

Rev. Aaron B. McEmrys

Candidate for Senior Minister

The Ministerial Search Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington enthusiastically presents the Rev. Aaron B. McEmrys as candidate for Senior Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington. Rev. McEmrys was ordained at the First Unitarian Society of Denver in 2007, and has served as Senior Minister for the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, CA, since 2008.



Rev. McEmrys has led a life of service and leadership. Prior to entering the ministry, he advocated for workers rights as an organizer and labor representative for AFSCME in Oregon, a council representative to the AFL-CIO, and a grass-roots activist for the Oregon State Public Interest Group. Rev. McEmrys founded and managed the Portland Interactive Theatre, dedicated to the use of arts as a vehicle for community development, conflict resolution, and social change. He has also published a children's book, *After Aesop: Stories for All Ages*.

In 2008, Rev. McEmrys was one of just 20 ministers invited to take part in the UUA's "Dreaming Big" program, which provided mentorship and specialized training for ministers of large UU churches. He is a recipient of the John Haynes Holmes Memorial Fellowship, has served on the Board of Trustees of the Meadville Lombard Theological School, and has published several peer-reviewed academic articles including, "Engaging the Sacred Wisdom of our Sisters in the Wilderness: A Unitarian Universalist/Womanist Dialogue."

Rev. McEmrys is an accomplished administrator who thrives on collaboration and draws his energy from working with people. "I love writing, scholarship, and study," he states, "but what really inspires me is walking with, working with, people in celebration and grief, growth and fear; in both the ordinary-ness and extraordinary-ness of life. I hope for a ministry that values growth more than perfection, and where beauty of individuality is balanced by a firm commitment to beloved community."

Rev. McEmrys holds a Masters of Divinity from the Meadville Lombard Theological Seminary, and a Bachelors of Science in Labor Studies from the National Labor College. He is originally from rural Wisconsin, where he learned to love the wonder of the natural world. Rev. McEmrys is married to Eliza McEmrys, a Washington DC native and acupuncturist. They have a 2-year old son, Luke. Rev. McEmrys is also father to three teenagers from his previous marriage.

Rev. McEmrys will lead the Sunday worship services on May 4th and May 11th. Please see the UUCA website for the Candidating Week schedule.

"I have found Aaron to be an inspired, compassionate, and courageous leader with a compelling vision of Unitarian Universalism, not just for our congregation but for our wider movement. He crafts excellent, thoughtful and energetic worship services, he challenges the congregation to be bold in their vision of what is possible, and he brings a creative, empowering approach to our work together as a staff."

- Rev. Julia Hamilton
USSB Associate Minister

"Aaron McEmrys is a person of deep integrity and personal convictions. Aaron has enormous energy and boundless creativity. He is a trusted confidante and is one of the most thoughtful human beings I know. Aaron calls to the best in all of us in his ministry and in his way of being."

- Nancy Liggett Edmunson
former USSB staff member

"When a congregation grows numerically, it is because members and visitors alike sense that something special is happening. It happens because people feel inspired, needed and seen."

- Rev. Aaron McEmrys

"Aaron's leadership begins with listening carefully, and listening as a leader -- imagining as he listens how to weave things into the larger vision. Aaron is not merely a facilitator. His organizing background is the foundation of his leadership."

- Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs
Unity Church, St. Paul, MN
mentor of Aaron