

Settled Search Calendar 2027

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Phase 1: Foundations for a Settled Search			
Concluding a Ministry Well			
Foundations for a Settled Search			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
Feb-Mar 2025	Minister announces departure (See Concluding a Ministry Well)	Outgoing minister	Ideal dates for announcement to give congregation time to have a good goodbye
Feb-Mar 2025	Congregation submits Notice of Ministerial Transition	Board	
Feb-Mar 2025	Consultation with Regional Congregational Life Staff/UUA Transitions Team	Board	Reach out to UUA regional staff contact and transitions@uua.org
Feb-Aug 2025	Church website update	Board/ staff and volunteers	Updated to reflect changes; website becomes a source of information for potential ministerial applicants
Mar-Aug 2025	Exit interviews	Board/outgoing minister/ UUA regional staff contact	Board works with UUA regional staff contact to arrange
Mar-May 2025	Interim ministry application and search	Board	
01 August, 2025	Interim ministry begins	Board, congregation, and interim minister	Some congregations doing developmental or contract ministry may also be doing settled search

Phase 2: Education and Preparation for Search			
Education and Preparation for Search			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
Winter 2026	Board reviews congregational by-laws for alignment with UUA search process	Board	Please consult with Congregational Transitions Director if there is not alignment
Feb-April 2026	Congregational Transitions Director reviews search process with Board	Board, UUA Congregational Transitions Director	Board should schedule a meeting or drop into office hours to review the search process
Feb-April 2026	Review of UUA compensation materials , consultation with Church Staff Finances	Board, person who administers benefits to employees	

Phase 2: Education and Preparation for Search			
<i>Education and Preparation for Search</i>			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
Spring 2026	Approve budget for search	Board	Should happen after 2 previous tasks for best results
Spring 2026	Church website review	Board/ staff and volunteers	Updated with the ministry search in mind
Apr-June 2026	Search team selection	Board	nominations, slate, congregational vote/approval
By 01 June, 2026	Sign up for UUA search support	Board	
Late June 2026	Search team reviews Settled Ministry Search Handbook	Search team	

Phase 3: Building the Structure to Search			
<i>Building the Structure to Search</i>			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
Spring/ Summer 2026	Search team shares availability for summer retreat programming led by UUA facilitator	Search team, Congregational Transitions Director	Search team sends availability to cpurcell@uua.org
06 June, 2026	UUA Transitions Team hosts overview of search process	UUA Transitions Team	Canceled due to extremely low registration
late June-Aug 2026	Search team retreat	Search team	In consultation with UUA retreat leader
20 June — 31 August, 2026	Congregational record/search profile initiated	Search team requests of UUA staff	All search team members are added to transitions email list; establishes covenantal agreement to rules of search process with UUA
15 July — 01 September 2026	Submit Break Barriers, Build Beliefs (B4) application (scheduled in order of submission)	Search team	
July-Sept 2026	Congregational survey and B4 congregational self-study	Search team	Contact transitions@uua.org for template
Aug-Sep 2026	Negotiating team selected	Board/search team	One search team member, one board member, one other member selected by the board
Sept-Oct 2026	Search team reserves weekends for precandidating in February-March	Search team	Pre-candidating weekends will be from 05 February — 14 March

Phase 3: Building the Structure to Search			
<i>Building the Structure to Search</i>			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
Sep-Nov 2026	Small group meetings & focus groups	Search team	Small group meetings are more likely open to anyone; focus groups have specific parts or ideas about the congregation to discuss
Sep-Nov 2026	“Break Barriers, Build Beliefs” (B4) congregational self-study (launch 2 weeks before workshop)	Search team	Self-study focus: widening the circle of potential ministers for the congregation.
Sep-Dec 2026	Break Barriers, Build Beliefs (B4) Workshop	Search team, board, congregation	<i>A complete update of the previous workshop, Beyond Categorical Thinking</i>
Oct-Dec 2026	Documents packet	Search team	A collection of documents about the congregation to be shared with applicants; includes items like by-laws, budgets, etc;
Oct -Dec 2026	“Break Barriers, Build Beliefs” (B4) follow-up packet	Search team	For copying: newsletter, worship and coffee hour resources to keep widening the circle of potential ministers congregations may welcome.
Oct-Nov 2026	Recommendations for ministerial agreement and compensation made to board	Negotiating team	Negotiating team recommends, board approves, search team adds agreement to search profile and documents packet. Only minimum compensation figure should be shared with applicants.
Oct-Nov 2026	Draft agreement (with changes tracked or logged separately) and compensation worksheet completed	Search team/board	
mid-November 2026	Congregational record/search profile completed and shared with transitional minister and UUA regional staff for review/feedback	Search team	All questions must be answered

Phase 4: Opening Up the Search			
<i>Opening Up the Search</i>			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
Mid-late November 2026	Review of congregational record/search profile	Transitional minister, regional staff, Congregational Transitions Director	Search profile reviewed by at least 2 people who give feedback, ask for clarifications, offer suggestions
Dec 1, 2026	Congregational record/search profile	Congregational Transitions Director	<i>The search team should get UUA approval for any changes made after publishing</i>

Phase 4: Opening Up the Search			
<i>Opening Up the Search</i>			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
	approved and published. Search team may request publication as late as Dec. 15 if they are not ready on the 1st.		
December 1-20, 2026	Documents Packet link submitted to Congregational Transitions Director	Search team, Congregational Transitions Director	
December	Consultation with Congregational Transitions Director, if desired, to prepare for discernment phase of search	Search team schedules consultation with Congregational Transitions Director	to establish uniform protocols with all ministerial applicants and have a chance to ask questions before discernment phase begins
December	Search team plans for applicant interviews	Search team	The search team should set aside times for hold open for interviews in advance and conduct a mock interview with their transitional minister

Phase 5: Discernment and Mutual Selection			
<i>Discernment and Mutual Selection</i>			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
04 January, 2027	Release of names of initial applicants to the search team (soft deadline for ministers to apply)	UUA Transitions Team	
04-16 January	Search team reviews applicants' materials, shares link to documents packet with all applicants, receives references from applicants	Search team/applicants/ UUA Transitions Team	Search team reviews applicant records and shares documents packets by VIEW-ONLY access link with applicants. Team asks applicants for references (of applicants' choosing). New applications may come in until until Jan 16th
Early Jan-late Jan	Video interviews of applicants	Search team and ministers	Sample Interview Questions for Settled Searches (XLSX)
16 January	Last day to apply	Ministers	Search team may request extension
25 January	Pre-candidating offers extended	Search team	Offers may be extended beginning at midnight local time; some congregations may not be ready
26 January	Pre-candidating offers accepted	Applicants	Offers may be accepted by applicants
05 February — 14 March	Pre-candidating weekends	Search team and ministers	Friday-Sunday; search team hosts

Phase 5: Discernment and Mutual Selection			
<i>Discernment and Mutual Selection</i>			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
February-March	Developed references	Search team	Search teams must get permission from applicants before reaching out; search teams and ministers also schedule research calls with UUA regional staff
15-21 March, 2027	Discernment and follow up week	Search team and ministers	Chance to do follow up interviews or ask questions
Monday, 22 March, 2027	Ministers submit ranked yes/maybe/no list to Transitions Team	Ministers	Minister's ranking form
Monday, 22 March, 2027	Search teams submit ranked yes/maybe/no list to Transitions Team	Search team	Search team's ranking form
Tuesday, 23 March, 2027	UUA Transitions Team distills matches	UUA Transitions Team	UUA Transitions Team will verify everything but mutual #1 matches (ties, second choices)
Wednesday, 24 March, 2027	UUA Transitions Team confirms matches	UUA Transitions Team	UUA Transitions Team contacts both search teams and ministers
Thursday, 25 March, 2027	Offers can be made and accepted	Search team/ministers	Noon Eastern/11 am Central/ 10 am Mountain/9 am Pacific

Phase 6: Finalizing the Offer			
<i>Finalizing the Offer</i>			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
Beginning 25 March, 2027	Negotiation of employment agreement	Negotiating team and minister	Candidate minister can be connected to negotiating team after offer is accepted; agreement is not executed until successful call vote
25 March-08 April, 2027	Background checks	Board or administrator	Criminal background and sex offender check only
28 March-11 April, 2027	Announcing the candidate	Search team	Before announcement: fully negotiate agreement, initiate background check, minister must tell their own congregation (if they are serving with a congregation)

Phase 7: Beginning a New Ministry			
<i>Beginning a New Ministry</i>			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
24 April-01 May, 2027	Candidating week and vote to call!	Search team, candidate, board, and whole congregation	UUA dates are negotiable; the listed date range is a recommendation. The content and structure of the week should be mutually agreed to by candidate and search team
May, 2027	Congregation submits notice of call form	Search team, board, or anyone familiar with details of compensation	
May-July 2027	Preparation for August start of settled ministry	Board	Good good-bye to interim, office prepared for new minister, remind congregation that minister's start date is not until August 1
01 August, 2027	Arrival	Minister, leaders, congregants, congregational benefits manager	Make sure minister is enrolled in all compensation and benefit plans
Aug-Nov 2027	Starting together	Congregation and minister/ UUA regional staff	Be intentional and relational in starting well. Plan a new ministry start-up with UUA regional staff.

If No Match Occurs: Moving to What's Next			
<i>If No Match Occurs: Moving to What's Next</i>			
Dates	Task	Whose Is This?	Notes
Friday, 02 April, 2027	Board and search team decide and prepare to move to contract or interim search or continue in current transitional ministry for another year	Board, in consultation with search team	UUA Transition Team will provide significant support in the planning process should a pivot be needed
Monday, 05 April, 2027	Ministers can begin applying for congregations which pivoted from a settled search to a contract search. The interim search has its own calendar and plays out in late April to mid-May	Ministers	