

Meet Pam Philips during candidate week: April 30 – May 7

Pam hopes for a ministry with a congregation that loves to worship together. She is invigorated by creating worship in collaboration with others, integrating words, music, rituals, silence to create an experience that speaks to hearts and minds and spirits.



Whether in governance, worship, religious education, pastoral care, social justice, hospitality, stewardship, or buildings and grounds—these are all ministries that make a vibrant and transformative church. Faith development spans the generations. Where children and youth learn how to be religious people by regularly joining the adults in Sunday services, and adults learn more about their own beliefs by sharing them with children and youth.

She looks for a ministry with a congregation that reaches outside its walls to the larger community, helping bend the moral arc of the universe toward justice. “Having practiced creating beloved community with each other, we can take those skills and values out to the wider world. I want ours to be a congregation that is known for showing up.”

April 6 Update

Pam graduated last year from Meadville Lombard Theological School with a master's degree of divinity. (Her third master's – more on that later.) She completed several internships as part of her program. The first was at The Haven, a day homeless shelter in Charlottesville. Another internship was in Richmond at First Unitarian Universalist Church (2014-2015), a corporate-sized church with a long history of social justice work. The final internship site was Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Glen Allen (2015-2016), a pastoral-sized church. She was welcomed by the UUA into preliminary fellowship in September 2016. Pam's Web site is <<http://pamelaphilips.weebly.com>>.

April 9 update

The previous “meet-Pam” detailed her seminary and internship experiences. She also has a commendable and extensive history of lay volunteer work within her UU church in Charlottesville where she served as a youth advisor, covenant group facilitator, worship associate, board member (President), and lay pastoral care team leader. Clearly, Pam is not a “newbie” to the workings of the UU faith and church life. Pam is also currently involved in many special interests - racial justice (belongs to the Charlottesville chapter of *Showing Up for Racial Justice*); reproductive justice (has led a class on reproductive justice and many years ago was part of her church's organization, “Reproductive Choice and Responsibility” committee); and spiritual practices. Additionally, Pam's years of experience as a high school English teacher and later as a middle school special education teacher, lead teacher, and literacy and testing coordinator, all serve as building blocks for her pastoral role.

April 13 Update

Pam's life-long love of literature led her to the University of Oregon where she majored in English. During her junior year, she took a semester abroad to study in England and followed the semester with summer travel throughout Europe using rail passes and hostels. Pam went directly from college to graduate school, moving across the country to Chapel Hill, NC where she enjoyed being part of an intellectual community of graduate students and professors (and, on the side, learned about “the war of northern aggression”).

Her master's thesis was on JD Salinger's later fiction as a modern saint's life. She started on her PhD but realized she was more interested in teaching, so she left graduate school and began her teaching career, first in high school and then in middle school. She is a member of a book club and continues to do a lot of reading, currently reading *Without You, There Is No Us*, a memoir about an American woman teaching school in North Korea. Pam's years of life-experiences have shaped who she is today.

April 16 Update

It's not just Pam we are excited to have as our ministerial candidate; it's also her husband, Jamie McReynolds, who we look forward to welcoming into our congregation. Prior to completing seminary at Starr King School for the Ministry in 2009, Jamie had a career in finance and information technology, including being the CFO of a community bank and a business systems analyst for a California winery. He served as a hospice chaplain right out of seminary. Since moving to Charlottesville in 2011 from the San Francisco Bay Area, Jamie has volunteered as an on-call chaplain at the community hospital and at hospice. He has two grown daughters, who live in Seattle, WA and Walnut Creek, CA. Jamie recently retired as the director of finance at a non-profit social service agency in Charlottesville and currently works half-time as the bookkeeper at a tech start-up. He is an avid walker and swimmer, and enjoys participating in groups exploring spiritual themes such as non-duality and evolutionary spirituality. Other interests include university lectures, films and documentaries, political advocacy, and concerts. Pam and Jamie have been married almost four years.

April 20 Update

Our ministerial candidate, Pam Philips, impressed the Search Committee with her thoughtful and knowledgeable responses to their many questions. Here are some examples of Pam's vision, style of ministry, and interests:

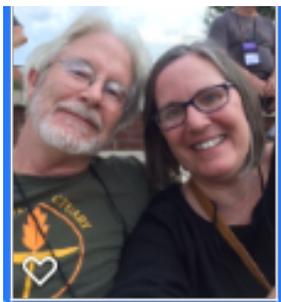
Worship is very central for her. The sermon subject matter comes from her research, events, matters of concern, and personal experiences. Rituals are an important part of the worship service. Pam enjoys the music component of the service and seeks to wed the music with the worship theme. She looks forward to finding out what our congregation wants, expects, and enjoys from

worship services. Her own religious orientation leans toward religious humanism, with strong interests in religious naturalism and process theology.

Pam prefers a collaborative approach to church administration and believes staff should have opportunities to learn and grow. Likewise, because of her many years teaching middle school, Pam has a committed interest in Lifespan Religious Education, with one of her goals being that the children learn what it means to be a UU. Pam “walks the talk” regarding social justice activities and looks forward to working with other faith communities in our area. She has an interesting perspective on social justice — too often, she feels, we approach such activities as doing something FOR others, which perpetuates the separation between “us” and “them”. A better approach is to orient ourselves to working WITH others.

She recognizes that as a congregation works to fulfill its mission, some resistance is likely — even positive and desired change can be challenging — and avoiding conflict can be worse than the conflict itself. Clear communication is important to her, and technology is one way of reaching out to connect with congregants and the community. Pam believes that to be truly welcoming to newcomers, everyone in the congregation should consider themselves as greeters. Pam is a thinker, a very approachable person, and sensitive to the needs of others. Both Pam and her husband, Jamie, plan to be active in the social activities of the church. They look forward to becoming a part of our church family.

April 23 Update



Previous “Meet Pam” paragraphs addressed her college, post-graduate and seminary education; professional work experience; lay volunteer work in the UU church; involvement in social justice; and Pam’s approach to ministry and her vision for the UU church. This “Meet Pam” presents Pam as a person, someone who could easily be your neighbor.

NPR, podcasts, and reading help keep Pam informed and intellectually invigorated. In fact, she enjoys going to the gym for aerobic exercise while multi-tasking with reading and podcasts – she is “plugged in”. Working in the yard and garden help Pam feel connected to the earth (UUC’s Grounds Committee wishes there were clones of the “garden Pam”.) Pam enjoys travel with her husband, Jamie McReynolds, with most travels having a purpose – joining other family members at a family cabin on the Columbia River; attending weddings, graduations, and bat mitzvahs. Her extended family is scattered across the country. Both Pam and Jamie enjoy attending outdoor concerts and festivals and participating in small group activities. Cooking is high on the list of things Pam enjoys doing. We look forward to welcoming Pam and Jamie in person during Candidating Week.