

A Covenant Between Gary
Kowalski, Senior Minister Emeritus and
Roberta Finkelstein, Interim Senior Minister,
First UU Society of Burlington

Gary and Roberta commit to this covenant for the duration of Roberta's ministry. Gary will enter into a covenant with the new settled minister after they arrive.

Gary Kowalski resigned in 2010 from his position as senior minister at the First UU Society of Burlington and, after two years living out-of-state, has returned to his home in Burlington. We recognize that he knows many congregants well and remains conscious of them. We recognize that the very length and effectiveness of his ministry could create challenges for his successor; we also recognize that Gary's experience represents a special resource for both the interim minister and the newly called minister in the future. In order to assure a healthy relationship between Gary, as Emeritus minister, and the congregation, we promise to work together in the following ways:

Gary will stay away from congregational activities for a third consecutive year and will arrange re-integration into the Society as Emeritus Minister in conversation with the next Senior Minister in accord with UUMA Guidelines. There may be times when Roberta feels it is appropriate for Gary to be present and will invite him to be in attendance on these occasions.

All the duties and privileges of the Senior Minister now rest with Roberta. Gary has no duties or privileges, except having delegate status at General Assembly and having his name and Emeritus status listed on the congregational letterhead and any other such institutional publications. Roberta and Gary agree that over the long term the congregation would do well to define more explicitly the role of emeritus ministers in the congregation.

We pledge to be in continuing conversation about the impact of any potentially problematic interactions between Gary and congregants or staff. We will consult regularly and openly.

Gary and Roberta recognize the value of being in conversation about the life of the congregation.

During the interim period, Gary will refrain from conducting any rites of passages for current Members or Friends, redirecting any requests for memorials, weddings, or dedications to Roberta. He will attend memorials and other rites of passage of congregants and their families only with permission of the interim minister.

In the case of non-FUUSB members and their families, Gary will be free to preside at memorials and weddings, and to collect fees for such services. But if he senses any conflict that might impact the congregation, he will first consult with Roberta.

We anticipate that the most difficult situations may arise when people whom Gary knows well are ill, in mourning, or in need of pastoral care. Gary promises to consult with Roberta before becoming involved with a Member or Friend in such circumstances. He further pledges not to act as the primary pastor in these situations, nor to interfere with Roberta's pastoral authority in any

way. Roberta pledges to be compassionately understanding in each situation and to take into consideration the particular circumstances each time. She will share her perspectives and concerns with Gary.

Gary may from time to time interact socially with members of the congregation. He promises to think carefully about these interactions and to discuss them with Roberta. He will honor Roberta's request not to pursue personal relationships that Roberta feels would have a negative impact on the congregation.

Gary further pledges that whenever his personal relationships with UUs begin to take on the appearance or feel of a ministerial relationship, even in an informal or friendly way, he will remove himself from the situation and consult promptly with Roberta on the matter. Both Gary and Roberta recognize that for some people, Gary will always, in their minds, be their minister. Roberta and Gary will work together to help all Members and Friends make the transition to new ministry.

Roberta and Gary both pledge to put the best interests of the congregation above any other personal or professional considerations.

Signed,

Roberta Finkelstein, Interim Minister

Gary Kowalski, Minister Emeritus
