

Meet the Nominees for your Search Committee

A Search Team publicizes the congregation's 'resume', seeks applicants, reads applications and screens candidates by checking references. They interview candidates, review sermons & worship leadership, consider together. Second interviews may follow, or a visit to Pasadena. Their goal is to settle on a candidate whom they can present to the congregation. Your nominating committee believes these persons are well-equipped to do this, and to work well together. This group will need to be good at getting tasks done, evaluating written information and conducting interviews; then making decisions. They will also be your representatives. So, it is hoped that a candidate will get a glimpse of the strengths of this congregation when meeting with them.

Allan Rohlf – Allan is a retired therapist with a deep appreciation for this congregation's spirit of welcome and its theological commitments. He spends some time each year in Hawaii, which means he has experienced other congregations and can bring that wisdom & perspective to the group. He is a terrific listener, readily able to discern the heart of the matter. He is articulate, intelligent, and kind – all things that will serve him well in this role.

Heather Bland – Heather's faith has led her to justice work as CEO for My Refuge House in the Philippines (since the pandemic she only travels there once a year). She has organizational and leadership skills and is well-versed in the many facets of organizational life. She participates actively in the congregation. She is familiar with theological language which will be useful in reading what candidates have said in their profiles. She has a natural warmth and a ready laugh that puts others at ease, and her training as a therapist means that she is insightful and very good at conversations (like interviews!).

Jeff Levison – A member of FCC for decades, Jeff has exercised his leadership in many important roles. He has moderated Church Council and he chaired the Strategic Plan Task Force some years ago, helping to re-focus the congregation's mission. He is skilled with a spreadsheet and understands the congregation's budget intimately. He works at JPL and his experience interviewing and recruiting new talent for the organization will serve him well as an interviewer. Jeff is a process person, good at thinking about how something might be accomplished. He has been a UCC member all his life (which is rare). He is passionate about looking forward and following God into the future. He served on the Search Team that called the most recent pastors.

Bob Rinck – Bob's friendly strength and easy manner convey steadiness. He is comfortable with evaluating situations and conveying information (both welcome and challenging). He thinks things through and often sees things others miss. Having raised his kids at FCC, he understands the importance of community and connection. As a musician he values the importance of music in our common life. He can evaluate complicated situations and make clear and effective decisions, which will serve him well in this role.

John Gamber-Thompson – John is a public-school teacher and a parent of school-age kids. He is spiritually thoughtful, and emotionally intelligent. He is valued by the community for his kindness and trustworthiness, his warm smile and his involvement. He grew up in very conservative Christian spaces and values the inclusive welcome of FCC. He wants his kids to know a faith tradition that welcomes questions and doubt, and hopes they experience a community of love, care, and belonging. He believes exposing them to a broad and spacious faith tradition will 'inoculate' them against versions of 'faith' that exclude or demonize others.

We hope you will agree that these are the folks the Spirit has raised up at this time for this purpose, and that they will represent you well in the sacred task ahead of them.