

**Mission Peak Summary Guide to the
Ministerial Sabbatical
Oct 15, 2023 – Jan 15, 2024**

SABBATICAL MINISTER

The Rev. Jim McKinley

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SABBATICAL COMMITTEE (Committee on Ministry)

Committee on Ministry com@mpuuc.org

Alan Davis – Chair alanshar@comcast.net

Paul Clifford paulkclifford@gmail.com

Rev. Barbara Meyers bfkmeyers@gmail.com

The Committee on Ministry will serve as the group to oversee sabbatical operations during Rev. Greg's absence. This summary will serve as the overview for having a happy, healthy, enlightening and productive sabbatical.

WHAT IS A SABBATICAL?

A ministerial sabbatical is a period of time when the professional Settled Minister sets aside normal responsibilities for the purpose of rest, renewal and rediscovery of their call. It is an intentional effort toward reinvention and reinvigoration based on a deeper understanding of themselves and their call that has been gained in the previous period of extended service.

A ministerial sabbatical is NOT an extended vacation. Nor is it an academic sabbatical that normally involves extensive study. It is a purposeful release from the normal routines of ministry in order to discern how their own physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual needs have evolved. It also asks the minister to recognize and appreciate the ways in which the needs of the community they serve have evolved as well.

The concept of a sabbatical has roots in Judeo, Christian and Islamic practices. 'On the seventh day (shabbat) there is rest'. It has agrarian roots as well. It was a common practice to allow a field to lay fallow every seventh year. This provided time for the minerals and nutrients that had been expended to be replenished.

Sabbaticals for 'settled' ministers have been a longstanding and standard part of the contractual agreement within the Unitarian Universalist tradition (as well as other denominations). There is specific language in all settled minister's contracts, including the one MPUUC has with Rev. Greg.

Last year, the Committee on Ministry (CoM) made a recommendation to the Board of Trustees that the congregation consider having two shorter sabbaticals (3 months) in a seven year period rather than one long one (6 months). The reason being that the CoM felt MPUUC, having little paid staff and infrastructure, relies heavily on the professional minister for day to day operations. A sabbatical for longer than 3 months would put significant strain on key leaders and systems. Rev. Greg and the Board saw the wisdom in the recommendation and are in support of this approach.

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MUTUAL BENEFIT FOR MPUUC

One ideal within Unitarian Universalism involves the shared nature of ministry. There is a strength and balance that exists between a professional minister and the lay ministry that comes from volunteers. It should also be clear that the stresses, hardships and burdens of any ministry are not endured by professional ministers alone. All participants – lay and professional – feel the impact. Obstacles preventing excellence in the overall ministry might stem from volunteer fatigue, less than optimal distribution of authority / responsibility, poor communication or situations where efforts are in conflict, rather than cooperatively coordinated.

When a professional minister steps out of a system, it can provide the opportunity for more than just the minister to learn. It can be an enlightening experience for lay leaders to discover the unseen areas where the minister functions. Perhaps the minister has over-functioned in certain areas, taken on authority or responsibilities better left to others or created an overreliance on the minister. Perhaps the minister's time might be better redistributed to another underserved area of the congregation. Perhaps a minister's duties can be better apportioned to a staff member or capable volunteer. A sabbatical is a crucial time for the laity to explore possibilities creatively, free of the minister's influence. It is NOT a time to keep things in a strict holding pattern, ready for the minister to return and re-plug into all the exact same routines they were doing before.

Ideally, a minister returns from sabbatical with new epiphanies that are the key to their revitalization and renewed passion. Ideally, the congregation will come back from the experience with some of the same insights. The period of post-sabbatical re-uniting between professional minister and congregational laity will – hopefully – be an exciting conversation honoring experiences and listening to each other into productive change.

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SABBATICAL MINISTER



The Rev. Jim McKinley served for nearly 30 years as a UU Minister. Experience, insight, his kind and caring demeanor - all made him an obvious choice. His roughly $\frac{1}{3}$ time contract covers only some of Rev. Greg's responsibilities. He will be with us in-person. His tasks include:

- Preaching 10 times and coordinating Worship
- Periodic post-service conversations
- Support and counsel for staff.
- Support and counsel for Board
- Support and counsel for Rev. Barbara Meyers as Pastoral Care Coordinator
- Support and Counsel for CoM
- Consultant for special programming provided by staff, CoM or Board. Rev. Jim will *not* be expected to
- Attend Committee meetings
- Attend Social Justice events
- Attend Board Meetings (unless by special invitation of the President)
- Serve in a denominational or collegial capacity
- Rev. Jim may attend social events in a non-programming role to connect, offer care, encouragement and support

SABBATICAL COVERAGE

The Rev. Jim McKinley will serve approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ time as MPUUC's Sabbatical Minister. Rev. Jim is only one of several different strategies CoM has arranged to cover the responsibilities normally handled by Rev. Greg.

- Rev. Barbara Meyers will serve as a paid Pastoral Care Coordinator.
- Ariel Smith-Iyer, who works on Multigenerational Community Building will share additional hours with Von Bringham, Choir Director, to provide programming support.
- Sandra Lange, our Congregational Administrator, will provide additional administrative support for staff and Worship development.
- The Board will monitor emerging unmet needs within leadership support and be available to coordinate and communicate with volunteers.
- The Committee on Ministry will help coordinate these efforts and provide regular communication with the congregation; including at least three Congregational Conversations

DATE	CONVERSATION
Oct 15	Plans, Possible exploration, Questions, Concerns
Nov 19	Surprises, empowerment Resources, Tools
Jan 21	Discoveries, New Ideas, Positive Change

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SABBATICAL WORSHIP SERVICES

DATE	LEAD / ASSOCIATE TITLE / DESCRIPTION
Oct 15	Rev. Greg Ward and Rev. Jim McKinley Walking the Path that Comes to You
Oct 22	Rev. Jim McKinley and Paul K. Davis Jim's Big Picture of Life and Love.
Oct 29	Rev. Dr Kathy Hurt and Rev. Barbara Meyers; "A Spiritual Facelift" What spiritual growth looks like.
Nov 5	Rev. Jim McKinley and Don Ramie "The Chalice of Our Being" The Chalice as a Spiritual Compass.
Nov 12	Rev. Jim McKinley and Drew Wilson "Hope that Works." How hope can make a real difference and bring true joy
Nov 19	Rev. Jim McKinley and Mark Rahman "Preoccupied." How gratitude, appreciation and mindfulness help us reoccupy ourselves.
Nov 26	Guest at Your Table with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and Kathi Bayne
Dec 3	Rev. Jim McKinley and Paul K. Davis "You Gotta Own It." Lessons from a 24 day trip through the Grand Canyon.
Dec 10	Rev. Jim McKinley and Sharon Davis "You're Here!" A letter to his daughter about a hope that invites us to life.
Dec 17	Rev. Dr. Chris Schriener and Drew Wilson; "Letting Go of Our Dearest Illusion"
Dec 24 5:00pm	Rev. Jim McKinley and Rev. Barbara Meyers "A Heartwarming Christmas Eve message of Love."
Dec 31	Eric Dittmar and Mark Rahman <u>Breathing Love</u> - Meditation for Stress Management based on Tonglen
Jan 7	Rev. Jim McKinley and Paul K. Davis "Three Suggestions for the New Year." Wisdom to remember from a clay tablet.
Jan 14	Rev. Jim McKinley and Rev. Greg "Farewells, Appreciations and Welcome Home." Rev. Jim's final Sunday and Rev. Greg's return.

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**PASTORAL CARE
(ENCOURAGEMENT COMMITTEE)**

Rev. Barbara Meyers has been hired to provide professional pastoral care in situations that merit professional responsibilities. If you need Pastoral Support during the sabbatical, you can contact the Encouragement Team Leadership at eclead@mpuuc.org or any individual member of the team

ENCOURAGEMENT TEAM

Sharon Davis (Chair)	sawatkinsdavis@gmail.com
Jo Ann Schriener (Secretary)	hellojoann13@gmail.com
Rev. Barbara Meyers (Professional On-Call Support)	bfkmeyers@gmail.com
Don Ramie (Member at Large)	donramie2@gmail.com
Julie Ganzlin (Member at Large)	jganzlin2u@comcast.net
Lucienne Bouvier (Member at Large)	xochiquetzal3261@gmail.com

THE BOARD

Beth Schaefer - President;	president@mpuuc.org
Jay Steele - Treasurer;	treasurer@mpuuc.org
Michelle Wallace - Secretary;	mlwallace1021@gmail.com
Valerie Stewart - Member at Large;	valeriempuuc@gmail.com
Stephen Longfield - Member at Large;	stephen.longfield@gmail.com
Kathi Bayne - Member at Large;	kabayne@gmail.com

WORSHIP ASSOCIATES

Our Worship Associates coordinate what happens in our Sunday Worship Services. They are:

Paul K. Davis	paulkdavis@earthlink.net
Rev. Barbara Meyers	bfkmeyers@gmail.com
Mark Rahman	markrahman52@yahoo.com
Sharon Davis	sawatkinsdavis@yahoo.com
Don Ramie	donramie2@gmail.com
Drew Wilson	drewwilson47@gmail.com