

Journal of Unitarian Universalist History

Volume XLIV (2021)

EDITOR: Kathleen R. Parker

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Lynn Gordon Hughes

EDITORIAL BOARD:

John Buehrens, Dean Grodzins, Cynthia Grant Tucker, David Hall,
Mark Harris, Dan McKanan, Mark Morrison-Reed, Lewis Perry,
Susan Ritchie, David Robinson

Table of Contents for Vol. XLIV

Editor's Note

Lecture

Mark Harris – Riding the Circuit to Salvation – Collegium Scholar Lecture (2019)

Articles

J. Sylvan – The Risks of Radical Welcome: Arlington Street Church and Gay Rights, 1973-1983

Paul Beedle – Origins of Unitarianism and Universalism in New Orleans

Deidre A. Johnson – “Instead of the Brier”: The Life and Works of Mrs. E. M. Bruce

From our Transylvanian Files

Robert Kokenyesi – Translation: Concio CXCII and Concio CXCIII, Sermons from 1597 by György Enyedi, the Third Bishop of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church

Lovas Borbála – Sixteenth-century Unitarian Interpretations of Psalm 2 in Sermons by György Enyedi (1597)

Claudia Elferdink – Anna Eddy Richmond and the Origins of Unitarian Transnational Relations: Transylvania, England, and America

Book Reviews

William H. Armstrong, *Father Taylor: Boston's Sailor Preacher as Seen and Heard by His Contemporaries*

Reviewed by John Buehrens

Kazimierz Bem, *Calvinism in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth, 1548-1648*
Reviewed by Jay Atkinson

David Blight, *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*
Reviewed by Mark Harris

Howard Bryant, *Full Dissidence: Notes from an Uneven Playing Field*
Reviewed by Phoebe Cos

Christopher Cameron, *Black Freethinkers: A History of African American Secularism*
Reviewed by Patrice Curtis

Jane Fleishman, *The Stonewall Generation: LGBTQ Elders on Sex, Activism, and Aging*
Reviewed by Gail Forsyth-Vail

Sylvester Johnson, *African American Religions, 1500-2000: Colonialism, Democracy, and Freedom*
Reviewed by Connie Simon

Naomi Klein, *On Fire: The Case for a Green New Deal*
Reviewed by Stephen Cleghorn

Maria Popova, *Figuring*
Reviewed by Barry Andrews

Samantha Seiple, *Louisa on the Front Lines*
Reviewed by Rali Weaver

**Unitarian Universalist History and Heritage Society
Board of Directors, 2020-21**

PRESIDENT

John Buehrens
438 8th Ave. #101
San Francisco, CA

VICE PRESIDENT

Nicole Kirk
Meadville Lombard Theological School
Chicago, IL 60605

SECRETARY

Dan McKanan
Harvard Divinity School
45 Francis Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

TREASURER

Rali Weaver
First Church and Parish of Dedham
670 High Street
Dedham, MA 02026

Directors

Phoebe Cos
146 Saint Regis Drive North
Rochester, NY 14618

Kathleen Parker (*Journal Editor*)
5921 Tamar Drive, Unit 3
Columbia MD 21045

Patrice Curtis
20403 N Lake Pleasant Rd.
#117-481
Peoria, AZ 85382

Connie Simon
First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati
536 Linton Street
Cincinnati, OH, 45219

Gail Forsyth-Vail
28 Searle Street
Georgetown, MA 01833

Tisa Wenger
Yale Divinity School
409 Prospect Street
New Haven, CT 06511

Mark A. Hicks
Meadville Lombard Theological School
610 S. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60605

Editor's Note

Greetings to our readers. After what has been a difficult year, we hope you will find in the pages of Volume 44 of our journal a welcome respite as well as renewal to our Unitarian Universalist principles and continuing call to purpose.

We begin by revisiting our 2019 Convocation of UU Studies, featuring the second Collegium Scholar Lecture delivered by Mark Harris. As someone who found a source of identity in sports, Mark speaks of his concern that our Unitarian Universalist focus on mental, spiritual, and ministerial activity does not overshadow our need for bodily exercise, development, play, and mutually loving sexual intimacy. The latter item can teach us, says Rebecca Parker, that “joy is grounded in relational power.”

J. Sylvan explores developments in UU gay rights history as played out at the Arlington Street Church, beginning with a lesbian wedding officiated by Rev. Leslie Westbrook in 1973. Ten years later, meeting space at the Arlington Street Church was offered by Rev. Victor Carpenter to the North American Man Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), which pushed further what Sylvan calls the “edges of moral discomfort.” Sylvan observes that Arlington Street participated in the conversations by which gay activists negotiated the moral boundaries of their movement. The moral boundaries of sexual engagement continue to be negotiated today, for instance, regarding the practice of polyamory.

Paul Beedle tells the story of Rev. Theodore Clapp, a northern Congregationalist minister who was invited in 1835 to serve a newly formed Presbyterian church in New Orleans. Though Clapp was a popular preacher, his position in the (Orthodox) Presbytery came to be challenged due to perceived conflicts over theology. In time he left the Presbyterian church, and many of his parishioners followed him as he established a Universalist congregation. Clapp took care not to offend southern honor culture, yet his support for slavery was tempered by a concern that slaves be protected from cruelty and neglect.

Another piece of our Universalist past is brought to light in Deidre Johnson's account of Elizabeth M. Bruce, a mid-nineteenth-century woman who was a minister's wife, a prolific writer, and eventually an ordained Universalist minister in her own right. Elizabeth wrote stories that featured children who solve problems for themselves or, in some cases, educate the adults in their lives. After her marriage ended, she became editor of a popular children's periodical, the *Myrtle*. Her one adult novel was dedicated to “the noble band of Christian ministers by whose self-sacrificing toil American civilization is so rapidly advancing...” By 1877, she renewed her license to preach and built the Wayside Chapel as an addition to her home, where she held services for large crowds until she died in 1910.

The final entries in this year's journal illuminate fascinating elements of our Transylvanian Unitarian past. Robert Kokenyesi offers translations of two Unitarian sermons delivered in 1597 by György Enyedi, the Third Bishop of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church at that time. These sermons are based on Psalm 2, which was the scriptural text used in Transylvania to support an anti-trinitarian theology. The reasoning, as readers will see, began with the recognition that Jesus