



Dear Centre Church Members:

The Search Committee is pleased to announce the candidacy call for our settled pastor position to the Reverend Dr Scott Couper, AKA “Scott.” Scott felt a call from God and the Centre Church to serve in Brattleboro and our committee felt the same way.

Scott grew-up in a military family travelling all over the USA, and thus moved every two-and-a-half years of his young life. He studied International Relations (School for International Service at the American University, Washington, D.C.) and travelled abroad to Chile, Nigeria and Zimbabwe (the latter two through Brattleboro’s own School for International Training, SIT).

While in university during the summers, Scott served as a local church pastor and chaplain in

Pennsylvania. After earning a Bachelor’s Degree, Scott became a missionary in the Kingdom of Lesotho monitoring human rights abuses. After returning to the USA, he married Susan Valiquette (also an ordained UCC minister) and then studied theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School and Chicago Theological Seminary. After earning a Master’s Degree and becoming ordained in the UCC, Scott became a missionary, living with his wife and children (Micah and Madeline) in the Republic of South Africa. For eighteen years Scott served many local Congregational churches there, initiated and fostered HIV and AIDS ministries and curated a local history museum and archive for an historic Congregational school. While in South Africa, Scott earned a PhD in History and published a biography of the only Congregationalist to win the Nobel Peace Prize, Albert Luthuli. Scott’s ministry also involved teaching political science, theology and history at two universities (one being SIT!) and at a Methodist seminary. Though an academic, Scott’s desire is to be intimately accountable to a local faith community.

Scott’s connection to Brattleboro reaches beyond his being a student of and lecturer for SIT. His great-great-great-great-grandfather was once sheriff of Brattleboro! For most of his life, Scott says he has felt in exile from and is eager to reside in his ‘ancestral’ New England (as most of his family is from Maine and Massachusetts).

Both Scott and the Search Committee feel we were led by the Holy Spirit to be partners in Christ’s ministry. Scott’s ministerial passions are pastoral care, preaching, and community activism. Scott and Centre Church both share a love of history, a love for justice and a love for missional outreach - no doubt, a “match made in heaven”!

When asked what attracted him to Centre Church, Scott replied:

I want to support Centre Church's practice of gifting its spiritual, human, infrastructural and financial resources for the benefit of the local community and the world thus honouring God's intended purpose for it.

I crave the opportunity to partner with Centre Church that stands in radical solidarity with those who are most marginalised, be they on its doorstep or on another continent, and thus foster the Realm of God on Earth as it is in heaven.

I found Centre Church to be a 'target rich environment' whereby I feel like a mosquito in a nudist camp - I simply don't know where to turn! - the past accomplishments, the present ministry opportunities and the future potential harvest are all so plentiful!

Also I enjoy New England Clam 'Chowda', maple syrup, and running where my radiator will not have to work so hard!

Scott, Madeline, Micah



The Search Committee feels Scott has high energy and experience. He has a focus on mission and will work to see the needs of the community and the strengths within the church to address those needs. He's a good listener, has a desire to get to know the congregation, and is easy to talk with. He's faith-filled, and always sees projects through to completion. He thoroughly enjoys teaching and is able to bridge his academics with sermons. Visiting, whether in homes, hospitals,

or elder care institutions is very high on his list of priorities. The Search Committee feels as Scott said earlier in this letter that Centre Church and Scott are an excellent match.

Please join Centre Church in welcoming Scott on Saturday, June 30, for a meet and greet social, from 2-4:00 P.M. in the parlor. The next day, Sunday, Scott will preach and lead the service. This will be followed by a congregational meeting to vote to give him the call as our next settled pastor.

In Faith,
Your Search Committee

Jennifer Ambler Jim Bedard Roger Brown Anne Fecto
Tony Grobe Kate Maisner Judy Palmer Priscilla Svec