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**Unitarian Universalists of Southern Delaware**

Board of Trustees  
30486 Lewes Georgetown Highway  
Lewes, DE 19958

Dear UUSD Board Members,

I'm writing this letter to request your support for ordination by the UUs of Southern Delaware, should I be welcomed into ministerial fellowship by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee at my April 4, 2025 appointment.

To offer some context for my request, I would like to tell you a little bit about my story and my call. I grew up in one high-control sect of Christianity and spent my young adulthood in another. I didn't knowingly meet my first queer person until I was in college; without queer representation or queer support, it took another decade before I fully came out to myself and my community. Like many other queer and trans people, I have experienced significant religious trauma over the years. Unlike a number of others, though, I have also experienced deep and generative religious community within Unitarian Universalism, as well as had the joy of making holy trouble with our liberal religious siblings across denominations.

I began my seminary education in 2017, studying part time while working and parenting full time; in 2024, I joyfully completed my degree and received an MDiv in chaplaincy and interreligious engagement from Chicago Theological Seminary. I completed my ministerial internship at the UU Church of Annapolis between 2018 and 2020, under the supervision of the Revs. John Crestwell and Kathleen Rolenz. I have been in good standing and covenantal relationships with my fellow Aspirants and Candidates, including participating in the Ministerial Formation Network, since the start of seminary in 2017.

If there is one thing that my upbringing has gifted to my call, it is the unshakeable belief that church does not have to look a certain way or exist in a certain location; those whose trauma has made them unwilling or unable to engage with organized religion still deserve the spiritual care they would be able to access as a religious community member. Whether UUSD ordains me or not, it is my hope to become an affiliated community minister, engaging

in community chaplaincy and interfaith organizing in Delaware.

It would mean a great deal to me to be blessed by ordination and sent out into the community by the congregation I have chosen as my home, and I would be so grateful for your approval in that.

With warmth and appreciation for your consideration,

Leika Lewis