



I AM  
A LIVING MEMBER  
OF THE GREAT FAMILY  
OF ALL SOULS.

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING,  
FOUNDER OF AMERICAN UNITARIANISM

THE ORDINATION OF  
**ABBEY TENNIS**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH, 2015, 4PM

ALL SOULS CHURCH UNITARIAN  
1500 HARVARD STREET NW  
WASHINGTON, DC

**REMINDER**

PLEASE TURN OFF CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES DURING THE SERVICE.

**PRELUDE**

All Souls Choir

*One Voice*, by the Wailin' Jennys

Vicki Childers, guitar; Jen Hayman, Rochelle Rice and Nicole Rumeau, soloists

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN 358**

Rank by Rank Again We Stand

Rank by rank again we stand,  
from the four winds gathered hither.  
Loud the hallowed walls demand  
whence we come and how, and whither.  
From their stillness breaking clear,  
echoes wake to warn or cheer;  
higher truth from saint and seer  
call to us assembled here.

Ours the years' memorial store,  
honored days and names we reckon,  
days of comrades gone before,  
lives that speak and deeds that beckon.  
From the dreaming of the night  
to the labors of the day,  
shines their ever-lasting light,  
guiding us upon our way.

Though the path be hard and long,  
still we strive in expectation;  
join we now their ageless song  
one with them in aspiration.  
One in name, in honor one,  
guard we well the crown they won;  
what they dreamed be ours to do,  
hope their hopes, and seal them true.

**WELCOME, INVOCATION, CHALICE LIGHTING**

Rev. Dr. Robert Hardies

Chalice lit by Robin Lea and Jenny Weil

**CHORAL INVOCATION**

All Souls Choir

*Better is One Day in Your Courts*, by Matt Redman, arranged by Trey McLaughlin  
Gordon Kent, piano; Ken Quam, drums

**READING**

Jennifer Nordstrom

"These Images" by Wang Ping from her collection *Of Flesh and Spirit*.

**SERMON**

Rev. Jay Leach

The Truly Precious Things . . .

**ANTHEM**

All Souls Choir

*In the midst of a world*, composed by Carol Sams, text by Rebecca Parker  
Carolyn Davies, piano; Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker, cello

## **ACT OF ORDINATION**

Jenice View, President, All Souls Board of Trustees

**Jenice:** In the living tradition of Unitarian Universalism, the authority to ordain a minister rests solely with the congregation. It is a meaningful and joyous occasion when a congregation joins together, as we have, to recognize one who has answered the call to ministry as her life's work. This is a sacred time as we ordain one whose ministry was shaped by being among us. The members of All Souls Church, Unitarian, gather this afternoon to ordain Abbey Suzanne Tennis into the ministry.

Abbey, we offer you ordination, and all its attendant rights, privileges, and responsibilities. Among us, and wherever you may be called to serve, we would have you preach the truth in love, minister to joys and sorrows alike, work for justice and liberation, nurture spiritual growth, and embody in your life the principles of our faith. In our eyes and in our hearts, you are a minister. Today, we confirm your calling. Are you prepared to embark, formally and fully, upon the path of ministry?

**Abbey:** I am!

**Jenice:** Will the members of All Souls Church, Unitarian, rise in body or spirit?

**Members of All Souls Church, Unitarian:** May you comfort the suffering and do your part in healing a broken world. May you interpret life passed through the fire of thought. Remember those in our tradition who came before and help prepare a place for those who will come after. Keep open an eager mind. Keep ready a loving heart. Guard a sacred silence. Speak the truth in love. Companion others. Build the Beloved Community. Call your people to their best selves. Be an agent of holy transformation. And be ever mindful of your calling to lead, live, love, and serve with beauty, strength, and humility.

We, the members of All Souls Church, Unitarian, hereby ordain you, Abbey Tennis, to the Unitarian Universalist Ministry.

**Abbey:** With humility and deep gratitude to God and to all who have traveled before me and beside me, I joyfully take up this ministry to which you ordain me.

**Jenice:** Will all who wish to add their love and encouragement to this ceremony please rise in body or spirit and join in affirmation of this ordination?

**All Gathered:** In the beauty of this afternoon, we witness an unrepeatable moment, sacred beyond words. Today, as we recognize your ordination, we bless your ministry and ours with it.

**Jenice:** And let the people say Amen!

**All Gathered:** Amen!

**PRESENTATION OF STOLE**

Marsha Tennis & Ordination Committee

*In Unitarian Universalism, the stole symbolizes the mantle of ordained ministry.*

*Traditionally, the first time a minister wears a stole is on the day of her ordination.*

*The stole being presented to Abbey was made by her mother, Marsha Tennis, for this day. The stole incorporates fabrics, images, and small objects from people, places, and times important in Abbey's life, as well as vintage silks. On the stole, there is an image of Abbey's late father, Michael, playing his beloved guitar; a picture of the first stained glass chalice Abbey made at age 16, fabric from Abbey's father, her grandmother, and a piece of her mother's wedding dress. Using symbols from Abbey's past, Marsha has created a stole that will ground her future ministry.*

**HYMN 123**

Spirit of Life

*Sing twice, first in Spanish, then English*

Fuente de Amor, ven hacia mí.  
Y al corazón, cántale tu compasión.  
Sopla al volar, sube en la mar,  
hasta moldear la justicia de la vida.  
Arráigame, libérame,  
Fuente de Amor, ven a mí, ven a mí.

Spirit of Life, come unto me.  
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.  
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;  
move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.  
Roots hold me close; wings set me free;  
Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

**CHARGE TO THE MINISTER**

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker

**CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION**

Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt

**LAYING ON OF HANDS & PRAYER OF ORDINATION**

Rev. Sofia Betancourt

*Thuma Mina*, from the Xhosa people of South Africa

Carolyn Davies, piano; Vicki Childers, guitar

Send her, Spirit; Send her, Spirit;  
Send her, Spirit; Send her, Love.

**OFFERING**

Rev. Don Southworth

*This afternoon's offering will go to support education for future ministers.  
Please make checks payable to **Starr King School for the Ministry**.*

**OFFERTORY**

All Souls Choir

*Yes*, by Shekinah Glory Ministry  
Nicole Rumeau, soloist; Gordon Kent, piano; Ken Quam, drums

**RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP**

Rev. Dr. Robert Hardies

**CLOSING HYMN 108**

My Life Flows On in Endless Song

My life flows on in endless song above earth's lamentation.  
I hear the real though far-off hymn that hails a new creation.  
Through all the tumult and the strife I hear the music ringing.  
It sounds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing!

What though the tempest 'round me roars, I know the truth, it liveth.  
What though the darkness 'round me close, songs in the night it giveth.  
No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that rock I'm clinging.  
Since love prevails in heav'n and earth, how can I keep from singing!

When tyrants tremble as they hear the bells of freedom ringing,  
when friends rejoice both far and near, how can I keep from singing!  
To prison cell and dungeon vile our thoughts to them are winging;  
when friends by shame are undefiled, how can I keep from singing!

**CLOSING ANTHEM**

All Souls Choir

*Grateful*, by Hezekiah Walker

Rochelle Rice, soloist; Gordon Kent, piano;  
Ken Quam, drums; Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker, cello

**BENEDICTION**

Rev. Abbey Tennis

**POSTLUDE**

*Grateful* reprise

Gordon Kent, piano; Ken Quam, drums;

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR A CELEBRATORY RECEPTION IN PIERCE HALL!**

**Ordination Donors**

Thank you again to all the supporters who gave generous gifts in order to make this ordination happen: All Souls Church, Unitarian, who set aside a generous line item in the budget this year for my ordination, as well as Elisabeth K. Larson, Cherri Murphy, Vail Weller, Matthew J. Scott, Phyllis Daniel, Howard B. Bernstein, Jeremiah Kalendae, Michael M. Rush, Nell Cloutier, Shirley Liu, Carrie Davidson, Rachel Weidenfeld, Paul Rickter, Renata Thomas, Steven Feinstein, Cory Mescon, Stephen A. Marshall, Paul David Wadler PhD, Amanda Weatherspoon, Nancy Meyer, Sonia W. Hamel, Nicole M. Noel, Lucy Wainwright Roche, Lawrence R. Ladd, Charles McNulty, Sarah Bastille, Karen Scrivo, Erin Splaine, and a number of generous donors who preferred to remain anonymous. I am so grateful!

## SOME WORDS OF GRATITUDE

My heart is overflowing with gratitude for all who have supported me on the path to ministry, and all who came together to make this ordination happen. I am eternally indebted to the **Celebrants** of this service; the **Music Team**; my **Ordination Committee**; the **All Souls** Membership, Staff, Board, Committee on Ministry, and my Internship Committee; my **Family and Beloved Friends**; the many **Religious Communities** that nurtured me and formed me into a leader; the many **People who Contributed** their gifts of time, money, energy, and skill to this Ordination; my colleagues at **Starr King School for the Ministry**; this **Living Tradition of Unitarian Universalism** which grounds our history and offers inspiration and vision for the future; and to the great Everything which I call **God**, God that holds all in the embrace of wholeness and love. Thank you, thank you, thank you. -Abbey

### The Celebrants

**Rev. Sofia Betancourt**, Interim Minister at the UU Church of Fresno, CA, and dear friend and colleague of Abbey's, most recently having both served on the Starr King board.

**Rev. Patrice Curtis**, Consulting Minister at All Souls Church, Unitarian, served as Ordination Marshall, and is a good friend, classmate, and study-buddy of Abbey's from seminary.

**Rev. Dr. Robert Hardies**, Senior Minister at All Souls Church, Unitarian, and Abbey's supervisor and beloved mentor during her internship here.

**Robin Lea**, Abbey's colleague and close friend from working at the Unitarian Universalist Association's Youth Office 15 years ago.

**Rev. Jay Leach**, Senior Minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte, NC is Abbey's colleague and friend from service on the Starr King presidential search committee.

**Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt**, President of Starr King School for the Ministry, is Abbey's beloved boss and partner in hilarity.

**Jennifer Nordstrom**, Interim Minister at Third Unitarian Church in Chicago, IL is Abbey's best friend from seminary, and colleague and co-conspirator in ministry and in life.

**Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker**, President and Professor Emerita of Starr King School for the Ministry, has been one of Abbey's most important teachers and mentors in ministry.

**Rev. Don Southworth**, Executive Director of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, and Abbey's friend, colleague, and mentor.

**Jenny Weil**, Abbey's beloved friend and colleague from service on the Starr King School for the Ministry board and presidential search committee.

### The Music Team

**Jennifer Hayman**, brilliant Director of Music and Arts at All Souls, partnered with Abbey in planning today's beautiful music, and in the magic process of directing and pulling together the amazing music. Jen leads the always-spectacular **All Souls Choir**, whose voices create sacred magic (along with the **Jubilee Singers**) every week in worship. Lending their incredible solo voices to the group today are **Rochelle Rice** and **Nicole Rumeau**, two of Abbey's favorite singers in the whole world. Equally exciting are the gifts of **Carolyn Davies**, **Vicki Childers**, and **Ken Quam**, soulful and loving musicians with whom Abbey had the pleasure of working to create the All Souls Vespers ministry during her internship. Having **Rebecca Parker** play cello during this service, particularly for *In the midst of a world*, a piece written in her honor, is an enormous gift for Abbey as the holiness of music has always been one of the places where Dr. Parker and she have resonated. Finally, it is an unbelievable honor to have **Gordon Kent**, jazz and gospel pianist extraordinaire, playing today after a recent injury made it seem like he wouldn't be able to be present.

### Ordination Committee

I could not have hoped for a more loving, competent, and flexible group of people to shepherd me through this process and make this day possible. Thank you each, so much, for stepping up to help with fundraising, service logistics, budgeting, reception planning, overall leadership, and in general, being a group of people who seem effortlessly able to create something moving, beautiful, and incredibly generous for me and for All Souls. I will never be able to thank you enough for the gifts of leadership, kindness, and stress-relief you have given me. **Carolyn Davies, Anna Hargrave, Meredith Higgins-Hargrave, Steve Marshall, Nancy Meyer,** and **Michael Milano**, my cup runneth over.

### The Entire All Souls Community

I am indebted to the entire diverse, spirit-growing, justice-seeking All Souls community for taking a chance on me as an intern two years ago, and honoring me with ordination to the Unitarian Universalist ministry today. You are the community who immediately welcomed me as one of your ministers, and in doing so, made me into the minister I hadn't yet known I could be. I love every single one of you. I am particularly grateful to my Internship Committee, who shepherded me through an incredible year of serving as your intern minister, to the Committee on Ministry, who gave my request for ordination enormous care, and helped move me forward, and to the Board of Trustees who have always offered me support and recommended to the full congregation that I be ordained here. I am also incredibly indebted to my colleagues on the All Souls who put in so much work to make this day possible, particularly **Katie Loughary, Gary Penn, Rob Hardies, Jennifer Hayman, Delores Miller, Patrice Curtis, Rev. Dr. Susan Moore,** and **Solomon Teklemicael**. Thank you as well to **Laurie Lester** and **Bob Bonner**, who generously donated flowers and cookies for this ordination, and **Colin Danville**, who is lending his photographic skill! I am also immensely grateful to the "Vespers Village," who shared my vision of contemplative, beautiful mid-week evening worship services at All Souls and made sure they remained a part of All Souls life even after I left. You are an inspiration to me. Besides all of these people, there were many others who came today as greeters, ushers, or to help with set-up, clean-up, or a million other tasks. To those of you whose names are not written here, Thank You!

### My Family

**Marsha Tennis**, my strong and loving mother who always manages to be competent, hilarious, generous, and able to create beauty around her. Thank you for bringing me to Unitarian Universalism and teaching me how to be a woman. **Seager Tennis**, my older brother who has been nothing but loving, gentle, funny, and supportive my entire life. Thanks for speaking for us both when I was too shy, and thanks for showing me what true musical genius looks like. **Michael Tennis**, my beloved father who passed away in 2007, and was always a source of unconditional love and unfailing interest and support in my growth and development as a human. I miss you, Dad, but I know your presence is with us. And my loving **Extended Family** who have cared for and supported my immediate family through difficult times, and who embody kindness, humor, and generosity in their lives.

### Other Religious Communities

I am so grateful for each of the religious communities that helped to form me as a spiritual being and a religious leader from my birth through this day. First Parish UU of Arlington, Massachusetts; Ferry Beach Camp and Conference Center; Young Religious Unitarian Universalists; Oberlin College Liberated Unitarian Universalist Voices; the Unitarian Universalist Association; First Church in Roxbury, Massachusetts; First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon; Starr King School for the Ministry; The Earth Center in Brooklyn, New York; The Atesh-i Ashk Chishti Dargah in Oakland, California; and of course, All Souls Church, Unitarian in Washington, District of Columbia.

*Friends, you honor me with your gifts, and I pledge my life in service of a more just, more loving, more beautiful, and more whole world. I love you.*

- Abbey

### Special Music Note:

As Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker, the 25 year president of Starr King School for the Ministry, was preparing to leave her service to the school, Abbey worked with the student body to commission a piece of music in honor of Rebecca's exemplary presidency. Rebecca, a musician, theologian, minister, teacher, mentor, and justice-maker, has played a role in forming countless Unitarian Universalist ministers and other religious leaders over her career. Her powerful writing has transformed even more lives and shifted the theological ground of progressive Western religion. Carol Sams, one of Rebecca's composer friends, adapted one of Rebecca's poems into an anthem for choir, piano, and Rebecca's instrument, cello. It was an honor to play a role in bringing this piece of music into being, and an even greater honor to have it as a part of my ordination service, especially with Rebecca performing. The text of the piece is below, only slightly adapted from Rebecca's original poem.

My friends, in the midst of all the tragedy and beauty of this world, there must be religious witness. This is my calling, and my call to you. May our lives be lived in witness.

#### **In the midst of a world** by Carol Sams, based on a text by Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker

In the midst of a world marked with tragedy and beauty, There must be, there must be those who bear witness.	There must be, there must be those whose grief troubles the water while their voices sing and speak of new life.	There must be those who gather with the congregation and walk the simple path of love.
There must be those who stand and who lead in freedom, with grace, with grace and power and strength.	There must be those whose exuberance rises, with lovely energy, rises with lovely energy and speaks to us of joy.	And there must be communities of people. Who seek to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God, who call on the soul-force to heal and bless.
There must be, there must be those who speak honestly in courage and see what must be seen of sorrow and outrage, or tenderness and wonder and love.	There must be those who are restless for respectful and loving amity, whose presence here invites us to see ourselves without fear.	In the midst of a world marked with tragedy and beauty, there must be, there must be those who bear witness.

There must be religious witness.

Rev. Dr. Robert M. Hardies, Senior Minister  
Rev. Dr. Susan Newman Moore, Associate Minister for Congregational Life and Pastoral Care  
Dolores Miller, Interim Director of Children's Religious Education  
Jennifer Hayman, Director of Music and Arts  
Lenard Starks, Associate Music Director  
Katie Loughary, Executive Director  
Leo Jones, Chief Program Officer  
Rev. Patrice Curtis, Consulting Minister