

65 Polpis Road
Nantucket, MA 02554
March 12, 2018

Karen Palmer, President
Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta
12 Ford Avenue
Oneonta, NY 13820

Dear Ms. Palmer,

I am the President of the Nantucket Unitarian Universalist Meeting House Society, Nantucket, MA. Rev. Kimberley Debus is serving as our Sabbatical Minister while our settled minister, Rev. Linda Simmons, is on her sabbatical leave to Nepal and India. I would like to give you my impressions of Kimberley, and of the concept of hiring a sabbatical minister in general.

Kimberley is serving in our regular minister's place for a short-term sabbatical (two months), which was all that our minister wished to take at this time (having served for four years, she could have taken four months according to her contract). The Board of Trustees discussed other options for the short period (lay led services, finding a local substitute minister, etc.), but we decided that the best choice for our congregation was to find an ordained UU minister. We advertised the position on our Website and received some applications. Several Board members, including myself, attended the General Assembly in New Orleans last June, and were able to conduct interviews of the candidates. I also was able to attend a workshop led by her. Kimberley stood out as the one we wanted. Upon return to Nantucket, I called her references (which were superb), and by September, we offered Kimberley the position. Kimberley visited us in October, preached during our Sunday service, and shared meals with our Minister and church leaders. That weekend crystalized our belief that Kimberley was the one for us.

Kimberley arrived in mid-February and will be with us until mid-April. Even before she arrived, she had planned her service themes and sermons and several "Friday Frolics", when the congregation could meet for a potluck and then a movie, board games, or Karaoke. One of Kimberley's strengths is her use of music in the service, especially by means of her beautiful singing voice. Her sermons have been outstanding, each ranging from humorous to meditative, and her radiant smile fills the service. But when there was a need for grieving, as after the Parkland school massacre, which happened only a week after she arrived, Kimberley created a special service that was perfectly fitting. She has jumped right in to minister to several congregant's pastoral needs and to become involved in the work of the church.

Kimberley's personality and talents make her a perfect candidate for a Sabbatical Ministry position. I recommend her without reservation. I am enjoying tremendously this opportunity to work with her. She presents a breath of fresh air, which every congregation needs from time to time. We love our settled minister, but now we also love Kimberley. I wish your congregation all the best at this time, and hope that you too will be able to breathe the fresh air that Kimberley will bring.

Sincerely,
Valerie A. Hall, PhD