

N6012 Prairie Fire Trail
Onalaska, Wisconsin
54650

July 14, 2016

RE: Jim Molina

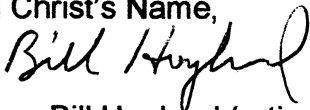
To Whom It May Concern:

Jim Molina has asked me for a letter of reference, and I am happy to comply. I worked with our Personnel Committee to hire Jim in September, 2006, to develop/direct a praise band and to work with me in further developing a more contemporary Sunday worship service at 11:00 a.m. That service continued to grow and reach people before eventually becoming a single blended service after I moved up north. The congregation valued Jim and continued to utilize his gifts and skills. The praise band he developed, "Guided Path," was widely praised, even as it helped us praise God. Indeed, Jim and the band also provided music for the Fox Valley Association/Illinois Conference UCC in 2012, and this past year as well. (I heard they're also booked for 2017.)

My experience with Jim was very positive. I found him to be a creative co-worker who led the band with zeal and professionalism while always respecting and supporting my decisions as the worship leader. Jim is a fine musician and a fine human being. He was the first to admit he didn't have mainline, progressive United Church of Christ roots, but he was eager to become a part of us. He also provided wonderful visual technical assistance, along with a quality repertoire of religious music suitable for today's Christian worship. Jim cares about what he does and how the band represents the Church. He also put together some fine Sunday afternoon performances, including some wonderful Christmas concerts. And Jim is committed to teaching others to further their musical ministries too.

I found Jim to be trustworthy and professional in his work with our church and I believe you will too. Jim demands a lot of himself and his fellow musicians, but he has good 'people skills,' and a faith and sense of humor that enable him to adapt on the fly when necessary. He also had the resolve to become more and more accomplished with the church's pipe organ. I have been back to worship at First Congregational and have seen and heard him blend the praise band with the traditional church choir in effective ways. I believe any congregation would do well to have an individual of Jim's caliber assisting it with worship music that is both 'traditional and today.' Please do not hesitate to be in touch should you have any further questions or concerns that I might address.

In Christ's Name,



Rev. Bill Høglund (retired)