COVENANT BETWEEN
ANNE MARSH & WADE WHEELOCK, OUR RETIRING MINISTERS
AND THE
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF CANTON
March, 2009

When Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock retire from their co-ministry at the UU Church of Canton (UUCC) at the end of July 2009, their relationship with the congregation will change in significant ways, both because of the nature of ministry in general and the professional guidelines of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association in particular. This changed relationship will be the basis of a new covenant between the retired ministers and the congregation.

Anne and Wade have expressed their intention to stay in the community after retirement and their desire to become part of the congregation of this church. They have made it clear that they hope to establish an open, candid and generous collegial relationship with their successors and intend to do all they can to allow their new colleagues to assume the mantle of ministry in the eyes of the congregation.

The congregation is deeply grateful for the many years of exceptional service, leadership, and care provided by Anne and Wade and wants to keep them as ministers emeriti, parishioners, and friends. The church is also fully committed to a smooth transition to new ministerial leadership and will be generous in its welcome and support of the new minister/s.

The tenets of this covenant will serve as guidelines for the participation of the retired ministers in the life of our church. The retiring ministers plan to enter into discussions with their successor ministers to arrive at similar, mutually agreed upon covenants.

The terms of the covenant are as follows:

1. The ministers emeriti will not take, nor will they be asked to take, any leadership roles in the congregation. They expect to participate in church life only in very limited ways during the first few years of retirement. Within a few years they hope to be ordinary in-the-pew congregants.

2. The retired ministers will not offer or perform ministerial services for members and friends of the UUCC, or people in the wider community served by the UUCC, except with the permission of, and ordinarily only by the express invitation of, their successor colleagues. Those ministerial services include (but are not limited to) rites of passage (child dedications, weddings, and memorial services), counseling, and pastoral visits. If they are invited by their successor colleagues to participate in a rite of passage, they prefer their role to be a minor one. Members of the congregation are expected to seek the services of the new minister for rites of passage, counseling and pastoral visits. It is recognized that some congregants

may remain emotionally and professionally committed to the retired ministers for a time; however, the retired ministers will make clear to these individuals their altered position within the church and will encourage them to seek the services of the new minister(s).

3. At the request of their successor ministers, the retired ministers will be glad to be a source of information and/or confidential counsel with no presumption that their counsel be used or followed.

4. In order to ease the transition to new ministry in Canton, the retired ministers plan to continue as the part-time consulting ministers for the Adirondack UU Community in Saranac Lake during the first few years of their retirement. In that role, they will not encourage any members of UUCC to seek out their ministerial services in the Saranac Lake region.

5. The retired ministers will neither listen to nor volunteer criticisms of their interim or settled colleagues. Concerns should be presented directly to the new minister or to the appropriate committees or officers of the congregation. In the unlikely event that intervention from beyond the congregation is needed, first the Good Offices Person (of the local UU Ministers Association chapter) should be consulted; and then, if necessary, the District Executive.

6. The scale of fees for professional services applies to the work of ministers emeriti.

Approved by Church Council, March 4, 2009

Margaret Harloe, President	Anne Marsh & Wade Wheelock, co-ministers