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Dear Ministerial Committee,

It is a great pleasure to write to you recommending Rev. Tony Lorenzen for the ministry. I know Tony as a parent facilitator working with him in the Covenanting Year Program for eighth grade students in the church school as well as a parishioner at first Parish Church in Weston who has heard him preach and conduct worship services.

In his work with the eighth graders Tony has built a strong, positive rapport with the students. He shows God's love through the way he interacts with them, with respect, compassion, and commitment and creativity. His ministry is not simply one of talking, but one of being. He is articulate and able to convey concepts to these young people in an age-appropriate way. They trust him and have been able to share personal stories from their childhoods as well as talk about their beliefs in front of their peers because of Tony's facilitation. Tony is an example of faith in action and a very positive role model. This year, for the first time, Tony has enriched the traditional Religious Education Covenanting Program with a host of innovative ideas and activities. This is without exception the most excellent, comprehensive and organized program that we have had to date. He has added substantial learning and sharing experiences such as an opening ceremony for the Covenanting Year in front of the entire congregation, implementing a mentoring program that involves adult parishioners in the eighth graders' covenant experience, and an overnight retreat. His ability to work at the intergenerational level has been most impressive. Older members of the church seem to "light up" and be invigorated by their interactions with the eighth graders.

I have been very impressed with Tony's preaching ability in both form and content. Whether he is preaching a sermon or telling a story to the church school children as part of Sunday Services or Chapel, he is able to connect and offer creative ways to think about situations and problems. I came home after one of his sermons and had my first discussion with our children about the difference between minimum wages and living wages and the untold obstacles faced by those working for minimum wages. The spiritual context for caring for what happens to our neighbors was powerfully driven home because of his sermon connecting that problem with parable of the Good Samaritan. Tony has a ministerial presence. While he is able to relate in a personable manner, he also has the presence of a deep thinker, a person with a mission to inspire and motivate others out of complacency, and a compassionate heart.

I have also observed Tony conducting organizational meetings with other RE staff and parents for the covenanting year activities. He is very personable and

professional. I observed him handle a difficult situation when a parent strongly confronted Tony with differing religious views, and Tony was able to listen, allow the person to finish, and approach him respectfully even though Tony's view was being attacked. This demonstrated maturity and deftness with interpersonal relations that befit an individual preparing for the ministry. I was impressed with him as a professional and as a human being, and the outcome was that the parent apologized for his conduct and continues to volunteer his time.

Tony Lorenzen presents himself and conducts himself as a minister. Tony seems made for this vocation, and the ministry is the perfect medium for expression of his authentic and genuine self. He has all of the qualities that inspire trust, respect, faith, and comfort. It is a rare person who possesses these gifts and can express them so freely to people of all generations. The UU ministry is lucky and blessed to have him. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen Riess". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long, sweeping underline.

Helen Riess, M.D.