

## **Cottage Meeting Notes – Compilation from 3 meetings (July 19, August 9, August 30) with total of 28 attendees**

### **1) Looking back after our minister has been with us for a year, what will success look and feel like at FP?**

- More people in the pews.
- We'll be thinking about possibilities, not limitations.
- Not consumed by financial issues; we are spending energy being a church.
- Not defined by financial limits.
- More diverse congregation (gay, people of color, varied ages, more kids).
- FPUU more known in the Town of Canton for good things.
- More social action; more externally focused.
- More outsiders are using our facility for weddings, funerals, etc.
- More interchange with other UU and other faith communities.
- More regular attendance at Sunday services.
- Considering year-round services.
- More kids in RE.
- RE program attracting families.
- Sermons would be more nourishing to men to encourage attendance on Sunday mornings.
- Children's Garden Pre-school more integrated with FPUU church life.
- Most people have not left FPUU.
- People smile as they walk in the door and as they walk out.
- We will feel the minister knows us as individuals.
- Sense of forward direction.
- We are looking forward to 2nd year.
- We will have a sense of direction.
- Sense of wholeness within to start tackling outreach and community work.
- More diversity in pews.
- Variety of ages in sanctuary on Sundays.
- Having children who want to be here.
- Feeling we can accomplish anything regardless of difficulties encountered.
- Experiencing much excitement as we prepare minister's installation.
- Sense of belonging at FPUU.
- Good attendance at FPUU sponsored events.
- Feeling inspired by services.
- Inspiring service with direct contact/inclusion/engagement by minister to congregants.
- New staff (minister, DRE) working together successfully.
- All are fully engaged due to minister.
- Feeling there is enough - \$\$, volunteers – to do all we want to do. Living within our means and not feeling we are lacking resources.
- Larger membership, new members.

- We will look more like a religious institution and less like a business, moving from a business model to stewardship model.
- More children.
- Thought provoking sermons with subsequent discussions ie: sermon circles that include minister and guest ministers.
- Prompts from sermon at coffee hour to stimulate further discussions/conversation.
- Have a place to discuss current issues.
- Place to discuss current stressors in our lives ie: job transitions, perhaps in a covenant group model.
- Change our culture to be less individually oriented and to develop more of a group church culture; need to discuss within church community.
- Hold issue oriented discussion groups that include minister.
- Church to be prepared for ‘fallout’ of discussion groups.
- At end of year begin assessing whether we are on right track together with minister.
- Do survey on regular basis to assess where we are and need to go and to evaluate church leadership.
- Better communication among us, especially with those who can not attend Sunday service.
- More comprehensive newsletter.
- Occasional worship services at alternative day/time.

## **2) After a year, what will we know and love about our minister?**

- Their heart is shared with us.
- They have a pleasant speaking voice that facilitates enjoyment of sermons.
- Good public speaker.
- Shares our values.
- Is enthusiastic, energetic and has a sense of humor.
- Knows how to take care of self and us – boundaries between personal life and church life are not an issue.
- Has a love of children.
- Joyous, sociable, outgoing, extroverted.
- Likes to be connected to ALL congregants (not just to those in leadership roles).
- Connected to Canton and larger community.
- Empowers congregants to take on roles as caregivers, connect with others and plan activities.
- Knows how to delegate.
- Is comfortable talking about Judeo-Christian faiths, so as not to exclude those who celebrate their religious backgrounds.
- Respects and uses a “language of reverence”, including references to g/God (by whatsoever name we worship).
- Does not feed our phobia of spirituality.
- He/She is fully engaged.
- Sense of humor.
- Feels inspired.
- Is intellectually inspiring (or not).
- Minister helps us know and help ourselves – is a catalyst for cohesiveness.

- Has brought us together.
- Is positive person, likes music, likes children, thinks positively.
- Cares for and knows our youth.
- Is 'warm and fuzzy (?)' – sincerely caring and warm.
- Is creative and insightful.
- “Gets” us and has pride in what we have pride in.
- Is willing to embrace spirituality at all FPUU gatherings including didactic mtgs.
- Will have a friendship with minister – know about their family, interests/ sharing.
- Minister is not afraid to try new things even when there is conflict – will address conflict and facilitate us moving forward.
- Is willing to listen to old and new members.
- Is a facilitator, nurturing and supportive.
- Is prompt, organized.
- Service begins & ends on time; makes adjustments if Joys/Concerns too long/too brief.
- Has good balance/boundaries of their needs and those of congregation.
- As minister their calling is to care for others vs. need for private space – need for balance.
- Is more present in the FPUU community, more local, less commute time.
- Accepts our prior traditions & backgrounds as individuals.
- Knows & practices 1st and all 7 UU Principles.
- Age preference? Attendees expressed wish for experienced minister, with life experiences if not lengthy ministerial experience to add interest to sermons and to “handle” congregation as “we are difficult”. Others suggested considering a recently graduated minister due to our small size and salary considerations.
- Is self-assured enabling him/her to do all other aspects previously stated.
- Acknowledgement that we will have to work with minister to help him/her meet our expectations.
- We will feel comfortable speaking directly with him/her.
- They are available yet have good personal boundaries.
- Emphasis on boundaries to be different from current policy/contractual boundaries.
- They will lead by example and not just by words.
- They are open to listen to different ideas and don't solve problems unless asked.
- Is hospitable and welcoming.
- Flexibility with their time availability, choices of what to get involved in and arranges coverage when not available.
- Understands their role.
- Good communicator.
- Has inspirational relationship with our children/youth.
- Is geographically close so is more involved in our community.
- Doesn't hibernate in office/home; is accessible.
- Helps us grow, supports change and is capable of facilitating difficult discussions/decisions.
- Keeps us organized and focused.
- WALKS ON WATER YET IS HUMAN!!!!