

## PROCESS FOR HIRING JUBILEE'S NEW MINISTER



### Overview

In February, the Jubilee! Community was asked to respond to a survey with their input on what characteristics are most important for their new minister. Eighty-six Jubilants answered the survey, and a job description based on the community's input was developed.

Since then, the Minister Search Task Force (Maureen Linneman, Rose Bator, Diane DeWitt, Michele Bernhardt, George Fleming, Willie Repoley, Ruth Pike-Elliott and consultant Laura Collins) has worked together and consulted with Guy Sayles on developing processes for hiring our new minister.

Their work has included advertising our search for a new minister, evaluating candidates, asking questions of top applicants via email, evaluating videos of those applicants speaking at spiritual gatherings, and conducting Zoom interviews.

MSTF is on track with their original timeline to present the new minister to the Jubilee! Community for affirmation in the first quarter of 2024, and have set a December 31, 2023 deadline for receiving new applications. Applications received after that date will be held for consideration if MSTF's first recommendation does not work out.

It is important to note that MSTF is moving as fast as they can, and as slowly as they must. Guided by spirit and powered by many, many hours of hard work, the minister search will unfold as it is meant to for Jubilee!'s highest good.

### Work that has been completed or is underway

- Developed Job Description, based on broad input from the whole community
- Advertised in Indeed, LinkedIn, the Creation Spirituality newsletter, Sojourners and Wild Goose Festival
- Reached out to many progressive seminaries, religious groups, and influential individuals and social groups
- Established criteria for evaluating candidates and began reviewing applicants with three key requirements in mind: leadership experience, speaking/leading spiritual events experience, and interfaith capacity
- Began evaluating 2<sup>nd</sup> round candidates, including watching videos of them speaking and having them respond to essay questions particular to the needs of Jubilee!
- Is currently inviting top candidates to Zoom interviews with the whole task force (Laura Collins is not directly involved in the interviews, but can review afterwards if there are concerns, questions or areas of confusion.)
- As new resumes come in, they are being evaluated to see if any advance to Round Two and then if any advance to a Zoom interview
- Any candidates that apply after the December 31 deadline will be informed that their resumes are being held while we complete the evaluating of candidates we've already reviewed.

### Next Steps

- Narrow to top one or two candidates, and follow up with references.
- If references check out, MSTF will evaluate them speaking in a "neutral pulpit" (not Jubilee!) where the candidate(s) can lead the celebration
- Hold in-person interviews with MSTF, and informal "meet & greets" with the Board and staff
- If a candidate rises to the top and receives unanimous MSTF consent (preferably unanimous enthusiasm, but at the least unanimous acceptance) as the top candidate, MSTF will:
  - Run a background check
  - Take their recommendation to the board for approval
  - If they receive the Board's approval, make the candidate a job offer

- If candidate accepts job offer:
  - Create brochure explaining why candidate is right for Jubilee!
  - Schedule a day for the candidate to speak at a Jubilee! Sunday Celebration and invite the affirmation of the community by proclamation.
  - Provide small group opportunities for candidate to meet with team leaders and staff the day before they speak, and an informal “reception” time with community members after the Sunday Celebration
  - Sign a formal contract and set a date to begin serving as Jubilee!’s new full-time minister
- If the candidate doesn’t accept the job offer, decide whether to contact runner-up
- If there is not unanimity on calling runner-up, back to square one...

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Why isn’t Laura Collins becoming our full-time minister?**

Laura came to us when we were in a time of transition and her role has been transitional in nature. Transitional ministers do their best work when their contract is time-limited. Laura feels the community will be ready to move into a new chapter with a fresh start and new energized leader. When the new minister is hired, Laura will return to building her own Soul Care business and working on some personal projects that she has put on the back burner while serving our community.

### **Why wasn’t I part of the decision-making process to choose our new minister?**

Jubilee!’s Board is made up of members appointed and voted in by the community to represent their best interests. In keeping with our bylaws, the Board is solely entrusted to make decisions about hiring a new minister. The Board appointed a Minister Search Task Force (MSTF) composed of Board members and Jubilants to organize and undertake the search for our new minister. MSTF’s first action was to undertake a community survey to determine what are the most important characteristics of our new minister. MSTF based the job description and evaluation criteria on that community input. Following rigorous processes, they will make a recommendation to the Board about the most capable candidate. The Board will evaluate, and accept or reject that recommendation.

### **Who is on the Minister Search Task Force?**

The task force is appointed by the Board, and includes three Board members (Maureen Linneman, Diane DeWitt and Michele Bernhardt) and four Jubilants (Rose Bator, George Fleming, Ruth Pike-Elliot and Willie Repoley). Laura Collins consults with MSTF.

### **Why is only one final candidate being presented to the community?**

If two (or more) candidates are presented to the whole community to “vote” on, it inevitably means that speaking/leading celebrations will receive the most consideration, while leadership experience/skills and interfaith capacity will receive comparatively less attention. It also invites “campaigning” which, in a community of Jubilee!’s current size, could be divisive. Also, if a candidate is currently employed, it could be risky to them to “audition” publicly at Jubilee! before being offered the job.

### **What has the candidate pool been like?**

Over 30 candidates from a variety of backgrounds applied for the position. Candidates came from all across the U.S., and primarily presented experience as ministers or chaplains. While many of them came from traditional Christian churches, the ones that rose to the top embrace theologies that match Jubilee!’s interfaith traditions and roots in Creation Spirituality.

### **Who do I contact if I have questions or comments?**

Please send any questions or comments to [ministersearch@jubileecommunity.org](mailto:ministersearch@jubileecommunity.org)