



WE INSPIRE and support individual spiritual growth.
WE CONNECT through worship, music, learning, and caring ministries.
WE ACT in the service of peace and justice.

Dear Minister in Search,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church in Westport, I am delighted to welcome you to consider our church as you journey to your next settled ministry. Our congregation has a rich history, and we are committed to the work necessary to understand our past and the path forward (albeit a work in progress). We now seek a minister to guide us forward in our continued spiritual growth with open hearts and minds.

Our congregation is undergoing quite a lot of transition with our ministerial succession, as last year we celebrated the culmination of the successful 29-year ministry of our beloved Minister Emeritus, the Reverend Frank Hall. We are simultaneously excited and nervous about the transition period that followed, and have been working closely with Reverend Roberta Finkelstein, our interim minister, to help us integrate our past and envision our future, while growing towards a more policy-based governance model.

While the concept of policy governance isn't new to many of us, the reality of moving the entire congregation towards a clear and consistent view of how decisions are made and who is responsible for what does require quite a lot of prep work. We are actively engaged in thinking through our governance structure; documenting and developing a broad-reaching policy manual, formalizing our committee charters, and working towards our new normal. We have already made many changes, including formalizing reporting relationships and the concept of the senior minister as chief of staff, and we are continually challenging ourselves to focus on the true work of the board, and to resist the temptation to slip into the comfort of the old ways of working. We are a work in progress, but we recognize and appreciate the guidance Roberta has provided, and we very much look forward to continuing this work with our settled minister.

I could go on about our terrific religious education programs, our extraordinary music program and numerous choirs, our rich heritage, our recently retired 29-year minister emeritus, our community outreach, and all the other things that make us special, but I will leave that to our talented, dedicated and trusted Ministerial Search Committee to express. Please feel free to contact them if you have questions, and I hope this has been useful to you. Thank you for your interest. I so look forward to meeting you!

Respectfully,

Michelle Garvey
Board Chair
The Unitarian Church in Westport