

Dear Colleague,

In 2013 the UUA and UUMA published a handbook entitled “*Fulfilling The Call – A Model of UU Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*” which defined in depth the duties of a UU minister. A suggested use of the handbook was directed at evaluation bodies:

“One of the challenges with which congregations and community organization commonly struggle is determining how to provide specific, useful developmental feedback to their minister. The Fulfilling the Call handbook, used thoughtfully and respectfully, can provide the tool to do that.”<sup>1</sup>

The CENTER team of the UUMA has developed a tool to help you and your evaluating bodies use the FTC handbook for the purpose of evaluations. It has been field tested with positive results for both the minister and the evaluating body, both reporting that it was useful as a tool to assess the performance of the ministry and to point out areas for development. As one person who was part of the field test put it “finally it was clear what a minister does and on what we should evaluate them”

The evaluation form includes the nine duties and all of their associated tasks as defined in the FTC handbook, using the proficiency category as the standard by which to judge the performance of a specific task. Each task is then evaluated as either a strength, satisfactory, an area for growth, a weakness or not observed. There is also room in each duty for comments which we strongly recommend to evaluators.

The evaluation form is a word document which you may edit for your specific setting. It is recommended that before the final form is distributed to evaluators that the minister and perhaps the head of the evaluating body go through the form to exclude tasks that are not applicable to the minister’s setting, or ones that could not accurately be evaluated by any of the evaluators.

Once the final form is agreed upon a select group of evaluators should be chosen to complete the form including the minister and if applicable any and all staff members. There are many categories and each evaluator is expected to spend a minimum of 3-4 hours completing the form. Again it is highly recommended that each evaluator be asked to provide specific comments for each duty.

It will be up to each minister and their evaluating body to determine how the results will be tallied and what mechanisms will be used to provide feedback to the minister. In the test case, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Wilmington, the minister was given numerical feedback (each category was assigned a number from 4 for strength to 1 for weakness; not observed was not included in tally) and a summary of comments. The minister was also given access to all of the evaluations none of which were not anonymous.

The goal of the evaluation is to evaluate a *ministry* rather than the minister so that the minister can improve their ministry. We believe that used thoughtfully, this tool can become the gold standard for evaluations of clergy ministries.

Many thanks are due to the Committee on Ministry and congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Wilmington, NC for being the first test case. Their work in helping CENTER develop this tool is much appreciated.

If you have any questions or comments please contact Don Southworth, Executive Director of the UUMA.

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<sup>i</sup> *Fulfilling The Call – A Model for UU Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston, 2013, p.4