University of North Georgia campus (7,200 students).
- The region is a tourist destination with an extensive wine region, state and national parks, and the start of the Appalachian Trail.
- The area is also a destination for pre-retirees and retirees in the North Georgia mountains. GMUUC has attracted many of these individuals as members.
- The North Georgia region is a politically and socially conservative area.

Exhibit C

GMUUC Bylaws on Ministerial Search

Section 4.3 Ministerial Search

When requested by the Board, a Ministerial Search Committee, composed of five (5) members representing diverse perspectives, shall be nominated by the Leadership Development Committee and approved by a vote of the Congregation at a duly called meeting. GMUUC members shall be eligible to be elected to this Committee upon being a member for two (2) years.

The Ministerial Search Committee shall follow the search process prescribed by the Unitarian Universalist Association to search out and recommend a Minister for the Church to the membership.

Section 4.4 Minister Eligibility, Congregational Approval and Contract Terms A

A Minister who is either in, or eligible for, Full Fellowship with the UUA is eligible to become a Minister with GMUUC.

The Board shall call a special meeting of the Congregation for the selection of a Minister when so requested by the Ministerial Search Committee. Upon the recommendation of the Ministerial Search Committee and the Board, a minister shall be called by at least eighty percent (80%) of those members voting by secret ballot at a Congregational Meeting called for that purpose. For the purpose of calling a Minister, forty percent (40%) of the Voting Membership shall constitute a quorum.

Prior to Congregational approval of a recommended candidate, the Ministerial Search Committee or its designee, in consultation with the Board, shall negotiate terms of employment with the candidate, and shall present this to the Board for conditional

approval. The Board-negotiated employment contract shall only take effect upon Congregational approval of the candidate.