

UU STUDIES NETWORK 2023 CONVOCATION

Widening the  
circle  
of

UU STUDIES

# Widening the Circle of UU STUDIES

2023  
UU STUDIES NETWORK  
CONVOCATION

March 23–26  
Chicago, IL

**Widening the Circle of UU Studies**, the inaugural international gathering of the new Unitarian Universalist Studies Network, will encourage presenters and attendees to engage across multiple and intersecting disciplines with the 2020 Report of the Commission on Institutional Change, *Widening the Circle of Concern* (Boston: UUA, 2020) which analyzes structural and systemic racism in Unitarian Universalism.

**Widening the Circle of UU Studies** will include presentations from a variety of disciplines and perspectives that explore the imaginative, congregational, intellectual, and liberatory study of Unitarian Universalism. Beyond presentations, **Widening the Circle of UU Studies** will include an optional Thursday-afternoon field trip to Chicago area attractions, panels addressing a wide variety of topics, social hours and communal lunches and dinners, and a talk from our distinguished speaker, Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore.

## SCHEDULE All times are Central Time.

### Thursday, March 23, 2023

- 5:00 pm **Check-In**
- 6:00 pm **DINNER**
- 7:00 pm **The Cairn: Celebrating Thoreau at Walden Pond (staged reading)** *Frank Potter and others*

### Friday, March 24, 2023

- 8:00 am **BREAKFAST**
- 9:00 am **Growth of Beloved Community among UU Church of the Philippines** *Rev. Tet Gallardo*
- 10:00 am **Reckoning with Marginalized Communities in International U/U Histories** *Panel: Mark Harris, Claudia Elferdink, several international presenters on Zoom*
- 11:00 am **Wider Still: Perspectives With an International U/U Focus** *Rev. Fred Muir, Rev. Alicia Forde, Rev. Sara Ascher, Rev. Roger Bertschausen*
- 12:30 pm **LUNCH**
- 1:30 pm **International Unitarian Universalism and White Christian Nationalism: What Is to Be Done?** *Marc Roscoe Loustau, Tibor Tarcsey*
- 2:30 pm **Sharing Equitable Unitarian Universalist Histories, Part 1 & Part 2** *Rev. Adam Lawrence Dyer and Dan McKanan*
- 4:00 pm **Suffering for Blasphemous Libel** *Rev. Dr. Colin Bossen*
- 5:00 pm **Social Hour/Author Tables**
- 6:00 pm **DINNER**
- 7:00 pm **Keynote** *Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore*

## Saturday, March 25, 2023

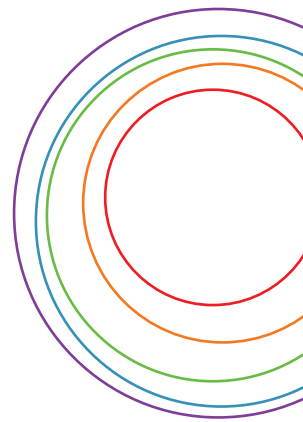
- 8:00 am **BREAKFAST**
- 9:00 am **Exploring Universalism: Evangelical Roots and the Working Class** *John B. Newhall*
- 10:00 am **Evolving Nature of Universalist Theology** *Avery Guest*
- 11:00 am **The audacity to imagine Sisyphus Happy: African American Naturalistic Humanism and the Quest to Dismantle White Supremacy in Unitarian Universalism** *Andrea Johnson*
- 12:00 pm **LUNCH**
- 2:00 pm **Widening the Pedagogy of the UU Seminary: An Exploration of "Educating to Counter Oppression"** *Yvonne C. Garrett, PhD*
- 3:00 pm **Owning Our Past: Developing a Curriculum** *Elizabeth Foster and Heidi Fiore*
- 4:00 pm **Is Congregational Polity Untouchable?** *Stephanie May, Elias Ortega, Barb Greve, Meg Richardson*
- 5:00 pm **When Unitarians Faced a New Age** *Arliss Ungar*
- 6:00 pm **Dining Groups (not included in fee)**

## Sunday, March 26, 2023

- 8:00 am **BREAKFAST**
- 9:00 am **Worship** *Rev. Dr. Jay Atkinson, Amanda Thomas*
- 10:00 am **Reimagining the Scholar-Minister** *Graduate Student Panel*
- 11:00 am **Reflections** *Distinguished Speaker Rev. Dr. Fenimore*
- 12:00 pm **Lunch on your own**
- 1:00 pm **Library/Archive Time (until 5:00 pm)**

## Monday, March 27, 2023

- 8:00 am **Library/Archive Time (until 5:00 pm)**



## THURSDAY NIGHT

7:00 pm

### **The Cairn: Celebrating Thoreau at Walden Pond**

*Frank Potter, et al*

The year is 1903. In the opening scene, a professor is giving a lecture on Thoreau to visiting parents at the Mackenzie School for Boys, which is located on the Hudson River above New York City. Near the end of his lecture, the professor says that a cairn (a pile of stones to honor a person or event) was built on Walden Pond to commemorate the deceased Thoreau. A woman in the audience, Mrs. Goan, raises her hand and says that it was her mother, Mary Newbury Adams, a Universalist from Iowa and a friend of Emerson and Bronson Alcott, who started the cairn with Alcott. The surprised professor and she agree that when she returns home she will send the professor a letter describing the event.

When the professor starts reading the letter, we watch the reenactment that occurred thirty-one years earlier in 1872. Mrs. Adams had a six-week break in May and June from her traveling to women's empowerment gatherings on the East Coast and visiting relatives in the Boston area. Mrs. Adams and her husband had hosted Emerson and Alcott in their travels west and now Emerson reciprocates. Alcott visits Mrs. Adams at Emerson's home where she is staying and he escorts her to Walden Pond.

## FRIDAY MORNING

9:00 – 10:00 am

### **Growth of Beloved Community: UU Church of the Philippines**

*Rev. Tet Gallardo*

In 2020, the UU Funding Panel approved for 10,000 dollars a project proposal for only 8,000 dollars. The Panel said that they are adding 20% more as a gesture of their enthusiasm and trust that this project is indeed for the strengthening of Beloved Community in all congregations of the UU Church of the Philippines. I will be displaying photos.

10:00 – 11:00 am

### **Reckoning with Marginalized Communities in International U/U Histories**

*Panel: Mark Harris, Claudia Elferdink, several international presenters on Zoom*

We will feature a panel with participants representing several countries where U / U exists as a religious movement. We will especially highlight those who are not from the USA who will appear on Zoom. The presentation will include the goal of the group which is to reckon with the stories from our respective pasts which value unspoken or neglected aspects of our history. Reviewing the content of our first two webinars on oppression in Romania and the loss of home and land due to colonialism, we will show how organizing has been a challenge for the planning group due to barriers of identities, time zones, languages, marginalized people, and different historical understandings. Each U/U group is adding new stories from diverse and intersectional perspectives, and we will invite the panel and audience to share those.

11:00 am – 12:30 pm

### **Wider Still: Perspectives With an International U/U Focus**

*Rev. Fred Muir, Rev. Alicia Forde, Rev. Sara Ascher, Rev. Roger Bertschausen*

The COIC "Report" recalls a 1989 admission regarding how "... the refusal [of UUs] to acknowledge and accept the firsthand knowledge that people of color, indigenous and other marginalized groups face with our frames is maddening to those who experience it over and over among us." (135) This presentation turns our attention to the ways we have been in relationship with international co-religionists and specifically draws our attention to how we might examine and reflect on those relationships while holding the recommendations made by the COIC. We ask: How can an organization—an individual, a congregation, the UUA—speak the truth about its past and with this truth move forward? With the spirit of tikkun olam

(Hebrew for "repairing the world" and connoting social action and the pursuit of social justice), we suggest that one additional path is to make our journey "wider still."

## FRIDAY AFTERNOON

1:30 – 2:30 pm

### **International Unitarian Universalism and White Christian Nationalism: What Is to Be Done?**

*Marc Roscoe Loustau, Tibor Tarcsay*

It's time UUs had a conversation about confronting the scourge of authoritarianism abroad. The news is filled with stories about Hungary's racist, homophobic, and anti-immigrant regime. The European Union has now declared Hungary to be a failed democracy. But the Partner Church Council and the UUA International Office promote relationship-building programs that do not take into account this political context. The result is a naively apolitical approach to partner church relationships that ignores the front page news UUs read everyday. Instead of changing its programs to take into account what everyone knows, the Partner Church Council has quietly advocated a policy of engagement. Has this policy produced any progress? What is to be done about the complicity of the Hungarian Unitarian Church, which takes large amounts of money from the Hungarian government? Is it time for Unitarian Universalists in the US to support other partners: groups that have, unlike the Hungarian Unitarian Church, courageously stood up to Hungary's racist and homophobic regime?

2:30 – 4:00 pm

### **Sharing Equitable Unitarian Universalist Histories, Part 1 & Part 2**

*Rev. Adam Lawrence Dyer and Dan McKanan*

Almost every pastoral care resource recommends listening as a practice and skill of ministry across many diverse forms and contexts. Yet listening is not neutral. This workshop will invite practices and possibilities of decolonizing listening aimed toward change and transformation. Listening is not easy. Under what circumstances could listening itself be liberating? What does it mean and look like to

liberate deeper ways of hearing and being heard that confront complicities, are real about the risks of ableism, and co-create new possibilities?

4:00 – 5:00 pm

### **Suffering for Blasphemous Libel**

*Rev. Dr. Colin Bossen*

Robert Wedderburn (1762-1835?) was likely the first Unitarian minister of African descent. Born in Jamaica to an enslaved mother, he emigrated to England in the late eighteenth century before opening a Unitarian chapel in 1819 in London. In 1820 the combination of his revolutionary politics and radical theology led to his conviction for blasphemy and a two-year prison sentence. Some years after his release, in 1828, he again tried to open a Unitarian chapel, which quickly failed. Using a combination of his surviving writings and police accounts of his sermons, preserved in the National Archives in London, I have attempted to reconstruct his life and theology. In doing so, I place him within the context of the global Unitarianism and raise questions about the nature of the theological movement and its history.

## SATURDAY MORNING

9:00 – 10:00 am

### **Exploring Universalism: Evangelical Roots and the Working Class**

*John B. Newhall*

I will explore growth of Universalism along class lines during the late 18th and early 19th centuries as a direct outgrowth of what has commonly been termed the "Great Awakening." This lens provides a more complex view of how Universalism interacted with other dominant religious traditions at the time. This paper will emphasize not the primary theological controversies but will endeavour to approach religion from the pews, focusing geographically on Universalism's growth along Boston's North Shore region as well as in Philadelphia.

10:00 – 11:00 am

### **Evolving Nature of Universalist Theology**

*Avery Guest*

My previous analysis was limited by temporal availability of sermons and computer technology to evaluate word themes. Most of these problems have been overcome, and I have some excellent ideas from Dan McKanan on how to expand the theological breadth of my search.

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

### **The Audacity to Imagine Sisyphus Happy: African American Naturalistic Humanism and the Quest to Dismantle White Supremacy in Unitarian Universalism**

*Andrea Johnson*

African American Naturalistic Humanism begins with the unblinking acknowledgment of sadness and struggle: from the loss of the metaphysical comforts associated with a benevolent deity who watches over us, gives our lives meaning and significance, and ensures that justice will prevail; to the fact that death is our ultimate destiny; to the realization that human existence is marked by disease, defeat, and dehumanizing oppression. And yet, despite life's inevitable struggles, African American Humanist, Anthony Pinn, takes inspiration from the existentialist philosopher, Albert Camus, who had the audacity to imagine Sisyphus happy. Despite continuing to push his rock, making at best temporary progress and finding at most fleeting meaning, Sisyphus is not crushed by the struggle. Camus imagines the possibility that struggle might yield happiness — especially when it is done in community. This paper will examine the marriage of humanism with naturalism and the liberation it makes possible.

## **SATURDAY AFTERNOON**

2:00 – 3:00 pm

### **Widening the Pedagogy of the UU Seminary: An Exploration of “Educating to Counter Oppression”**

*Yvonne C. Garrett, PhD*

Starr King School for the Ministry's statement “Educating to Counter Oppression,” works to define a “vision and hope” for the mission of the theological seminary. Within this statement are stated goals for theological education including several bullet points outlining the ways “courses and sites of learning” and “pedagogy and educational philosophy” should be enacted within the Starr King community. My presentation queries how successful this work currently is, particularly in pedagogy that works to teach seminarians “literacy beyond the ‘white canon.’” I explore the question whether it is possible to teach UU Theology and UU History and present discursive spaces wherein seminarians can both fulfill the requirements of the M.Div. (including the MFC reading list) and move beyond the ‘white canon’ while being empowered to work toward dismantling patriarchal heteronormative white supremacy and countering oppression in its myriad forms.

3:00 – 4:00 pm

### **Owning Our Past: Developing a Curriculum**

*Elizabeth Foster and Heidi Fiore*

*Widening the Circle of Concern* suggests that to build the beloved community we must heed the ways in which UUs have contributed to oppression. This includes our denomination's shameful involvement in the eugenics movement. From the early to mid 1900s, Unitarians and Universalists widely supported the eugenics movement in America and Britain. Prominent Unitarians in the Supreme Court contributed to the *Buck v. Bell* decision, which legalized state sterilization of people with intellectual disabilities. With support from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, EquUal Access is currently developing and piloting an Adult Religious Education curriculum, rooted in circle process dialogue, that empowers congregations to explore our historical connection to the eugenics movement, how this legacy perpetuates ableism and racism in the present, and how we can

work toward liberation and repair. We look forward to sharing our findings with the UU Studies Network, and invite feedback and conversation about our work.

4:00 – 5:00 pm

### **Is Congregational Polity Untouchable?**

*Stephanie May, Elias Ortega, Barb Greve, Meg Richardson*

In the wake of the *Widening the Circle of Concern* report, questions of polity, power, and accountability in our congregations, institutions, and Association abound. Rooted in the 1648 Cambridge Platform, congregational polity has long governed our congregations and our Association. While to some congregational polity remains an untouchable foundation, to others congregational polity constrains possibilities of change while maintaining structures and assumptions of white supremacy culture with little accountability to shared UU values and commitments. As we build a more anti-racist, anti-oppressive future in our congregations and Association, what role might changes in Polity play? Additionally, how might the ways we teach Polity in our seminaries support a vision of change in how governance functions within congregations, groups, and the Association? Moderated by Elias Ortega, panelists include former UUA co-moderator, Mr. Barb Greve, and polity professors Stephanie May and Meg Richardson.

5:00 – 6:00 pm

### **When Unitarians Faced a New Age**

*Arliss Ungar*

As we discuss *Widening the Circle*, it is important to remember and learn from an earlier, crucial Unitarian report, the 1936 *Unitarians Face a New Age*. By the 1930's Unitarianism was in trouble. The number of churches was declining drastically. Funds were limited. Church leaders wondered whether or not Unitarianism could and should survive. A Commission of Appraisal was established to consider the future of the denomination. While systemic racism was not yet on their radar, other important questions had to be addressed. Learn how and why the Commission was established, who was on it, what they studied and what they recommended in their report and how it was implemented.



## Widening the Circle of UU STUDIES PRESENTERS

### **Frank Potter**

*The Cairn: Celebrating Thoreau at Walden Pond, Thursday Night*

M. Frank Potter obtained his degrees from Simpson College (Iowa) and the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He retired after 39 years as a vocational rehabilitation counselor for the State of Iowa. In the last decade since his retirement, he has been writing a book with a working title *The Radical Mary Newbury Adams and the Nineteenth Century*. He is a long-time member of the Unitarian Universalist MidAmerica Region History and Heritage Committee. He lives in Dubuque, Iowa with his wife Tamara Prenosil. They have two sons.

### **Rev. Tet Gallardo**

*Growth of Beloved Community among UU Church of the Philippines, Friday 9:00 am*

Rev. Tet Gallardo was the Balazs Scholar of 2016–17 in Starr King, and was elected as the President and Executive Minister of the UU Church of the Philippines (2019–22). She has served 42 NGOs in her lifetime. She is a LGBTIQAP rights activist and staunch climate activist focusing on human behavioural changes for ecological sustainability. She has recently launched a consultancy that helps human ecosystems go through the organizational conversations that would prioritize ecology.

### **Mark Harris**

*Panel: Reckoning with Marginalized Communities in International U/U Histories, Friday 10:00 am*

Mark Harris is a retired UU Minister, Minister Emeritus, First Parish of Watertown, MA, and an adjunct professor at Boston University. Mark taught UU History and Polity at a number of seminaries, including Harvard, Starr King, and Andover Newton. Mark has published several books and articles.

### **Claudia Elferdink**

*Panel: Reckoning with Marginalized Communities in International U/U Histories, Friday 10:00 am*

Joining in from Silver City, Rev Elferdink is a UU Historian and retired Religious Educator and Minister. She served congregations in New England for over 25 years. A graduate of Antioch School of Education and Harvard Divinity School, she has loved learning from history since the fifth grade. She has published articles on “forgotten” women involving Transylvania, the UK, and the USA. She currently serves as Co-Coordinator of the Reckoning International U/U Histories Project.

### **Rev. Fred Muir**

*Wider Still: Perspectives With an International U/U Focus, Friday 11:00 am*

Rev. Fred Muir served as the Senior Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis, MD, for 34 years. For 25 years he has been the UUA ambassador to the UU congregations of the Philippines. He has written and edited several books, including *Magilpay Universalist* (2000); *The Whole World Kin: Charles Darwin and the Spirit of Liberal Religion* (2009) and *Turning Points* (both from Skinner House Books). His article "Seduced by the Sound of Science: Unitarians and Universalists in the Eugenics Era" was featured in the current UU Studies Journal.





## **Rev. Alicia R. Forde**

*Wider Still: Perspectives With an International U/U Focus, Friday 11:00 am*

The Reverend Alicia Roxanne Forde serves with the Unitarian Universalist Association as the Director of the International Office. She is a graduate of The Iliff School of Theology and currently lives in Longmont, Colorado. Alicia was born and spent her formative years in Trinidad and Tobago. She identifies as an African descent queer, cis-gender female with deep roots in Tobago. She considers herself bi-cultural and is grateful that her formative years enabled her to cultivate a global perspective. Alicia is a certified Spiritual Director and has a strong interest in health and wellness. When she's not hiking, you can find her reading, working-out, or podcast-walking.

## **Rev. Sara Ascher**

*Wider Still: Perspectives with an International U/U Focus, Friday 11:00 am*

Rev. Sara Ascher has been a Unitarian Universalist her entire life. After graduating from Andover Newton Theological School in 2000 with a Masters of Divinity she spent the next 16 years serving Unitarian Universalist congregations in the United States. She worked with our global faith community as the Executive Director of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) for 5 years before earning a Masters in International Relations from the The Fletcher School and moving to the environmental arena helping to address the climate crisis, working for World Resources Institute, as a Senior Project Manager.

## **Rev. Roger Bertschausen**

*Wider Still: Perspectives with an International U/U Focus, Friday 11:00 am*

Roger is the Interim Lead Minister at the White Bear UU Church. He had a twenty-five year settled ministry at the Fox Valley UU Fellowship in Appleton, WI, and then served as Executive Director of the UU Partner Church Council for four years and as Interim Minister at First Unitarian Society in Madison, WI. In 2021, Roger received a Doctor of Divinity Honorary Degree from Meadville Lombard Theological School.

## **Marc Roscoe Loustau**

*International Unitarian Universalism and White Christian Nationalism, Friday 1:30 pm*

Marc is an anthropologist and scholar of religion studying religion and nationalism in Eastern Europe. Marc's opinion articles have appeared in major U.S. and European newspapers and magazines. Marc has given invited lectures at European and North American universities and presented at numerous international conferences. Marc's book, *Hungarian Catholic Intellectuals in Romania: Reforming Apostles* explores how contemporary Hungarian Catholic intellectuals are forging an ethical concept of nationhood. Marc is currently working on a second book manuscript about how pilgrimage to the Our Lady of Csíksofolyó shrine is changing purchasing habits and devotion to the Virgin Mary in Transylvania's Hungarian minority. Marc works at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, as Managing Editor of the Journal of Global Catholicism.

## **Tibor Tarcsay**

*International Unitarian Universalism and White Christian Nationalism, Friday 1:30 pm*

Tibor Tarcsay is a human rights activist, Leaven Community (Kovács Közösség), Hungary.



## Rev. Adam Lawrence Dyer

*Sharing Equitable Unitarian Universalist Histories, Part 1 & Part 2, Friday 2:30 pm*

Rev. Adam Lawrence Dyer was the lead minister at First Parish in Cambridge Unitarian Universalist, MA and a Harvard University Chaplain from 2017–2022. He is the author of *Love Beyond God* and he maintains a regular blog, [Spirituwellness.org](http://Spirituwellness.org). His writing appears in *Body Battlegrounds: Transgressions, Tensions, and Transformations* (2019), *To Wake, To Rise: Meditations on Justice and Resilience* (2018), and the *Harvard Kennedy School LGBTQ Policy Journal* (2021). He is a graduate of Princeton University and the Pacific School of Religion and is currently a PhD Student in Ethics and Society at the University of Virginia where he is developing a research project on equity in religion.

## Dan McKanan

*Sharing Equitable Unitarian Universalist Histories, Part 1 & Part 2, Friday 2:30 pm*

Dan McKanan is Emerson Senior Lecturer at Harvard Divinity School, where he has taught since 2008. Dan's research and teaching focus on the connections between religious communities and social transformation. He is the author of six books, and the lead editor of the *Documentary History of Unitarian Universalism*. His current research is on how 19th-century religious liberals participated in the preservation of wild spaces in metropolitan Boston—a topic that is curiously entangled with histories of settler colonialism, enslavement, abolition, and eugenics. Dan lives in Somerville, MA, with his spouse Tammy, and is a proud member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford.

## Rev. Dr. Colin Bossen

*Suffering for Blasphemous Libel, Friday 4:00 pm*

The Rev. Dr. Colin Bossen presently serves as the Senior Minister of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston in a developmental capacity. He earned his PhD in American Studies from Harvard University and his MDiv from Meadville Lombard Theological School. Since arriving in Texas, he has had fellowships with Rice and Princeton Universities. He is currently working on two books, the one on contemporary Unitarian Universalist theology for Brill and the other on the religion and populism in the United States. In addition, he is pursuing a project with his partner Sadé Perkins, and funded by the Crossroads Project housed at Princeton University, on religion in Houston's Pan-African community. He keeps a blog at [www.colinbossen.com](http://www.colinbossen.com).

## Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore

*Keynote, Friday 7:00 pm*

Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore is Lead Minister and Minister for Lifespan Religious Education at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset, NY, past President of the Liberal Religious Educators Association, a former member of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change and a former VP of the Board of Trustees for Starr King School for the Ministry, and member of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change. Rev. Dr. Fenimore is an author of *Unitarian Universalist Religious Education Curriculum and Religious Education Renaissance Modules*, meditations and readings. She is a contributing author in *Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity and Power in Ministry* and *UUA Commission on Institutional Change: Widening the Circle of Concern*. Her Doctor of Ministry area of study is Narrative Theology with an emphasis on Story and Faith Development for African American Unitarian Universalists.



## **John B. Newhall**

*Exploring Universalism: Evangelical Roots and the Working Class, Saturday 9:00 am*

John B. Newhall is currently a graduate student at Boston University School of Theology. With primary interests in colonial and early republic America, John's work has engaged a wide variety of subjects from visual culture and materiality to Islam and Hinduism. John's undergraduate thesis at Lawrence University focused on way two Muslim comic book series addressed Islamophobia, fulfilling a major in religious studies and film studies.

At Boston University, John's work has been geared somewhat towards late antiquity, especially relics, reliquaries, and processions. John's current research is focused on understanding colonial and early republic American religion through the lens of materiality. Especially interested in the syncretic relationships between indigeneity and Christianity, as well as interactions of Islam within enslaved populations and the dominant Christianity throughout the land. John lives in Salem, MA. In addition to this work, John currently serves as Vice-Moderator on the Unitarian Universalist Association Board of Trustees.

## **Avery (Pete) Guest**

*Evolving Nature of Universalist Theology, Saturday 10:00 am*

I am working on an empirical monograph that analyzes the rise and decline of the Universalists, with specific empirical analysis of why they grew and why they declined.

## **Rev. Andrea Johnson**

*The Audacity to Imagine Sisyphus Happy, Saturday 11:00 am*


Rev. Andrea Johnson is a Unitarian Universalist minister who is currently pursuing her Doctor of Ministry degree at United Theological Seminary in St. Paul, MN. Her dissertation responds to the UUA's WTC report's call to "articulate a theology of liberation, experimentation, and innovation grounded in our Unitarian Universalist principles and sources of inspiration," aimed at dismantling white supremacy culture within Unitarian Universalism and our wider communities. Her dissertation offers 4 theological trajectories to ground our racial justice work: The personalism of Martin Luther King Jr., Empirical Process Theology (Bernard Loomer), African American Naturalistic Humanism (Anthony Pinn, William Hart, and Carol Wayne White) and Liberation Theology (Sharon Welch, William R. Jones, and Sallie McFague).

She is deeply committed to racial justice work and serves her home congregation, First Universalist Church, in a variety of roles. Andrea also serves on the Board of Trustees for United Seminary where she is co-chairing the Capital Campaign and funded an endowed chair in World Religions and Intercultural Studies. When she is not reading profound theology, she enjoys cooking, hiking, and spending time with her family and friends.

## **Yvonne C. Garrett, PhD**

*Widening the Pedagogy of the UU Seminary, Saturday 2:00 pm*

Yvonne C. Garrett is a current M.Div. student at Starr King School for the Ministry where she is a newly elected Student Body member of the Curriculum Committee. A lifelong UU (Humanist & lapsed Pagan), she is a recent member of the Community Church of New



York where she serves on the Church Council. She holds a Ph.D. in History & Culture (Drew), an MA in Humanities & Social Thought (NYU), an MA in Irish Studies (NYU), an MLIS-Archives (Palmer-LIU), an MFA-Fiction (The New School), and a Certificate in Online Learning Pedagogies (Parsons). She works full-time at The New School where she is also a Shop Steward for the 1205 Teamsters. Senior Fiction Editor at Black Lawrence Press, she also edits the weekly publishing newsletter "Sapling." Her writing has been published in a wide array of journals & magazines. In addition to her labor activism, she is a feminist, animal rights advocate, and community activist. Dr. Garrett worked in the music industry for many years where she represented artists as diverse as Neil Young, Public Enemy, Green Day, and L7. Originally from Olympia, WA, she has lived on the Lower East Side of NYC for several years.

### **Elizabeth Foster**

*Owning Our Past: Developing a Curriculum, Saturday 3:00 pm*

Elizabeth Foster is a graduate of the Boston University School of Theology, the current Ministerial Intern at First Parish Canton Unitarian Universalist, and a former DRE. She received Springboard Funding to conduct archival research at the Wellcome Library in London resulting in a directed study and GA workshop on the history and theological implications of Unitarian and Universalist involvement in the eugenics movement in the early 1900s. She is a member of the Executive Board of EqUual Access and serves as Chair of the Rider's Transit Access Group for the Boston MBTA. She was an organizer for the graduate conference "Accessing the Divine: Disability, Embodiment, and Claiming Joyous Futures," and frequently presents on topics related to disability justice. She lives in Boston with her cat, Jade.

### **Heidi Fiore**

*Owning Our Past: Developing a Curriculum, Saturday 3:00 pm*

Heidi Fiore is a graduate of the Boston University School of Theology, and is currently studying Restorative Justice at Suffolk University. She is trained in circle process, mediation, parliamentary procedure, and dialogue facilitation. She has worked with the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church facilitating circles and assisting in parliamentary discussions. She also has worked with dialogue training organizations Essential Partners and Robert Stains, LLC, since Fall of 2020.

### **Stephanie May**

*Is Congregational Polity Untouchable?, Saturday 4:00 pm*

The Rev. Stephanie May, ThD, has explored questions about life and religion throughout her life. She earned a degree in philosophy from Wheaton College (IL), a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary, and a Doctorate in Theology from Harvard Divinity School. Her doctoral work focused on the intersection of religion and women, gender and sexuality studies. Prior to entering the ministry she served as a teaching fellow at Harvard College and Harvard Divinity School, and a Lecturer at both Brandeis and Boston College. She also served as the interim UU chaplain at Wellesley College and as a summer chaplain at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital. A proud native of Michigan, she and her family currently live in Lincoln.



## **Dr. Elías Ortega**

*Is Congregational Polity Untouchable?, Saturday 4:00 pm*

Dr. Elias Ortega is the president of Meadville Lombard Theological School. He is an interdisciplinary scholar who received his M.Div. and Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. He also holds a B.A. in Communications Arts & Sciences and Philosophy and Religion from Calvin College.

Prior to coming to MLTS, Dr. Ortega served as Associate Professor of Social Theory and Religious Ethics at Drew University Theological School. His primary teaching and research areas are Sociology of Religion, Religious Ethics, Cultural Sociology, Social Movements, Critical Theory, Africana Studies, Latinx Cultural Studies.

In recent years, his denominational service included serving as a member of the UUA's Commission on Institutional Change (2017-2020) and co-authoring the Commission's report, *Widening the Circle of Concern*, and a term in the Religious Education Credentialing Committee (2016-2018). From 2015 to 2017, he served as a mentor in UUA's Growing Racial Justice initiative, and during that same period was the Co-Chair of the UU Legislative Ministry of New Jersey's Dismantling Racism Group. He has been a volunteer, provided strategic planning, and program support to various community organizations including the Student Outreach and Academic Reinforcement Program at Bethel AME in Morristown, NJ; New Jersey Parent Caucus, a mental health and juvenile justice advocacy group; and the Sila Maria Calderon Foundation.

## **Rev. Mr. Barb Greve**

*Is Congregational Polity Untouchable?, Saturday 4:00 pm*

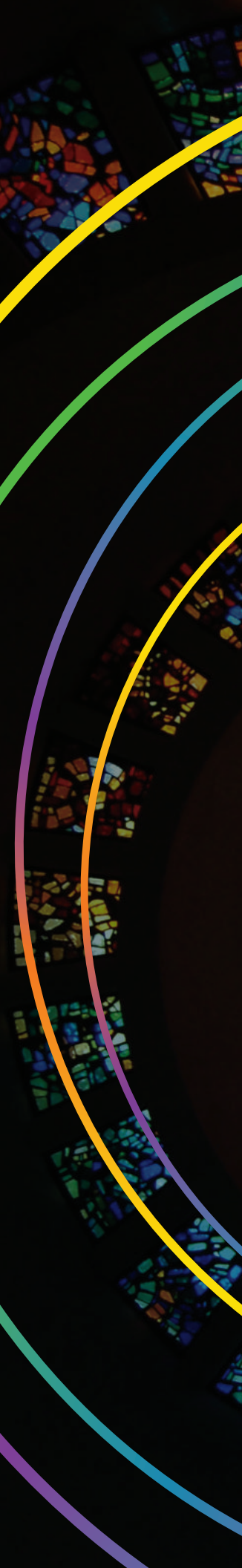
Rev. Mr. Barb Greve serves as a hospice chaplain with Vitas Healthcare. From August 2017– June 2020 he served as Co-Moderator to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations and currently serves on the boards of Meadville Lombard Theological School and the Unitarian Universalist Studies Network. In addition to having served as an intentional interim/consulting director of lifespan religious education to multiple Unitarian Universalist congregations for over a decade, Barb has served on the Faculty of The Chaplaincy Institute (teaching Prophetic Voice & Social Transformation), as the Chair of the Starr King School for the Ministry's Board of Trustees, is a founding member and served on the Steering Committee of Transgender Religious professional Unitarian Universalists Together (TRUUsT), and is a founding member and served on the Steering Committee of the Guild of Interim Religious Educators.

## **Rev. Dr. Meg Richardson**

*Is Congregational Polity Untouchable?, Saturday 4:00 pm*

The Rev. Dr. Meg Richardson joined the faculty of Starr King in 2014 as Visiting Assistant Professor of Unitarian Universalist History. She has studied our living tradition in both the United States and Great Britain, and was mentored by scholars including Conrad Wright, James Luther Adams, and Sheridan Gilley. In addition to serving as the Interim Dean of the Faculty in Spring 2023, Dr. Richardson teaches UU History and Polity.

Dr. Richardson was raised Unitarian Universalist in the Wellesley Hills congregation, where she was a product of UU religious education and a member of LRY. Her love of languages led to a BA in Linguistics from the University of Chicago and while there she discovered her passion was for meaning, not grammar. The search for meaning and its



historical context led her to Harvard Divinity School and on to England: to Manchester College Oxford and Durham University. In England she studied 19th century British Nonconformism for a PhD in Theology and Church History and explored the life and work of Francis William Newman, the Unitarian brother of Saint John Henry Newman.

### **Arliss Ungar**

*When Unitarians Faced a New Age, Saturday 5:00 pm*

Arliss Ungar is a lay historian of 19th and 20th Century Unitarianism in the United States. She has an honorary doctorate from Starr King School for the Ministry where for many years she was the volunteer Chair of the Balázs Committee which each year brought an international Unitarian minister, almost always from Transylvania, to study at the School. She is the author of *With Vision and Courage: Starr King School for the Ministry, The History of its First 100 Years. 1904-2004*. Arliss and Arthur, her husband for over 65 years, live in Vancouver, Washington where she enjoys gardening and walking when it is not raining.

### **Rev. Dr. Jay Atkinson**

*Worship Leader, Sunday 9:00 am*

Jay Atkinson retired in 2011 from 32 years in Unitarian Universalist parish ministry, while teaching occasionally on the adjunct faculties of Meadville Lombard and Starr King. He is now a research scholar at Starr King, with interests in UU history, process theology, and social/economic justice.

### **Amanda Thomas**

*Worship Music Director, Sunday 9:00 am*

Amanda Thomas is a retired UU music director and a member of Unity Temple Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Oak Park, Illinois. She has been an active UU for 22 years, and has served on the Board of Trustees for the Association of UU Music Ministries and on the UUA's Music Leadership Certification Committee. Amanda is now serving as a Troubadour and offering services as a freelance soloist, music/choir consultant, choral conductor, workshop facilitator, worship leader, vocal instructor and respite music director. Amanda believes we can each find our own joy through music, and as UU's each travel their own path to a free and responsible search for truth and meaning, Amanda enjoys the monumental task of creating ways to inspire and feed the souls of all individuals through music.

# Widening the Circle of UU STUDIES WORSHIP

Sunday, March 26, 2023 9:00 am

## Call to Worship

**Singing** *When We Are Gathered* (SLT #359)

When we are gathered for a time of worship and of song,  
let none forget the joys and griefs that mark each path of life,  
and thus we reach for those who love, we reach for those who love.

For youth shall pass and time is wise, and countless seasons turn,  
so day by day our years increase until at last by life released  
our spirits shine like stars, our spirits shine like stars.

## Lighting of the Chalice

**Song** *I, Too* (music: Margaret Bonds; text: Langston Hughes) Amanda Thomas

**Prayer and Meditation** Rev. Patrice Curtis

**Song** *Ombra mai fu* (From *Serse*, G. F. Handel) Amanda Thomas  
Ombra mai fu di vegetabile, (Never was the shade of leaves,  
cara ed amabile, soave più. so dear and lovely, or more gentle.)

## Reading

**Singing** *Fuente de Amor / Spirit of Life* (VdC #31/SLT #123)

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



**Homily**    *Moral Beauty and the Shape of Justice*    Rev. Dr. Jay Atkinson

**Singing**    *We Are Building a New Way* (SH #1017)

We are building a new way. We are building a new way.  
We are building a new way, feeling stronger ev'ry day.  
We are building a new way.

We are working to be free. We are working to be free.  
We are working to be free of hate and greed and jealousy.  
We are working to be free.

We can feed our every need. We can feed our ev'ry need.  
We can feed our ev'ry need; start with love, that is the seed.  
We can feed our every need.

Peace and freedom is our cry. Peace and freedom is our cry.  
Peace and freedom is our cry; without these this world will die.  
Peace and freedom is our cry.

**Benediction**

*Thanks to our musicians for the morning:  
Amanda Thomas, mezzo soprano  
Carl Kennedy, pianist*