



Expression of Interest by
Candidate for Nominating Committee
Brownlee Field

1. Why are you interested in being a member of the Nominating Committee at First Unitarian Church?

- There are four reasons that formed or triggered my interest in becoming a member of the Nominating Committee. I was a member of the team that supported Reverend Shari Halliday-Quan with the selection of our second minister; Margalie Belizaire. I found that team energizing and I discovered that I had skills and insights that proved useful. When the team's work was done, and we were sharing the lessons we learned I said that I wanted to do more. So this first reason is quite fresh and strong. Secondly I am recently retired and I have more time to devote to our church now. I am loving retirement and do not lack for things to do, but I do not have job commitments and can chose my own priorities. Thirdly I spent most of my career in a leadership role that evolved into mostly leadership in the later years. I enjoyed leadership and my company sent me to an intensive leadership building program that I found very invigorating. So I value the importance of good leadership. My final reason is simple: I was asked. David Ryder reached out to me and asked me to participate. Sometimes all it takes is for someone to ask.

2. The Nominating Committee is charged with vetting interested candidates for open Leadership positions. What skills, strengths and ideas do you bring to support this role?

- I started my career as an Engineer in a position that included team leadership. I changed to become an IT (Information Technology) professional and that position included project leadership that continued to the end of my career. I led a series of successful projects over

several decades and earned a certification in Project Management. I became a Supervisor and finally a Manager of a team of IT professionals. I am a firm advocate that leaders should be “servant leaders”. Their role is to help their team members discover and grow their skills and be given assignments that best match the organization’s needs with their skills and strengths. Team and project leadership in IT often involved building a team of contractors and consultants to complete a project and then doing that all over again for the next project. I have, as a result, plenty of experience interviewing and selecting candidates. I was often called on by our HR (Human Relations) team to be a member of the interviewing team for new hires. Finally, I am no expert. I understand that the operation of a church is far different from my experience with leadership within a corporation. I have plenty to learn and I am sure, if I am given the opportunity, I will grow and be surprised and perhaps delighted by what I find.

3. What thoughts do you have about cultivating leadership among other church members?

- First Unitarian is a very mature organization and I am sure there are well established practices in place to build and support church leaders. I hope to learn those practices if I am given this opportunity. Convincing people to volunteer to be leaders requires good communication and some marketing. We should be looking not only for candidates that are eager and willing to serve but also those have skills but may need a little convincing. Leadership follows a growth path and providing a range of leadership opportunities from lightweight first experiences to our most demanding positions should allow candidates to grow and be ready when needed. Finally, I have seen that mentors can be effective in fostering leadership, I have been a mentor and had a mentor.

4. Describe your participation in this church (past and present) and other relevant community or work organization.

- I grew up as part of a Unitarian Church. I attended church school, sang in the youth choir, and attended the predecessor of OWL. I began attending First Unitarian in Rochester when our daughter was in Kindergarten. I volunteered to teach every other year and particularly enjoyed the Neighboring Faiths class and the sleep overs at the Church (even sleeping on the concrete floor). I was a member of the RE Committee for a couple of years. I joined Lew Ward Baker’s early service choir and sang at the early service for many years. I was blessed to sing under the direction of Lew, Grady Bailey, Debbie McCullough, Lisa Schmitz and finally Thom Snell. I sang in both choirs for a few years and so had a chance to be led by Ed Schell. I joined our current choir when Thom merged the early and late service choirs to form a single choir. Music is a very important component of our worship. I am an imperfect, full bodied singer and I encourage others to share their voice and join the choir. I joined the Bi-Fri’ers when I retired. I look forward to a post-virus time when the Bi-Fri’ers can re-enter the church and get back to work. I was surprised by an invitation to join the team helping Reverend Shari search for a second minister. I thoroughly enjoyed that team and the chance to meet great candidates and hear their deeply held thoughts. It was moving and inspirational. I am happy I helped the team select Reverend Margalie Belizaire. Outside of church my volunteer work

centered around our daughter. I led a team of parents to build a playground. When she was in the marching band I was the treasurer of the band boosters for a few years and I led a few chicken barbecue fund raisers and coordinated the yearly "home show" that was the major source of income for the year. I also led a team of dads to transform a retired school bus into an equipment and uniform hauler for the band. I am a devoted blood donor and I encourage everyone who is able to donate blood through the Red Cross. Finally I help my wife who volunteers with Meals on Wheels. We deliver meals once a week.