



Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in our opening for Minister of Faith Development.

We are excited about the possibilities for this new ministry, which comes at a transformative time for us as a congregation. Like many congregations we have been wrestling with how to live into a vision of ministry that is relevant, responsive and spiritually centered in the face of great change. So, over this past year we have undergone a time of deep discernment that has helped us clarify and confirm our values and mission as a congregation.

Part of what this journey has helped us see is that faith development across generations must have a central place here. So, rather than spreading those duties across positions we are centering that work in one named ministry. By doing that, we intend to break through the “upstairs/downstairs” divide that stymies many congregations and clear the way for creative engagement with the many dimensions of faith formation across generations.

So, this position links leadership of what is already an innovative program of religious education for children and youth with adult learning and spiritual deepening, small group ministry and pastoral care leadership. All of this, of course, also links to worship, where we envision many opportunities for collaborative and creative work. We are looking for someone who is inspired by this unique blend of ministries and can bring their gifts to helping us realize our vision.

It doesn't hurt that Asheville is a beautiful location in the Blue Ridge Mountains with a progressive community that is a strong draw for people of all ages looking to create an intentional life. All that has helped us grow into a relatively large UU congregation – about 500 members and 120 enrolled in religious education with around 300 in Sunday worship – in an area where liberal religion thrives. We are also well known in the community for an active social justice ministry in areas including immigration reform, Black Lives Matter and environmental justice.

I hope this picture intrigues and even excites you, and I look forward to hearing from you. Please send your application material to search@uuasheville.org. You are also welcome to contact me directly if you have any specific questions or concerns.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Ward".

Rev. Mark Ward, Lead Minister

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