



10 Lyons Plains Road Westport, CT 06880

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## Please welcome Rev. Dr. John Morehouse as our candidate for Senior Minister!

Your Ministerial Search Committee is thrilled to announce that our candidate to be the next Senior Minister of the Unitarian Church in Westport is **Rev. Dr. John Morehouse**. Rev. John is currently Senior Minister of Pacific Unitarian Church, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. In Rev. John, we believe we have found the experienced, knowledgeable, compassionate, visionary minister who will lead our congregation into its brightest future.

Lee Barker, the President of Meadville Lombard Theological School, has said, "John is a great preacher, pastor, and educator. Above all he is a minister who sees possibilities. Each congregation he has served has been taken to a new size and a new level of service.

John is able to honor a church's past and, at the same time, galvanize the congregation to take on new projects and shape a new vision for itself. That is a rare ability!"



Rev. Dr. John Morehouse is a fifth generation Unitarian (one of his great-grandfathers was a Unitarian minister) and he grew up in the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Croton-on-Hudson, NY. After graduating in anthropology from Grinnell College, Iowa in 1979, he started a solar energy business, and later held several positions in sales and marketing before feeling the call to ministry. He graduated from Meadville Lombard Theological School in 1990 and was ordained that year.

Rev. John's first ministry was at First Unitarian Church, South Bend, IN. From 1994-2005 he served as Senior Minister of the UU Congregation of Frederick, MD. There he led the congregation through a three-fold increase in membership and budget, and a five-year multi-million dollar building campaign. Since 2005, Rev. John has been Senior Lead Minister of Pacific Unitarian Church, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. Under his leadership, the congregation grew in size by more than 50% and its budget doubled. In 2008, it was recognized by the UUA as a "Breakthrough Congregation."

Rev. John is well known as a leader in the UU movement. He is an Adjunct Professor and Teaching Pastor at Meadville Lombard Theological School, where he has taught courses in congregational polity and actively mentors intern ministers. He has completed his doctorate of ministry (graduating May, 2015), and his thesis "Creating Theology Together: A Curriculum for Spiritual Leadership" is focused on helping church leaders develop their shared theology. Rev. John is also board president and senior consultant of the Chalice Oak Foundation, an organization he founded to incubate and grow UU social justice programs.

Rev. John's ministerial record says, "I seek a calling with a congregation that is searching for a new direction forward, uniting the past with the potential for a new future. I have special skills in transforming congregations to dream of a better future, and in building stronger communities. The ministry I am hoping to find will be with a congregation interested in growing in spirit, institutional maturity and civic identity. I believe we could be the religion for our times."

Rev. John talks about "setting free the ministry" in each of us, creating a congregation that is not "minister centered" but "ministry centered."

Rev. John and his wife, Francis, have been married for 30 years. They have five daughters, Portia (41), Fiona (37), Courteny (29), Emma (27), and Madeline (24), and three grandchildren, Skye (11), Iris (9), and Ashur (9).



## Your chance to meet our candidate

Rev. John will visit our congregation from April 25 to May 3 for "candidating week" and will preach on two successive Sundays (April 26 and May 3). You'll have various opportunities to meet him. Visit the church website soon to see the complete schedule, and watch for further announcements.

At the end of candidating week, on Sunday, May 3, there will be only one worship service at 11:00 a.m., and this will be immediately followed by a meeting of the entire membership at which you will vote whether to call Rev. John to be our new Senior Minister. Please plan to attend this important meeting. We need a quorum of at least 40% of the membership, which is about 200 members.

### By the numbers...

- This year, **42** UU congregations were in search for a settled minister.
- About **120** UU ministers were in search for a settled ministry.
- Our congregation received **21** applications for Senior Minister.
- We narrowed those down to **9** candidates for further follow-up, and we interviewed **7** of those candidates for **2** hours each by Skype.
- We narrowed those down to **4** pre-candidates each of whom we met for a weekend of intensive in-person interviews and preaching at another UU church in the area (a "neutral pulpit").
- We had **30** phone interviews with references.
- We had **16** meals with candidates.
- The search process lasted **10** months and we each put in about **400** hours of work.
- We have found the **1** candidate who we feel is the best match for our congregation!

**Vote on  
May 3<sup>rd</sup>,  
following the  
only service  
at 11am**

Your Ministerial Search  
Committee:

Jim Cooper  
Charles Harrington  
Linda Hudson  
Kristen Leddy  
John Mason  
Carrie McEvoy  
Catherine Onyemelukwe  
Anita Pfluger  
Kathy Roberts