

Third International Women's Convocation
Asilomar Conference Center, Monterey Peninsula, CA
February 16-19, 2017

Workshops on Friday, February 17, 2017

Building Collective Power of Older Women

Women who were radicalized 30 or 40 or 50 years ago and have lived long lives steeped in feminism, are now retiring from jobs, completing the intensive time of child-rearing, and are ready to offer their gifts to the wider world. We have superpowers, including invisibility and the willingness to offend, which accumulate with age. How do we channel these into collective resistance to sexism? Where do we find our own strength reflected and amplified, and how do we build a movement now? Offered by Revs. Meg Riley and Alison Miller, USA. Alison is a Gen-X woman who will talk about her experience growing up with feminist role models all around.

Rev. Meg Riley is Senior Minister at the Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF). Before coming to the CLF, she served the UUA in a variety of positions including directing the Advocacy and Witness Programs, Washington Office for Advocacy, Office of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Transgender Concerns, and Youth Office. She is the founding director of the Standing on the Side of Love campaign.

Deep Time; Mother Earth, and a Geologic Sense of Place

Learn about the geologic history of coastal California: how the landscape came to be and how scientists are using it to study long-term processes. Looking deep into geologic time, we will also weave a spiritual appreciation for mother earth and her awe-inspiring natural history. We will take a walk up the beach and experience the weathering granite of Spanish Bay. Please dress appropriately; bring a rain coat if possible. Offered by Marjorie (Jorie) Schulz, USA.

Marjorie is a geologist at the US Geological Survey, where she currently studies soil development and organic matter stabilization. Jorie is the worship committee chair of the UU Fellowship of Redwood City, CA.

Empowering African Girls through Education

Explore the importance of girls' education in the life of individual girls and in the development of nations. Hear the stories of dreams of female students in Ethiopia and Burundi and the challenges they face. Discover the impact of partnerships to support and sustain girls' empowerment and what role you can play. Offered by Helen Boxwill, USA.

Helen Boxwill, formerly a teacher and school principal, has been working for social and racial justice through her UU Fellowship of Huntington in New York. She is executive director of h2 Empower, dedicated to improving education and sustainable development in Ethiopia and Burundi.

Evolution and Future of UU Feminism

IWC is the descendant of over 200 years of UU women's activism. We will take a fast trip through this herstory, focusing on the past 40 years, since the UUA Women & Religion Resolution, and the origins of IWC

10 years ago. Now that UU feminism is global, what do we envision as possible? Offered by Rev. Dr. Dorothy Emerson and Gretchen Ohmann, USA.

Dorothy Emerson is the former co-coordinator of UU Women & Religion and founder of the UU Women's Heritage Society. Gretchen Ohmann is a web designer and current coordinator of UU Women & Religion.

Forced Migration: Women and Girls. How Should We Respond?

Women and girls are forced to leave their homes with or without their families due to war, climate change, oppression, and other causes. The numbers increase as recipient communities are becoming ever less welcoming. In fleeing violence and death, women and girls are vulnerable to violence at every turn of the migrant's road. What can we do to help? Offered by Bruce Knotts with Latifa Woodhouse, Colin Woodhouse, and Ann Lundberg, USA.

Bruce Knotts was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ethiopia and worked for Raytheon in Saudi Arabia and for the World Bank in Somalia before joining the Department of State in 1984. Director of the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office (UU-UNO) since 2008, he established faith-based advocacy for sexual orientation/gender identity human rights at the United Nations and continues to advocate for the rights of women, indigenous peoples, and sustainable development.

Interplay

InterPlay is an active, creative approach to honoring the human desires for individual wholeness and connection. Participants are led through a series of incremental forms based on simple, but powerful ideas and practices, using movement, words, stillness, and storytelling to access our individual body wisdom, while interacting gently and playfully with others. Offered by Mary Kay Hamilton, USA.

Mary Kay Hamilton is a retired women's therapist and an accredited InterPlay leader. With degrees in psychology and counseling, she has worked in non-profit management and women's studies. She currently leads InterPlay classes at YWCA of Monterey County where she is a member of the board.

Learning from the Transylvanian Leadership School – Learning Leadership and Resilience

In this interactive workshop for self-discovery, we will use the experiential, well-tryed method of learning by doing. We will seek answers to questions like: Who am I? Do I need to be a leader? Do I need the reflection of a mirror? Is my resilience strong enough in a critical situation? Offered by Gizella Nagy, Romania, and Tina Huesing, Ph.D., New Zealand. Gizella was the coordinator of the five-module leadership school for Transylvanian Unitarian women. Tina was a presenter at two of those modules.

Moving into Discomfort: Race, Class, and Gender in the time of Black Lives Matter

How does discomfort help us create a more just and sustainable world? Join as we delve into the complexities of gender, race, and class in the framework of Black Liberation. Offered by Amanda Weatherspoon, USA.

Amanda Weatherspoon is a ministerial candidate with a passion for community ministry with a focus on black liberation, womanist theology, and international human rights ministry. She has worked with two Bay Area UU congregations, the Church of the Larger Fellowship, and with Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA).

OWL Comes to the Philippines

This workshop will tell the story of the collaboration between the UU Church of the Philippines, the UU Partner Church Council, and the UUA that brought an adaptation of Our Whole Lives (a lifespan sexuality curriculum) to the Philippines. How did the collaboration happen, and what will be its long-term impact? Offered by Rev. Roger Bertschausen, USA, with Rosela Piera, Philippines, and Allison Hess, USA.

Rev. Roger Bertschausen has served as the Executive Director of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council since July 2016. Previously he served as the Senior Minister of the Fox Valley UU Fellowship in Appleton, Wisconsin, USA. He lives in St. Louis, Missouri, USA—the new headquarters of the UUPCC.

Transgenerational Pattern: The Feminine Approach

Where are women feeling well in families and groups? What strategies do we already use and where can we improve during these difficult times? Women are not at the right place if they are not treated well. Let's define ourselves, the place(s) where we feel right before others try to define us. Welcome to this journey and search! Offered by Rev. Mária Zsuzsanna Bartha with Mária Róka, Hungary.

Rev. Mária Zsuzsanna Bartha is a Unitarian minister serving in Kocsord, Hungary and for the Unitarian diaspora congregations in Nyíregyháza and Namény (Hungary) as well as Nagykároly (Romania). She is also a family therapist, working with girls and women to change their attitudes and mindset about themselves.

Visioning a Just World

A brief meditation accompanied by drum and/or flute and spoken word will create an atmosphere for vision and creativity. Each participant will be provided with cardboard to create their own vision board; materials will include oil pastels and collage. Upon completion, participants are invited to journal about their vision if they choose, and discuss the created works. We will meet outdoors to take advantage of the beautiful surroundings. Please bring a jacket and perhaps a rain coat. Offered by Roberta Wentzel-Walter with assistance from Pat Egenberger, USA.

Roberta Wentzel-Walter is a Board-Certified Art Therapist (ATR-BC) working with children and adults. She is a founding member of Arts Unity Movement, (AUM) a non-profit organization focused on utilizing healing, performing, and expressive arts to create change in the world by facilitating change in individuals. AUM is the home of the NewGround Theatre Dance Company, the South Bay Area's professional contemporary dance company.

Women's Movements and Antidogmatic Religion in Poland - the Same Goals, the Same Obstacles

A general overview of Poland and its traditions in Unitarianism and women's rights. Surprisingly, there are many similarities between these movements: both require women's activities and cooperation. Both have a common opponent in the patriarchal backward tradition. The workshop will explore Polish struggles for religious freedom and women's rights. Information for a study tour to Poland will also be provided. Offered by Justyna Borusinska, Poland.

Justyna Borusinska is reactivating UUism in Poland. She is interested in the Polish Brethren's heritage especially as it relates to women, and has participated in women's and pro-democracy demonstrations in Poland.

Workshops on Saturday, February 18, 2017

Bringing the World into Your UU Congregation

Inspiring new chapters of community-building and confronting injustice are being added every day to the story of our global faith. Come to hear stories and activities for congregations seeking ways to “show up” in this work with partners in faith and justice worldwide. Offered by Allison Hess, and Bruce Knotts, USA

Allison Hess is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist from Thousand Oaks, CA, currently based in New York City. Allison serves as International Engagement Associate at the UUA where she connects UU congregations to our global faith, and provides resources and opportunities to get involved with global action for justice and peace.

Campaign to Eliminate Violence against Women and Girls

Raising awareness of and campaigning to eliminate violence against women and girls is a big challenge for every woman, especially in developing and underdeveloped countries. Voice your concerns! Speak out! Silence is consent! Inspire each other! Learn about the campaign of the Unitarian women in the Khasi Hills. Offered by Elgiva Dora Shullai, India. Elgiva is the coordinator for the leadership development program for women in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. In 2014, she organized the launch of a White Ribbon campaign to eliminate violence against women and children in Unitarian communities in North East India.

Developing a Deep Understanding of the Seven UU Principles

Gain a deep understanding of the seven Unitarian Universalist Principles: what they mean to you and how they relate to you in terms of the theme of this conference. In groups, you will design graphic posters of each principle and explain them to your colleagues. Offered by Rev. Dr. Robin Finnan-Jones. We will meet in the beautiful surroundings of Asilomar. Bring a warm jacket and perhaps a rain coat.

Robin Finnan-Jones, Ed.D., is adjunct faculty for education specialties at St. John’s University School of Education. She is a member of the UU Congregation of Shelter Rock, Manhasset, NY.

Gender Revolution

Globally, the notion of gender as binary - male or female - has opened up to a more complex, nuanced understanding. Not only are there transgender people, who transition in various ways from male to female and female to male, but there are many other ways in which people identify their genders, including genderqueer, genderfluid, and gender-nonconforming. Pronouns written on nametags have become commonplace at universities and progressive gatherings. How does this impact justice, health, and the understanding of gender? How does a broader understanding of gender identity affect conversations with younger people about women's rights? Offered by Rev. Meg Riley and Jie Wronski-Riley, USA.

Leadership and Organizing for Today: Lessons from Arizona and the Border for this New America

In the aftermath of the U.S. presidential election, resistance, resiliency, and movement building have become critical. On election night, there were important figures who lost. What lessons can we learn? What leadership must women bring to forge justice in this new climate? Offered by Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, USA, Candidate for UUA President.

Living in Community - Lessons from Nigeria

During her 24 years in Nigeria, Catherine learned to appreciate the strong sense of community that pervades that society. She will describe how the sense of community and belonging is developed and reinforced with examples from Igbo society, her own family, and from Nigerian literature. Offered by Catherine Onyemelukwe, USA.

Catherine started her career as a Peace Corps volunteer in Lagos, Nigeria. During her second year as a volunteer, she met Clement, her future Nigerian husband. After 24 years in Nigeria, she returned to the U.S. Her memoir *Nigeria Revisited: My Life and Loves Abroad* was published in 2014 by Peace Corps Writers.

Shifting the Lens: Viewing Race through Poetry and Movement

Often when we dialog about RACE, we erase the physicality of our own lived experience. This workshop will provide participants an alternative way of connecting, discussing, and then crossing the political, social, and ideological boundaries of our Race-Centric society. We will use words, music, and movement to express and share our unique racial experiences. Offered by Revs. Laurie Stuart and Carol Thomas Cissel.

Rev. Carol Thomas Cissel has experienced the power of movement, connection, and human sustainability at Interplay, and has workshop experience in diversity, race relations, and the creation of multi-cultural congregations. Rev. Laurie Stuart is a creative artist who enjoys blending the spoken word with music, movement, and artistic expression.

The Economics of Women's Priorities

Money and economic power are historically seen as a single entity, rarely viewed with an understanding of the profound differences gender can bring. How is a "woman's dollar" different and what is the effect of ignoring how women use money and economic power? We'll discuss the "woman's dollar," reflecting on cases from Jeanne's own experiences of economic disruption and intervention, through the lens of a growing body of economic analysis on women. Offered by Rev. Jeanne M. Pupke, Candidate for UUA President.

Think Locally, Act Globally - Leveraging Local Ties for Global Impact

Congregations can leverage unique local ties that create significant opportunities for global learning, engagement, and impact, as well as counter narratives rooted in fear and xenophobia. In this workshop, we will open pathways to deepen and grow our international commitments both to our faith and to the work of justice. Offered by Rev. Alison Miller, Candidate for UUA President.

Women & Religion – Panel Discussion

What roles do women have in our faith communities and cultures? Where are the commonalities and the differences in our experiences? We will discuss the roles of women and the feminine divine from our respective experiences in different cultures. Participants: Olga Flores from Bolivia, Rev. Zsuzsanna Bartha from Hungary, Rev. Dr. Karolina Sofia Pavala from the Czech Republic, Rev. Júlia Jobbágy from Romania, and Rev. Tet Gallardo from the Philippines. Offered by Rev. Sara Ascher.

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 16 years serving Unitarian Universalist congregations in the United States. She now works with the UU global faith more directly as the Executive Director of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU).

Zimbabwe Artists Project: A Model of Cultural Exchange and Community Connection

The Zimbabwe Artists Project (ZAP) has worked in collaboration with a rural community of women artists for nearly two decades. Learn from ZAP's model how to cultivate support for micro-enterprise initiatives and UU service projects that build upon deep, interpersonal bonds with one small community to expand to nearly 100 UU congregations. Come to our booth in the exhibit hall for this workshop. Offered by Elissa Adair and Nicole Perkins.

Elissa Schuler Adair, Ph.D., has volunteered with the Zimbabwe Artists Project and First Unitarian Portland's Africa Connections since 2013. She is a raised UU who promotes social justice, serving as an Our Whole Lives (OWL) teacher, youth facilitator, and lay preacher. Elissa is Director of Communications and Outreach for Donate Life Northwest, whose mission is to save lives and improve health through the promotion of organ, eye, and tissue donation. Co-presenter Nicole Perkins has been involved with the Zimbabwe Artists Project since 2012, serving as the program coordinator, manager, and most recently as a board member. She is dedicated to raising awareness and building connection through storytelling, art, and social activism.