

Meet Zackrie Vinczen, Ministerial Candidate

Zackrie graduated with a Master of Divinity degree from Starr King School for the Ministry in 2017. Since graduation, he has worked on the staff of the nearly 400-member Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley as both the Program Coordinator and Acting Director of Family Ministry. This multi-dimensional program is dedicated to preparing young UUs & their families for a lifetime of spiritual exploration and growth. While embracing many aspects of traditional religious education, the Family Ministry program also has been actively re-imagining how UU parents can be supported in their roles as the principal religious educators for their children.

While still a seminary student and as part of his ministerial formation, Zackrie spent time with the San Francisco Night Ministry, working primarily with homeless and marginally housed people. He says the experience taught him about ministerial authority in the public sphere, affirmed his own call to pastoral ministry, and demonstrated the important role pastoral care plays within a community. The experience also helped him more deeply understand his personal "longing to be pastoral -- helping people to find meaning and navigate the complexities of their lives."

Coming to Cedars would be a return to Washington for Zackrie. Although born in Alaska, Zackrie spent most of his childhood in Grays Harbor County, where he graduated from high school and community college. After completing his AA degree, Zackrie transferred to Western Washington University in Bellingham and declared a double major in philosophy and creative writing. He graduated with a BA in English, focusing in non-fiction creative writing. It was also in Bellingham that Zackrie met his husband, Elliott Smith, and first encountered UU values at the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship.

Zackrie made a very positive impression on the Cedars Search Committee with his deeply reflective and personable nature, satisfying everyone that he will be well-matched with Cedars and its aspirations. His training, experience, and enthusiasm promise a fresh and collaborative partnership as we venture together toward a new era in our congregational development.