

Letter of Affiliation between Rev. Gail Stratton, M. Div. and
The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford, MS
November 26, 2016

The Board of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford (UUCO) hereby affiliates with Rev. Gail Stratton and her community ministry in North Mississippi. The board supports and encourages her ministry outside of the congregation and in her role as a member of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association.

The UUCO Board expects Rev. Stratton to remain in good standing with the Unitarian Universalist Society for Community Ministry (UUSCM) and with the Unitarian Universalist Minister's Association (UUMA), conducting herself in accordance with the UUSCM Code of Professional Practice and the UUMA Code of Professional Conduct. Gail will always conduct her ministry with honesty and integrity in the community and will identify herself as a Unitarian Universalist Community Minister affiliated with UUCO and will not speak on behalf of UUCO without specific consent of the UUCO Board of Directors.

Affiliation with a community minister often allows a UU congregation to develop an outward focus of care and concern and we expect this to be the case with this affiliation. In developing her ministry, Rev. Stratton will seek to invite and involve congregants where appropriate, with a goal of shared ministry and mutually supporting the congregation and outreach to the community.

Ministerial services, such as weddings, funerals and rites of passage will be provided in a case by case arrangement, with people contacting Rev. Stratton directly. Rev. Stratton is willing to provide such services, generally at the UUA rate for compensation. Rev. Stratton is willing to preach at least four times per year, two of which will be provided gratis and the others to be compensated at standard guest preaching amount. Gail will provide a report for the Annual Congregational Meeting that is normally held in April and will seek to be in touch with the UUCO Board monthly.

Other than the above, there will be no compensation for Rev. Stratton's services in the congregation. Meeting space at UU Hall may be provided to Rev. Stratton for events consistent with the mission of UUCO and consistent with the UUCO Building Use Policy and will be arranged through the building scheduler. If Rev.

Stratton uses the space for an event such as a wedding, she will negotiate the rental fee to go to UUCO for that event using the Building Use guidelines.

Members of UUCO may participate on the Committee of Ministry for Gail.

Rev. Gail Stratton will be identified as a Unitarian Universalist Community Minister affiliated with UUCO on the UUCO website and where needed, in orders of service, newsletters and in reports to the UUA.

If, at some point in the future, UUCO calls a part time, developmental, interim, or full-time minister, Rev. Stratton agrees to respect the authority of that minister and will develop a covenant of understanding with that person.

There will be an annual meeting between the UUCO board and Rev. Gail Stratton to discuss their relationship in connection to the Mission of UUCO. This affiliation agreement will be reviewed annually and reaffirmed by the UUCO Board before the Annual Congregation meeting in April of each year.

Signed this day on _____

Rev. Gail Stratton, M.Div. _____

Greg Johnson, President for UUCO _____

for the UUCO Board of Trustees

COVENANT

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford Board of Trustees
and
Rev. Gail Stratton, Affiliated Community Minister

The relationship between a Unitarian Universalist congregation and a Unitarian Universalist Community Minister affiliated with the same congregation is guided by the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association Code of Professional Practice and Guidelines. The hallmarks of this relationship are respect, collegiality, mutual support, open communication, and professionalism. This covenant agreement is intended to deepen the relationship between Gail and the UUCO Board of Trustees.

Ever mindful that we are nourished by relationships and grace, and ever mindful that we are co-creators and have a shared ministry in Unitarian Universalism in Mississippi, Rev. Stratton and the UUCO board agree to honor and affirm each other's role in affirming the Mission of UUCO and upholding the principles of Unitarian Universalism.

Gail will not speak on behalf of the congregation unless given explicit authority to speak on an issue. Any concerns about the nature or conduct of ministry will be raised directly with the other. This covenant will be revised as necessary.

Greg Johnson, President
for the UUCO Board

Date

Rev. Gail Stratton Community Minister

Date

notes on making a covenant.

Why a covenant?

Covenants come in many different forms, but share certain basic characteristics. All good covenants strengthen the following qualities in a congregation:

Mutual Respect- Respect includes the assumption of equality, and sincere acceptance of one another, unaffected by material, social, or economic considerations.

Mutual Openness- Openness refers to a free flow of information, feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions. Within a covenantal relationship people say what they really believe and think without fear of punitive, judgmental, or negative reactions. People can be calm with one another despite differences.

Loving Intent Toward One Another- Good covenants strengthen and support the wish toward one another that all may experience wholeness, ease and peace.

Cultivation of Mutual Trust- A good covenant supports actions that lead us to act in ways that are ethical, appropriate, and responsible, which in turn nurtures trust.

—adapted from Rev. Ed Broc