

MFC December 2025 Week Agenda

Wednesday, December 3-Sunday, December 7

Co-Chairs: Michael Tino, Alison ALG McLeod, Amanda Poppei, Nathalie Edmond, DC Fortune, Shirley Lange, Cindy Malley, Beth Norton, Kären Rasmussen, Lindasusan Ulrich, Laura Shennum, Paul Langston-Daley, Karen LoBracco, Linda Thomson, Ken Reeves, Takiyah Amin.

UUA Staff: Cecilia Kingman, Darrick Jackson, Marta Valentín, Marion Bell, Aastha Poudel, Michelle Pederson, Amy Szen

UUA Board Observer: Adam Robersmith

Absent: Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa

Wednesday, December 3

Executive Committee Only – Alison ALG McLeod, Michael Tino, Shirley Lange, Cindy Malley, Amanda Poppei. UUA Staff: Cecilia Kingman, Darrick Jackson, Marta Valentin, Marion Bell

Thursday, December 4

Business Meeting
Affirming Our Covenant

Motion to Approve the September 2025 MFC Business Meeting Minutes.
Approved.

Working Groups Meet

Friday, December 5

PANELS MEET FOR CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS

Saturday, December 6

PANELS MEET FOR CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS

Sunday, December 7

Co-Chairs: Michael Tino, Alison ALG McLeod, Amanda Poppei, DC Fortune, Shirley Lange, Cindy Malley, Beth Norton, Kären Rasmussen, Lindasusan Ulrich, Laura Shennum, Paul Langston-Daley, Karen LoBracco, Linda Thomson, Ken Reeves, Takiyah Amin, Stephen Atkinson.

UUA Staff: Cecilia Kingman, Darrick Jackson, Marta Valentín, Marion Bell

UUA Board Observer: Adam Robersmith

Absent: Nathalie Edmond, Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa (medical leave)

Caucus Time

Memorial Service

Open Meeting:

NON-CONFIDENTIAL AGENDA

FELLOWSHIP WORKING GROUP

Proposed Changes to Rule 17

additions in bold

~~deletions in strikethrough~~

17. Employment Restrictions for Ministers Serving Congregations

In order to ensure an equitable settlement process for congregations and ministers in transition, policies, procedures and restrictions ~~have been~~ **are** developed **and administered** by the Ministries and Faith Development Staff Group and ~~the Transitions Team are administered by the Transitions Director~~. Failure to adhere to the policies, procedures and restrictions governing the settlement process, including but not limited to the restrictions described below, may constitute grounds for termination of Ministerial Fellowship.

A. Access to UUA Ministry Search System

Access to the UUA's ministry search system is limited to ministers in Fellowship with the UUA or those who have been otherwise approved by the MFC or their designee to seek settlement.

B. Three-Year Rule

A minister is not eligible for employment in a ministerial capacity in a congregation for three years following previous engagement as an intern or interim minister in that congregation. Waivers may be granted by application to the MFC.

C. Inside Candidates and Professional Engagement Rule

~~Any minister who has visited a congregation in a professional capacity after the most recent settled minister has announced their departure to the congregation, or who is either employed by or a member of a congregation seeking to fill another ministerial position on staff may only apply for such a position as an inside candidate, to be considered before the Transitions Director has submitted a list of potential candidates to that congregation.~~

While the UUA Board is considering changes to Rule 17, the MFC gives the Transitions Team permission to waive Rule 17C as they find appropriate.

Discussion:

How might we educate people about this rule change in a way that furthers our goal of transparency?

Paul: the orig rule changes in 2024, we made some changes on Rule 17. We discovered in the rule change we made, it generated a lot of unanticipated reactions.

If you preached at a congregation in the previous year prior to someone leaving you were considered an inside candidate. PPL were making choices about where they were going to preach. It wasn't working for settlement office or others.

What are our intentions? The way it was applied wasn't working on our end. Transitions found the same. So we, with Transitions, are proposing the changes below. We want to empower Transitions to create policies that are equitable and make sense. Circumstances are constantly changing. We have a shortage of ministers

Cecilia: Actually, we do NOT have a shortage of ministers. What we have is a mismatch between what's available to choices for settlement for ministers. Shift in people moving and congregations are offering smaller packages.

Michael – what needs to be in a Rule? That the Board needs to approve. What should be in a policy? That MFC can change. In 2024 we made many changes to take out Rules and put them in policies for ease of updating.

Cecilia: Transitions Team is a cross-staff group that includes Christine Purcell from Congregational Life, and Eric Kaminetzky and Patrice Curtis from Ministries and Faith Development. All three support this change.

Michael – the update allows Transitions more leeway to create policies..

Paul – the MFC is responsible for keeping an eye on policies for consistency with what we're looking for. Accountability is the MFC's.

Michael- how do we anticipate concerns and questions about this update and prepare to educate others about this change.

Karen L- What is inside candidate vs. regular process?

Michael – Inside candidate rules are set by Transitions. Inside cand's must be considered by search committee before they consider external candidates. People could game the system by intentionally preach somewhere to be an inside cand. Also, the confusion about what it means about the most recent settled minister announced their departure.

Alison – There were things that were done out of right relationship. These suggestions will help with ceasing 'gaming' the system.

Lindasusan – this change is empowering Transition Team to make policies vs. approving or disapproving an inside candidate.

Michael - those policies will apply to everyone.

Amanda- is there anything to worry about being 'lost' with this change?

Cecilia – I recall this Rule was meant to prevent a different gaming, that you'd know already that a minister is planning to announce a departure, then sliding in there, then I'll preach in the congregation so they see how awesome I am and will have an edge when I apply. We need to thread this carefully and not swing from one to the other.

Cecilia-Can you make a policy of MFC vs staff. I have concern by placing into the staff of UUA.

Adam- what I think allowing board to say yes, this makes sense, go ahead. I don't think the board is interested in micromanaging. Say more about your concern, Cecilia. I think having the response for process to be collaborative and across multiple bodies is great to get more perspective. Breadth of experience can be helpful.

Cecilia – not I can articulate even yet why am a little uncomfortable. Part is the parameters do reside with the MFC and application and results if it reside with the MFC. Not sure as staff if we thought what the implications in their roles are. Maybe a slow down on that for Staff to review and think about this change.

Lindasusan – what are mechanisms for MFC to have oversight. If Transitions make a policy, how does MFC know about that and be accountable for it?

Michael – there are policies now that we don't oversee (of Transitions). Maybe we should? We need a set of their policies and our policies to be separate. Maybe we should workshop together.

DC – What mechanism the MFC has for enforcement of broken Rules/Policies. We don't have a lot of authority to impose consequences. Who does that fall to and how does that happen?

Michael – good question. In some ways, our tools are blunt. We have some – probation, review team.

Karen – I've heard that in the past some of our larger congregation would bypass settlement process and interview/hire ministers outside the process. Is that true? Would this affect that?

Michael -Congregations can choose who they want for their minister.

Meg Richardson- How does this account for Community Ministers affiliated but not employed by a congregation, are they necessarily members of that congregation?

Cecilia – our website says community ministers are inside candidates for contract ministry. Not listed for full-time positions, which is odd.

Michael – if community affiliated minister applies for a position (would be an inside candidate), but we should include that language. The FWG will continue working on the language in this Rule change.

This Rule 17 change is tabled pending conversations with the UUA Board.