



Mountain Desert District Unitarian Universalist Association

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Dear Colleague in Search,

I am pleased to write this letter of greeting and encouragement for the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durango, CO. As the District Executive for Mountain Desert District I have visited the congregation regularly, working on important issues and often preaching. This is a dedicated, happy and healthy congregation striving to bring Unitarian Universalism and our values to their city. About 6 years ago I made a proposal for sharing a minister to the Four Corners congregations. The Durango congregation seriously considered the proposal and responded with a list of developmental tasks prior searching. Since that time they have hired an administrator, purchased and restored church buildings, hired a religious educator, established solid stewardship practices to name a few important accomplishments.

Obviously, multiple boards have created a powerful sense of continuity and common cause within the congregation -carrying projects successfully through multiple years. I think the congregation is poised to welcome their first minister and build a strong partnership. They will grow in depth, maturity and numbers through their partnership with a minister.

Durango is a charming and welcoming city set in great natural beauty. It is a small city with great cultural opportunities, a college, and engaging recreational variety. The regional airport makes it possible to travel easily to nearby hub airports in Denver, Albuquerque or Salt Lake City. There is even a direct flight to Chicago and other hub cities.

Mountain Desert District consists of 55 congregations, 44 affiliated congregations, 8 emerging congregations and several other "small groups that meet." These Unitarian Universalist covenanted communities span the Mountain Time Zone from El Paso, Texas to Kalispell, Montana. This makes MDD a difficult geography in which to create sustainable collegiality. However, the vastness is challenged by the enthusiasm for Unitarian Universalism that motivates good attendance at the Annual Conference, ministers retreats and cluster meetings, the use of technology and a deep desire to stay connected.

Pacific Western Region includes MDD, Pacific Northwest District, Pacific Central District and Pacific Southwest District. Our region has already hosted the first Regional Assembly last April with over 600 registered and over 800 at Sunday morning worship. MDD shares staff with PNWD and works collaboratively with the other districts in our region. We are

finding that regional collaboration is most easily experienced in the depth and breadth of the webinars we are able to offer, in our Touchstones Journal and the innovative Createmeaning.org network of congregations working to expand Unitarian Universalism beyond our congregations. PWR also sponsors a regional Leap of Faith initiative involving 16 congregations in partnerships. We are the region of Big Faith * No Borders!

This is just a brief introduction to what awaits you in this beautiful and busy district and region. Unitarian Universalism in the mountain west is dynamic and vibrant. As I write this letter we are building a faith based social change network among the congregations in Colorado with a staff person funded by the congregations. Durango is an exciting opportunity within MDD a strong district and PWR a rapidly evolving network of love and justice.

Do consider joining us!

If you have questions, please feel free to call me directly at 303-726-9676. You may also want to visit our website at <http://mdduua.org/>.

In the faith,

Nancy

Rev. Nancy Bowen, District Executive
Pacific Western Regional Lead