

Q: What will we do during the transition to support membership and engagement at First Universalist?

A: While transitions do put a strain on commitments of both involvement and financial support, we believe that over the past ten years we have grown stronger with our understanding of our mission and structure, and that our membership is more open to discussing our differences, whatever the topic. We have done a lot of work to renovate our church home, also, and that is paying off in rentals.

Most recently, we have learned a lot about the importance of being in healthy relationships (covenant!) and will be sharing our draft covenant at the Mid-Year Meeting. And finally, we are kicking off 2018 with a series of "Dream Circles" to which all will be invited, where we can express our highest hopes for First Universalist and all the ways we are able to Explore, Embrace, and Engage. We are here for you and your spiritual journey, no matter what.

If you have other ideas or questions, please feel free to contact any member of the Board: Joanna Landsman (President), Lily O'Brien (Vice-President), Marge Titcomb (Treasurer), Sarah Witte (Clerk), Charlie Horstmann, Rebecca Rundquist, Lauren Taylor, and Jamie Brookes.

You can find us at church, leave a note in our boxes, or send an email to any of us through addresses listed in the directory, or through the office email at office@uuyarmouth.org. Thank you!

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be a spiritual seeker

**First Universalist Church
Yarmouth**

**Ministerial Transitions
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**



Q. What's going on?

A. Reverend Jennifer Emrich, our called minister, decided that this would be her last year of professional congregational ministry, and shared that decision with us in September 2017. She will be with us in her full capacity as our minister through this church year, which ends on June 30, 2018.

Q. Then what is she going to do?

A. She is looking forward to obtaining official teaching credentials, and will be exploring a world of possibilities!

Q. Will she still be a UU and will she attend First Universalist?

A. You might see Jennifer around Yarmouth, as her children Max and Madelin will continue to attend the North Yarmouth schools. Max and Maddie may continue to have involvement at First U, but Jennifer will not attend our worship services for at least two years, in keeping with UU clergy guidelines.

Q. Will Reverend Jennifer still do things like our weddings and memorial services while we're in transition?

A. No, once a called minister leaves a church community, he or she is no longer in service to that community. We will have the professional support of other UU clergy for worship and pastoral care during our transition time.

Q. What is next for us and how do we get there?

A. The First Universalist Board of Trustees has contacted the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA, in Boston) for guidance. The UUA provides amazing support for congregations, from arranging an Interim Minister to helping us develop a Search Team and providing us with candidates who meet our desired profile.

Q. What is the Transition Team?

A. The Transition Team will help the church and Rev. Jennifer to have a "Good Goodbye." A Transition Team is not yet in place. The Board and Healthy Congregation Team will develop a suggested team structure in the coming months.

Q. How and when will we select the ministerial Search Committee?

A. The UUA will help the Board to follow a tried-and-true process of inviting self-nominated individuals from current active membership to apply for positions on the Search Committee, which would begin its work next summer at the earliest (2018).

We will ask our members to vote on the Search Committee at our Annual Meeting in late May or early June, or we may choose to put it off a year, and do the Search for a minister in the church year 2019-2020.

Q. Why would that take so long?

A. Especially in the case of long-term ministers leaving a church, the UUA recommends a two year interim. The first year is devoted to normalizing the transition/change period, and conducting an in-depth assessment of the current state of the congregation.

After the ministerial Search Committee is selected by the congregation, we can expect to spend time in the second year helping the church, as a whole, clarify a current-state picture of our desired future. We have not decided if one or two years is better for Yarmouth.

Q. What are the expenses associated with the Ministerial Transition?

A. The Transition Team and Board will learn more about this and share it with the congregation in the coming months.