

Your Sr. Minister Search Committee proudly presents as its ministerial candidate the Reverend Doctor Justin Osterman.



Dr. Osterman was raised in a Unitarian Universalist family. His parents were teachers in the US Dept of Defense School System in Europe so he spent his childhood in Norway, England and Germany. He received a BA in English from St. Andrews Presbyterian College in North Carolina. Following college he spent four years in the US Army as a non-commissioned officer and, later, as a paratrooper and an Arabic linguist with a peacekeeping force in the Sinai Peninsula. Following an honorable discharge, he moved to Florida and worked in business. After several years of volunteering in his free time for work with the homeless in Tampa and Hospice of Southwest Florida, he decided, "service toward others had become the clearest source of meaning in my life."

Dr. Osterman received a doctorate in Ministry from the Meadville Lombard Theological School in 1999 and, at graduation, received the Robert Charles Billings Prize for Excellence in Scholarship for his doctoral thesis. At St. Luke's Medical Center in Boise, Idaho, he completed a degree in Clinical Pastoral Education, and also served as parish intern at Birmingham Unitarian Church in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

He interned at Birmingham Unitarian Church in Bloomfield Hills, MI in 1998; and following graduation he served as the interim minister at All Souls Church in New London, CT in 1999. He was subsequently called by the Central Unitarian Church of Paramus, which he has served since then.

In 2005 Dr. Osterman was asked to accompany and interpret for two attorneys representing prisoners at the US detention center at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He thus became the first and only non-military clergy person to meet and speak with prisoners in that facility.

He is currently the president of the Meadville Lombard Theological School Alumni Association. He is a Co-founder of the Bergen County Sanctuary Committee and a member of the Bergen County Human Services Advisory Council, chairing the Comprehensive Emergency Assistance sub-committee.

We are very excited for our congregation and know that Justin will be an inspirational minister and provide the leadership and qualities we seek to pair with us as we proceed into the future.

During the search process, as we narrowed down the field of highly qualified ministers, we were able to discover many things. Here are a few about Justin.

We know that Justin is incredibly warm and personable. He possesses a sharp mind and brings an intelligent yet impassioned message. You will find that you will not want to miss a service on any given Sunday. In fact, this may be a problem. If you volunteer during Sunday services, you may just have to stay for both services- teach or volunteer during one, attend service during the other. Justin describes himself as a preacher, and in fact he is. His message and indeed, his delivery style will not only get you thinking and reaching intellectually, but also become involved emotionally in the message. These Sunday services will have you coming back for more and keep you thinking far past Sunday.

Justin is passionate that our liberal Unitarian Universalist faith is the faith for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. He believes that our message of compassion and justice should be a welcoming message for many more. To that goal, he has worked to make Meadville Lombard, one of only two UU seminaries, a stronger institution. His focus is not only on theological institutions, but in the lives of the community as well. His leadership and empowerment of lay leaders brings that vision to our peace and justice making goals as well.

Please reserve as much time as possible to get to know Justin during Candidating Week, the 20<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2008. There will be many opportunities to get to know him, hear him, question him and hopefully, welcome him into our community.

He is divorced, single, and without children. Oh, by the way, he scuba dives and likes to make pies, especially mango.

Please feel free to ask anyone on the Search Committee any questions you may have and look forward to many more announcements and invitations in this exciting time.