

# Frequently Asked Questions about Nathan's Sabbatical

## What is a sabbatical and why does Nathan need one?

### How will the sabbatical benefit UUAC?

Many UU congregations remain vibrant, in part because they incorporate sabbaticals into the professional lives of their ministers. A sabbatical (coming from the Hebrew word 'shabbat' meaning rest) provides the minister with a block of time to step back from business as usual to gain new perspective and energy. It is a time for rest, renewal, discovery, and growth, benefitting both the minister and church by allowing time by each for development of new challenges and insights.

### How long will Nathan be away?

UUAC's covenant agreement with Nathan offers him one month per year of service to our church. His first sabbatical was for six months in 2010. This sabbatical will run from the beginning of March through the September start of a new church year.

Nathan will preach on March 3<sup>rd</sup> before leaving, will return on June 9<sup>th</sup> to both preach at our Flower Communion Service and handle some administrative duties, then will formally return to the church and the pulpit on September 8<sup>th</sup> for Ingathering Sunday.

### What will Nathan be doing during his Sabbatical?

Nathan will be working on his new book on addiction - "*Out from the Shadows, Into Community: A Resource for Families and Friends of a Loved One with Substance Addiction*". He will also find time for study, reflection and to be with his family.

### Will we see Rev. Nathan at all during the Sabbatical?

Nathan will be gone completely from UUAC from March 3<sup>rd</sup> to September 8<sup>th</sup>, with a brief appearance in the week of June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### How can I get in touch with Nathan?

Sorry, but Nathan's sabbatical is a time for a complete break from his duties as our minister. UUAC has an accomplished ministerial staff and experienced administrative and governance structure, all of whom are prepared to handle needs during Nathan's sabbatical.

In the next paragraphs you will see how all aspects of the church's functions have been planned out in advance.

During Sabbatical, a limited group are authorized to contact him: Minister of Faith Formation, Board President, Church Administrator and a member of the Sabbatical Planning Team.

### What will happen at UUAC during Nathan's Sabbatical?

- **Worship** - Who will lead Worship Services on Sundays while Nathan is gone?

The Worship schedule for the church year has already been planned and put in place. Our own ministers, some of our favorite guests and a few guest ministers (e.g. Matt Meyer, Rev. Mark

Harris, author of "Elite" and other books and a speaker from Black Lives of Unitarian Universalists) will all be leading Worship during the spring.

- ***Ministers -- What will Rev. Heather's role be during Nathan's Sabbatical?***

Reverend Heather will fill a number of roles, including preaching, leading faith formation activities, pastoral care needs and rites of passage, like weddings, funerals, and child dedications. Just as when our three-minister staff is available, Heather will assume leadership roles where she and Nathan are normally involved.

- ***Who will I call for Pastoral Care?***

We have our experienced, trained staff of ministers (Reverend Heather Concannon ([revheather@uuac.org](mailto:revheather@uuac.org)) and Ministerial Intern Jessica James ([intern@uuac.org](mailto:intern@uuac.org)) and the Lay Pastoral Care Ministers ([laypastoralcare@uuac.org](mailto:laypastoralcare@uuac.org)), all of whom are ready and prepared to help in all circumstances. The Caring Committee will continue their important work to support our members who need a little help with daily life emergencies.

- ***Meetings***

All church meetings and events are expected to go on as usual. This includes RE Classes, gatherings like UUAC and U, Roots, Coming of Age, etc. When in doubt, consult the UUAC website calendar, the weekly order of service, *This Week at UUAC* or the Church Administrator.

- ***Big Decisions***

The Ministers, Staff (Church Administrator at [uuac@uuac.org](mailto:uuac@uuac.org)), Board of Directors and all Ministry Leaders are available to answer questions or help with big decisions. The Sabbatical Planning Team is also available to answer questions and provide resources.

- ***What is the Impact to the Budget?***

There will be no change in budget impact. Nathan's Professional Development expenses are already a part of the budget; worship speakers were also budgeted. No other changes are expected.

### *How is the leadership preparing for Nathan's Sabbatical?*

Rest assured that your Ministers, Staff, Board and Ministry Summit Leaders have been preparing for this event for the last year. The Sabbatical Planning Team will continue in place until Nathan's return, and all of these groups are available to answer questions and help in any way needed.

### *What can we do to help prepare for Nathan's Sabbatical?*

All of us in the congregation should do everything possible to continue in loving community as usual! For example:

- Helping out newer folks who may have questions;
- Volunteering where help appears to be needed;
- Getting Annual Pledges in on time or early;
- Remembering that we are in loving covenantal relationship to each other and to the world beyond our walls.

The **Sabbatical Planning Team** (Gage Heath, Maureen Gormley, Abby Marschke and Lucia Frenkel) is working with the congregation, ministers, staff and volunteers to:

- Oversee the preparations for Nathan's Sabbatical before it begins;
- Monitor and support the staff, church Board and others to see that the Sabbatical replacement plans are proceeding and are adequate during the time away;
- Help welcome Nathan back after the Sabbatical, to assist with re-entry and engagement with the life of the congregation;
- Answer additional questions, including a list of key contacts for specific situations.

**Feel free to reach out to us with any questions at any time at [sabbatical@uuac.org](mailto:sabbatical@uuac.org)**