

Community Ministry Covenant & Affiliation
between
Second Unitarian Church of Chicago
and
Rev. Vilius Rudra Dundzila

Introduction

Currently, within the Unitarian Universalist Association, there are three different ministerial tracks: Parish Ministry, Ministry of Religious Education and Community Ministry. While the first two tracks are well known, the third may not be. “Community Ministers” are persons qualified to perform ministries of counseling, chaplaincy, social justice, education in religious studies, or other such ministries as the UUA’s Ministerial Fellowship Committee may recognize.

Although Parish Minister and Ministers of Religious Education are clearly tied in structured institutional ways to congregational life, community ministers commonly are not. To address this concern, the UUA Department of Ministry and the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, together with the UU Ministers Association and other interested groups and councils, are currently examining ways of strengthening the institutional ties and accountability between Community Ministers and various Unitarian Universalist institutions—especially UU churches. Rule 18 of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee requires that a community minister “maintain ties and receive endorsement by one or more of the following: A UUA member congregation, authorized District body, UUA Associate Member organization, or the UUA. Endorsement includes a pledge of continuing relationship and support and affirmation that the work is recognized by the endorsing body as ministry.”

Very few models exist for structured relationships between UU community ministers and local churches. The First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco, the University Unitarian Church in Seattle, WA and the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee are among the few pioneering such relationships. The following proposal, which has close parallels with First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco seeks to provide one way of more closely linking UU Community Ministers to the Second Unitarian Church of Chicago, for the mutual benefit of both the church and the Community Ministers. In the process, we might also provide needed leadership for the denomination in the growing alliance of UU community ministry and congregational life.

In putting forth this proposal, as a matter of policy, it is necessary to first describe how a UU Community Minister might formally affiliate with our congregation, i.e., without reference to any specific Community Minister.

I. Basics of Affiliation

1. A Community Minister at the Second Unitarian Church of Chicago will receive all of the following:

- A. Recommendation by the Parish Minister of the Church,
- B. Vote by the Committee on Ministries of the Church, and
- C. Vote by the Board of Trustees of the Church

2. The following Terms of Understanding are to be approved by:

- A. The Parish Minister,

- B. The Community Minister,
- C. The Committee on Ministries,
- D. The Board of Trustees of the church.

II. Terms of Understanding

1. The duties of the Community Minister shall be agreed upon by the Parish Minister and the Community Minister. The Parish Minister clearly have overall responsibility for ministerial leadership within the church and, thus, appropriately shall take the lead in seeking clearer delineation of responsibility, accountability, and channels of communication as responsibilities, roles, and relations are negotiated and, as needed, renegotiated. As stated in the UUMA's Code of Professional Practice, the Affiliated Community Minister "...will in all ways honor the priority of the [Parish Minister] call to the ministry of that congregation, and...will carefully shun inappropriate influence which other members may tend to yield." At the same time the Parish Minister shall earnestly seek to respect the calling, strengths, and sensibilities of the Community Minister, taking care to work collaboratively in a spirit of mutual cooperation and consultation.

2. Referrals to the Community Minister shall be in such a manner as the Parish Minister and Community Minister shall agree.

3. Community Ministers are neither employed by, nor paid by, the church on any continuing basis. Community Ministers may be employed by the church on a short term basis as needed by the church. When Second Unitarian Church members receive pastoral services from the Community Minister, there shall be no charge. When the Community Minister preaches or teaches, officiates at a wedding, funeral or memorial service, or provides other ministerial services at the church, for church members, there shall be no charge. However, when Community Ministers perform services for people who are not members of the church, then appropriate fees may be charged.

4. The Community Minister shall have access to the church facilities, photocopier, telephone, etc. for services rendered to the congregation, and the wider UU community. Secretarial services will not be provided, however.

5. The Community Minister shall be identified as such on all staff lists and annual reports to the UUA and other regional institutions. Since Community Ministers in affiliation with a congregation are eligible to vote at General Assembly, the Community Minister may serve as a Ministerial Delegate from our Church at the annual UUA General Assembly. This, however, would not reduce the number of lay or Ministerial Delegates apportioned to our Church.

6. The Community Minister shall meet with the Parish Minister and the Committee on Ministries at least quarterly in order to review their relationship with one another, and within the life of the congregation. Responsibility for initiating these meetings shall rest with the Community Minister. One of these meetings will focus on planning the Community Minister's ministerial contributions to the congregation for the following year.

7. The Community Minister shall write an annual report of his/her activities, which shall be included in the Church's Annual Report.

8. The Community Minister will have access to a Committee on Ministries to assist the Community Minister toward completing requirements of Final Fellowship, and to further professional development.

9. The UUMA Code of Professional Practice shall be carefully observed by both the Parish Minister and the Community Minister. If difficulties arise, various resources may be called upon, including the Good Offices program of the UUMA. The Community Minister may resign upon 30 days notice. The Community Minister's relationship with the Church may be terminated upon 30 days notice by either the Parish Minister or the Board of Trustees. Since the Parish Minister's relationship with the congregation is primary, should the Parish Minister resign, the Community Minister shall be prepared to resign, if necessary as well, pending establishment of a harmonious working relationship with the new Minister.

10. Changes in this document may be made by agreement between the ministers concerned, and shall be effective 60 days after written notice of the change is given to the Board of Trustees, unless the Board votes to delay, or reject the change.

11. The Community Minister agrees to be a member of the congregation, and will support the church financially.

12. The Community Minister will not make public statements of a sensitive nature regarding the church's image in the community without the approval of the Parish Minister.

13. The Community Minister will abide by the UUMA Code of Professional Ethics and the UUSCM Code of Professional Practice.

14. The Community Minister will support the Parish Minister in leading the congregation.

III. Duties of the Rev. Dundzila as a Community Minister with Second Unitarian Church of Chicago

1. The primary arena of Rev. Dundzila's ministry will be as a Professor of Humanities and Comparative Religion with Harry S Truman College (City Colleges of Chicago). The district, founded by Unitarians Jane Addams and John Dewey and others, serves to deliver exceptional learning opportunities and educational services for racially diverse and economically disadvantaged student populations in Chicago. Moreover, it works proactively to address and overcome causal factors underlying socio-economic disparities and inequities of access and graduation in higher education, as well as to eliminate barriers to employment. As a Community Minister of our church, we understand Rev. Dundzila's ministry to be an extension of our own ministry: a Unitarian Universalist ministry of religious education and social justice that the Second Unitarian Church of Chicago is extending to the larger community under the auspices of Rev. Dundzila's employer.

2. Should Rev. Dundzila's relationship with the City Colleges of Chicago be severed, he would continue to serve as Community Minister provided he is actively involved in a search for a related ministry in the greater Chicago area. It is expressly understood that the Second Unitarian Church of Chicago would bear no financial responsibility to him during this interim period. It is also expressly understood that Rev. Dundzila would resign his affiliation with the Second Unitarian Church of Chicago should he find employment that would either (1) take him out of the Chicago area or (2) not be work that is clearly understood as ministry (as defined by the Department of Ministry and the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the UUA).

3. Within the church arena, Rev. Dundzila will seek to be available, as needed and mutually agreed upon, as back-up to the Parish Minister e.g. performing rites of passage (especially non-member weddings and funerals), for on-call, pastoral care, teaching and preaching.

4. Rev. Dundzila's ministry within the congregation will emerge in consultation with the

Parish Minister. Rev. Dundzila currently leads the Pastoral Care Ministry. Similar to all volunteers for the church, Rev. Dundzila will strive to focus on only one ministerial project at a time.

5. Referrals from the Parish Minister to Rev. Dundzila and vice versa shall be carefully worked out so that each person's ministry is affirmed. Consistent with the UUMA Code of Professional Conduct, Rev. Dundzila shall defer accepting from members and friends of the church any invitation for his services traditionally associated with the Parish Ministry, in the absence of a clear prior understanding to the contrary.

6. Second Unitarian Church of Chicago will formally install Rev. Dundzila as its Community Minister, including accepting his previous ordination and extending to him the right hand of Unitarian Universalist ministerial fellowship by the Parish Minister.

Signatures and dates:

Parish Minister Date

Community Minister Date

Committee on Ministries Date

Board of Trustees Date