

The Ordination of Jen Raffensperger

by the

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia and
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick**

Sunday, October 17, 2021 — 4:00 pm



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GATHERING MUSIC

<i>Part of the Plan</i>	Dan Fogelberg
<i>I Believe</i>	R.E.M.
<i>Let the Day Begin</i>	The Call
<i>Level Up</i>	Vienna Teng

PRELUDE

Here Together

David Glasgow

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick Virtual Choir

PROCESSIONAL HYMN #298

Wake Now, My Senses
Michael Adcock, piano

words by Mikelson

1. Wake, now, my senses, and hear the earth call;
feel the deep power of being in all;
keep, with the web of creation your vow,
giving, receiving as love shows us how.
2. Wake, now, my reason, reach out to the new;
join with each pilgrim who quests for the true;
honor the beauty and wisdom of time;
suffer thy limit, and praise the sublime.
3. Wake, now, compassion, give heed to the cry;
voices of suffering fill the wide sky;
take as your neighbor both stranger and friend,
praying and striving their hardship to end.
4. Wake, now, my conscience, with justice thy guide;
join with all people whose rights are denied;
take not for granted a privileged place;
God's love embraces the whole human race.
5. Wake, now, my vision of ministry clear;
brighten my pathway with radiance here;
mingle my calling with all who will share;
work toward a planet transformed by our care.

WELCOME

Rev. Paige Getty

CALL TO WORSHIP

Dr. Mark Hicks

CHALICE LIGHTING

The Verow-McLaughlin Family

TIME FOR ALL AGES

Robin Slaw
Nichole Hodges-Abbasi
Kelli Danaker
Lora Powell-Haney
and Hope!
with Michael Adcock

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Rev. Dr. Carl Gregg

OFFERING OF GIFTS & MUSIC Hymn #299 – *Make Channels for the Streams of Love*

Nick Int Veldt, piano

To contribute remotely, text the word CHALICE to 73256
or visit uucolumbia.net/giving

1. Make channels for the streams of love
where they may broadly run;
and love has overflowing streams
to fill them every one.
2. But if at any time we cease
such channels to provide,
the very founts of love for us
will soon be parched and dried.
3. For we must share, if we would keep
this gift all else above;
we cease to give, we cease to have--
such is the law of love.

READING

"Dead Stars" by Ada Limón

Rev. Scot Hull
Julia Jones

SPECIAL MUSIC

The Eternal Present
written and performed by Caleb Stine

SERMON

Anthony Jenkins
Chaplain, 59th Medical Wing, USAF

PRAYER & REFLECTION

Anthony Jenkins

MUSIC MEDITATION

Peace Piece

Bill Evans

Michael Adcock, piano

ACT OF ORDINATION

Lisa Bromfield, President, Board of Trustees, UUCF
Colette Gelwicks, President, UUCC

Colette: In the Unitarian Universalist tradition, ordination is one of the most cherished rites of our faith. The authority to confer ordination lies wholly within each congregation and not within any hierarchical power structure. It is a profound moment of joy when congregational communities come together to recognize one among us who has answered the call to ministry as their life's work, for in doing so, we are declaring our belief in the future of our progressive religious movement.

Lisa: Ours is a faith tradition of voluntary relationships based on covenants, or promises, that we make to one another. We form and sustain these covenantal relationships through connections: connections we make to ourselves, to each other, and to something greater than us. Each of these relationships is a part of this Service of Ordination.

Colette: Jen, you have undergone the deep work of preparation for ministry and have allowed it to open your heart to the sacred possibilities of life. Having received the recommendation of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and by the authority of these two congregations, it is our joy and our privilege to offer you ordination on this day.

Lisa: Are you prepared to, formally and fully, take upon yourself the yoke of ministry? Are you prepared to accept the responsibilities and the joys, the privileges and the burdens of ordained ministry in this Unitarian Universalist tradition?

Jen: I am.

Colette: As the congregation where Jen discovered her home in Unitarian Universalism and received her call to serve in the ministry of our religious tradition, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia, Maryland, have voted to ordain Jen Raffensperger.

Lisa: As the teaching congregation that supported Jen in her formation, helping her to grow into the minister she is today, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick, Maryland, have voted to ordain Jen Raffensperger.

Colette: Assembled here online and in-person are the members and friends of these two ordaining congregations. Together, we acknowledge our own calling to be engaged and active partners in our covenantal faith.

Lisa: Together we affirm our commitment to the shared ministry of Unitarian Universalism. Are we prepared now to live our commitment by conferring ordination upon Jen Raffensperger? If so, please say or write in the chat, yes, we are.

Congregations: Yes, we are.

Lisa: Assembled members of the ordaining congregations, please join in reciting the words now displayed on your screen. We invite those of you here in person to rise in body or in spirit.

Members of UUC and UUCF: We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia, and we, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick, hereby ordain you, Jen Raffensperger, to the Unitarian Universalist ministry. Wherever you are called to serve, we charge you to speak the truth in freedom and in love, to minister with compassion to joys and sorrows, to promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and to work for justice each day. We promise to support you in all the ways that we can throughout your ministry.

Colette: Family, friends, colleagues, and anyone else who wishes to add their blessings please recite the words written on the screen. We invite those of you here in person to rise in body or in spirit.

Family, Friends, and Colleagues: Jen, we have encouraged and comforted you as you worked and prepared for this day. With joy and pride, we, your cloud of witnesses, affirm your ordination today, and offer our blessings upon your ministry. As you go forth, know that our continued support and love goes with you wherever your call may lead.

Jen: It is with great joy and deep gratitude that I accept the ministry to which you have ordained me. Mindful of the immense privileges and responsibilities of ministry, I promise to minister with love, compassion, authenticity, and kindness in service to our Unitarian Universalist faith. I know, like those who have come before me, that all ministry is shared ministry and that I cannot do this work alone. I am grateful for your love and support as I take up this ministry. Where boundless enthusiasm meets with the bittersweet wholeness of life, there my ministry will go, with the strength of your affirmation and the clarity of my call.

All Assembled: We celebrate you now as a Unitarian Universalist minister and affirm your ordination as the Reverend Jen Raffensperger. May your ministry be a transformative force for love and justice in this world.

Lisa and Colette: Let the people say "Amen."

All Assembled: Amen!

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

Internship committee of the UU Congregation of Frederick: Steve Berté
Cheryl O'Brien
Barbara Schectman

Presidents of Frederick and Columbia Congregations: Lisa Bromfield
Colette Gelwicks

LAYING ON OF HANDS

Rev. Paige Getty
Rev. Dr. Carl Gregg

MUSIC DURING RITUAL

River Flows in You Yuruma
Nick Int Veldt, piano

COLLEGIAL WELCOME / HAND OF FELLOWSHIP

Rev. Kären Rasmussen

CHARGE TO THE MINISTER

Rev. Friederike Kaufel
Dr. Laura Solomon

CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION

Rev. Elizabeth Mount

HYMN #108

My Life Flows On In Endless Song

Michael Adcock, piano

1. 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?
2. 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 heaven and earth, How can I keep from singing?
3. 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,
Since friends by shame are undefiled, how can I keep from singing?

BENEDICTION

Rev. Jen Raffensperger

EXTINGUISHING THE CHALICE

POSTLUDE

Be the Light Lea Morris
UUCC Stay-at-Home Choir

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS (in order of appearance)

Michael Adcock Michael assumed the role of Director of Music at UUCC in 2019, after first serving as pianist (1990 – 2007), then Associate Director of Music (2008-2018). When Jen found Unitarian Universalism and UUCC, the music grounded her in this faith quickly and completely, in large part to Michael's gifts and skills and the deep dedication to music ministry in the community. Michael's rich musical offerings enliven and enlighten the life of worship at UUCC!

Rev. Paige Getty The Rev. Paige Getty began her UUCC ministry in 2003. A native of Savannah, Georgia, she earned her bachelor's degree at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia, and her master's degree in Divinity from Harvard Divinity School. Paige was preaching the day that Jen first attended UUCC, and has always been a welcoming and encouraging mentor and minister. Her talent for remembering names and faces has set a nigh-impossible bar for Jen's ministry, but it is good to have aspirations!

Dr. Mark Hicks Dr. Mark A. Hicks is the Angus MacLean Professor of Religious Education at Meadville Lombard Theological School and Director of The Fahs Collaborative, A Laboratory for Innovation in Faith Formation. Mark was Jen's faculty advisor for all four years of her seminary education and provided invaluable guidance and counsel, as well as some of her most memorable learning experiences.

The Verow-McLaughlin Family Regina, KP, Braidon, and Teaghan were some of the first people Jen made contact - and friendships - with at UUCC, because they are deeply committed Unitarian Universalists, active members of this faith community, and generally awesome as a rule.

Robin Slaw Robin joined the staff at UUCC in July 2016 as Director of Religious Education, after serving as religious educator in three prior congregations in New Jersey. Robin was Jen's first boss as a religious professional, forming an important working relationship full of learning during the years Jen served as Youth Director. Robin's passion and engagement provided wonderful modeling and mentorship and was a fantastic introduction to life as a religious professional. She was also an excellent partner in bartending!

Nichole Hodges-Abbasi Nichole has served as the Director of Religious Education at UUCF since 2018. She is a teacher, labor rights activist, and is passionate about creating meaningful connections with others. Nichole was a wonderful and welcoming presence at UUCF during Jen's internship, and a great collaborator for classes, stories, and activities! Even when these were curtailed by the pandemic, she maintained collaboration and connection and a joyous presence.

Kelli Danaker With a vision of keeping children as the central focus of her working life, Kelli found her way to UUCC through what can only be called serendipity. Before coming to UUCC, Kelli worked for more than 25 years as a regional theater professional as an actor, singer and director. As Religious Education Assistant, Kelli brings an energy, vitality, and generosity of spirit that makes her a joy to work with, to text with, to joke with, to trade thrift store tips with.

Lora Powell-Haney Lora Powell-Haney is a former Director of Religious Education at UUCF and she and Jen met when they were attending meetings of the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA). Lora and Jen enrolled at Meadville Lombard Theological School at the same time and have been friends, colleagues, and companions ever since. Lora is a gifted storyteller, a talented preacher, and has a calm pastoral presence which is grounding to all who seek her as a chaplain, advisor, and friend. Also when she sets out to feed a bunch of hungry seminarians, they are in for a feast!

Hope On the very first Pandemic Sunday, in March of 2020, when everyone was shocked and scrambling to move worship online, Hope came with Nichole to help tell the Story for All Ages. Nichole and Jen and Hope began a beautiful working relationship that day, and even as we mostly only shared virtual space, every week spent working with Hope led to big smiles and great happiness!

Rev. Dr. Carl Gregg Rev. Carl has been the minister at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick (Maryland) since 2012. He holds a Doctor of Ministry and a Diploma in the Art of Spiritual Direction from San Francisco Theological Seminary, a Master of Divinity from Brite Divinity School, and a Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Philosophy (*cum laude*, *Phi Beta Kappa*) from Furman University. In addition to his credentials, Carl has the true heart and soul of a teacher AND a minister. He was Jen's small group leader for three years in the Ministerial Formation Network and her internship supervisor for her two years at UUCF. His steady, thoughtful guidance has been a key part of Jen's formational journey.

Nick Int Veldt Nick has been the Choral Accompanist at UUCF since fall 2014, and has enjoyed a long and varied musical career as accompanist, director, arranger, composer, and collaborator. Nick also has a real gift of teaching and a real gift for human connection. Nick's warm welcome on Jen's very first Sunday as the Intern Minister at UUCF helped to make her feel at home even in a brand-new environment. Nick doesn't just make friends, he makes new family members with his expansive spirit...and his wonderful piano-playing!

Rev. Scot Hull Rev. Scot is the senior minister of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva (IL), and his home congregation is UUCF. Scot and Jen met at Meadville Lombard Theological School, then after knowing each other a while discovered mutual friends, and worked out that they had in fact been at the same bat mitzvah over 30 years ago! Scot is an excellent friend, a wonderful mentor, a stalwart colleague, and has excellent taste in scotch, to boot.

Julia Jones Julia is the Intern Minister at Beverly Unitarian Church in Chicago, IL. Jen and Julia also met at Meadville, and while they were inclined to like one another right away due to mutual friends (for instance, Julia's spouse, Scot, see above), they quickly bonded over stories of growing up in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C. Julia's home congregation is also UUCF, and she brings great gifts of compassion, empathy, thoughtfulness, and healthy boundaries to her ministry. She brings understanding, awesomeness, and her deep skills of political wonkery to her friendships.

Caleb Stine Caleb Stine is a Baltimore-based singer and songwriter whose welcoming spirit infuses all his work. Having heard his music on local radio, Jen first attended one of Caleb's shows in 2009. Caleb's open, approachable style is evident in person as well as in his music, and so it was easy to fall into conversation. Over the years, at shows, house concerts, shape-note singing and sometimes just house parties, they have shared conversations about the things in life that really mean something. Also she is really grateful he's still on good terms with her after that time she nearly set his kitchen on fire.

Anthony Jenkins, Chaplain, 59th Medical Wing, USAF Anthony served both as Intern Minister and then Assistant Minister at UUCF, as a part of his preparation to enter service as a Chaplain in the United States Air Force. Anthony's expansive and adventurous spirit made for wonderful conversation and connection when Jen was on staff at UUCF with Anthony. A 2017 graduate of Meadville, Anthony served as a mentor, a friend, a sounding board, and a collaborator. His ministry is generative, generous, healing, and holistic. In considering who to ask to give the sermon at her ordination, Jen asked herself, "Whose preaching do I most want to hear as I embark on ordained ministry?" The answer was immediate, and she is so grateful Anthony said "yes"!

Lisa Bromfield Lisa is the President of the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick, where Jen completed her two-year part-time internship from 2019-2021. Lisa is a dedicated Unitarian Universalist, works as a public health nurse, and is a talented musician. She also happens to be Julia's sister, and was always a warm and welcoming presence during Jen's time at UUCF.

Colette Gelwicks Colette is the President of the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia, Jen's home congregation. Jen met Colette early in her time at UUCF and is thrilled she is serving the congregation and the faith in this capacity now - so that she can be a part of this day! Colette is smart, funny, welcoming, and has a strong sense of faith and of leadership.

Steve Berté, Cheryl O'Brien, and Barbara Schectman Steve, Cheryl, and Barbara served on Jen's internship committee at UUCF (along with **Bruce Fry** and **Ed McDonald**, who are unable to be here in person today). They provided support and guidance during monthly meetings throughout her two-year internship. Especially as everything shifted so suddenly during the pandemic, their feedback and care and concern was a great help to Jen during this crucial time of her ministerial formation.

Rev. Kären Rasmussen Rev. Kären is the director of No Child Goes Hungry, a registered 501(c)3 non-profit dedicated to the elimination of childhood hunger, one kid, one meal at a time. (<https://nochildgoeshungry.net/>) She previously served as the Assistant Minister at UUCF when Jen first began attending in 2012. Kären holds the distinction of being the first person that Jen talked to about her potential call to ministry. She has, since day one, been supportive and encouraging, with practical advice as well as care and concern. She runs truly excellent, efficient meetings that Jen aspires to emulate!

Rev. Friederike Kaufel Rev. Rica is the part time minister at the UU Church in Anaheim (CA) and an instructor at the University of California at Irvine. Rica and Jen met at Meadville, a wonderful story Jen will never tire of telling. After a particular class discussion, as Jen greeted her in the student lounge after class, Rica said, "You remind me of some of my best friends from high school in Germany, we would hang out after school and get tea and talk for hours. I would love to be friends with you." This is possibly the best thing anyone has ever said to Jen, and is a model for the sort of open, forthright connection-making that is so marvelous in friendships and in ministry. Shortly thereafter, Rica and Jen did get tea and talk for hours, and the rest is history.

Dr. Laura Solomon Laura is the Director of Spiritual Growth at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring (MD). Laura has also recently been admitted to Ministerial Fellowship and will become the Rev. Dr. Laura Solomon in the near future! Laura and Jen met at UUCF many years ago, before either of them were fully on the path to ministry. After a good conversation after a Blessing of the Animals service, they built a lasting friendship of love and support that frankly Jen can't write about without crying. Frequent companion at after-worship lunches and co-conspirator during many turns on the road to ministry, Laura has been a source of learning, of laughter, a shoulder to cry on, and shelter in more than one storm.

Rev. Elizabeth Mount Rev. Elizabeth serves as the Interim Minister at the First Unitarian Church of Indiana, Pennsylvania. They also served as Jen's vocational advisor during her fourth and final year in the Ministerial Formation Network. During their monthly Zoom chats, Elizabeth demonstrated a passion for covenant, community, and ministry and a warm welcoming spirit for new colleagues. Over time Jen learned that warm welcoming spirit extended to everything Elizabeth did! This summer they joyously met in person when Elizabeth traveled to the area, affirming the real beauty of connections that begin virtually.

And last but not least,

Kathryn Adams Kathryn is the current Intern Minister at UUCF, and while she did not technically “appear” during this ordination ceremony, she played the vital role of Marshal (or, affectionately, Clergy Wrangler). In Kathryn’s first year at Meadville, she was assigned Jen as an existing-student “buddy” to orient her to student life. Learning they both lived in the DMV (District / Maryland / Virginia), Kathryn promptly invited Jen over to her home. That kind of straightforward welcome and no-nonsense (well, perhaps *little-nonsense*) approach to friendships, family, career, and call made Jen feel welcome in her life right away. She has been invaluable as a sounding board through the ordination planning process.

SPECIAL THANKS

It is a cliché because it is true: No one does ministry alone. No one gets through the tests, the classes, the ethical dilemmas, the imposter syndrome, the heartbreaks and triumph of ministerial formation alone. Honestly no one gets *through* any of that, ever – it is an ongoing journey of learning and loving more and more into one’s call.

And I will stop writing about myself in the third person now, because I need to say thank you. To all the people named above and all I could not ask to participate in my ordination out of fear we would all be here for fifteen hours. I need to thank my mother, Wilda Raffensperger, for always supporting me in my faith journey and my decision to answer this call. Although we no longer share a faith tradition we share a loving respect for each others’ spiritual paths. I need to thank the rest of my family: my brother Jeff, my sister-in-law Shalene, my nephews Jack and Jeff, and my niece (and Jack’s wife) Kasey. Their love, support, and acceptance have been with me all along. I would also definitely not be here without my chosen family, Kim Swartz and Jack Eidsness and Melissa Baar and Tripp Lilley and every single person who has ever been a member of Peril Book Club, still going strong after twenty (20!) years. And even though they can’t read, I need to thank my cats Desmond and Peggy, for without them I would simply *not* have made it through the last 18+ months of pandemic school, pandemic ministry, or pandemic *anything*.

The staff of both congregations, Columbia and Frederick, have been nothing but supportive throughout the ordination planning process. They have answered countless questions with patience and kindness. Columbia nurtured me into this faith and into my life as a religious professional; Frederick supported me and showed me how to be a faith leader.

And my first model in faith, in family, and in friendship - I chose this date for my ordination to honor the memory and vocation of my father, Jeff Raffensperger, ordained a Permanent Deacon in the Roman Catholic Church on October 15, 1983.

Thank you all for the richness and blessing of this affirmation of my ministry.