

To Be Sorted / Organizational Guidance

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Recommendations for Emeritus/Emerita/Emerit Status

1. Purpose

This guidance outlines the process for conferring honorary Emeritus/Emerita/Emerit status to religious professionals at Foothills Unitarian Church.

It supports our values of covenant, gratitude, and generational stewardship by:

- Honoring those who have significantly shaped our community through faithful service.
- Ensuring clarity, continuity, and integrity in the church's relationships with retired religious professionals.
- Aligning with **Board Policy 3.1.5** by offering a principled path for recognizing covenantal bonds beyond active ministry.

This guidance enables us to celebrate and clarify ongoing relationships, particularly in moments of transition or public recognition.

2. Organizational Guidance

Implementation by Ministry: Determining a Recommendation

The decision to recommend a religious professional for Emeritus/Emerita/Emerit status is made with care and grounded in covenant. The Senior Minister, in consultation with relevant staff or lay leaders, will assess alignment with the following criteria:

- **Length of Service:** The individual must have served Foothills Unitarian Church for **at least five years**.
- **Generational Impact:** Their service must reflect a **significant contribution to the church's long-term spiritual and communal life**—through preaching, pastoral care, leadership development, or other generative ministry.
- **Retirement Status:** The individual must be **fully retired** from active professional ministry or religious education.
- **Good Standing:** They must remain in **good standing** with the **UUA** and/or any relevant professional associations (e.g., LREDA, UUMA).
- **Covenantal Departure:** They must have signed a **Covenantal Departure Agreement**, affirming mutual commitments to:
 - Respect for successors
 - Healthy boundaries

- Ongoing relationship grounded in covenantal trust
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Key Clarifications

- The title Emeritus/Emerita/Emerit honors past service and covenantal alignment, not future authority.
 - Honorees may remain part of congregational life as members or guests, but not as staff, ministers, or public representatives.
 - The status is honorary and confers no formal leadership role or financial obligation
 - This designation supports ongoing healthy relationships, not continued ministry roles.
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3. Related Content

Bylaws and Policies

- [Board Policy 3.1.5 - Honoring and Recognizing Religious Professionals](#)

Affiliation with Community Ministers

1. Purpose

This guidance supports the creation of clear, accountable, and mutually beneficial relationships between Foothills Unitarian Church and Unitarian Universalist ministers serving in community-based settings outside of congregational roles.

It clarifies the nature of "affiliation," including expectations, boundaries, and structures, ensuring these relationships uphold:

- Our commitment to shared ministry
- Clarity in ministerial roles and accountability
- Integrity with the UUA's Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) standards
- Our congregational values of inclusion, justice, collaboration, and transparency

This guidance honors the sacred work of community ministers and protects the wellbeing of our congregation and staff.

2. Organizational Guidance

What is a Community Minister?

A community minister is a UU minister in Final or Preliminary Fellowship whose primary ministry takes place outside the congregational context (e.g., chaplaincy, nonprofit leadership, advocacy, spiritual direction, therapy).

Affiliation is a formal, covenantal relationship between the minister and the congregation, affirming this work as legitimate ministry and establishing expectations of mutual support.

Affiliation does *not* imply staff status or employment by the congregation.

Steps for Establishing an Affiliation

1. Initial Discernment

- Community minister reaches out to the Senior Minister to express interest in affiliation.

- Senior Minister engages in initial discernment to assess alignment with our values, community needs, and capacity.
- 2. Collaborative Discernment**
 - If initial alignment is clear, Senior Minister may convene a discussion with with key leaders (e.g., Executive Team, Board Chair).
 - Education and transparency are prioritized, especially if the congregation has not previously affiliated with a community minister.
 - 3. Development of an Affiliation Agreement**
 - All parties (parish ministers, community minister, and Board representatives) co-develop a written agreement that includes:
 - Roles and boundaries
 - Mutual commitments and benefits
 - Scope of participation
 - Fee schedules for additional services
 - Support for fellowship renewal
 - Plan for annual review
 - 4. Board Approval**
 - The final draft of the Affiliation Agreement is presented to the Board of Trustees for formal approval and minuting.
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Required Elements of an Affiliation Agreement

- 1. Role & Boundaries**
 - Community minister is not staff.
 - No supervisory or pastoral care authority over congregants.
 - All ministerial activities in the congregation occur in coordination with parish ministers.
- 2. Gratis Services**
 - May include preaching once/year, newsletter contribution, or adult education.
 - Should reflect the community minister's gifts and schedule, and remain limited.
- 3. Compensated Services**
 - Additional preaching, pastoral care, or education work beyond agreed gratis services should be compensated.
 - Agreement includes a basic fee schedule and notes that other services must be negotiated in advance.
- 4. Relationship to Staff**
 - Community minister is not a supervisor.
 - May or may not receive office support or access—this must be specified.
 - Collegial relationship with parish ministers per UUMA guidelines.
 - Conflict handled through appropriate channels (e.g., Committee on Ministry or UUMA Good Offices).
- 5. Congregational Support**
 - May include access to office space, mail delivery, listing in directories, opportunity to officiate rites for non-members.

- Congregation commits to forming or participating in the minister's Committee on Ministry.

6. **Congregational Engagement**

- When possible, identify ways congregants can engage in the minister's community-based work.
- May include volunteer opportunities, shared plate offerings, or joint advocacy work.

7. **Recognition of Ministry**

- Agreement explicitly affirms the work as a form of valid, recognized Unitarian Universalist ministry.
- If ambiguous, consult MFC rules or contact UUA Ministerial Credentialing Office.

8. **Review & Renewal**

- Agreement reviewed annually by the Committee on Ministry or designated body.
- Adjustments made based on congregational needs, minister's role, or fellowship requirements.

3. Related Content

Bylaws and Policies

- Board Policy: [3.1.5 Honoring and Recognizing Religious Professionals](#)

Current Community Ministers

Rev. Christopher Watkins Lamb

Rev. Roger Butts

Previous Version: None (new guidance)

Effective Date: 05/19/2022

Interactions with Federal Immigration Law Enforcement

1. Purpose

This guidance establishes our congregation's approach to federal immigration enforcement based on our religious convictions as a Unitarian Universalist sanctuary congregation. It clarifies how our theological principles translate into practical action when faced with immigration enforcement activities ¹. This guidance supports our mission of radical hospitality and justice-making while protecting both our community members and our religious freedom. It aligns with our conviction of the inherent worth and dignity and our congregational vote to become a Sanctuary Congregation (established August 27, 2017).

Foundational Religious Framework

Core Theological Foundation: Our response to federal immigration enforcement flows directly from our fundamental religious convictions:

- **Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Person:** Our core religious belief is that every person possesses sacred, inviolable worth regardless of legal status, documentation, or national origin. This theological conviction makes sanctuary not optional charity but religious imperative.
- **The Sacred Sources Authority:** Our faith draws from religious Sources that universally command protection of the stranger, care for the vulnerable, and resistance to unjust authority, including:
 - Jewish and Christian teachings: "You shall love the stranger as yourself" (Leviticus 19:34)
 - Humanist ethics: Universal human rights transcend national boundaries
 - Earth-centered traditions: All beings deserve protection and care
 - Progressive revelation: Our understanding of justice continues to expand, grow and change.
- **Congregational Covenantal Practice:** Through democratic process on August 27, 2017, this congregation formally covenanted to become a Sanctuary Congregation, making sanctuary practice a binding religious commitment, not discretionary policy.

Religious Mission Implementation

Mission Clarity: Our congregation exists to serve our religious mission of sanctuary. Every space, every activity, every interaction serves this sacred purpose as theological reality, not political

statement.

Sanctuary as Religious Practice: We practice sanctuary through:

- Worship - We welcome immigrants because our faith declares no human being illegal in the eyes of the divine.
- Spiritual formation - Sanctuary work is spiritual discipline that forms us into the people our covenant calls us to be.
- Community care - Protecting the vulnerable fulfills our sacred obligation to create beloved community.
- Prophetic witness - Our sanctuary practice proclaims that divine love transcends human borders.

2. Organizational Guidance

Non-Cooperation with Immigration Enforcement

Compliance with Lawful Orders: We make a clear distinction between two types of documents: judicial warrants (signed by federal judges, which we comply with under legal compulsion while maintaining religious objection) and administrative requests or warrants (issued by agencies like ICE, which we refuse based on religious conviction and Fourth Amendment protections).

Private Religious Space: Our building is designated as a private religious space, except for public religious areas that serve our mission of public worship, limited to Sunday mornings and other times the building is open for public worship. Public religious areas include the sanctuary and entrance hall.

Private Religious Areas: All other spaces and times, including but not limited to:

- Offices and meeting rooms
- Classrooms and library
- Sanctuary/worship hall outside of public worship times
- All outdoor areas and parking
- Any space during pastoral care, spiritual direction, religious education, or sanctuary activities

Information Protection

Data retention: We will not ask for or collect information regarding legal status, documentation, or immigration history from any community member or visitor.

Clergy-Penitent Privilege: We affirm and protect clergy-penitent privilege and will legally defend against any intrusion into confidential pastoral communications and relationships as protected by Colorado state law (including but not limited to [C.R.S. § 13-90-107\(1\)\(c\)](#)), and the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

Community Protection

We maintain clear community protection measures including communication channels for rapid response, training programs for staff and community members, and coordination with local partners doing immigration work.

3. Related Content

Bylaws and Policies

This guidance interprets or implements the following:

- Congregational Vote - Sanctuary Congregation Commitment (August 27, 2017)
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1. By immigration enforcement activities, this is defined as any federal implementation of immigration law through any agency

Officiating Rites of Passage

1. Purpose

This guidance explains how Foothills provides officiating for life's important moments—weddings, memorials, child dedications, and other ceremonies. We do this because we believe in walking alongside people through transitions, celebrations, and grief.

As a member benefit, we offer these services at no cost when certain conditions are met.

This guidance respects both our commitment to accessibility and the real limits of our ministers' time and capacity, as well as provides guidelines for the use of our facilities for Rites of Passage more generally in accordance with our values.

2. Organizational Guidance

Approved Officiants on Foothills Campus

- Rites of Passage on our campus must be led by Foothills ministers or by individuals on our [approved officiants list](#).
- Approval of officiants is done to insure alignment with our religious practice and values.

Memorial Services

For Members:

- Members can have a memorial service officiated by a Foothills minister at no cost if the service is in Fort Collins.
- This access is coordinated with the schedules and availability of ministers. Members or families should contact the minister(s) as early as possible to discuss dates and logistics.
- If the requested minister is unavailable, the congregation will make reasonable efforts to connect the family with another Foothills minister or an approved officiant.

For People Who Participate Regularly (Not Yet Members):

- If someone has been actively involved at Foothills for over a year, they can request a memorial service.

- The minister will decide whether to officiate based on the person's connection to our community and the minister's availability.
- There's no fee when this service is provided.

Location:

- No-cost services are for memorials held in Fort Collins.
- Services outside Fort Collins can be discussed case-by-case.

Private Services

- Foothills ministers may choose to provide memorial officiation or other rites of passage services to members of the broader public outside of these provisions.
- Such private arrangements are arranged independently between the minister and the individual/family, typically for a fee set by the minister.
- These private arrangements are separate from the ministers' congregational role and do not obligate the congregation.

Weddings

- We make every effort to provide Foothills members access to a Foothills minister (called or hired) to officiate, based on scheduling and workload capacity.
- We do *not* provide access to a Foothills minister for someone who is not a member. Instead, non-members will be given access to the approved officiant list, comprised primarily of affiliated community ministers.

3. Related Content

Bylaws and Policies

This guidance interprets or implements the following:

Organizational Guidances & SOPs

This guidance is related to or informs the following documents:

- [Memorial SOP](#)
- [Weddings SOP](#)

Previous Version [Date]

Content of Previous Version of Guidance

Personal Sales & Promotion Policy

Purpose

Foothills Unitarian exists to cultivate belonging, spiritual depth, and collective care. Our ministries, small groups, and communication channels are spaces of trust and shared purpose, not marketplaces. This policy clarifies boundaries around personal business promotion in order to protect equity, prevent pressure or favoritism, and keep our shared spaces focused on mission.

Guiding Principles

- Participation in Foothills ministries should never carry implicit financial pressure
- No individual or business should gain advantage through access to church platforms
- Clear boundaries help maintain trust, inclusion, and fairness across our community
- Community connection is welcome; commercial promotion is not

What Is Not Permitted

Church ministries, programs, small groups, committees, events, and communication channels **may not be used to promote, advertise, or solicit**:

- Personal businesses, professional services, or products created by congregants (including books, curricula, courses, or other materials offered for sale)
- Sales of goods or services for individual financial benefit
- Referral codes, affiliate links, or discount promotions
- Fundraising for non-Foothills causes not formally approved by leadership

This includes (but is not limited to):

- Verbal promotion during meetings or gatherings
- Flyers, business cards, or sign-up sheets
- Emails, newsletters, Slack/Group posts, or social media connected to Foothills
- Announcements before or after services or group meetings

What Is Permitted

The following are allowed and encouraged when they support healthy community life:

- **Relationship-based sharing** (e.g., one-to-one conversations outside of ministry spaces)
- **Church-sponsored fundraising or events** formally approved by staff or the Board
- **Resource sharing** that is clearly non-commercial and not tied to personal financial gain
- **Mutual aid or care-based requests** (e.g., meals, rides, support during hardship)
- **Offering professional skills as a gift to the community** in support of Foothills' mission, provided the contribution is clearly volunteer-based and not used to market, promote, or sell services or products

If someone asks directly and privately for a recommendation, members may respond, but it should not turn into group-level promotion or ever create the perception that individual businesses are promoted by the church.

Special Circumstances & Exceptions

- Ministries or events that involve vendors, artists, or service providers (e.g., auctions, fairs, special events) must be staff-approved and use transparent, equitable selection processes.
- Any proposed exception must be reviewed in advance by the Executive Team.

Enforcement & Care

If this boundary is crossed:

- A staff member or ministry leader will address the situation directly and kindly
- Repeated violations may result in loss of access to leadership roles or communication channels
- The goal is education and repair, not punishment

Questions & Discernment

When in doubt, ask:

Would this create pressure, privilege, or confusion about why we're gathered?

Questions or requests for clarification should be directed to a member of the Executive Team.

Previous Version [Date]

Content of Previous Version of Guidance