

MINISTRY SEARCH TEAM NOMINEES, 2023-24



Mark Eschbach



Karen Kurth



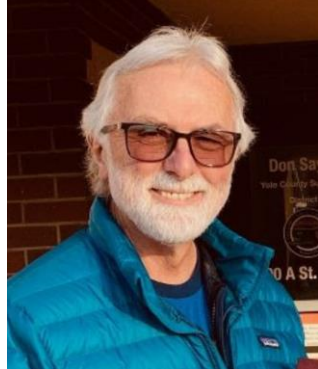
Alex Lee-Jobe



Jill Pickett



Tamara Range



Don Saylor



Jose Torres



Lorraine Visher

Mark Eschbach: Service to our community is a family value of mine, and have been called upon by others to serve. As an individual member I bring the perspective of someone surrounded by UUs in the wild throughout my life, starting my direct affiliation with being a UU as a young adult. I hesitate to admit I am much older now, although do not hesitate to admit we still regularly attend. For more than ten years now, my family has attended two UU churches: a small one in Elk Grove, then UUCD.

During my time with UUCD my oldest son has gone from kindergarten to high school. I have actively volunteered with many youth levels of our Religious Education program: from the youth in the bridgehouse; our middle schoolers who regularly met in the library; and our high schoolers who do not have a location to call their own even during their meetings. I volunteer with youth outside of UU, bringing UU values to the great BSA Scouting program as the Scoutmaster of Troop 139.

I hope to ply my experience and knowledge as a voice for those who recommended me on the committee for this important search.

Karen Kurth: Karen has served UUCD in multiple roles during her 25+ year membership and feels honored to continue her service. She has stretched her skills through teaching RE, two terms on the board, celebration of life, sabbatical team, nominating committee and Worship Associate. Many other contributions populate her resume - feel free to ask her! We value the leadership skills, knowledge of our church community and openness to change that she brings to the table. Her competence, follow through, active listening and team-building skills will serve the SearchTeam well.

Karen has three adult kids and her varied careers include Program Director of a Mental Health Crisis Facility, Conservatorship Officer and business owner of Lifeline Yoga & More. She is a long-time Woodland resident and lives North of town in a little farmhouse with her husband Bill and their 3 dogs.

Alex(andra) Lee-Jobe: Dear Friends, Hi there! My name is Alex(andra) Lee-Jobe, pronouns-she/her/hers, 30+year member of UUCD, former member of: Uniting for Racial Justice & Religious Exploration Committees, Sparks Choir singer, two time General Assembly attendee, and Worship Associate. I am currently an active member of the Asian American Pacific Islander Caucus (APIC) and Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM).

I joined UUCD with my husband and three children in 1996. I wanted my kids to have an accepting/loving community around them as a “safety net” to cushion them from the difficult world they live in as BIPOC. I was also very impressed and pleased to find my former UC Davis Professor, Isao Fujimoto’s wife as the Director of R.E. We struck up a fast friendship, both being the mothers of Asian bi-racial kiddos. In many ways, I found that comforting “safety net” for myself, in this church.

I am proud and excited to be involved in selecting UUCD’s next minister! I’m anticipating a deep, rigorous, and invigorating journey ahead. I will bring the perspective of an AAPI/BIPOC (Black Indigenous Person of Color) person to this team. We sorely need to grow into a church that welcomes ALL people. My experience is, we have challenges in this area. At the same time, we have many warm hearted, dedicated, well intentioned folks here. I have strong faith that we will be able to find someone that will nurture, challenge, and guide us into being the fully loving congregation we are faithfully becoming.

Jill Pickett: I grew up near Cambridge, England. I trained in London to be an elementary school teacher. I was working in a village school near Cambridge 1974 when I met my husband, Warren. He was a Kansan, taking a year of his physics PhD program in New York to study in England. We married in 1976 in Bristol England, and I emigrated later that year. We have three children, Leonie in Davis, Chris in St. Louis and Tim in Richmond, CA. Leonie has two children and Chris has one.

We first lived in Berkeley, then Evanston, IL, then we lived in Maryland for 18 years, taking two sabbatical years in England during that period. When Tim was a baby in Clinton, Maryland, I joined the Unitarian Church of Camp Springs, and the children joined the R.E. program. I felt much at home in the church, serving on the R.E. Committee and organizing the auction.

Also, when Tim was a baby I went to college in the evenings to earn my MA in Counseling Psychology, then began work fulltime as a school counselor and part-time as a family therapist.

After we moved to California in 1997, I worked as a middle school counselor for ten years in Roseville. But during the first year while I was fulfilling requirements for school counseling in California, I sought out the Unitarian Church in Davis. I became a member immediately and knew I had found my community.

Over the years I have taken many roles in the church. For 25 years I have given pastoral support in a assorted programs, from joining the Pastoral Care Oversight Committee, to becoming a Pastoral Associate, to co-leading the Caring Council. I served twice on the Nominating Committee and once on the Board, culminating as Chair in 2012. I served on the Committee on Ministry, on a Search Committee for an R.E. director, and as a leader on Reverend Morgan’s Search Committee.

Choir was an important part of my life in my early church years. I took a break helping with administration and rejoined last year. I find it fulfilling again now.

I reflect over the years how my UU religion is compatible with my personal and career beliefs. I recognize the strong need of individuals to belong; the importance to treat everyone with respect and kindness and to be committed to the organization.

I am honored to be invited to serve on this Search Committee.

Tamara Range: Unitarian Universalism has been what feeds me spiritually and has made me a better person. I love this faith tradition! UUCD has become my family's extended family. I was interested in attending a church in 2006 because I wanted a positive spiritual foundation for my then, four-year-old daughter, Grace. After attending 3-4 services I found that UUCD was going to give me a solid spiritual foundation!

Since committing myself as a member I have taught in the Bridgehouse, was on the Children's and Youth Religious Exploration (and chaired), was part of the Strategic Planning Team, joined the Board in 2018, was a Worship Associate, served on the Nominating Committee and most recently assisted with our 2023 auction planning team.

In my personal/professional experience I have been a manager for over 25 years. I've interviewed hundreds of people and hired many. I can get a good read on someone in a short amount of time and I'm good judge of character.

My family is deeply connected to UUCD. I've raised my kids here and am grateful for this community. I'm proud of UUCD and what it offers. It would be my honor to help find the next minister, someone that will love UUCD and its congregants as much as I do!

Don Saylor: Julie and I joined the UUCD congregation shortly after we moved to Davis in 1987 with our two children. We came looking for a faith tradition to share with our children and found a home for all of us. Both of our now adult children have served in committed leadership roles in UU congregations in their communities. I served as a Board Member and Treasurer in the late 1980s and served a three-year term as a member of the Committee on Ministry in the 1990s. Through those experiences, I came to know and appreciate the vision and work of many of the founding members of our congregation. These relationships deepened through our participation in a multi-generational "extended family". I often reflect upon the ways that the principles and values of Unitarian Universalism have informed and guided my public service. I look forward to being able to contribute to the future of our congregation at this key milestone event and to continue to steward the vision that drove our founding members to create this very special space.

Dr. José V. Torres is Professor and Vice Chair for Undergraduate Education at the Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology of the School of Medicine at the University of California at Davis. He is also the President and Co-Founder of CancerMune, a company dedicated to the development of cancer immunotherapeutic and preventive vaccines for humans and companion animals including dogs and cats. He was born at home in a remote mountain in Puerto Rico. He performed immunological research on pathogenic human viruses for 20 years and now teaches human immunology, human virology, biotechnology and cancer to medical students and senior undergraduates. He is interested in global health, holistic medicine, sustainable agriculture, and conservation of the natural environment. His hobby is the preservation of critically endangered tortoises and *Uromastyx* lizards with his wife Xia and two children, Angelita and Vidal.

Lorraine Visher: More than twenty years ago I was looking for a church home, a place where I could feel at peace and accepted, and that aligned with my values. I needed a touchstone to ground me as I struggled with a challenging new teaching job, young children, and the impending death of my mother. I started church shopping. UUCD was the first church I attended and I've been here ever since.

I've served on the Committee on Ministry, the Celebration of Life, as a Worship Associate, an OWL facilitator and Deep Listening Group facilitator. Recently I began serving on the Nominating Committee where I learned more about the search for a new minister and the team that would be charged with that task and I knew it was something I wanted to do.

I am presently transiting from serving as President of the Davis School Arts Foundation, a task that demanded a great deal of my time and helped me grow my leadership skills and understanding of community service. I'm ready to apply that growth to the next big task. My time and experience with UUCD along with my love for this congregation makes the Search Committee an exciting challenge. I look forward to it.