

January 7, 2019

Dear members and friends,

I am writing to let you know that after a time of deep discernment, heartfelt and thoughtful consideration I will be concluding my ministry at Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation June 2019.

Life calls me on... I am not going into direct search at this time. I anticipate a period of personal reflection, prayer, meditation and opportunity for deeper reconnection with my husband Gary. The past few years have offered us many challenges, and we are both looking forward to this time of introspection, discernment and preparing for what lies ahead.

It has been a journey filled with many highlights along with some significant challenges these past three years. I trust that my presence, talents and gifts that I could offer Beacon have genuinely benefitted the congregation, and hope that you have shared my joy in the many forms of vitality we have found together. There is much to lift up as we sing praises for the journey that we have travelled together. I look forward to celebrating that continuing journey with you in the months to come.

I truly do find blessings upon reflection of a meaningful ministry at Beacon. There have also been ways I have struggled to express my best ministry here. I feel I have not been as productive in partnership with the congregation as I had anticipated when I arrived. This is for several reasons, some due to me, and some due to other factors, including the congregation's internal and ongoing need to gain clarity on the kind of leadership it seeks from its ministers and members. I anticipate exploring these factors, if this is desired, with the Board and Committee on Shared Ministry in the coming months in service for all of our learning and congregational health.

I share the news of this upcoming transition with you now, rather than in the spring, because I care deeply about the future of Beacon. I know you have had some difficult ministerial transitions in the past, and I want to work with the congregation's leadership to do this transition well.

I trust the Board and the Committee on Shared Ministry are prepared to lead you through this time, and you will be hearing more from them in the coming weeks and months. Even though every transition contains some loss and sadness, ministerial transitions are an opportunity to focus on identity and direction, and can increase congregational health, self-awareness and vitality. The Board will be responsible for hiring an interim or developmental minister who will help the congregation use this unique moment well, and also lay the groundwork for your next settled minister.

I love and respect the people of the Beacon. I have come to know many of you in profound ways. I will miss you greatly once this church year concludes. I have every confidence that you have what it takes to face this and any future challenges.

Please know I will continue to be here with you fully in the coming months, and will continue to lend my energy, insight, and care with my full commitment until my last service and last days with you. I do not look forward to saying goodbye, but I very much look forward to honoring you as a congregation and celebrating our time together in the months ahead.

There will be a conversation opportunity after the social hour following worship on Sunday the 13th and Sunday the 20th of January. The worship service on Jan 13th will address the transition; we will welcome our UUA Congregational Life Representative Rev. Sarah Gibb-Millspaugh as our guest speaker. She will be present for our service, and will be with us after the service to assist us in this first community conversation of transition. She and I will also meet with the Board for a special leadership meeting that afternoon after the public conversation. I will also be available for individual discussions by appointment—please do not hesitate to be in touch. I look forward to learning from our common past, celebrating the abundant present, and with faith, appreciating the possibilities of the future.

Blessed Be,

Rev. Kevin J. Lawson