

Music Director

First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY

First Unitarian Church, a progressive, inclusive, and engaged congregation in Rochester NY, is seeking a 30 hr/week **Music Director**. Our Unitarian Universalist congregation is explicitly (if imperfectly) anti-racist, LGBTQ+ affirming, theologically diverse, and musically eclectic. Everything we do is driven by our congregation's [mission, values, and ends](#).

This role reports to the Lead Minister and is responsible for leading our music ministries and creating music for worship and other gatherings, both in-person and online. As Music Director, you will work closely with our programming staff, lay leaders, and diverse groups of mostly amateur musicians, including an adult choir, rock band, a bell choir, ukulele orchestra, paid guests, and community partnerships, to plan worship and provide music for Sunday services, holidays, rites of passage, and justice gatherings.

Compensation: The annual salary range for this ¾ time position is \$45k- \$55k, depending on experience and qualifications. Benefits include relocation allowance, generous paid time off, health insurance, short-term disability, life insurance, and access to group dental. After one year of employment here or by another Unitarian Universalist congregation, the congregation contributes an additional 10% of salary toward retirement.

Core Competencies

- **Unitarian Universalist Music and Worship:** Sunday mornings wouldn't happen without you, and they're different from a recital or worship down the street at another congregation. We don't expect you to come in knowing everything there is to know about worship and music at First Unitarian, and we'll work to help you understand how we craft worship, how musical selections support the emotional arc, and the greater purpose of what we do together. Experience in Unitarian Universalism is helpful, but we're willing to teach you about us and expect that you will bring your own experience and training to help us grow musically and spiritually.
- **Understands Music as a Ministry:** While creating beautiful music is a good and noble pursuit all on its own, we believe that music is a ministry that helps us pursue our mission. Our music director needs to be a skilled musician who invites others into participation by facilitating congregational singing, leading the choir and ensembles, and using music to expand our heartspace. Your calling here is to invite, to teach, and to inspire.
- **Collaboration and Communication:** The right person for this job thrives as part of a team. You'll work with our ministers, amateur musicians, AV techs, and others with an attitude of learning, humility, honesty, courage, and enthusiasm. It's absolutely critical that the music director communicates and keeps others informed with what they need to succeed. Giving and receiving feedback within our team is a norm that helps us all grow together.
- **Cultivates and Supports Leaders** It helps to have a natural orientation toward cultivating belonging and getting people to work together. The music director identifies, assesses, and supports talent and capacity for artistry and leadership. Ours is a shared ministry, and while we

are relentless about alignment with mission, part of this is recognizing that our work is best done not alone. You'll need support from lay leaders, and they need support from you.

- **Connects and Cultivates Relationships** With an in-town conservatory, numerous music programs, a world famous jazz festival, an underground hip hop scene, Garth Fagan dance, a top-three-in-the-US Fringe Festival, and so much more, Rochester is a music town. You'll enjoy soaking it up and meeting people along the way, some of whom you'll invite as guest musicians in worship. Locally and throughout Unitarian Universalism, you'll network with other musicians because we know that we have much to learn, to delight in, and to experience from others.
- **Pastoral Leadership:** This leadership position fosters health in congregation by building trust and accountability. This requires maintaining professional boundaries, understanding your role and impact in a broader power analysis of religious community, modeling self-differentiation, resilience, self-care, and a relatively non-anxious presence. You learn from adversity and failure, cope with change and uncertainty, and can navigate the complexities of the human condition and community.
- **Commitment to Unitarian Universalism:** You don't have to be a Unitarian Universalist, but you do have to be committed to our values in this work and to helping us as a church and a wider faith movement go deeper and expand our impact. You'll bring a liberation-centered lens to music selection and understand that ours is a pluralistic religious tradition that draws from many sources. Our church has adopted [the 8th Principle](#), and anti-racism is a key part of our spiritual growth.
- **Comfort with tech:** You have some fluency in sound and recording technology relevant to creating music for online and in-person church, cloud-based collaborative tools, such as Google workplace, and customer relationship management systems, plus an eagerness to learn new tools and technologies as they support our work together.
- **Aligned with our values to maximize our impact in the world:** We are grounded in our mission: through spiritual connection in community, we listen deeply to others and ourselves, we open to wonder and transformation, and we serve together with love and humility. Love and courage undergird all that we do. Our leadership team takes this mission seriously and orients our work towards this, while having fun and finding joy in this pursuit.

Scope of Responsibilities

Congregational Music Leadership in Worship

- Lead congregational music-making with a focus on paperless songleading, and recruit and train song leaders from within the congregation to achieve this
- Lead music for most services, employing congregational resources and your own skills to offer vocal and instrumental music that supports the overarching worship theme
- Collaborate with the worship team to craft online and in-person worship that uses music to hold the emotional arc of the service and invites deeper engagement by participants
- Find, suggest, and select hymns and other congregational songs as well as performed vocal and instrumental music to support worship themes and needs
- Recruit and support guest musicians to enhance worship with greater diversity or to support specific goals or themes of services
- Seek out music from variety of styles and sources to increase the depth, quality, and accessibility of our collective worship experience
- Identify, recruit, and support congregation members to become lay leaders in music ministry

Direct the choir(s), our largest music ministry

- Direct adult choir(s), including scheduling and leading rehearsals, selecting music, and coordinating with worship calendar to elevate the collective worship experience
- Train choir(s) in vocal technique, choreography, and other aspects of musical leadership in worship, providing opportunities for those with less experience to learn and grow
- Assess and identify opportunities for additional ensembles
- Recruit singers and musicians from within the congregation, working with the membership and communications staff to ensure ongoing invitation to participation
- Support choir(s) in establishing commitment to participation, understanding singing as spiritual deepening, building community within the group, and integrating into the wider life of the congregation

Lead music & arts ministries that support our Mission and Ends

- Serve as staff liaison for the music and arts ministries, leading some directly and supporting volunteer leadership of others
- Work with Director of Religious Education to support music in children and youth worship and youth and children's musical participation in intergenerational services
- Develop opportunities for people of all ages and a range of abilities to cultivate music as a spiritual resource
- Collaborate with ministry teams to integrate music as a faith formation tool into programs of the wider congregation

Administration

- Supervise other professional musicians, which includes, depending on your skills, needs, and budget, one or more of the following roles: a collaborative pianist, an organist, section leaders, other vocalists, a children's choir director, and others
- Ensure that musical guests are appropriately onboarded, supported, and paid
- Communicate promptly with AV, admin, worship, and lay leader teams
- Oversee the use and maintenance of our pianos, organ, and other instruments
- Oversee the purchase, use, and care of the music library, instruments, equipment, and other resources that support the ministries of the church.
- Oversee copyright adherence for music use.

And other duties as assigned by the lead minister

Position Requirements

- Four-year degree in music or equivalent professional training and experience
- Ability to lead amateur musicians, cultivating talent from within the congregation and fostering a supportive environment for those with varying levels of skill and experience
- Experience in choral direction and broad knowledge of choral repertoire in multiple genres
- Appreciation for and commitment to include different styles and genres, including traditional sacred music, contemporary pop, jazz, rock, theater, folk, world music, gospel, classical, and UU hymnody

- An understanding of cultural appropriation, a commitment to reflecting our community's multiculturalism in our music ministries, and a desire to be in ongoing conversation and learning in community about anti-racism
 - Good sight-reading ability with at least basic keyboard and singing skills
 - Experience leading musical ensembles besides choir
 - *Preferred* Ability to arrange and compose music
 - *Preferred* Experience working with adults and children
 - *Preferred* Volunteer and staff supervision and training experience
 - *Preferred* Experience in video production and basic knowledge of sound equipment
 - *Preferred* Ability to accompany vocalists and play piano and 15-rank, 2-manual pipe organ
 - *Preferred* Experience in developing and leading congregational music programs
 - *Preferred* Understanding of Unitarian Universalism and experience with our hymnody
 - Must pass our standard background check
 - Membership in the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries www.auumm.org and adherence to the [Code of Professional Practice](#) is required upon hire
 - Already are or are willing to be fully vaccinated for COVID and will support masking guidelines of the church, and lead rehearsals, services, and other gatherings outdoors when asked
 - Members of First Unitarian Church of Rochester are not eligible to apply
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Start Date: Fall 2022

Reports to: Lead Minister

Applications due July 31, 2022. Please email your cover letter, resume, and links to 1-3 video (preferred) or audio samples of a music performance, including at least one vocal/choral selection, that you helped bring to life to [hiring@rochesterunitarian.org](mailto: hiring@rochesterunitarian.org).

People with disabilities, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ candidates are encouraged to apply. First Unitarian Church is committed to developing a diverse and talented staff team. If you are excited about this role but are unsure whether you meet 100% of the requirements, we encourage you to apply and/or inquire.