

Covenant
between
First Parish Cambridge, Unitarian Universalist
and
Rev. Elizabeth Nguyen

“Come thou fount of every vision lift our eyes to what may come. See the lion and young the lamb dwell together in thy home. May the cries of war fall silent, feel our love glow like the sun. When we all serve one another, then our heaven is begun.

Come thou fount of inspiration, turn our lives to higher ways. Lift our gloom and desperation, show the promise of this day. Help us bind ourselves in union, help our hands tell of our love. With thine aid, O fount of Justice, earth be fair as heaven above.”

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

What is community ministry?

Community ministry is Unitarian Universalist ministry that happens beyond the context of a UU congregation. Community ministry may be hospital chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, spiritual direction or serving in leadership with our UUA or our District. For me, community ministry is interfaith social justice work.

I serve in community ministry as the full-time Director of Programs and Inclusion at Boston Mobilization, an organization in Harvard Square that supports youth-led social justice education and community organizing. Through my work with Boston Mobilization, I support the emotional, spiritual and identity development of teens, teach skills for social justice work, celebrate the joys, sorrows and milestones of our youth community, empower youth to act on issues ranging from minimum wage to diesel emission reduction and tend to the organizational wellbeing of a small nonprofit. In addition, I serve in other ministerial roles by guest preaching, officiating weddings, facilitating Young Adult Our Whole Lives, and serving on our Massachusetts Bay District Board.

What is affiliation?

Community ministers are affiliated with UU congregations. As a community minister in preliminary fellowship, I am required by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee to be affiliated with a UU congregation. Affiliate ministers are not part of the staff of a congregation. Instead, affiliate ministers and congregations are bound by covenants that articulate how they live out their shared ministry. Affiliate community ministers and UU congregations bind ourselves in union so that our hands may better tell of our love.

1. The primary arena of Elizabeth's ministry will be in the area of youth-led social justice work. As the Director of Programs and Inclusion at Boston Mobilization, we understand Elizabeth's ministry to be an extension of our own Unitarian Universalist justice ministry.
2. Elizabeth will be supported by a Committee on Ministry made up of people passionate about youth leadership and faithful social justice work, including both youth and adult colleagues familiar with Boston Mobilization and members of the congregation.
3. Should Elizabeth's plans in these activities change, she would continue to serve as Affiliate Community Minister provided she is actively involved in a search for a related ministry in the greater Boston area. It is expressly understood that First Parish in Cambridge would bear no financial responsibility to her during this interim period. It is also expressly understood that Elizabeth would resign her affiliation with First Parish in Cambridge, Unitarian Universalist should she find full-time employment that would either (1) take her out of the Boston area or (2) not be work that is clearly understood as community ministry (as defined by the Department of Ministries and Faith Development and the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the UUA).
4. Elizabeth will keep the congregation informed about her activities in her ministry by occasional newsletter articles and by any other meetings or reports specifically requested by the called Ministers or the Standing Committee (SC). She will attend SC meetings at the request of the chair and provide an annual report to the Standing Committee about her activities. Each year, for the purposes of UUA credentialing, she will work with her Committee on Ministry to create an annual structured evaluation of her ministry.
5. This Covenant does not imply that Elizabeth will take up ministerial tasks in First Parish. In mutual consultation with the called Senior and Associate ministers, Director of Religious Education and relevant committees and task groups, Elizabeth may occasionally teach a class, facilitate a workshop, lead worship, perform rites of passage, be available for on-call pastoral care and/or represent the church at denominational meetings, and other such ministerial tasks.
6. Referrals from the called Senior and Associate ministers to Elizabeth and vice versa shall be carefully agreed upon so that each person's ministry is affirmed. Consistent with the UUMA Code of Professional Conduct and in the absence of a clear agreement to contrary with the relevant First Parish staff, Elizabeth shall defer from accepting any invitation for her services traditionally associated with the Parish Ministry from members and friends of the church.
7. Elizabeth will affirm First Parish's Covenant of Right Relations.
8. Elizabeth will continue to lead worship and be a ministerial presence at the Sanctuary Boston's twice-monthly evening worships - one of which is hosted at First Parish. She will also continue to serve our larger Unitarian Universalist movement as a member of the Massachusetts Bay District board and the Unitarian Universalist Community Cooperatives board.

9. No regular compensation will be offered nor is it implied in this Covenant. Elizabeth is available to preach one sermon pro-bono (without fee) per year. For preaching, teaching and rites of passage beyond this, she will be reimbursed at UUMA suggested rates.

10. Elizabeth is encouraged to use the church facilities without charge for meetings or consultations related to her community ministry when scheduled in advance.

11. Elizabeth will maintain active membership and participation in the UU Ministers Association and UU Society for Community Ministry, and she may participate in UUA activities and groups at national, district and local levels. She may serve as Community Ministry delegate from this congregation at the UUA General Assembly by virtue of this Covenant of Affiliation, per the UUA Bylaws.

Chair of the Standing Committee Date

Rev. Elizabeth Nguyen Date