Excerpts from Letters of Recommendation for UUCC's Application for Covenanting Community Status with UUA - January 2025

"I am writing to offer my full support and recommendation for the Unitarian Universalist Community (UUCC) to become a covenanting congregation. Having witnessed their work firsthand, I can confidently attest to their commitment to supporting the LGBTQ+ community. They have hosted LGBTQ+ history quiz games and an anti-bullying activity at local events, put on talks by queer and transgender faith leaders, guided arts and crafts projects at our annual Pride event, and participated in local parades with us." Cam Zeller, Interim Executive Director, CoastPride

"UUCC's advocacy has been invaluable in promoting change and equality in our community. Members of the church regularly demonstrate their support at city council meetings, backing initiatives that promote equality, compassion, and justice. Most recently, UUCC has been actively advocating for affordable housing for farmworkers at the Half Moon Bay City Council meetings over the past few years. I wholeheartedly recommend UUCC for the UUA affiliation, as they consistently demonstrate a spirit of collaboration and compassion." – Judith Guerrero, Executive Director, Coastside Hope

"I have had the pleasure of working with UUCC since 2021. We were most grateful to be the recipients of the UUCC holiday fundraiser in December 2021, during which the generous members of UUCC donated $6,895 to Senior Coastsiders. In addition to this direct support of Senior Coastsiders, we know that UUCC has also been generous financial supporters of other local nonprofits, including the Coastside Adult Day Health Center and Abundant Grace." – Sandra Winter, Executive Director, Senior Coastsiders

"I am writing to recommend the UUCC, our Unitarian Universalist Coastside Community, to become a UUA-Affiliated Covenanting Congregation. They are a wonderful community that has been very welcoming to me. I have enjoyed several services with them, including the most engaging winter solstice holiday service I've ever seen. They are a lively and engaged group." – Eric Debode, Executive Director, Abundant Grace

"I recommend an affirmative response to the Unitarian Universalist Coastside Community's request to become a UUA Covenanting Community. I have spoken there twice, and in each case I was impressed by their hard work and their dedication to presenting meaningful services of professional quality. I do quite a bit of guest preaching, and I have seen no other congregation that is as careful in preparing Zoom services. I'm sure the UUCC in-person experience is also excellent." – Rev. Chris Schriner, Minister Emeritus, Mission Peak UU

“More impressive was participating with their worship team as they planned a service when I was speaking. Their care, attention to detail, focus on quality, creativity, thematic integration, and amount of time spent on planning and rehearsing were amazing. During my ministerial career, I worked with several small, lay-led congregations in various consulting roles. None of them came close to what UUCC does. Their involvement in the online Shared Pulpit program reflects a commitment to quality. I would add that their commitment to right relationship echoed in all of my interactions with them.” – Rev. Kirk Loadman Copeland

“In my opinion, UUCC is at a tipping point—and ready to become independent from their long relationship with UU San Mateo. The congregation is well past the "launch" phase of a small church and is in the phase of growth (new members are joining!). They embody all that UU congregations strive for, that is: supporting each other, learning from experiments, constant improvements in worship and administration, connecting locally with good causes , and promoting UU values.” – Rev. Russ Menk

“UUCC has fostered relationships with a number of UU communities beyond UUSM, forming mutually supportive relationships. During Covid in particular, they played an important role in collaborating with other UU congregations around online worship. For a period of time, UUSM, UUFRC and UUCC created a partnership for summer services, with each congregation hosting 2 worship services a summer, which was mutually beneficial for the worship teams of all three congregations and helped build relationships as well.” – Rev. Tovis Page and Tricia Dell

“We, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Santa Cruz County, are an established fellowship just down the California Coast from UUCC. Although we have been a thriving fellowship for almost six decades, the UUCC has actually provided our Worship Team with quite a bit of mentoring during the past few years. We feel this puts them in good stead for one of the defining characteristics of a UUA Covenanting Community: Maintain relationships with other UU individuals, groups, and congregations.” – Bob Campbell & Mindy Scherr, UU Fellowship of Santa Cruz County

“During this past year, UUCC leadership has been extremely supportive and available to our congregation as we go through a time of challenging transition. UUCIL was unexpectedly unable to call a minister for the current church year. Consequently, we needed to arrange lay speakers and visiting ministers for all Sunday services in a short amount of time. To summarize, UUCC is the UU community from whom we have received the most support during this transitional year. We are enthused about their effort to become a covenanting Unitarian Universalist community affiliated with the UUA, formalizing and reflective of the

actual role that they already play in this region." – Emily Ranken, Board President, UUCiL (Livermore)

"During the pandemic, the UUCLC and the UUCC began a rich relationship of working together to survive the dark days of the pandemic. While the UUCLC congregation shuttered in our homes, the UUCC's Worship Committee shared with us their knowledge and extensive digital music library. Both congregations traded speakers via ZOOM. We have enjoyed a loving, sharing relationship with the UUCC and whole-heartedly recommend this congregation for independent status with the UUA. – Susan Herrmann & Alex Rudy, UUCLC Board Co-Presidents; Jane Thanx, UUCLC Worship Chair

"Finally, on a personal note, I am so very grateful to the members of UCCC for their willingness to invite seminarians to lead worship. I'm sure you've had the experience of leading worship as a guest speaker only to find that the community is a little rigid in the way they do things: not interested in changing the order of service or adding in a new ritual, easily riled up by mentions of god in worship, or just a little cold to outsiders. In my experience, the exact opposite is true of UUCC! They are a warm and welcoming place to preach, eager to engage with a variety of spiritual perspectives, and explicitly welcoming of UUs who want to engage with god-language in worship. They have a worship planning process that offers an established form for seminarians who may need more support in crafting a full service while also remaining open to new ideas and creativity in worship. UUCC is, in so many ways, an ideal place for seminarians to practice leading worship, and their consistent outreach to emerging ministers is so appreciated." – Esther Wallace, MDiv

"I want to underscore the high quality level of collaboration in preparing the entire service each time I was invited to preach. The worship associates, led by Noreen Cooper Heavlin and Bill Heavlin, worked extensively with me at various stages of sermon and worship preparation, from suggestions for specific sermon ideas, input on draft ideas or versions of my sermon, and working with me to include other elements of the worship service, including rituals we created. They were absolutely supportive as we reviewed the service, ensuring that all elements coherently fit together. In addition, we reviewed each step of the service so that all handoffs from one element to the next would go smoothly. They always offered to allow me to take on as many elements of the worship service as I felt comfortable doing but also offered to allow me to focus just on sermon preparation and delivery while they handled all other elements. In addition, after the service, we regularly went to lunch, where both Noreen and Bill offered constructive feedback on my sermons. The whole process was about as positive and productive to my learning as any I have experienced with other congregations." –Ron Ahnen