



Dear Members and Friends of First Universalist Church of Essex:



I am the Reverend Justine Sullivan. I will be serving as your interim minister, beginning August 1st. I grew up in Scituate, a small town on the south shore of Massachusetts, and when I saw that First Universalist of Essex was looking for an interim minister, my

heart sang at the thought of spending time in a place so reminiscent of my childhood home. And then I had the pleasure of meeting many of your leaders, and I felt certain that we would be a good match. I am delighted to be working with you over these next months and look forward to meeting many more of you soon.

I come to the ministry after working for the past 20 years as a social worker and psychotherapist and more recently as a congregational consultant and facilitator. I served as president of the Clara Barton district board from 2012-2015 and as president of the district presidents association 2014-2015. I graduated from Meadville Lombard Theological School in May and completed a two-year ministerial internship at First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Chelmsford, MA in June. I was ordained in my home congregation of First Parish Northborough on June 11th.

Although I am newly ordained, I have been working with congregations and other groups and systems for years and am called to work with congregations

in transition. It will be good to be with you. I know that you have overcome many challenges in the last 14 years, moving from near extinction to new life as a thriving and growing congregation of over 100 adults and many, many children. I am eager to hear your stories of triumph and tribulation, of struggle and success and to offer my support and guidance as you write the next chapters of your amazing story.

I wish you a restful and joyful summer, and I will see you all soon.

I will be available by phone and email beginning August 1st and intend to be present for summer services in August. I can't wait to meet you!

Blessings,

Justine

The Reverend Justine Sullivan
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508-662-0279

Thank you for help with services in June and July

The Transition Committee would like to thank those who contributed to services in June and July. We've been honored to hear from Janet Green Garrison, Mike Attridge, Jerry Gould, Matt Meilnick, Jim Thuline, and Debbie Frontiero. August will bring more inspiration from individuals from within our congregation and without, and we look forward to getting to know Justine Sullivan as our new Interim Minister! Any questions or comments about the services can be directed to any member of our committee: Molly Gould, Fran Pierce, Lindle Willnow, Sean Moynihan, and Kim Tompkins.

Update from your



PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

After receiving nine applications for interim minister, and interviewing five possible candidates, the Search Committee has recommended to the Board of

Directors to hire Justine Sullivan. She will serve as interim minister for the upcoming year starting on August 1st. We were impressed with Justine's warm style and engaging presence. We welcome her with open hearts as she helps us move to find our next settled minister.

The Search Committee attended a daylong retreat this month with Laura Graham, who will help guide us through the next phase of this process. It was informative and helped us bond further as a team, as well as organize all of the tasks ahead of us.

We have been seeking input from the congregation as we try to define our most important values and needs as a congregation. This has been done through our retreat last spring, our small group meetings, our suggestion box and many individual discussions. Using this information, we have been working on a survey that should be ready in the next few weeks.

In addition, we will be setting up a workshop in the fall for the entire congregation entitled *Beyond Categorical Thinking*.

Some folks have been asking about what things came up in the small group meetings. We have compiled and categorized the information you all have shared. It is a LOT of information! I will print our copies and post them downstairs at the church. If anyone wants their own copy, please let me know

(debfrontierro@gmail.com) and I'll send the files to you directly.

In the category of "What we want in our next settled minister", there arose some qualities that are essential to us. These include (but are not limited to): A "relational" pastoral style (as opposed to a "hierarchical" style); a sense of humor; a strong intellect; a balance between the intellectual and spiritual; the application of our shared values to our daily lives and to the world at large; a warm embrace of all (including our "wee ones"). Like I said, there is SO much more, but these things appeared to form a basis from which we can begin.

Thank you for your honest, open sharing with the search committee. Look for the survey in the next few weeks! Debbie Frontierro, chair; Tom Duff, Peter Kellerman, Pat Murphy, Tori Rosati, Ken Swanson

Our UU Essex yard sale 2017



Photo by Alan Budreau

UU Essex Events

Mondays: Tai Chi at 6:30 with Jim Thuline

Tuesday: August 1st PFlag

Ingathering/water service: September 10

RE starts: September 17