

**UUA Transitions Office  
Request for a Beyond Categorical Thinking Visit**

Please complete this form as thoroughly as possible after reviewing the [BCT information on the UUA website](#) and send it as an email attachment to [transitions@uua.org](mailto:transitions@uua.org). Then send a printed copy with a check for \$300.00 which partially covers the cost of the workshop. The remainder of the cost is covered by UUA funds. The check should be payable to the UUA, with your congregation name on it and BCT in the memo. Please mail it to UUA Transitions Office, 24 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210-1409.

**\*Indicates a required field.**

**Note that the input fields will expand as you type.**

**\*Full Name of Congregation** The Unitarian Church in Westport

**\*City** Westport

**\*ST/Province** CT

**\*BCT Contact Name** Kristen Leddy

**\*email** kristensleddy@aol.com

**\*Phone** 203-788-5711

**Visit Dates**

Usually the facilitators meet with the search committee on Saturday evening, provide the sermon (and potentially more) for the Sunday morning service, and conduct the workshop following the Sunday service. If you determine that attendance will be stronger on Saturday you may request a Saturday workshop. You should allow approximately 3 hours for the workshop.

Please choose dates when the entire search committee and most of the church leadership can attend. We do our best to honor your first choice but we ask that you submit 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choices as well.

**\*1<sup>st</sup> Choice Oct 18, 2014**

**\*2<sup>nd</sup> Choice Oct 19, 2014**

**\*3<sup>rd</sup> Choice Oct 25, 2014**

Would you prefer a Saturday workshop? yes

Or Sunday after worship?

**Congregational Information**

**\*Interim minister (if applicable)** Rev. Roberta Finkelstein

**\*Other ministers serving congregation at present and list length of settlement to date** Rev. Dr.Ed Thompson, Minister of Music. Arrived 1974. Ordained 1999.

**\*Please list at least 3 but not more than 10 previous ministers with their dates of service and type of ministry.**

e.g. Rev. J Jones	2002 – 2012	Settled
Rev. Frank Hall	1984-2013	Settled
Rev. Margie Allen	2006-2009	Associate
Rev. Manish Mishra	2005-2006	Interim
Rev. Barbara Fast	2000-2005	Associate
Rev. Dr. John Tolley	1996-1999	Associate

**\*Expected start date (month/year) for new minister** August 2015

**\*Size of congregation** 450 est

**\*Number and time of Sunday services** 9am, 11am

**\*Average worship service attendance - if more than one service, feel free to list estimates for each service**  
2013 average for both services - 264

**The following information will be extremely valuable to the facilitators and will benefit both the search committee and the congregation. Some of this information might be available in the congregational survey and easy to find. In some cases it may not be, and you are free to estimate (preferred) or leave blank. Please note, if possible, where the information is from (survey, best estimate, other).**

Size of search committee: 9

Does the search committee include anyone under the age of 40? no

Does the search committee include any people who identify as people of color; Latino/Latina/Hispanic; gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender; people with a disability? Which one (s)? no

How many people in your congregation identify as people of color and/or Latino/Latina/Hispanic? (These figures may be given in a lump sum or broken down by different identities. Please note if the figures are for adults or for adults, youth, and children) 25 est

How many people in the congregation identify as bisexual, gay, lesbian, and/or transgender? (These figures may be given in a lump sum or broken down by identity. Of particular use here if the figures are given in a lump sum is a notation of how many of these folks identify as transgender—transgender, transsexual, intersexual, cross-dressers, third gender.) `40 est

How many people in the congregation live with disabilities?

Are the above numbers from the congregational survey or an estimate? Please explain. Estimates. the congregational survey won't be completed until Oct 6<sup>th</sup>.

**The following questions may affect the way the congregation thinks in terms of calling a minister in both positive and negative ways. Taking a moment to answer these questions will offer invaluable information to the BCT training team.**

Have any of your previous or current ministers (settled, interim, intern) identified as people of color - Latina/Latino/Hispanic; bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender; and/or having some disability? Please list.

e.g.	Rev. John Doe	intern	1996-1997	gay
	Rev. Jane Deer	interim	1999-2000	Latina
	Rev. Jed Stag	settled	1985-1989	diabetic, used walker at times
	Rev. Margie Allen	Associate	2006-2009	gay
	Rev. Manish Mishra	Interim	2005-2006	gay, Indian
	Rev. John Tolley	Associate	1996-1999	gay

What work around anti-racism has the congregation done? Book readings, Reel Justice film and discussion series, Racial Justice Committee, involvement in town committee (TEAM) Together Effectively Achieving Multiculturalism, MLK services annually, Mark Morrison Reed guest speaker

Is there a group for people of color/Latina/Latino/Hispanic concerns? no

What work around disability issues has the congregation addressed? none

What disability issues are currently being addressed? We have approved the construction of a Lift into the building.

What disability issues has the congregation said it needs to address but has not? While approved by the congregation and funded, the town has thrown unexpected zoning issues at us and we need to continue to raise more money to meet their concerns. The lift construction has been postponed.

Is there a group(s) for disability issues/concerns? no

Are you officially recognized as a Welcoming Congregation? yes

Is there an active Interweave or b/g/l/t group in the congregation? yes

Is there other anti-oppression/multicultural work that the congregation is doing that is not covered in the above questions? Work on passage of immigration legislation at the state assembly, support of Mercy Learning Center for women of color, an immigration-social action committee has been formed.

What challenge(s) have arisen for the congregation in the past surrounding categories of diversity (race, ethnicity, affectional orientation, transgender, ability) that may impact the readiness of the congregation for bringing in a new minister? none

Was a successful strategy implemented to address the challenge(s)? n/a

### ***The Wider Community***

**These questions may give some important context to the facilitators who may know little about the wider community you serve.**

Where do the majority of your members live? (For example, they may all come from the suburbs to downtown or be primarily located between the town your congregation is in and a neighboring town or you may serve people in a 50-mile radius around your congregation.)

Members come from various towns along an approx 40 mile long stretch of coastline, and up to 15 miles depth into the state.

What are the racial/ethnic communities that are in the area served/close to your congregation?

Black, Hispanic, Lantina, Latino

How does the congregation interact with these communities/groups?

We partner with a school in Bridgeport, Beardsley School. Volunteers work on construction needs of the poor through Westbridge Coalition. The Mercy Learning center for women of color, Share the Plate, Family Re-entry, advocacy work on state legislation

How do issues of race and ethnicity surface in the wider community?

How accessible to people with disabilities is the wider community of which you are a part?

Has your wider community undertaken any work to make your community more accessible to people with disabilities that you are aware of?

no

Is there a disability rights group in your community?

not that I'm aware of

How has the congregation engaged in this issue in the wider community?

n/a

What activities and services in your community are there for bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender people/concerns?

Do you have people who are out in the congregation but not able to be out in the wider community?

not to my knowledge

How does the congregation interact with the local bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender community (ies)?  
Triangles Community Center in Norwalk, Rainbow Task Force is open to all, not just members. It's annual service is publicized in the community. Share the Plate for Mid-fairfield AIDS, Transgender Day of Awareness Vigil - annually

Does the congregation have a relationship with another congregation that serves primarily people of color or b/g/l/t people?

no

In some congregations, issues of gender, age, and class would warrant some time as part of the BCT training. For example, one congregation that was several hundred years old had never had a female minister. Another example is calling a minister from a working class background in a congregation of primarily upper class congregants and there being strife over many issues. If there is a reason why you feel that part of the BCT time should be spent addressing one of these areas due to congregational history, please give a short history of why that should happen below.

What else should we know about your congregation that we haven't asked?

There is no way for people to get to our church without a car. There are no bus or train lines that come close to the church.

If we need clarification on any part of this form, should we direct questions to the contact person or to someone else (please list name and contact)?

Kristen Leddy or David Vita, Dir of Social Justice. [david@uuwestport.org](mailto:david@uuwestport.org)