About Rev. Ellen Quaadgras

Rev. Quaadgras received preliminary fellowship from the Unitarian Universalist Association in 2011, was ordained in 2012, and received full fellowship in 2014. Her MDiv, 2011, is from Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, Massachusetts. She has served as the settled minister of Westminster Unitarian Church in East Greenwich, RI, since 2012. As part of her ministerial training, she served as Ministerial Resident for Social Justice, 2011-2012, at The First Unitarian Church of Dallas, TX, and during 2010, she trained in clinical pastoral education.

Prior to entering seminary, Rev. Quaadgras had a career in technology. She received her Bachelor of Science in 1989 from Johns Hopkins University and advanced training in business and systems analysis from MIT/Sloan School of Management, Harvard Extension School, and Northeastern University.

The South Church Search Committee had the following to share about Rev. Ellen and why they thought she would be a good fit.

- The quality of her Ministerial Record. Over two years, we read 34 of them, none as good as hers. She was open, honest, not afraid to address difficult issues she’d faced, and she wrote with clarity and passion. Rev. Ellen is a person who has grown and developed over her time as a minister, has skills gained from experience, and has thoughtfully processed those years such that she is clearly capable of leading a congregation as strong and varied as South Church.
- The spiritual practice she prepared and led us through on Saturday morning and how - after all the readings and sermon watching - it gave us a chance to FEEL what she would be like as our minister. She listened carefully/respectfully, interjected humor when appropriate, and I came away feeling seen, heard, and embraced.
- Rev. Ellen brings broad experience, yet she is open and receptive to new ideas, especially our journey into the world of Collaborative Governance. She will bring a sense of humor and she is committed to setting boundaries and having selfcare time, which we all need to be respectful of.
- Rev. Ellen grasped the concept of Collaborative Governance right off the bat and was thrilled to discuss the possibilities. She is able and willing to identify and navigate power structures within systems while acknowledging each individual person's spark of the divine. She cares for the staff she works with while seeking to strive for clarity and equality. Rev. Ellen has a broad lens of understanding from an international upbringing while encouraging community outreach as well as congregational inreach. She has the capacity to be intellectual yet funny, introspective yet fair, set clear and fair boundaries while being open and caring. Rev. Ellen will be able to walk with and help guide South Church into the future.
- Rev. Ellen’s calm and deeply thoughtful way of being, her ability to be fully present and listen without judgment, and her bright smile and genuine laugh. Rev. Ellen is also a talented musician! She plays guitar and sings and understands the importance of music as a spiritual practice.
- Of Special Note: Worship Associate Hillary used one of Rev. Ellen’s writings in her opening words a few weeks back...when we were sitting in the Sanctuary, we couldn’t believe our ears. Just goes to show how well respected she is.