

# Minister's Self-Evaluation Application for Renewal of Fellowship

Name: Roger Butts

Date: 6/30/2022

Check all evaluated settings that apply for this renewal:

Parish  Community/Entrepreneurial

Remember to include a ministry cover page form. Please check the cover page that applies:

Parish-Based Ministry  Community-Based Ministry

## Notes Relating to Completion of Form

This evaluation should be completed by the minister. Separate forms for your supervisor/governing Board and Committee on Ministry (CoM)/Ministry Formation Team (MFT) should be given to those bodies for completion. When evaluations are complete they should be shared between all evaluating bodies. The MFC is looking for feedback from your supervisor/governing Board and CoM/MFT as separate bodies. The MFC will not accept a combined evaluation. For tips on how to do an assessment of a minister, please refer to the forms page on our website at: <http://www.uua.org/careers/ministers/support/fellowship/15505.shtml>.

When completing this evaluation form, review the Competencies and their considerations and then comment on your strengths and areas for growth. The MFC believes all ministers have areas where they excel and some areas where there is still room for learning and growth. Please be mindful that parish-based and community-based ministries have different areas of emphasis, so the MFC encourages you to be thoughtful about how each competency applies to your ministry. Your honesty and self-reflection during this process will enhance your ministry.

With the growth of innovative community and entrepreneurial ministries, the MFC requires all ministers to specify the funding source of their paid ministry; or if it is an entrepreneurial ministry, submit a business plan that demonstrates how this ministry meets or will meet the requirement of at least half-time compensated ministry.

The section entitled "Comments on congregational or organizational ownership and involvement in this area" is your opportunity to express your assessment of the congregation or organization's commitment and engagement in that area. For example, you might note that you have not done much in the area of social justice in the public square, but then recognize that there is not much commitment within your congregation to engage in this area or that your focus in your organization has a different emphasis.

**Forms should be submitted as email attachments to [mfc@uua.org](mailto:mfc@uua.org).**

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Please note that fields for your text will expand to accommodate your entries. Comments should be no more than 400 words.

Area of Ministry:

### 1. Worship and Rites of Passage

Check One:

Strength    Satisfactory    Area for Growth    Unsatisfactory    Not Observed

General Comments: *Consider*

- *Knows how to prepare holistic, inclusive worship and rituals for life passages.*
- *Demonstrates awareness of multicultural and multigenerational approaches to worship.*
- *Prepares and delivers engaging sermons, homilies, and reflections.*
- *Works collaboratively with professional colleagues and lay worship leaders.*
- *Uses arts to create multisensory worship.*
- *Integrates theological theory and practice.*

I enjoy using a variety of approaches to worship. I enjoy collaborative worship. So this year, I invited Mike Martin the founder of RawTools (guns to garden tools), a Mennonite, to speak with me about gun violence. Anthony Scott, the Assoc Conference Minister for Rocky Mtn Conf of the UCC, Stephany Rose Spaulding, founder of the Truth and Concilation Center, among others to share the pulpit with me. And I share the pulpit with congregants, attempting to teach them how worship works. I have a particular conversational/relational style, so I attempt to bring balance in providing worship that is different than my style when I am not there. Technology has been a challenge and I am trying to find my feet along with staff and lay leaders about our sweet spot around technology. We provided a coming of age service this year, but there haven't been too many rites of passage opportunities. I believe the church and I will continue to find a good balance of shared ministry around worship. Growing edge: engaging the young people of the church and young adults in worship.

Comments on congregational or organizational ownership and involvement in this area:

There is considerable buy in from Prairie

### 2. Pastoral Care and Presence

Check One:

Strength    Satisfactory    Area for Growth    Unsatisfactory    Not Observed

General Comments: *Consider*

- *Can provide pastoral care, recognizing differences between pastoral and therapeutic counseling.*
- *Demonstrates healthy personal boundaries and knowledge of professional ethics.*
- *Has awareness and skills to respond appropriately to sexuality, mental health, end of life, and relationship concerns.*
- *Understands cultural and generational needs in pastoral care.*

I spent seven years recently as a hospital chaplain in a 500 bed level 2 trauma hospital. I know how to do pastoral care. And at Prairie the pastoral care needs are different than the typical grief, loss of life, illness, aging, parenting dynamics. The congregation has been in a tough spot, losing members, a difficult transition during covid-19 around location/space for church services, a lot of learning about self-identity after a difficult ministry of 2 years. This grief and transition has really pushed me to grow and understand pastoral care in a new way. I have always considered social

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justice and pastoral care to be integrated into the whole of the church's life, but this has deepened my understanding. I pray that I am providing good opportunity for healing space around these issues, but the work continues apace. I am always trying to be better at boundaries and professional ethics—thus far I do not believe I've encountered any difficulties there. I am sensitive to cultural and generational needs in pastoral care and will refer out with specificity around those issues. I feel strongly that I do this pretty well. I will have to spend some time this next year working on training a new group of leaders in the congregation.

Comments on congregational or organizational ownership and involvement in this area:

There is a highly functional care team that is now facing a transition with members. Some are moving. Some are no longer involved in the congregation. So a new opportunity for congregational ownership is upon us and my hope is that we have a strong core of members involved in the care team but also a sense of ownership across the congregation.

### 3. Spiritual Development for Self and Others

Check One:

Strength     Satisfactory     Area for Growth     Unsatisfactory     Not Observed

General **Comments:** *Consider*

- *Models spiritual depth in personal practice.*
- *Articulates philosophies and theories of teaching and learning.*
- *Models accountable engagement with diverse spiritual traditions and communities.*
- *Demonstrates understanding of multi-religious knowledge and practices.*

I have a spiritual practice of centering prayer. I also model writing and reflection as a spiritual practice for others. I like to help people consider their experiences, approach those experiences mindfully/prayerfully, and ask questions that lead to some deeper understanding of what is being learned from that experience. I offered a spiritual retreat in the last year (with my DRE as cohost) at la Foret and will do so again this summer. I use my book and its stories as launching off points. I use poetry a lot. I offered up a four or five session class on the transcendentalists, including a session focused on the Black Walden. I think this church is hungry for interspiritual, progressive spiritual practices. We hired a religious educator who brings a depth of knowledge around that kind of approach to spirituality and we have a new member who has written in this area that we will tap into.

Comments on congregational or organizational ownership and involvement in this area:

We are learning together. My sense is that they want more of this and that we have to figure out the pacing. It is a small church, so I am trying to engage other congregations that are like minded and like hearted to share the load.

### 4. Social Justice in the Public Square

Check One:

Strength     Satisfactory     Area for Growth     Unsatisfactory     Not Observed

General **Comments:** *Consider*

- *Is engaged with critical justice issues in the local community and in the larger world.*
- *Can apply the lens of power and privilege in the areas of antiracism, anti-oppression, and multiculturalism.*
- *Understands basics of community organizing and value of broad-based coalitions.*

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- *Connects the history of UU justice engagement to the present.*

I am tempted to put area for growth here. Why? Not because I am ineffective at social justice. I am rather good at it. But I am good at it as an organizer (I organized against the death penalty, I testify at the State House at the invitation of the ACLU and the Interfaith Alliance of Colorado on drug/new jim crow/reproductive health/death penalty matters). But I find myself the spiritual leader of a congregation that is learning how to do multicultural/anti-oppression, anti-racism work. They are committed to hearing BIPOC speakers once a month. They are committed to ADORE workshops with Paula Cole Jones and they are working on 8<sup>th</sup> Principle kinds of matters. A deep commitment. But there is still a lingering mistrust among the members in light of certain difficult tensions within the congregation. Being able to say pretty words among my friends in the legislature versus being able to really confront head on the lingering anti-oppression/anti-racism work of this particular congregation in this particular context are two very different things. I seek advice and counsel from trusted sources within and outside the congregation about how to adequately deal with this. I am of course leading them in confronting issues locally: the right wing overtake of the school boards—we built a coalition with UCC and UMC congregations to address the issue. We have focused on reproductive rights, starting with the Roe mess. Until they gave up the building, I spent some of my office hours in Aurora at the NAACP office there.

Comments on congregational or organizational ownership and involvement in this area:

A deep and abiding love for social justice, and now a deep invitation to bring some of that passion to the work of reparations and reconciliation and restoration inside the parish walls.

### 5. Administration

Check One:

Strength     Satisfactory     Area for Growth     Unsatisfactory     Not Observed

General Comments: *Consider*

- *Is prepared to manage staff and volunteers.*
- *Has a basic understanding of budgets, stewardship, and fundraising (and the theology thereof).*
- *Understands role as a minister within a mission-based institution.*
- *Articulates understanding of conflict management and obstacles to healthy organizational functioning.*

Upon entering into agreement with Prairie to be their contract minister, I made it clear that administration is not my great passion or strength. I think I can do most of those things above, but as indicated earlier, I have growing to do around conflict management and healthy organizational health. It is of utmost importance. We know how to do shared ministry, but this is an area that requires extreme skill and finesse. With the help of Christine Robinson, with whom I work at All Souls in Colorado Springs, I am learning new processes.

Comments on congregational or organizational ownership and involvement in this area:

Our administrator recently left for First Universalist. We have been working together on admin things. The congregation is committed to good administration and together we will get there.

### 6. Serves the Larger Unitarian Universalist Faith

Check One:

Strength     Satisfactory     Area for Growth     Unsatisfactory     Not Observed

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General Comments: *Consider*

- *Collaborates with Unitarian Universalist and interfaith colleagues, including other religious professionals.*
- *Articulates historical influence of Christianity on North American culture, including Unitarian Universalism.*
- *Engages with Unitarian Universalism at the local, regional, national, and global levels.*
- *Articulates knowledge of current initiatives and issues within the faith movement.*
- *Demonstrates knowledge of UU history and polity.*
- *Contributes to on-going scholarship and support of professional ministry.*

I have learned over 20 years of ministry that I am an institutionalist. I want these congregations to survive as congregations. Reforming and growing, but still a recognizable congregation. I collaborate with both UU and interfaith clergy and colleagues well. I bring knowledge of our history and our movements in subtle ways to our worship and educational offerings. I both articulate and try to live out a Christianity within Unitarian Universalism that is radically liberative in its orientation, humble in its acknowledge of vast short-comings, super open and interspiritual, and humanist at the end of the day. I do not shy away from both claiming a UU Christian identity, which I've had since even before seminary 20 years ago and a reforming honest Christianity that is interspiritual. I know the issues facing UU right now and wrestle with them and acknowledge them in my setting. I believe my work around my book (and forthcoming book, *Praying the Poets*) are attempts to contribute to ongoing scholarship within UU. And my conversations with Patrice Curtis of the UUA around liberative approaches to UU life are in service to ongoing scholarship.

Comments on congregational or organizational ownership and involvement in this area:

They are eager to learn more about UU history and present and future. Committed to professional ministry and supporting the UUA

### 7. Leads the Faith into the Future

Check One:

Strength     Satisfactory     Area for Growth     Unsatisfactory     Not Observed

General Comments: *Consider*

- *Experiments with emerging media technology.*
- *Articulates a vision for the future, assessing opportunities and challenges for Unitarian Universalism in a changing society.*
- *Explores new generational and multicultural expressions of Unitarian Universalism.*

I am on a lot of podcasts. I am doing a lot of social media posts. I am putting up material on YouTube. But at the end of the day, I am an old dog learning new tricks. I like learning new tricks but I am not leading the way on those new tricks. But I'm willing to learn, by god. I'm willing to learn. I do believe that I have a strong vision of a multicultural possibility for UU, having been sponsored (all those years ago!) by All Souls in DC. I am super energized by most of what I see in the new generation of UU ministers. I wish to contribute to that and am engaging in learning around the multicultural, 8<sup>th</sup> principle world we are entering.

Comments on congregational or organizational ownership and involvement in this area:

The desire is strong.

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Date: [click here](#)

**Please note that the field for your text will expand to accommodate your entry.**

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee views the Renewal Process as a time of development and growth for new ministers. Pay particular attention to suggestions from your Supervisor/Board and/or Committee on Ministry evaluations when planning your continuing education. Consult with your mentor regarding your evaluations and development plans. Outline below, the continuing education plans you have for the upcoming year. Include workshops, programs, retreats, collegial groups, self-reflective work (therapy, spiritual direction, etc.), self-study (books, coaching, etc.) and self-care. We ask that you demonstrate your ministry's commitment to anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multiculturalism. THIS SHOULD NOT BE A LIST OF PROGRAMS THAT YOU PLAN TO COMPLETE WITH THE CONGREGATION OR ORGANIZATION, BUT A LIST OF YOUR OWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND HOW YOU INTEND TO FULFILL THESE NEEDS. PLEASE BE MINDFUL THAT YOUR PLAN IS A *LIVING* DOCUMENT THAT EVOLVES WITH THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR MINISTRY.

I have taken interim training at the basic level. I am part of the ADORE workshops. I am super committed to understanding organizational development. I work with a variety of organizations that are focused on interspiritual faith development. But I desire strongly an understanding of organizational development in a progressive setting.

### Source of Funding or Business Plan

This section should include

1. the source of funding
2. the anticipated amount of funding
3. any additional information needed by the MFC to evaluate how this ministry meets the criterion of at least half-time compensated ministry.

I have an adequate professional development fund to begin this work. I suspect I can take a series of workshops, via the UUA and via outside orgs, that would cost about half of my professional fund--\$1200 or so.