

**Rev. Rachel Anderson's Charge to the Congregation
Julia Older's Ordination and Installation, February 8, 2004
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Redwood City, California**

What an honor it is to be here, with you,
celebrating Julia's ordination witnessing you install her as your settled minister and
having the privilege of charging a congregation I have known and loved.

It is a joy to see dearly familiar faces
and it is a joy to see faces that are new to me
those of you who found this congregation
and maybe Unitarian Universalism over the past several years and found a home.

I often think of congregational life like that of a river or a brook
where one can never step in the same place twice because the water is always
moving and changing.

Congregations are like that
people leave or move away or die and new people arrive to the congregation never
having known those who used to be there and yet all are a part of the
congregation's dynamic embrace.

In this environment, change and the new possibilities it brings
is constant. It just is.

There is a hymn in our UU hymnbook that I'm particularly fond of
and one of the lines goes like this
— feel free to join in if you know it
Don't be afraid of some change — don't be afraid of some change.

And so my first charge to you this evening is
"Don't be afraid of some change."

Ride it, like a wave in the ocean, and see where it carries you.

If you've been holding back
and watching from the sidelines of congregational life step forward, get involved,
and make deeper connections and commitments. And if you've held the same
positions in the church
for a number of years, feel good about the ministry you've done and then move on
to find new ways that you can contribute.

This is how congregations and congregants mature and thrive.

So don't be afraid of some change
because so many new possibilities and connections await UUFRC and you.

My second charge to you:
Claim your purpose.

Nearly ten years ago you hired a part-time minister after being lay led for over a decade.

Over the past ten years the congregation worked towards the goal of fulltime settled ministry and achieved it.
Congratulations.

Over the past two years of interim ministry you've worked hard to be ready for this day welcoming and installing a full-time, settled minister. You have your new minister what a great choice you made!
Congratulations.

So now, with Julia, UUFRC begins a new era and has the opportunity to focus on new goals.

At this new beginning, answer the question:
What is the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Redwood's City's purpose?

Who do you want to be?
Figure it out together. Name it. Claim it. And become that Unitarian Universalist community of purpose.

Lastly,
I charge you to be good stewards of the Fellowship's Ministry.

Tend the Fellowship's shared ministry the ministry that you offer to one another.
Pay attention to it, nurture it.

As Plato said in a different era:

Please, my friends, Be kind.

For everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.

Remember that as you sit in committee meetings,
as you welcome guests through your front door.
Share your ministry.

Continue to support and care for the Fellowship's professional ministry.
Respect Julia's ministry.

When you have praise to give or concerns to share speak with her directly;
She wants to know you.

Make sure she takes all of her vacation time.

There are many wonderful people here at the Fellowship who can be your friends
let Julia be your minister.

Don't be afraid of some change.
Claim your purpose.
Be good stewards of the Fellowship's ministry.

This is my charge to you, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Redwood City.
All of my blessings go with you on your journey.