



Dear People's People,

2020 has been a year of anxiety and opportunity in the life of our church. The year began with two traumatic events--the sudden loss of our lead pastor followed closely by the covid19 pandemic that resulted in closing our church building. However, because of the dedication and determination of all the people of People's, the year will end with the promise of a blessing in early 2021.

A Pastoral Search Committee was formed in the spring of 2020 and the team began its work in June. Based upon the results of a congregation-wide survey (to which over 80% of the congregation responded), information gathered in smaller listening sessions and responses to questions in the Mid-week Review, a notice of our search for a lead pastor was developed. The notice contained the critical competencies required for our position. It was posted with seminaries, social media, professional recruiters of church staff, the Minnesota and Wisconsin conferences of UCC, and the NACCC. Over seventy persons expressed interest in the position.

The search committee reviewed the applications, searching for a candidate with the qualifications to lead our church. The critical core competencies were:

1. Spiritual and theological compatibility with ability to communicate.
2. Ability to promote growth while understanding that church growth is more than adding numbers.
3. Outreach and civic participation.
4. Strategic and organizational agility.
5. Effective team building.
6. Integrity and trustworthiness.
7. Committed to addressing the issues surrounding social justice and leading people's church in missions that ensure all persons have an opportunity to achieve social and economic justice in the 21st century.

While finding a person who possesses all of those characteristics and talents seemed a daunting task, we have found such a candidate. We are excited and proud to present to the congregation, for its consideration, Reverend Clare Gromoll.

Clare has for the past 6 years been an associate pastor at St. Paul's United Church of Christ in St. Paul, Minnesota. As part of this announcement, Clare has prepared a brief biography of her background, experience, and family information. You will have an opportunity to meet Clare virtually in days to come prior to congregational vote on January 17, 2021.

Sincerely,  
Pastoral Search Committee

*Walt Richey (Chair), Mary Bjork, Jim Dahl, Nat Graf, Kimberly Jackson, Lori Mildon Betsy Stokes, Matt Wulff*

Beloved Members and Friends of People's Congregational Church,

I am delighted and humbled by the opportunity to join you in worship on January 17<sup>th</sup> as candidate for your Lead Pastor position. I have appreciated two energizing interviews with your Pastoral Search Committee and a tour and visit with Kimberly Jackson at your church building. I feel a clear sense of call and readiness to join your faith community a collaborative pastoral leader, moving together toward a bright future in which you expand your reach and resources while maintaining your identity as a tightly woven caring community.

I currently serve as Associate Minister at St. Paul's UCC, a position to which I was ordained in 2014 after graduating from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. I previously served the congregation for several years as Seminary Intern and licensed Student Pastor. I work with the Ministry of Faith Formation to support faith vitality across all ages, with the Ministry of Belonging & Community to extend radical hospitality and foster deepening relationships, with the Congregational Care Team to support caregivers and organize care companions for homebound members, and with the Earthwise – Creation Justice Committee to act on behalf of our interconnectedness in the web of life. While serving on our church's governing body, I have gained insight into all facets of local church ministry. I make pastoral visits to our homebound members. I have officiated at numerous funerals, weddings, baptisms and confirmations. I collaboratively lead weekly worship, foster lay leadership, and support overall congregational vitality. It would be my great joy to draw on these foundational experiences as Lead Pastor of People's Congregational Church.

Before discerning a call to ordained ministry, I worked in year-round outdoor ministry in Texas and as a bilingual elementary school teacher in Texas and Wisconsin. I am grateful for how skills gained during my early professional experiences have transferred fruitfully into my work as a pastor.

Beyond church, I enjoy playing with my sons (Sam is six, Jonah is three), jogging as a way to tend to the wellbeing of my body and spirit, reading fiction, taking in live music, and visiting my parents in Eagle River, WI. My ex-husband and I equally and peaceably share responsibility in co-parenting our children. I am guileless, curious, confident, pragmatic and flexible. I value simplicity and artistry. Being a middle child has deeply shaped me. I enjoy a respectful argument, rarely needing to be right or to win. I tap into calm strength in the midst of stress and pain. I function well under pressure. When navigating conflict, I tend to collaborate or compromise. I believe fiercely in honoring the inherent worth of every person. I hope you discern that I am a good fit to be your next Lead Pastor. I look forward to meeting each of you online at the upcoming meet & greet's and at the special meeting of the congregation.

May the God of hope, peace, joy and love be very present with you this Christmas!

Clare

Rev. Clare Gromoll