**To our beloved congregation**

**From the Ministerial Search Committee**

During our search process, the MSC greatly benefited from guidelines and suggestions provided in the *Settlement Handbook* which UUA developed and refined over the years. We are so grateful for this resource which provided us the information and tools to do the search work as well as possible. As we approach our big decision about calling Rev. Jamie as our settled minister, the MSC believes a section with perspective on voting would be helpful to everyone. From the *Settlement Handbook*:

“The congregation should understand that if the vote to call the candidate fails or is too low to be accepted, there are no other ministers waiting in the wings to be evaluated by the congregation. The congregation will need another year of interim ministry and to engage the settled search again the following year.

During candidating week, members are voting on:

* whether they affirm the comprehensive, inclusive, collaborative, transparent process which was used to find the candidate
* whether the congregation was heard by the search committee
* whether the congregation was represented accurately by the search committee
* whether they believe the search committee saw the gifts of ministry which the congregation needs in the candidate
* whether the congregation is willing to move into a shared ministry partnership with the candidate whom the search committee identified as a good match for the congregation’s needs
* what is best for the whole congregation

They are not voting on:

* + whether individuals think they would have chosen the candidate who was identified by the search committee on their own, given what they know about the congregation
  + whether individuals think, based on two sermons, that every sermon the candidate preaches will or will not speak perfectly to the hearts and minds of every single member every single time
  + whether there might be a better match out there somewhere
  + whether the candidate is the perfect minister. Ministers come with different skills in worship arts, pastoral care, administrative/organizational work, and social witness presence. No minister will have a high level of skill or interest in ALL of those elements of the ministry. The shared ministry of the congregation will and should shift with the skills and interests of the new minister.
  + what is best for a particular individual within the congregation”

Our UUFD bylaws require 90% or higher ‘yes’ votes from those in attendance in order to offer a call to the candidate minister. We trust in the wisdom of our congregation and know we will make a decision together that best serves our future.