



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
HISTORY AND HERITAGE
SOCIETY BULLETIN



UUHHS AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

We sponsored two programs at this year's UUA General Assembly, held in Columbus, Ohio in June. Both were well received.

For the first time the **Annual Conrad Wright Lecture** was part of the GA program. Co-sponsored by the UU Buddhist Fellowship, the Wright Lecture attracted its largest audience in recent years. More than a hundred attendees heard James Ford, a UU Minister and also a Soto Zen Buddhist priest, speak on "Zen Buddhism as Universalism: A Historical Reflection." Board member Barbara Coeyman introduced the program, which included an extended and very interesting period of Q&A. You can download a transcript of the lecture on the UUHHS website.

"America's first black Socialist was a Unitarian from Ohio." This provocative sentence attracted around 75 GA attendees to a fascinating lecture by Nikki Taylor, a Ph.D. historian who teaches at Rice University. Taylor shared the little-known story of Peter Clark, the subject of her 2013 biography, *America's First Black Socialist: The Radical Life of Peter H. Clark*. Several in the audience were from Clark's home town of Cincinnati and contributed to the lively discussion that followed her talk. Board member Kathy Parker presided over this session.

Program slots at GA are limited, and we are in competition each year with other organizations seeking a place on the program. There are no guarantees, but we hope that sponsoring quality programs such as these helps our chances for future GA's.

We also sponsored a table in the Exhibit Hall at GA this year, as usual, piled high with copies of our *Journal*, spanning the last decade, plus several other interesting books, all proffered at very reasonable prices (including free copies). Included with books for purchase was a variety of attractive flyers available for the taking. These offered information on membership for the UUHHS, registration for the 2016 Convo, and an invitation to support the Channing Memorial Restoration at Mount Auburn Cemetery, which we are supporting. Our table banner this year was augmented by a the wonderful 2016 Convo logo created by Nate Walker.

There were just four members of the Board at GA this year: Barbara Coeyman, Earl Holt, Nicole Kirk and Kathy Parker. The table was open around 36 hours over five days, so we needed a number of other volunteers to tend the booth and fortunately we had many! Besides the aforementioned we thank Jay Atkinson, Daniel Budd, Marilyn Holt, Marty ?????, Stephanie May, Eleanor Piez, our former UUHHS president, Kate Walker, and Rali Weaver for donating some of their time to us (apologies if anyone has been omitted).



Linking Past and Present -- Thoughts from your Journal Editor

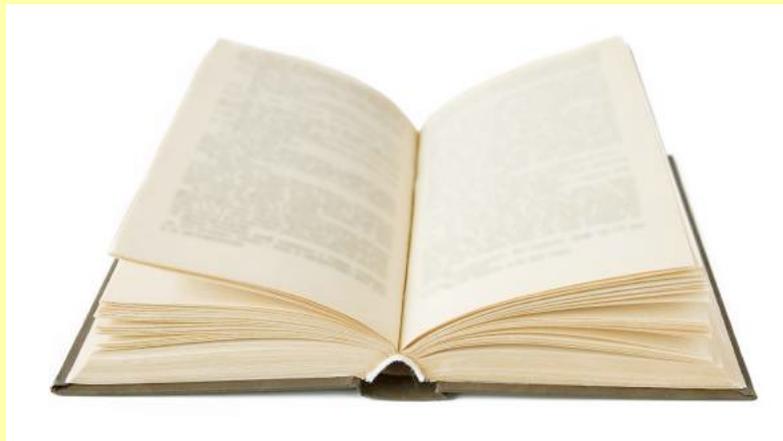
By Kathleen Parker, Journal Editor

This is the time of year when I am assembling the prospective Table of Contents for the next issue of our Journal. As in years past, I am deeply impressed with the quality and content of the work being done to research and write about the many yeomen – ordinary people -- who committed themselves to the cause of liberal religion in one way or another. As we learn about them, we can hope to better understand our Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist past – and in so doing, deepen our own commitment to the Unitarian Universalist vision we share today.

In Vol. 39, we learned how Samuel Howe came to distinguish the role of liberal missionaries in Greece from those who were more conservative theologically, and less tolerant of cultural difference. This is worthy of study, but we can only wish he had later in life adopted a more tolerant view toward the expansive literary and cultural gifts of his wife. We will learn more about that sad limitation in his personality in a review of the recent biography about Julia Ward Howe, which will appear in Vol. 40.

We also learned of William D’Arcy Haley’s dilemma during the Civil War, when parishioners at his Unitarian church in Alton, Illinois objected to his support for the abolitionists moving into Kansas. This raised the question in his mind of whether he could properly stay at his pulpit if he could not preach according to his conscience. Similarly, a Unitarian military officer faced critical questions of conscience when ordered to participate in the war on Mexico and to attack the Brulé Sioux. Nineteenth-century Unitarian jurists, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., and Frank Doster, exemplify the slow shift toward “legal realism” whereby, as Doster wrote, “Humanity is above property.” The Rev. Charles Elliott St. John aspired to spread the “loving hand” of Unitarianism on the city of Pittsburgh, but faltered over the question of rights for labor in light of the overwhelming economic power of those with property.

As Unitarian Universalists today, we recognize from these stories that living by the words in our covenant – “to affirm and promote the right of conscience” – has never been easy. The words of Phillip Hewett, one of our luminaries in UU history and ministry from Vancouver, Canada, link the experiences of our forebears to our lives today. In the context of our sometimes “fragmented” lives, he tells us, “We would hold fast to all of good we inherit even as we would leave behind us the outworn and the false.” (“From the Fragmented World,” #440, *Singing the Living Tradition*). In the lessons we continue to learn from our forebears, let us indeed hold fast to all of the good, while leaving behind what is false.





PRESIDENT’S POST: CONVO IS COMING!

2016 HISTORY CONVOCATION

Well, it won’t be long now. What I’ve been calling “CONVO III” is coming soon.

The dates are October 27-30. The venue is the Airport Hilton in the Twin Cities, Minneapolis/St. Paul. Registration information is available on-line at uuconvo.org as well as in this Newsletter. Please note: **the deadline for reduced room costs at the Hilton is September 26.**

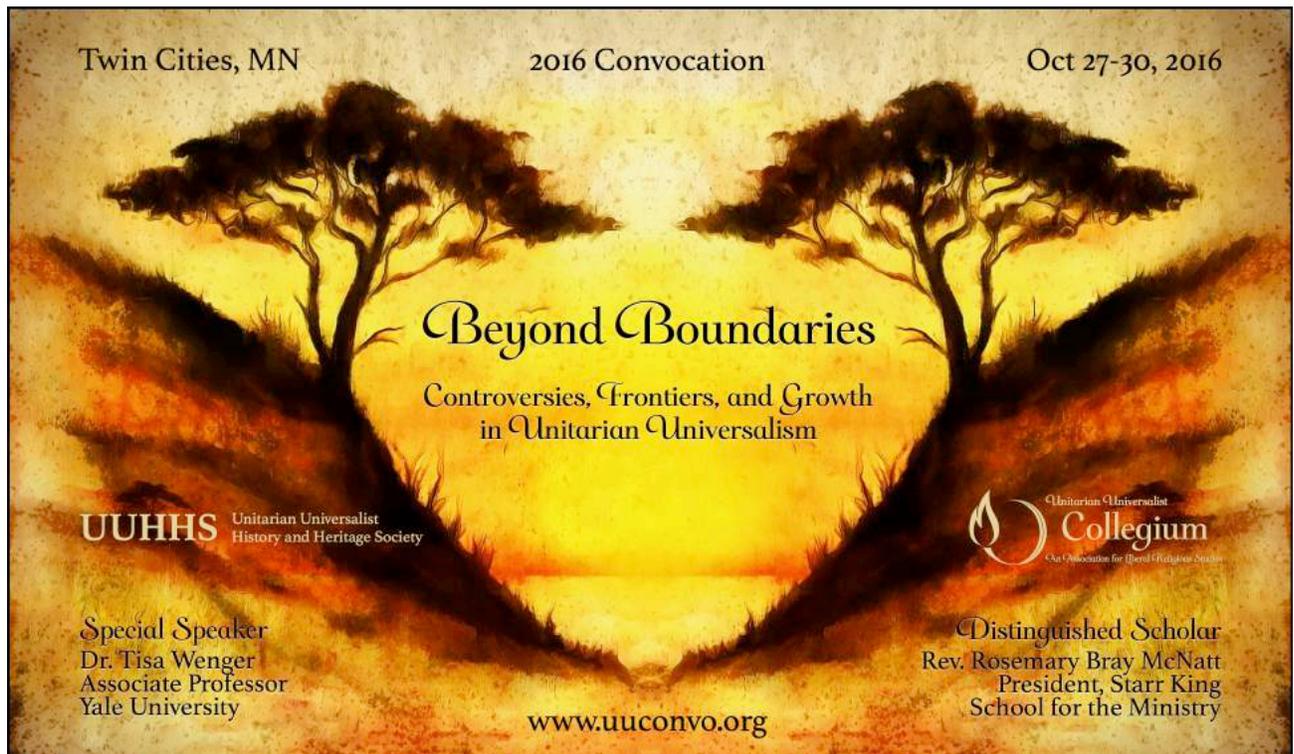
Again this year the UUHHS joins with Collegium as joint sponsors, and members of both organizations constitute the planning team. At this writing the program is shaping up beautifully with an exciting variety of papers, panels and performances having been proposed and submitted. The outstanding featured speakers this year are Tisa Wenger from the Yale Divinity faculty and Rosemary Bray McNatt, President of Starr King School for the Ministry.

There will also be a special lecture on the history of the development of Unitarianism and Universalism in the Midwest by Stefan Jonasson, UU minister and historian. This lecture is sponsored by the History and Heritage Society of the Mid-America region, chaired by Victor Urbanowicz, which has assisted us significantly with the planning of this year’s Convocation. In another nod to our geographical location all attendees will receive a complementary copy of the classic history of the Western Conference, *Freedom Moves West* by Charles H. Lyttle.

Don’t miss this opportunity to be part of a community of UU scholars, clergy and lay people who value study and the life of the mind and who share a common interest in knowing our past and care deeply about the future of our movement. Come to hear thoughtful and provocative presentations and share in lively discussions (both formal and informal), which are a hallmark of this triennial event.

I hope to see you there!

Earl Holt
(EarlHolt@aol.com)



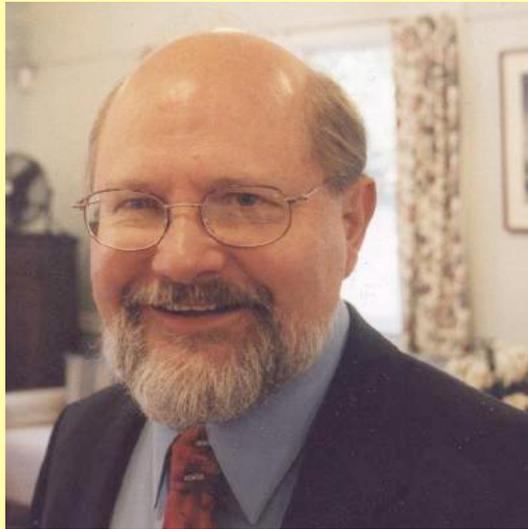
WE'VE MOVED!
All membership renewals and inquiries should be sent to:
UUHHS
670 High Street
Dedham, MA 02026

Membership Dues:
Student \$30; Individual \$50; Three year \$125
Membership Renewal!
Your membership expires in June of the year on your mailing label or in the Subject line of the email you received. To renew or extend your membership, contact: UUHHS, 670 High Street, Dedham, MA 02026

or email membership@uuhhs.org. You can also renew ONLINE at uuhhs.org/Join. Simply print out the form, fill it in, drop it in the mail, or use PayPal option from that page.

IN PRAISE OF PAUL

Paul Sprecher is stepping down from his position on the UUHHS Board after nearly a decade of generous and conscientious service to the UUHHS, including four successive two-year terms as Treasurer. Paul also handled most of our Membership records. The Minutes of the recent Board meeting report that “we shared memories of his even-handed guidance in keeping us afloat in challenging and sometimes confusing times...and we approved unanimously a vote of enthusiastic thanks to Paul for his devoted service.” We will miss him on the board!



Thank you, Paul!

