

Congratulations to my esteemed friend and colleague Reverend Mara Dowdall and best wishes to the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington. Mara is amazing. I hope you value her counsel and leadership as you embark on this unfolding adventure.

As minister emeritus, I am proud of what we accomplished in the past. During the many years that Roddy and I served the congregation, we proved repeatedly that a liberal church in a small state can make a difference in the world.

We broke the barriers to marriage equality. We forged connections with our neighbors in the Old North End. We were known for our advocacy of racial justice and women's rights. Our congregation grew not just numerically, but in inclusivity and spiritual depth, because people knew we were bringing a message of hope and unity to our divided, fractured world.

Looking forward, the First Unitarian Universalist Society can again fulfill its promise as the conscience of North New England. Give Mara your trust and support. Respect and encourage her as a pastor and prophet. Dare to live the principles you profess. Be guided by your faith and not your fear, and your shared ministry will be a blessing to the city you serve and beyond.