

Ministerial Settlement System

Congregational Record



The Unitarian Universalist Association declares and affirms its special responsibility, and that of its member congregations and organizations, to promote the full participation of persons in all of its and their activities and in the full range of human endeavor without regard to race, color, sex, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, age, or national origin.

Congregation: **UU Fellowship of Durango**

Website address: **www.durangouu.org**

Ministry title: **Minister**

Congregation Size: **I**

Congregation Wage Rate Area: **4**

Salary plus Housing: **\$**

Do the benefits and professional expenses provided for this position meet (or even exceed) the UUA Transitions Office recommendations as described in the "Open for Business" section of the [Settlement Handbook \(PDF\)](#)? **No**

If there is a range in the S&H, describe the objective, measurable criteria you will use in categorizing a potential candidate.

High \$82,000 - Senior minister with extensive experience. Total compensation for salary, housing and benefits.

Mid \$77,000 - Mid-career minister with developmental experience. Total compensation for salary, housing and benefits.

Low \$72,000 - Newly minted minister with short experience record. Total compensation for salary, housing and benefits.

Is the minister expected to occupy a parsonage? **no**

How much of the S&H is attributable to rental value? **15,600** To utilities? **2,600**

Number of adult members: **106** Av. Sunday attendance: **75**

Children & youth enrollment: **28** Av. children & youth attendance: **15**

Total operating expenditures: **141,812**

Total operating pledge income: **114,128** Number of pledge units: **67**

How many Sunday services? **1** Others during the week? **0**
How many months per year is the church at full operating capacity? **12**

Describe the character of the surrounding community:

Durango is nestled in the mountains of southwest Colorado at an altitude of 6,512 feet. To the south is high desert and to the north are the rugged San Juan mountains.

As of the 2012 census estimate, there were about 17,000 people residing in the city. La Plata County has a population of about 52,000 The ethnic makeup of the city in 2010 was 78.6% White, 0.6% African American, 6.3% Native American, 0.8% Asian, 3.0% other, and 3.0% from two or more ancestries. Hispanics were 12.3% of the population in 2000. Data provided add up to over 100%.

The Animas River runs through downtown and boasts excellent fly-fishing waters, and is popular for whitewater rafting, kayaking and canoeing. Durango is also popular for outdoor activities such as hiking, mountain biking, road biking, backpacking, rock climbing, hunting, off-roading, year-round fishing, kayaking and golfing. Durango enjoys two tourist seasons--summer for family vacations and winter for ski vacations. About one-quarter of the economy depends on tourism with the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railway the main summertime draw. The Durango Mountain Resort ski area is the largest wintertime attraction. Despite the high number of tourists, Durango feels like a "home town" with a real sense of community. When members attend a San Juan Symphony concert they generally run into many close friends.

Main Avenue in downtown Durango is home to boutiques, restaurants, newsstands, tourist and gift shops, a mall, bars, lounges and other businesses. Many buildings downtown are several stories high and include apartments on the upper levels. Durango's two oldest historic hotels, The General Palmer and the Strater, are both near the south end of Main Avenue, one and two blocks away from the train station, respectively. It is also home to many restaurants serving a wide variety of cuisines including Mexican, Italian, French, Thai, Indian and Japanese and others serve American favorites. Thousands of tourists walk Main Avenue each week, making it the most popular shopping and relaxing tourist destination in Durango.

Cultural organizations active in Durango include the San Juan Symphony (four concerts per year), Music in the Mountains (a three week summer festival with concerts daily), the Durango Choral Society, the UUFDR recital series and the 3rd Avenue Arts series of concerts. The Durango Arts Center is a showcase for the visual arts as well as plays and musicals. The downtown area has numerous art galleries. Even long term residents are amazed at the number of events and celebrations in Durango. In addition, the city has numerous volunteer opportunities at non-profit organizations.

Institutions of higher education include: Fort Lewis College, a four-year liberal arts

college enrolling approximately 4,500 students, that contributes a “college town” atmosphere to Durango. In addition to the lively energy that the students bring to the community, there are opportunities to take or audit classes, participate in the Continuing Education program or in the Professional Associates—a group of community members working to support and enhance college programs. The Community Concert Hall provides a full season of a wide variety of entertainment; the Center of Southwest Studies presents educational programs as well as ongoing exhibits in their gallery; the Art Department maintains a gallery featuring student and community artists; the Theater Department provides a full theater season; and the Music Department provides ongoing concerts by faculty and students. The School of Business maintains an active interface with the community offering education and consultation. The Life Long Learning program offers weekly lectures on a wide variety of topics. In the fall of 2013 four of the ten lectures will be given by UUFD members.

Southwest Colorado Community College, a branch of Pueblo Community College, is located in the Central Business District, on Camino del Rio.

San Juan Basin Technical College, located outside of Cortez, Colorado, 45 miles away, offers EMT certification in Durango.

The San Juan Community College in Farmington, about 50 miles to the south, offers AA degrees.

Additional information about Durango can be found at www.durangogov.org.

We have a parsonage on the property and whether the minister lives in it is negotiable.

UUA District: **Mountain Desert District** District Executive: **Rev. Nancy Bowen**

APF contribution: **5,280** Fair Share? **yes**

Ministerial settlement rep.: **Rev. Nancy Bowen** Compensation Consultant: **Rev. Nancy Bowen**

Provide your profile of the minister you seek:

We have a very lively and vibrant fellowship, historically very successful under exclusively lay leadership. Following a recent growth spurt and a variety of self-assessments, we now seek a Developmental Minister who will first work to understand the 46-year history of our fellowship, and then fully join with us to assess our current needs and enhance our continuing growth and impact on the lives of our members and friends, Durango and the greater Four Corners community.

We seek someone with both life experience and ministerial experience. Our minister must be able to help us raise our expectations of ourselves, value what is positive in

our congregation, work with and improve our long tradition of lay leadership. We seek someone who can provide inspirational and thought provoking sermons, with extensive experience and training in compassionate pastoral care, an interest in social justice and the environment, and a strong commitment to adult and children's RE. We seek a minister who is comfortable and competent in establishing an active, professional profile in the larger community – someone who will represent the liberal religious views of our congregation in Durango and the Four Corners area.

We have polled the congregation several times. First, a 2012 survey surfaced a desire for professional leadership. A series of focus groups made up of members and friends showed a desire for professional ministerial shared leadership and identified goals they believed should be the focus of a minister's efforts:

- 1) Develop a shared leadership approach to fellowship, governance and ministry,**
- 2) Continuing exploration of individual spirituality,**
- 3) Developing our pastoral care capacity and practice,**
- 4) Enhancing our Unitarian Universalist presence in the community, and**
- 5) Expanding our social justice efforts.**

Next, we held a series of small-group discussions to further refine the congregations thinking on a minister. That was followed by a second survey to provide more information about the congregation. The results of these interactions among the Fellowship were consistent with the earlier Focus Group results and add specificity which is reflected in the other parts of this document. Detailed information about the whole Ministerial Search process can be found on the UUFD website.

Regarding Sunday services: we seek experiences that (in order of importance): 1) encourage spiritual growth and change, 2) encourage compassion and generosity, 3) deepen the personal relationships within the UUFD community, 4) encourage respite and reflection and 5) help us better understand ourselves. A minister needs to be able to challenge and provoke us rather than telling us what to believe. The ability to deliver messages that reinforce a theme as well as providing a direct link to our UU principles is important.

Although this congregation looks forward to having a minister in the pulpit on a regular basis, we highly value the Sunday presentations of our own members and people from the community, as well as occasional visiting ministers. Most of our congregation feels that two sermons per month by our own minister is the ideal.

Being able to set reasonable priorities will be an important skill for any minister faced with the above tasks. In addition, excellent interpersonal skills will enable this person to engage in the interaction necessary for building relationship with members, friends, and the larger community.

Above all, we seek a minister who will become an integral part of our religious community, seeking with us, sharing our joys and struggles, and ultimately

providing us with the assistance we need to become a more fully beloved community.

Provide your profile of your congregation:

We are diverse in education, professions, age, working and retired, socially liberal, very diverse financially, and with many variations of religious tradition and belief. We are a multi-talented group of avid volunteers. Regarding our Sunday service experience, we rank the social time following the service and the discussion session to be as important as the sermon.

Data for this profile comes from a survey recently conducted among members and friends of the fellowship. Out of 105 members, 47 participated and 10 friends participated. It represents a solid snapshot, but is a panoramic rather than closeup view. The outcome does support information from a larger sample who participated in focus groups as well as a second set of small discussion groups. The margin of error is plus or minus 10 percent, so consider all numbers approximations.

The length of time members and friends have been associated with the congregation varies from new members (including those new to Unitarian Universalism) to a founding member who still attends regularly. Relative newcomers, from 0 to 2 years, account for 24 percent of survey respondents. Some 31 percent have been with us for 3 to 5 years while those of 6 to 10 years and over 10 years are 22 percent each.

A little over half (54 percent) have been affiliated with other UU societies and 46 percent are new to Unitarian Universalism. Most respondents (74 percent) claim to attend almost weekly and 11 percent attend once or twice a month.

In 2012, UUFD was officially named a Welcoming Congregation by the UUA. We believe that the number of LGBTQ members and friends approximate the percentages found in the general population.

As stated earlier, we are a congregation with more old members than young. Fully 6 percent of respondents to our survey are over 80 years old, 24 percent are 70 to 79, 44 percent 60 to 69. Thus, about $\frac{3}{4}$ are over 60 years old and no survey respondents were 29 or less. The vast majority (72 percent) are married and 6 percent live with a partner. Twenty-one percent are either divorced, widowed or single.

Eighty percent of survey respondents have at least a bachelor's degree. Twenty-six percent have a bachelor's degree, the same percentage have a master's and 28 percent have either a PhD, MD or other professional terminal degree.

Ethnically, UUFD is a reflection of Durango in that 91 percent of respondents are white/non-Hispanic, 2 percent are Hispanic/Latino and 7 percent prefer not to answer. Retired folks account for 57 percent of respondents while 39 percent are working.

Family income varies widely, with some reporting an annual income of less than \$15,000 while others reported incomes exceeding \$250,000. However, one-third of respondents preferred not to answer this question. It would appear that the median income pledging unit is roughly \$60,000.

A question about people's current religious orientation revealed considerable theological diversity (multiple answers were permitted and results are reported in order of preference):

- 1) Eclectic (59%): taking values and concepts from many different sources,
- 2) Humanist (46%): human experience is the basis of all religion and ethics,
- 3) Agnostic (39%): do not know "the truth" about theological matters,
- 4) Ethical religion (35%): religion should encourage the development of ethical matters,
- 5) Naturalistic theism (30%): powers traditionally attributed to a supernatural God are inherent in the natural world,
- 6) Mysticism (28%): it is possible for humans to have a vital identification with the cosmos,
- 7) Rationalism (28%): science and logic are the foundation of ethical living,
- 8) Earth-centered spirituality (24%): celebrates the sacred circle of life,
- 9) Skepticism (22%): there is no way of knowing the truth about theological matters, and
- 10) Buddhism of any form (20%).

What role do the congregation and its leaders expect the minister to play in relation to the other paid staff?

The minister will report to the Board of Trustees. Other staff members, the Administrative Assistant, RE Director, Music Director and Sexton will report to the minister.

Congregational history:

How and when was the congregation founded?

A History of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durango

By Dr. Frank O. Bowman and Dr. John Maisel, March, 2001

With assistance from Charles Archibald, Pat Blair, Mary Ruth Bowman and Sharon Gordon

Edited and updated by Lois Carpenter, March, 2007 and Ron Garst in 2013

The Early Years

In May 1967, fifteen members of the Durango community recognized a common interest. They were either Unitarians or they thought like them. They applied for and were granted a UUA charter in September 1967. When the Fellowship held a 30-year anniversary celebration in 1997, only Frank Bowman was still active and attends to this day.

Initially, the group held meetings once or twice monthly in members' homes, except for a summer hiatus in July and August. The members eventually realized that a central meeting place of their own would enable a larger membership. Accordingly, in 1982, the fellowship acquired a house at 848 E. Third Ave, which for the next 17 years was known as the Unitarian House.

Upon obtaining the house in 1982, members pitched in with shovels, brooms, carpenter's tools, soap and water, and paintbrushes. They renovated the entire house. Despite the original financing, the house was a considerable burden on the membership at a time when the Fellowship's operating budget was only a few thousand dollars a year.

In the late 1980's, the group rented out the upstairs rooms to adult foster care, both to meet a community need and the Fellowship's financial needs. By 1990, the mortgage had become too large a burden for a small group and the Unitarian House was sold. At this time attendance and membership averaged 20 to 25 persons, and guest ministers were often invited.

Weekend summer retreats were held for many years, first near Bayfield and later at the Timberline Academy north of Durango on the Animas River. Since 1995, they have been hosted at the home of Lois and Ken Carpenter on the Pine River just south of Vallecito Reservoir.

The Smiley Building Period

During the 1990's leaders recognized that the Fellowship needed to provide for growth and for young families and began a search for larger meeting space. In 1999, the fellowship moved into Room 16 of the Smiley Building, formerly Smiley Middle School.

To meet other needs at Smiley the fellowship purchased new hymnals, 60 upholstered chairs and a donated piano. After a few years, a sound system was purchased and installed. Guest ministers came about once a month. Young parents and others joined the Fellowship. In 2004, UUA President, the Rev. Dr. William Sinkford, preached a special mid-summer Sunday service in the Smiley Auditorium to an estimated 200 persons. By the fall of 2006 the budget had grown to over \$29,000, and membership stood at 73 with R. E. attendance often more than 20.

A Real Church Home

Once again, it was obvious the Fellowship faced a serious space need. In 2006, the board of trustees appointed an ad hoc facilities committee to search out meeting space possibilities. Given the high costs of land and buildings in Durango, they knew it would be difficult. After two months of searching, the committee found little to offer and was growing discouraged when one of the members discovered that an existing church structure might be available. According to a November 2006

newspaper story, the Nazarene Church at the corner of Columbine Avenue and San Juan Drive was on the market.

The Nazarene property consisted of a sanctuary building with several small rooms suitable for R.E., a parking lot and a two-story structure that had a fellowship hall, kitchen and meeting room on the ground floor with a minister's residence above. A developer had planned to purchase the property, tear down the buildings and build four houses, but we learned that the deal had fallen through. The committee viewed the property and saw immediately that it could be ideal for the fellowship. Members saw it and heartily concurred. The cost, however, would be daunting for a small group that had not even discussed the possibility of ownership.

To the great good fortune of the Fellowship, an interim purchaser was willing to buy the property and rent it to the fellowship until the membership could determine if purchasing it would be feasible. The meeting room at Smiley had become such a tight fit that plans were made to hold the evening Christmas Eve service in the new space. With no special advertising, no one expected the standing-room-only crowd of 174! A week later, with a guest minister leading the Sunday morning service on New Year's Eve, the fellowship convened for the last time at the Smiley Building to light the chalice and bid farewell to Room 16. The flame was carried to the new space, the group reconvened and the service continued.

Members and friends once again pitched in to spruce up old buildings. First, the former minister's residence was cleaned, painted and repaired so it could be rented to bring in income. Then renovations in the fellowship hall area and sanctuary building began. More new hymnals were bought, and several members joined in purchasing a new grand piano for the sanctuary. Our new Director of Music is a member and professional pianist. A three-month capital campaign and a unanimous vote by members led to the purchase of the church property in Spring 2007.

Within the congregation, the sense of energy and enthusiasm has become stronger each week since the move. As of the end of March 2007, membership stood at 86, and mid-March Sunday attendance was an even 100 persons—75 adults and 25 children.

Since the purchase of the property in 2007, physical improvements have been almost non-stop. Improvements include the following:

2007, parsonage and Bowman Hall renovation, new tiles in all bathrooms and kitchens, with many new appliances.

2008, replaced stage carpet with hardwood for better music acoustics

2009, new stained glass windows as well as new main entrance doors and sanctuary windows

2010, landscaping in front of the church and rehabilitation of lawns

2011, patio with sail shades for summer social hours

2012, completely refurbished Bowman Hall

2013, re-carpeted sanctuary and replaced pews with upholstered chairs

Some of the work had to be hired, but members of the fellowship did most of it. Collectively, members devoted thousands of hours to the various projects.

Programmatic improvements include the following:

**Share the Plate: donation of the first Sunday plate collection to a local non-profit
Scholarship for a student to attend Fort Lewis College**

**Members volunteering over the years at Mana Soup Kitchen, Durango Food Bank
and other places**

FROLIC service auctions to raise money for special renovation projects

**Recital Series: four classical music recitals annually draw members and outside
visitors**

Art in Bowman Hall features the work of our members and friends and local artists

Weekly Meditation Group meetings

**Four Corners Retreat includes UUs from Pagosa Springs, Cortez, Alamosa and
Farmington**

Circle Suppers, a long-term fellowship activity, continues to be enjoyed by many

**Outdoor Adventures is an informal group for hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, biking,
etc.**

UU Readers meet to discuss fiction and non-fiction books

Young Adults and Families group sponsors activities appealing to young adults

**UU Poetry Circle reads and discusses poems, both published and written by
participants**

**CUUPS, Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans meets regularly for learning
and celebrations**

UUFDD Summer Speakers Series was launched by a UUFDD member

2007, Mini Series on Dante

2008, Etched in Stone: The Power of Texts

2009, Bringing Texts to Life

2010, The Power of Poetry

2011, Rethinking Sins and Virtues

2012, Creativity: The Divine Spark

2013, On Thinking: A Summer of Conceptual Thinking

**Since purchasing our church in 2007, we have amazed ourselves with all we have
accomplished and look forward to an even brighter future as a beacon of liberal
religious thought in southwest Colorado.**

Note the three or four most important events in the congregation's history:

**Sixteen years after the fellowship was founded, Sunday services were still held in
members' homes. The first significant event was the move, in 1982, into what had
formerly been a private residence on 3rd Avenue in Durango. Importantly, for the
first time, the fellowship had a place to call home.**

**Seventeen years later, having outgrown the 3rd Avenue space, the fellowship in 1999
moved to a rented room in the Smiley Building, a former middle school located a**

few blocks away on 3rd Avenue. That space allowed the fellowship to grow to about 60 members, which was approximately the number of chairs that would fit into the room.

The most significant event in the history of the fellowship occurred in 2007 with the purchase of the current facility. Since then the fellowship has enjoyed significant growth in its membership, now standing at 105 members and many active friends, has made great efforts to improve the physical facility, has expanded program offerings and made the decision to seek a developmental minister as we continue on the path of membership and program growth.

Our new facility needed considerable renovation and we could not afford to do it all at once. To raise money for renovations we started our FROLIC service auctions held in 2009, 2010 and 2012. We initially anticipated raising about \$4,000 at each auction but to our delight, each topped \$10,000. Those funds were devoted exclusively to renovations.

List, most recent first, all clergy who have served since 1950 and earlier ministers of great importance, and interim ministers since 1980 (minister name, date arrived, date departed, reason for departure):

NA, we have never had a minister.

Current clergy and staff (include all paid staff):

Position	Date of hire/call	F/T or hrs. per week	Covered by Health Plan?	Covered by Retire Plan?	Annualized Compensation (S&H for clergy)	Supervised by/ reports to:	Member?
Administrative Assistant	July 2013	12 hrs	no	no	12,000	Board President	yes
Music Director	2007	12	no	no	3,600	Sunday Services Com.	yes
Director of Religious Education	2010	15	no	no	12,630	RE Committee	yes
Sexton	2012	5	no	no	4,200	Buildings Committee	no

Table I Membership, Attendance, and Pledging

Year Ending	Data Represents	Months	Adult Members	Average Adult	Children & Youth	Average Children &	No. of Pledge	Total Operating	Operating Pledge
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				Sunday Attendance	Enrollment	Youth Attendance	Units	Pledges	per pledge Unit (col 6/col 5)
2014	a twelve- month year	12	105	73	18	13	67	114128	1703
2013	a twelve- month year	12	108	71	16	13	48	77679	1618
2012	a twelve- month year	12	103	70	15	11	50	68245	1365
2011	a twelve- month year	12	108	0	0	0	48	61980	1291
2010	a twelve- month year	12	98	0	0	0	47	53600	1140
2009	a twelve- month year	12	89	0	0	0	35	45800	01309
2008	a twelve- month year	12	74	0	0	0	33	39924	1210

Table II Sources of Operating Income

Year Ending	Total Operating Pledges	Other Contributions	Fundraising Events	Endowment Investment Income	Building Rentals	Other Income	Total Income (sum of 1...6)	Total Endowment
2014	\$ 114128	\$ 8884	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 14000	\$ 4800	\$ 141812	\$ 1000
2013	\$ 75700	\$ 8470	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 13450	\$ 0	\$ 97620	\$ 0
2012	\$ 68245	\$ 11025	\$ 10000	\$ 0	\$	\$	\$	\$ 0

					13640	5000	107910	
2011	\$ 61980	\$ 3850	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 13640	\$ 0	\$ 79470	\$ 0
2010	\$ 48250	\$ 3350	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 13340	\$ 0	\$ 64940	\$ 0
2009	\$ 45800	\$ 6019	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 13740	\$ 0	\$ 65559	\$ 0
2008	\$ 39924	\$ 7184	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 13740	\$ 0	\$ 60848	\$ 0

Table III Operating Expenses

Year Ending	Building & Grounds & Utilities	Minister(s) S&H	Minister's Benefits & Professional Expenses	Other Staff Compensation	Religious Education	Social Justice & Service	Debt Service	Other Current Expenses	Total Expenses	Total Debt
2014	\$ 12630	\$ 032128		\$ 30230	\$ 4506	\$ 9900	\$ 10200	\$ 42218		\$ 128000
2013	\$ 14360	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 22464	\$ 5100	\$ 4100	\$ 10200	\$ 41396	\$ 97620	\$ 130033
2012	\$ 29150	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 19600	\$ 3900	\$ 2850	\$ 10200	\$ 38955	\$ 104655	\$ 135188
2011	\$ 12460	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 17824	\$ 5480	\$ 2600	\$ 10200	\$ 41866	\$ 90430	\$ 138023
2010	\$ 8759	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 9240	\$ 3800	\$ 200	\$ 17400	\$ 025541	\$ 64940	\$ 139291
2009	\$ 9210	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 7800	\$ 5800	\$ 0	\$ 18000	\$ 024849	\$ 65659	\$ 140000
2008	\$ 9907	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 3900	\$ 2496	\$ 0	\$ 18000	\$ 28045	\$ 62348	\$ 0

Explanation of any anomalies:

Prior to 2007 the fellowship was very small--15 members growing to about 60 over a 30 year period. Parsonage is main source of rental income. Whether minister lives in parsonage is negotiable. Debt renegotiated in 2010 resulting in lower debt service expenses. Minister's S&H for FY2014 is from pledge income and will be carried over to FY2015 when minister will start work. Ministerial Commitment Fund drive has raised enough to pay salary and housing for three years.

Current congregational life

Does the congregation have a mission -- not a mission statement, but a glowing coal at its center -- and if so, what is it?

Since 2007, when we purchased our facility from the Nazarene Church, our volunteer efforts have mainly focused on fixing what was in fact a sadly neglected facility. However, we have steadily increased our focus on social justice issues so that today about 10 percent of our operating budget (supported mainly by pledges and non-pledge contributions) funds those activities. If we include special (non-operating fund) contributions, about 20 percent of our budget goes to social justice activities. As we move forward we trust that a minister will help us improve on our growing level of social involvement in the Durango community and help us reach our goal of being a center for liberal religion in the four corners region.

One of the arms of the Social Justice Committee is the UUFD Community Fund. The fund was started in December 2011 and some funds have already been dispersed by committee decision. The fund invests in upholding the worth and dignity of marginalized people in the community providing short term relief to promote self reliance through education and training. Several scholarships have been given for post GED education and one microloan for an immigrant small business owner. The loan has been repaid.

Community social justice participation - "Winter Haven" is an overflow shelter project developed by representatives from several Durango religious communities. After a short amount of time and a great deal of work and municipal clearance, the First United Methodist Church and Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durango will open their doors in January to families in Durango who are homeless. Shelter will be provided daily from 7pm until 7am. Volunteers will provide some meals and overnight oversight.

Congregational strengths:

Our members and friends are our greatest strength. We are a mixture of long-term Durango residents and new arrivals. Most of the latter selected Durango as their retirement home. In terms of career paths, educators seem to be the greatest in number but the paths are many and varied. As is typical among Unitarian Universalist churches, our average adult education level is very high with many members and friends holding terminal degrees. Members of the fellowship consider the value of diversity, the highly active and committed volunteers, our welcoming friendliness, and our sense of community and social justice to be our major strengths.

Congregational challenges:

Our biggest challenge is to learn how to share leadership with a minister. Forty-six years of largely successful lay-led operation has undoubtedly led to behaviors of which we are not even aware. A new minister will have to remind us that things are going to be different, even with shared leadership, and to support us in that transition. Since a large portion of our fellowship has not personally experienced a

Unitarian Universalist minister, and some have had unsatisfactory relationships with other clergy, a big challenge will be the education of how to relate with a minister of the UU persuasion. Finally, and in part a consequence of these challenges, we as a fellowship may not even be aware of all the potential that a high-quality minister can bring to our community.

What congregational issues are likely to be most pressing within the next couple years: **Hiring a full-time minister will require a substantial increase in our annual pledging. We have completed a “Ministerial Commitment Fund” campaign that has enabled us to \$120,000 in a special account reserved for ministerial salary, housing and benefits. In addition, another \$69,000 has been pledged over the next three years and another \$32,000 per year from pledge income for our Operating Fund. As of early October 2013, pledge commitments and the Ministerial Commitment Fund, are sufficient to meet the expected salary, housing and benefits of a minister for three years. In addition to the financial issue, we will be learning—with the minister—how to share leadership. We seek to retain the best of what has led us to this place and learn how to develop and achieve new goals for the future.**

What congregational issues are likely to be most pressing over the next ten years: **Growth will likely be the most contentious issue. How much and how fast do we wish to grow? Should we make a concerted effort to attract new members or should we rely on people to find us? In addition, we need to further define our role in the community, dealing with the aging of our congregation, and attract young members and families.**

What congregational issues may never be resolved?

Given the high cost of living, low paying jobs, and the high percentage of retirees in the congregation, we have a highly skewed income and contribution distribution. Wealthier members of the fellowship have been extraordinarily generous in their financial support. This support is appreciated deeply and has allowed us to make significant improvements to our physical plant while increasing our involvement in and support of social justice action.

To what degree does the congregation possess a dominant theology?

We do not have a dominant theology, but can identify three clusters of theological exploration. About half of the congregation clusters around humanism, agnosticism, rationalism, skepticism and atheism. About one-quarter of the congregation identifies with earth-centered religion, naturalistic theism and mysticism. Finally, a bit less than one-quarter of our survey respondents leans toward ethical Christianity, theism in general and Buddhism. Sermons exploring each of these clusters would be welcome.

Describe the role of music and the arts in the life of the congregation:

In 2007, our Music Director, a retired professor of music at the George Washington University, started a recital series at the fellowship. Four classical music recitals per year have featured our Music Director and many other local professional musicians.

Profits from the series have paid for stage lighting and the initial sound system (which has since been further refined and upgraded). Our Music Director or a substitute who is a member of the congregation provide piano music for the Sunday services. In addition, we have a small choir that performs several times per year. In the recent survey, the music on Sunday was rated as one of the most crucial aspects of the service.

The renovation of Bowman Hall (our fellowship hall) included special lighting to enhance the showings of the artistic endeavors of members, friends and other local artists. New exhibits are hung four to six times per year.

UUFD members are very active in the Durango arts community, as teachers, participant creators, board members, and as patrons. It is quite common to see multiple fellow members at local arts and music events.

**Describe the religious education programs for children, youth and adults:
Unitarian Universalists believe that the search for truth and meaning is a life-long process. The purpose of Religious Exploration at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durango is to promote spiritual, emotional, and intellectual growth among fellowship members and friends of all ages. We offer a variety of diverse and inclusive programs that support UU principles.**

Currently, we are running the following programs, with average weekly attendance listed under each category:

**Nursery: Childcare for children ages 0-2 is available every Sunday from 10am-11:30 in the UUFD nursery. Gluten-free, dairy-free snacks are provided.
Average weekly attendance: 3 children**

**Preschool: Preschool class for children ages 3-5 meets every Sunday from 10:15-11:30 in the small RE room. Curriculum combines the UUA preschool curriculum “Come into the Circle,” and the secular “Affordable Preschool Curriculum.”
Gluten-free, dairy-free snacks are provided.
Average weekly attendance: 5 children**

**K-5th Graders: Children in K-5th grades meet every Sunday from 10:15-11:30 in the large RE room. This year’s UUA curriculum is “Spirit of Adventure,” which is designed for active kids and teaches UU identity through movement, challenge, and adventure. Activities related to the 7 UU principles include dissecting small appliances, building cantilevered architecture using graham crackers, interviewing a sports coach, eating smoked oysters, singing Jingle Bells in dog language, and creating an animal blessing.
Gluten-free, dairy-free snacks are provided.
Average weekly attendance: 10 children**

Youth: UUFD teenagers, called “The Hundred Acre Wood,” meet every Sunday in

the youth room in Bowman Hall from 10:15-11:30. This year the youth are focusing on the theme “Heroes and Heroines Among Us” which explores the challenges and accomplishments of members of our UU fellowship.

The youth engage in many other social and volunteer activities in the community throughout the year.

In February of 2011, UUFD kicked off the RE program for youth 6th to 12th grade. When there are enough youth, the group will be divided into middle and high school age groups. Two advisors coordinate the program; the lead advisor with 16 years experience, the assistant an energetic newcomer. Based on past experience, the foundation of the group is built on efforts to empower the youth while providing accessible and consistent advisement. The youth are given the opportunity and encouragement to create a comfortable environment for themselves including worship ritual, covenant agreements, and input for their sharing, study and activity. The advisors pay attention to keeping a balance of the YRUU five elements of a successful youth group -bonding, leadership, service/social action, education and worship.

In the church year 2011-2012, we studied and/or experienced 9 world religions in Durango - visiting Buddhist, Jewish, Hindu, Quaker, Lutheran, and Catholic centers/churches and studying UU, Islam and Pagan/Native Peoples spirituality. In the year 2012-2013, we put the 7 UU principles to work with service projects in the Durango community - for example various projects at the local homeless shelter, voter registration/services, folding 400 of 1000 cranes so far, interviewing a local astronomer, volunteering at the local humane society, participating in PRISM - the local GLBTQ college organization.

In spite of the long distances in our district, the youth have traveled to several district "cons" and intend to continue their participation and leadership in Youth Programming beyond UUFD.

Great thought and care is devoted to building relationships with and among these young people at this vigorous and formative stage in their lives both at church, in the community and beyond.

Adult RE: We currently are in the process of recruiting members for adult RE covenant groups. The covenant groups will consist of 8-10 members, will meet at least monthly, and will focus on themes decided by the group. More detailed information will be available in the coming months.

Lay leadership

In practice, are responsibilities for governance widely shared or confined among relatively few members? Give some examples:

Members of our Board of Trustees serve two-year terms. Terms are staggered so each year we elect about half the members of the board. Each of the last three presidents of the board were elected after being members of the fellowship for only

two-to-three years. Former board members generally move into other positions on committees. In a couple of cases members are serving a second term on the board after a hiatus of several years.

Each year we have a “committee fair” to recruit new committee members. Most active members will be able to list service on several committees on their fellowship “resume.” At this time, the following standing committees have been established to carry out much of the work of the fellowship: Buildings and Grounds, Communications, CUUPS (an interest group), Finance, Hospitality, Information Technology, Membership, Nominating, Religious Education, Safety, Social Justice, Welcoming Congregation (subcommittee of Social Justice), Stewardship, and Sunday Services. The Ministerial Task Force is an ad hoc committee to search for a developmental minister. We are also starting a Leadership Council which will meet quarterly. It will be an opportunity for committee chairs to learn about the activities of other committees and to coordinate their efforts.

In addition to members of the buildings and grounds committees, there are additional people who show up for workdays. We simply put out a call via email and they show up.

Describe the process you used to complete this form:

The seven members of the Ministerial Task Force and other leaders in the fellowship have been involved in the completion of the form. In addition, whenever specific information was needed, we consulted with committee chairs and staff members. Data came from fellowship records, focus groups and a congregational survey. One member of the task force was responsible for compiling the information and all task force members reviewed and edited the form.

Committees

Name the committees that have recently had the greatest success:

The Buildings and Grounds Committee has been successful as measured by their accomplishments. We bought a facility that was dark, dirty and dingy because we saw the potential and had the faith that we could turn it into an attractive place of worship. We are nearing the end of possible renovations and in the future may be thinking of major changes to our physical plant, but that depends on growth of the congregation.

Welcoming Congregation Committee. This committee was formed in January 2011. A year and a half of education and information for the congregation included: special Sunday speakers and panels, movies followed by discussion, a summer workshop, a congregational survey, participation in community programs such as Gay Pride Fair, and consistent communication/participation with Fort Lewis College and high school LGBTQ organizations. The OWL curricula was presented in RE programs, and LGBTQ issues/questions were incorporated into adult RE curriculum: “Faith Like a River”.

At the annual meeting on May 20, 2012, the congregation voted unanimously, by secret ballot, to ask for full recognition from UUA as a Welcoming Congregation. In a letter, dated July 25, 2012, we received that official recognition. Currently, the committee functions as a sub-committee of Social Justice Committee to ensure that “welcoming all” continues to be of highest priority across all activity in the congregation.

The Coalition of Caring Communities (CCC) is Durango's interfaith/inter-agency coalition. Its mission is "to provide a focus for area churches and human-service agencies to optimize services and resources for people in need". The CCC meets for 2 hours once a month, and is open to anyone. This is an effective, action oriented group of people "Standing on the Side of Love" to use familiar UU terms. UUFD has a regular representative on this coalition. Other churches and faith communities represented are Lutheran, Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, Quakers, Presbyterian, one evangelical church and the Jewish synagogue. A lengthy list of human services agencies are members as well. The CCC provides cross agency/church communication to avoid duplication of effort, informative presentations to keep all updated and frequently serves as a network and action body for helping individuals in need.

In addition, please see the section above that asks "Does the congregation have a mission."

Name the committees that have recently had the least success:

The Caring Committee is particularly challenged as we are not equipped to meet in depth the many and various needs which arise. Presently, we function as an entry point for the cares and concerns in the congregation that are voiced in one way or another. We assess and/or evaluate those needs via a phone call, if appropriate, provide a framework from which appropriate action can be taken, oversee the actions taken as best we can, and try to provide follow-up. Our principal response is to be a clearinghouse for referral to community resources. We do solicit help from the congregation for needs such as provision of meals, rides, and visits to those in need, but in essence these are “surface” needs.

Hospital visits are carried out by members and friends of the fellowship. Several of our members are retired medical professionals who bring an experienced "bedside manner" to the visit.

The missing link is a person who is available at all times to provide a much needed ear and to provide confidential “professional” listening/ counseling. In short, a trusted person to whom people in need could turn to with trust and confidence; a known entity that is available come rain or shine. We provide only those “surface” needs, but lack the ability to “be on call” for people who need in depth help. For the most part, people do not feel comfortable sharing serious problems and concerns with fellow congregants. We simply cannot provide true pastoral care. It is probably one of the most frequently mentioned concerns. We work hard with what we can do, but feel seriously lacking in being able to meet the needs beyond a hot meal or a ride

to the doctor.

The Communications Committee has nearly finished a complete revision of our website, which had languished for several years with significant technical and content issues. There is still work to do to keep it current, but the major changes have made it more accessible and functional for the multiple uses we hope to derive from it.

Major financial support

List the dollar amounts of the ten largest operating pledges received in the most recently completed fiscal year:

1.\$15,000 2.\$12,000 3. \$9,000 4.\$8,000 5. \$5,400 6. \$5,000 7.\$4,800 8. \$3,600 9. \$3,120 10. \$3,000

Give the dates of the last two capital fund drives, and the funds raised (a) by contribution and (b) by debt:

In January 2007, the fellowship launched a fund drive to purchase our current facility. The decision to buy the former Nazarene church building and adjacent fellowship hall/parsonage was made by a unanimous member vote. We received a very generous grant of \$100,000 from the UUA to help us buy the church. Three months later the treasurer was able to write a check for \$765,000 of the \$1,040,000 cost of the property. The remaining amount was financed by a private loan. About \$135,000 remains on the note.

Since then, all renovations have been paid for with cash from generous donations and profits from the FROLIC service auctions. We expected about \$4,000 income from our first auction and were delighted when it netted more than \$10,000.

In the late summer of 2013 we conducted a Ministerial Commitment Fund campaign that raised enough money (now stashed in the bank) that will augment the money from our annual pledge drive, insuring the funds to pay a minister.

What is the condition of the church buildings, and what funds may need to be raised in the future?

We just completed a project that included repainting, new hard floors or carpeting in the RE rooms, re-carpeting of the sanctuary and replacing the pews with attractive, comfortable chairs. We are rapidly running out of improvement projects so we do not anticipate having to raise funds in the near future. Future projects include renovation of the women's restroom in the sanctuary building, replacement of the sanctuary lighting, replacing windows in four RE rooms with energy efficient windows and resurfacing the parking lot.

Handicapped Access: The sanctuary building has four entrances, two are used regularly, one during the summer as it leads directly onto our new patio, and one is an emergency exit. Two of these entrances lead directly into the sanctuary with no steps. The men's room in the sanctuary building is wheel chair accessible and is

unisex. Bowman Hall, our fellowship hall, has a level entrance and an emergency exit as well.

Ministry

Describe the process by which the minister will be called:

We are seeking a developmental minister so the process is a bit different from that used for a called minister.

In 2012, a congregational survey revealed a strong desire for professional leadership and in the winter of 2012-2013 the Board asked a team to conduct focus groups to assess the congregation's position on hiring a professional church manager or a minister. The results showed a strong consensus to move forward in the ministerial hiring process. These focus groups led the Board to make the decision to seek a full-time developmental minister.

The board then appointed a Ministerial Task Force (MTF) in June 2013 (see below) and the MTF proceeded to build on the results of the previous focus groups. The MTF conducted small group discussions and followed it up with a congregational survey to further refine what we learned from the first focus groups.

These efforts by the MTF seek to engage members and friends in carefully defining our needs so we get a good fit between the minister and the congregation. The MTF will review the applications of 3 to 5 candidates that have been vetted by the Mountain Desert District staff, conduct interviews and neutral pulpit visits. After reviewing all the data the MTF will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees, which will make the final decision. The Board of Trustees may wish to conduct a final interview with the recommended candidate before making a final decision.

Describe the process by which the Ministerial Search Committee (or its equivalent) was chosen:

The Ministerial Task Force was selected by the Board of Trustees. The Board first asked the congregation for nominees to a search committee and added its own nominees. Each nominee was called to assess their willingness to serve if asked. A questionnaire was sent to all candidates asking for a response to the following questions: 1. What experiences have you had in working with a minister, being part of a ministerial search, or other significant history related to a minister--UU or other? 2. Please share with us the skills and competencies you would bring to the MTF work that you believe would be helpful to the team. 3. Given your own spiritual focus, how would you bring perspective to the ministerial selection process that would help the team find candidates who would respect and nurture the diversity of spirituality in our fellowship? 4. Every team can expect to encounter struggles or conflicts when doing important work. While vigorous and honest debate is useful, how will you ensure that the process does not get derailed by personal disagreements? 5. What else could you tell us about yourself that could be helpful as the final decisions about task force membership are being made?

After reviewing the responses the Board settled on the members. The group, 4 women and 3 men, consists of relatively new members and long term members, young and old, and with a variety of career backgrounds.

Ministerial skills and enthusiasms most needed by the congregation:

4 -Crucial 3 -Significant 2 -Modest 1 -Of less consequence

- 1 Administration**
- 3 Adult religious education**
- 3 Children's religious education**
- 1 Committee work**
- 4 Community building**
- 3 Denominational activities**
- 1 Facilitation**
- 1 Stewardship**
- 2 Home visitation**
- 3 Hospital calling**
- 2 Leadership Development**
- 1 Membership growth**
- 1 Music & liturgical arts**
- 3 Personal counseling**
- 3 Preaching**
- 2 Scholarship**
- 3 Social action**
- 4 Spiritual guidance**
- 2 Staff relations**
- 4 Worship**
- 3 Youth work**
- 4 Building partnership with leadership**

Assess the capacity of the congregation to exercise forbearance and nurture in assisting a minister's development:

Reflecting on our congregational history indicates a pattern of forbearance, patience, and the ability to nurture. Close to twenty years ago, Sunday service was simply a small discussion group. Changing to a “real” worship service with structure required forbearance and nurturing from all of us as we walked together through that significant change. The pattern has continued: moving to new spaces, purchasing a new building, renovating and improving, requesting necessary funds and physical assistance from the congregation – we have come through it all with amazing energy. We have high hopes and expectations for a new minister, but we also have solid history and experience with change and what it takes to make things work well. We know that we cannot do this alone. We are realistic in our understanding that we will need help from a new minister to help us through yet another change. We expect forbearance and nurture on his/her part as well.

Regarding the issue of nurturing the minister, the Durango religious community has an ecumenical pastors' group that meets twice a month at rotating locations. The group provides professional collegial support and opportunity for church collaboration

What expectations, however silent, may there be about the minister's family and personal life?

Since we have never had a minister (though many members and friends have been in UU churches with a minister), our expectations are aspirational rather than historical. We would hope that our minister will not consider this as just a job, but would engage fully in the life of the fellowship. For example, we would be delighted if he or she and spouse or partner would participate in our monthly Circle Suppers (potluck dinners hosted by members or friends and with a rotating group of attendees).

At the same time, we are aware that a minister must protect his or her private and/or family time. This is especially true if the minister lives in the parsonage above Bowman Hall.

We do expect that a Unitarian Universalist minister will be visible within the city of Durango and in the 4 Corners region. Along with that comes the responsibility of the him/her operating consistently, be it during personal or professional time, in regard to ethics, professionalism, "being" a moral leader in word and deed.

If our minister has a spouse or partner, and/or children, we would welcome their participation in the activities of the fellowship, including their participation in the RE program.

If the minister's spouse or partner is not a Unitarian Universalist, or does not identify with any religion, and chooses not to participate, we would honor their wishes.

Describe the worst mistake your new minister could make:

Coming in with a preordained agenda and not listening to the congregation.

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