

April 12, 2017

To the Congregation and Staff of The First Parish in Cambridge, Unitarian Universalist:

I am deeply humbled and overjoyed to have been selected by the Ministerial Search Committee as the candidate for your next settled minister at First Parish Cambridge. The historical roots of the church are unbelievably inspiring and well known to me as an enthusiastic student of Unitarian Universalist history, but it is not just the legacy of the church that has drawn me to your community. What is most compelling to me and what was most exciting to hear about from the committee is the vibrant and creative future ahead of the church and the potential to share in building something totally unique as we nurture a diverse beloved community in the heart of Cambridge.

I am coming to you from Berkeley, CA but I grew up in Framingham, MA not far from First Parish so this is something of a homecoming. I love New England and it feels as if I have been away for far too long. Some of my most cherished friends and colleagues and a significant number of my family are right there in the Boston area. In fact, my cousin and his family are longtime members of First Church, Congregationalist just up the street. I am grateful to have this kind of built-in support but I also look forward to making many new connections as I get to know today's Cambridge and each one of you better.

We are living in a challenging time both on a national level and as a faith community. But I believe that the reason we are all called to Unitarian Universalism is because we have a deep sense that despite the many flaws of human nature and missteps in our actions, we are still incredible and valuable creatures. Whether we express this as God, nature, the divine spirit or if we receive this through the miracle of science...or some personal combination of these or other aspects of our lived experience, as Unitarian Universalists we seek to make room for acceptance, understanding, questioning, uncertainty, joy, sorrow and all that it takes to stay in authentic relationship with each other and the world around us.

A healthy ministry is a collaborative effort that is built on trust and transparency and shared enthusiasm for living into values that support a world where everyone can dream and grow and thrive. This means first and foremost seeing each other in our fullness...strengths and weaknesses while trusting that we always bring our best intentions to our relationships. It means also being accountable to one another, not to call each other out, but to always call one another *into* community. For me, this health, trust and communication is summed up by one word: love. Together, I am sure we can share in a ministry built on love and by doing so, achieve even more than we can dream. I am grateful and truly excited to journey with you into this beautiful vision as your next settled minister. I look forward to meeting you all very soon.

Peace,

Adam Lawrence Dyer