

Affiliated Community Ministry
At
Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington
Reverend Forrest Gilmore
December Congregational Meeting

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 Ministers 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.”

In putting forth this proposal, as a matter of policy, it is necessary to first describe how Reverend Forrest Gilmore, Director of Shalom Community Center in Bloomington, Indiana might formally affiliate with our congregation

I. Basics of Affiliation

1. Reverend Gilmore would be all of the following:
 - A. Endorsed by the congregation at a congregational meeting;
 1. Upon prior recommendation by the Ministers of UUCB,
 2. Upon prior concurrence in that recommendation by the Board of Trustees of the Congregation, at a Board meeting;

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

- A. The Parish Ministers
- B. The Affiliated Community Minister.
- C. The Board of Trustees of the church.

II. Terms of Understanding

1. The duties of the Affiliated Community Minister (see III.) shall be agreed upon by the Parish Ministers and the Community Minister. The Parish Ministers 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(s)] 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 Ministers shall earnestly seek to respect the calling, strengths, and sensibilities of the Affiliated Community Minister, taking care to work collaboratively in a spirit of mutual cooperation and consultation.

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

3. Affiliated Community Ministers are neither employed by, nor paid by, the church on any continuing basis. When the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington members receive supportive services from the Reverend Gilmore, there shall be no charge. When Reverend Gilmore preaches or officiates at a wedding, funeral or memorial service, or provides other ministerial services at the church, for church members, normal congregational policies will be followed.

4. Reverend Gilmore shall have access to the church facilities and photocopier for services rendered to the congregation, and the wider UU community. Administrative services will not be provided, however. Reverend Gilmore shall be identified Community Minister on all staff lists and annual reports to the UUA and other regional institutions, on the Order of Service covers, etc., as space permits. Given the recent rule change by the UUA Board of Trustees regarding Community Ministers in affiliation with a congregation being eligible to vote at General Assembly, Reverend Gilmore may serve as a Ministerial Delegate from our congregation at the annual UUA General Assembly. This, however, would not reduce the number of lay or Ministerial Delegates apportioned to our Society.

5. Reverend Gilmore shall meet with the Senior Minister, Reverend Mary Ann Macklin and Associate Minister, Reverend Scott McNeill at least four times a year in order to review their relationship with one another, and within the life of the congregation. Responsibility for initiating these meetings shall rest with Reverend Gilmore.

6. Reverend Gilmore shall write an annual report of his/her activities, which shall be included in the Society's Annual Report.

7. Reverend Gilmore will have access to a Ministerial Support Committee to further professional development.

8. The UUMA Code of Professional Practice shall be carefully observed by both the Parish Ministers (Macklin and McNeill) and the Affiliated Community Minister (Gilmore). If difficulties arise, various resources may be called upon, including the Good Offices program of the UUMA. The Affiliated Community Minister may resign upon 30 days notice. Upon recommendation of the Parish Ministers and/or with the concurrence of the Board of Trustees, the Affiliated Community Minister's relationship with the society may be terminated upon 30 days notice. Since the Parish Ministers' relationship with the congregation is primary, should the Senior Ministers resign, the Affiliated Community Minister shall be prepared to resign, if necessary as well, pending establishment of a harmonious working relationship with the new Senior Minister.

9. 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.

III. Duties of the Reverend Forrest Gilmore as an Affiliated Community Minister with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington

1. The primary arena of Reverend ministry will remain with his duties as Director of Shalom Community Center in Bloomington, Indiana whose mission is *to aid and empower people experiencing homelessness and poverty. Shalom Community Center envisions a community that honors every person's fundamental right to sustenance, a safe home, quality health care, and meaningful work. We see ourselves as a key leader in providing the full range of support and services for people dealing with poverty and homelessness in South Central Indiana.*

2. Should Reverend Gilmore's relationship with the Shalom Community Center be severed, he would continue to serve as Affiliated Community Minister provided he is actively involved in a search for a related ministry in the greater Bloomington area. It is expressly understood that the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington would bear no financial responsibility to him during this interim period. It is also expressly understood that Reverend Gilmore would resign his affiliation with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington should he find employment that would either (1) take him out of the 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, Reverend Gilmore will seek to be available, as needed and mutually agreed upon,

- *to work with our Homelessness Task Force.
- * to perform rites of passage (non-member weddings and funerals)
- *to preach four times a year---fall, winter/spring, summer (June and July)
- *to meet with a Ministerial Support Committee
- *to attend professional gatherings when possible
- *to provide \$1000 Professional Expense line annually beginning 7/1/18

4. In consultation with the Parish Ministers, Reverend Gilmore may occasionally teach a class, lead a discussion or mini-orientation, and/or represent the church at denominational meetings, and other such ministerial tasks.

5. Referrals from the Parish Ministers to Reverend Gilmore and vice versa shall be carefully worked out so that each person's ministry is affirmed. Consistent with the UUMA Code of Professional Conduct, Reverend Gilmore 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.