



AN OPPORTUNITY BEFORE US

As we look ahead to reopening and to our fall staffing plans, we've been invited to wonder together and discern next steps as we journey into our three-phase staffing model, ideally culminating in calling a senior-level Minister of color, and our vision of being an antiracist church.

BACKGROUND

When Rev. Karin Case completed her ministry with us two years ago, Executive Council assembled a working group who outlined a three-phase staffing plan to both meet our staffing needs as a vibrant, engaged congregation, while reflecting our commitment to becoming a more multicultural, inclusive, and antiracist congregation. The plan was endorsed by the congregation at Annual Meeting in January 2020 and includes benchmarks, financial and otherwise, that help inform us when we are ready to move to the next phase of the plan. We are making good progress towards the financial benchmarks. In addition, we are deepening our work of being an antiracist church, which we hope will allow us to attract and fully include diverse staff leadership.

- Phase 1 involved hiring two Pastoral Associates. Last year, this was Carlyle and Lexi. This year, it's Lexi and Jaz. Note: Carlyle is currently serving in a BU grant-funded, 5 hr/wk role as our Community Minister for Racial Justice and has also begun serving as Associate Minister at Empowerment Church in Detroit.
- Phase 2 involves hiring a 3/4 or full-time Minister or Associate Minister and having a half-time Pastoral Associate.
- Phase 3, our overarching goal, is to call a senior-level Minister of color. We hope to be at Phase 3 soon, understanding that the process of assembling a search committee, writing a profile, and conducting a national search typically takes 15-18 months.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

For the 2021-22 program year, we plan to extend Jaz's Pastoral Associate position at 20 hours per week, from September - June. We will also increase Lexi's current 29 hour/week position to 40 hours to include sabbatical coverage for Karen and some for Sarah. This will facilitate our moving towards Phase 2 now, and could point us to beginning our Phase 3 search process as early as the fall of 2022.

To do this, we propose that Lexi Boudreaux serve as a full-time Transitional Minister for a designated term of two years¹, with possible month-to-month extension only if mutually agreeable. Her unique skill set (pastoral, on-line tech, and accounting) is just what we need at this moment, and she is excited by the prospect of helping us to move to Phase 3.

How would we get there? Ordinarily, Executive Council would have the authority to hire her, or any interim or transitional minister, for a designated-term role. However, at this time, Lexi has been approved for ordination, and to enable her to fill this transitional ministerial position, we would make the position an “ordainable call” for Lexi. The UCC requires that an “ordainable call” be at least half-time, at least two years, and compensated at a livable wage. This concept of “call” is rooted in our congregational theology and heritage and involves a mutual discernment of the Spirit’s leading to enter into a covenantal relationship that is affirmed at an Installation. Calling a minister also requires the vote of the entire congregation at a Special Congregational Meeting.

PROCESS TIMELINE

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| May 17-24 | Discussions by the Board of Deacons, Finance Committee, Staff Policy Committee, and Executive Council led to the endorsement of the following plan to hold: |
| June 13 | a Congregational Forum after worship to share the spring financial update and to present and discuss the proposal to hold a Special Congregational Meeting on June 27 call Lexi to the role of Transitional Minister for two years starting 9/1/2021. |
| June 27 | a Special Congregational Meeting after worship to vote upon the motion to call Lexi to the role of Transitional Minister for two years starting 9/1/2021. We could also consider any other business that needs to come before the meeting. |

¹ “Designated Term” is an expression suggested by the [UCC Search and Call Process](#). See page 2, and also Page 11 which has a relevant note about internal candidates.