

UUS Sabbatical Guide – Rev. Diana’s Sabbatical, January 27-April 26, 2025

Rev. Diana will be taking three months of sabbatical leave from January 27 to April 26, 2025. Since September, Rev. Diana and the UUS Sabbatical Committee have been meeting to prepare for this time to ensure that our congregation runs as smoothly as possible during her absence. Various congregation members, committees, teams, and staff have agreed to manage Rev. Diana’s duties and responsibilities during the sabbatical period. This guide has been prepared as a reference to assist you in answering your questions during this sabbatical time.

Purpose of a Sabbatical

The term “Sabbatical” comes from the ancient word “sabbat,” which means to rest. The concept was derived from the tradition of letting fields lie fallow every seventh year so they might recover strength and fertility. Sabbaticals are considered an opportunity to leave behind established routines and responsibilities in order to rest and to foster reflection and renewal. Sabbaticals typically include study and/or travel that allow for new insight, perspective and energy that is productive and balanced.

The sabbatical leave is a tradition for Unitarian Universalist clergy. It offers an extended time for study, reflection, rest, and renewal—all ingredients for effective ministry. Unitarian Universalist ministers and congregations have been pioneers in developing a rationale for sabbaticals, and in establishing structure for them. Since the early sixties, sabbaticals have been an encouraged and accepted part of the ministerial-congregational relationship.

A sabbatical leave is part of the congregation’s covenant agreement with Rev. Diana as our minister. Here is the section on sabbatical leave from Rev. Diana’s contract:

The Minister may use sabbatical leave for study, education, writing, meditation, and other forms of professional, religious, spiritual, or personal growth. Sabbatical leave accrues at the rate of one (1) month per year of service, with leave to be taken after four (4) but before seven (7) years of service. No more than six (6) months of sabbatical leave may be used within any twelve (12) month period.

The Congregation will continue full salary, housing allowance, and benefits during sabbatical leave.

The Minister agrees not to resign from service to the Congregation for a minimum of one (1) year following the end of each sabbatical leave.

Rev. Diana's Plans/What Will She Do?

Rev. Diana will spend the first part of her sabbatical traveling to Peru where she will study Spanish and travel. Once she returns to the US in late March, she'll be spending the remainder of her sabbatical visiting colleagues, catching up on reading, resting, and reflecting.

Important Sabbatical Dates

Rev. Diana's last pulpit date - January 26

Rev. Diana returns to UUS - April 27

Rev. Diana's returns to the pulpit - May 4

Sunday Service Pulpit Schedule

February 2: Rev. Carin Bringleon, Minister, C.R. People's Church

February 9: Nic Kaplan, DLRE

February 16: Bridget Laflin, Ministerial Intern

February 23: Bridget Laflin, Ministerial Intern

March 2: Diana Henry, UUS Member

March 9: Joe Kaplan, UUS Member

March 16: Bridget Laflin, Ministerial Intern

March 23: Quanda Hood, UUS Member

March 30: Bridget Laflin, Ministerial Intern

April 6: Michael Honey-Arcement

April 13: Rev. Lois Cole, UUS Affiliated Community Minister

April 20: Bridget Laflin, Ministerial Intern

April 27: Bridget Laflin, Ministerial Intern

In the event of inclement weather on the day of a Sunday service, the service will be cancelled and an alternative service will be suggested instead.

Responsibilities of Congregation Members

Our people are what make up this congregation. And the individual work of this congregation's friends and members are what make our community thrive. So while Rev. Diana is away, members of the congregation have a chance to lean into our values to support our beloved community and one another. If you are already involved in teams, committees, or other roles, thank you! Keep doing what you're doing! If you don't participate much yet, maybe now is a good time to explore how you can share your gifts. There are many ways to get involved. Talk to a staff member or look at options here: <https://www.uusic.org/connect/>. Thank you!

Sabbatical Leadership Responsibilities

Administrative questions/Building questions/Communications

Maya Yoder (admin@uusic.org)

Pastoral care for members - Pastoral Care Team

Virginia Melroy or Bridget Laflin (pastoralcare@uusic.org)

Performing memorial services and other ceremonies

Bridget Laflin or Rev. Lois Cole (pastoralcare@uusic.org)

Planning Sunday services - Worship Associates Team

Kara Beauchamp (worship@uusic.org)

Supervising staff

Mary McMurray and Carmen Griggs (personnel@uusic.org)

Representing the Society to outside agencies

Board of Trustees (board@uusic.org) and Justice teams
(socialjustice@uusic.org)

Minister's discretionary fund

Virginia Melroy and Bridget Laflin (pastoralcare@uusic.org)

Conflicts between members - Right Relations Team

Christine Etlar and Erica Reschly (rightrelations@uusic.org)

Governance / Organizational Questions - Board of Trustees

Jeff Walberg - (board@uusic.org)

Emails

Please note that all emails sent to Rev. Diana during her sabbatical will be automatically archived and will not be reviewed upon her return. If a response is needed, please send emails to the appropriate group / person above. If you would like Rev Diana to see your email please send it after April 27.

Sabbatical Committee Members and Areas of Responsibility

sabbatical@uusic.org

Sarah Ross, Society Vice President, Sabbatical Committee Chair (vp@uusic.org)

Rev. Lois Cole, Community Minister

Bridget Laflin, Ministerial Intern

Kara Beauchamp, Worship Associates Team

Carmen Griggs, Personnel Committee

Virginia Melroy, Pastoral Care Team

Rev. Diana Smith, Minister (on sabbatical)