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## MINISTERIAL LETTER, FOR THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF STERLING

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Dear Aspiring Ministerial Candidate,

It is my honor to share with you a bit about the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Sterling. As I know that the search process is a challenging time - one that offers difficult choices - allow me to congratulate you on choosing to look deeply at this fine congregation.

Serving for ten years as the last settled minister I was consistently surprised and inspired by the dedication, mission focus, and vibrancy that is the heart of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Sterling. The story of their founding was complicated but their guiding passion has always been clear. They want to create a home for Unitarian Universalist values and community in a place that desperately needs both. Throughout my time in service they consistently put their energy and their effort toward accomplishing this mission, never letting challenges subvert their dreams.

This is a congregation that respects clergy and cares for its ministers. Again here, I sense their mission focus. They expect and revere strong visional leadership and will work together with their ministers to achieve visional ends. It is also important to note that they understand appropriate boundaries and are dedicated to providing fair compensation. They offer trust and then work to ensure that trusting relationships are established throughout congregational life.

There is a strong base of lay leaders at UUCS and new leaders are readily developed. I was particularly impressed by the Care Team, Music Leaders, Religious Education Teachers, the Finance Team, the Communications Team, and the Board of Trustees. This is also a congregation with a good multicultural and racial justice start as some of the strong leaders are people of color and some of their most beloved groups and programs include the "Journey Toward Wholeness" task force, the Jazz Poetry Slam, and their many endeavors on behalf of Loudoun Interfaith BRIDGES. In addition UUCS has grappled with the work of moving beyond the partisan divide. A congregation in the D.C. metro area is challenged to build bridges with those who assert different political ideologies and UUCS has been brave in this endeavor.

Getting to know the beloved members and children of this will provide many blessings. This is a congregation served by individuals that devote their lives to

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something larger than themselves. Many assert that our faith tradition has saved them and nurtured them - that it has given their life purpose and direction. A Muslim colleague mentioned to me once while she was seated in our sanctuary: "Here I feel at home. I feel welcomed. I feel loved." The energy of this community is palpable, a blessing to behold, and a blessing for a leader to serve and shape.

If you would like to know more I would be happy to talk with you.  
May you be well as your search unfolds.

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