

# Multi-racial Congregations and Faith Formation

Meadville Lombard Theological School, Chicago

Sunday, October 22 to Friday, October 27, 2017

Tulsa, Oklahoma

[Note: students must arrive in Tulsa on Saturday, October 21 for an 8:30am start on Sunday morning]

## Instructors:

Mark A. Hicks, Ed.D.

Angus MacLean Professor of Religious Education

Director, The Fahs Collaborative Laboratory for Faith Formation

[mhicks@meadville.edu](mailto:mhicks@meadville.edu)

Rev. Ashley Horan, M.Div; MLTS '12

Learning Coordinator, The Fahs Collaborative

Executive Director, The Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance

## Course Description

Much of the discussion in liberal religion on matters of race and cultural difference tends to focus on critique and analysis. While that's an important place to begin, rarely do we focus on educational and spiritual practices that attend to healing the wounds of cultural and spiritual oppression. This class will explicitly explore how the process and practice of faith formation promotes the ongoing development of multi-racial, multicultural and theologically diverse congregations and communities.

***Multi-racial Congregations as Faith Formation*** will use the lens of race and ethnicity to explore: a) the history and impact of race/ethnicity and language on congregational life; b) innovative practices that attune themselves to individual and group identity development; c) the intersection of "race" and religious education, pastoral care, religious traditions and music; and finally d) specific practices and competencies employed by professional staff and lay leadership in building a faith-filled Beloved Community.

Two Unitarian Universalist congregations in Tulsa, Oklahoma – All Souls, Unitarian and The Church of the Restoration – will make their congregations available as a text for our learning. Each congregation will share how they have engaged their highly-charged racial setting, aspiring to create a true community of beloveds while navigating the challenges and failures that threaten to reinforce walls of division. Students will meet and interact with members of the professional staff and lay leaders who will share the

dynamics of their journey. In addition, we will use the historical context of the City of Tulsa as a laboratory for exploring a religious response to systematic racial wounds.

Students MUST engage with readings, digital and social media prior to arriving on site in Tulsa in order to understand what will be witnessed. Graduate level academic credit is available for this class. The class is limited to 30 persons, which includes lay leadership associated with the Fahs Collaborative's *Beloved Conversations on Race and Ethnicity*. Registration is available for religious professionals and 3-person teams from congregations. Religious Professionals should see the MLTS website for pricing and registration details and deadlines.

#### Housing, Transportation and Meals

Meadville Lombard has reserved a block of rooms at the Holiday Inn-Downtown for a very affordable rate (roughly \$90 per room per night). We will provide transportation between the hotel and churches. The hotel provides a free shuttle from the airport. The hotel provides breakfast daily and WiFi is free. The hotel has an indoor swimming pool. Lunch (including vegetarian/vegan/gluten-free options) will be at the church at your own cost (about \$10 per day) and dinner will be on-your-own. The hotel is located in a robust downtown neighborhood with a variety of options for food and entertainment.

#### Additional Fees

All Souls Church will be providing use of their church bus to shuttle us to and from the hotel. We will ask for a small contribution from the class to help defray fuel cost and recognize the volunteer drivers, as well as a token of appreciation for those who tour us around the city.

#### Schedule for the Week

**Students should be on site in Tulsa by Saturday evening**, as we will attend worship all day on Sunday, beginning at 9 am and ending with a panel discussions. The class will dine together on Sunday evening as an act of community. Class sessions will be from 9 am – 4:30, Monday-Thursday, and 9am to Noon on Friday. There will be optional opportunities to engage with evening worship and programming.

#### **Pre-Course Assignment**

1. Prior to arriving in Tulsa, spend time on the church websites of All Souls Unitarian, Tulsa, and, The Church of the Restoration (UU). Read about programs, history, staffing, and activities that speak to congregational and civic life.
2. Using your Home Congregation (or Teaching Congregation) as a “text”, apply the Inventory for Emotional Intelligence and Diversity in Religious Life” as well as

“Racial Justice in UU Congregations”. As a “system,” how prepared is your congregation for sustaining a healthy multi-racial, multicultural and theologically diverse population? Apply the inventories to your congregation as well as to yourself to get a sense of your personal and your congregation’s competency. Write a one-page reflection about your outcomes, paying attention to what you (and your congregation) may need to learn more about and/or explore.

3. If you have not already done so, complete the worksheet for “The Knowing Project” which asks you to frame how your social location shapes your worldview (see Populi for the project description and worksheet).

### **Bring to Tulsa**

1. Personal experience with all the texts for the course.
2. A rested spirit, ready to engage
3. Spiritual resources to support a challenging week of learning and engagement (poetry, meditations, music, etc.). Be ready to share your resources with others in the class.
4. A copy of a photograph of a family elder who was alive in the 1920s or 1930s. You will be physically manipulating the image, so bringing a copy – not an original – is useful.
5. Disposition for supporting your own learning, and that of your colleagues.

### **Post-Class Assignment**

Expressions of racism and other forms of oppression can push people to the edge of what they know and believe about themselves, what/who they can depend upon in the course of living their lives, and their sense of hopefulness and possibility. Your task as a religious leader, is to understand that dynamic and lead people forward with an ethical sense of compassion that promotes cognitive growth, spiritual depth, and a commitment to justice. Your post class assignment will ask you to explore the role of leadership, create spiritual practices to support such work, and, finally, set goals for future development and growth. Details for this assignment will be provided during the intensive class week.

**All work for the class is Due on December 1, 2017**

## Anticipated Readings

[expect additional readings/resources to be assigned as appropriate]

### Required Readings/Recordings

Bordas, Juana. (2007). "Crafting a multicultural Leadership Model." In Salsa, Soul and Spirit: Leadership for a multicultural age. [PDF]

Campolo, Tony and Battle, Michael. (2005). The Church enslaved: A spirituality of racial reconciliation. Fortress Press. *[Note: while this text is written through a Christian lens and also overly focuses on the dynamics of Black-White racism, it nevertheless provides a solid exploration of the historical, social and political dynamics that should be explored. Read with an open sense of engagement and translation.]*

Rahnema, Mitra. (2017). Centering: Navigating race, authenticity, and power in ministry. Skinner House Books: Boston.

Read chapters "Othering and Belonging" by Darrick Jackson and Lila Cuervo's Response; B) "The Religious Educator of Color" by Aisha Hauser and Natalie Fenimore" and Sofia Betancourt's response.

### Books, essays, URLs

Carr, Pat. If we must die: A novel of Tulsa's 1921 Greenwood Riot.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi (May 21, 2014). The case for Reparations. The Atlantic Monthly. (<http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/05/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>)

Keyes, Allison (2016) A Long-Lost Manuscript Contains a Searing Eyewitness Account of the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921 (URL)

Hicks, Mark A. (2014). Spiritual Malpractice and the Struggle for Voice [PDF]

Hicks, Mark A. (2017). Teaching hearts and minds to open for Multicultural Change. In, Unitarian Universalists of Color: Stories of struggle, courage, love and faith (Y. Yamamoto, et al. Eds). [PDF]

James, Jacqui and Morrison-Reed, Mark. (2012). Voices from the Margins: An Anthology of Meditations. Skinner House. Choose 2-3 poems that reflect the joy and challenges of doing multi-racial ministry.

Intrator, Sam and Scribner, Megan. (2014). Teaching with Heart: Poetry that speaks to the courage to teach. As one who ministers, you will be called upon to lead your people in this work. Choose 2-3 poems that reflect the joy and challenges of doing multi-racial ministry.

King, Jr., Martin Luther (1958). "Pilgrimage to Non-Violence" In A testament of hope: The essential writing of MLK, JR. James Washington (ed.). [PDF]

Lavanhar, Marvin. (2013). Moments of the Spirit, 2008-2012 [PDF]

Leback, Tamara. (2014). Intercultural Diversity Inventory [PDF].

Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921. (2001). [PDF]

Tatum, Beverly. Why do all the Black kids sit together in the cafeteria (see chapters in Populi).

#### Podcasts/Film:

Film: "42". (2013). Directed by Brian Helgeland.

Race and Tulsa" on The State of the Re-union  
(<http://soundcloud.com/stateofthereunion/tulsa-ok>)

"Heretic". This American Life (<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/304/heretics>)

History of America in the 1920s. <https://youtu.be/G7-uIKyavxE>. This Smithsonian podcast contains one of the only remaining film clips of the Greenwood neighborhood before the racial massacre of 1921.

Hardies, Robert; Lanahar, Marlin; Muir, Frederick and Pawlek, Josh. Middle Church Conference, NYC. "White ministers leading multi-racial congregations." (2014). URL in Populi.

#### Social Media

Professors Hicks and Horan have created an optional "private" FaceBook page as an additional resource for this course. This format allows class members to easily communicate with each other, share digital resources, and comment on current events that surround the topic of race/ethnicity and faith formation. If you choose, please send

Dr. Hicks a “friend request” to his professional FaceBook page, MarkAngusMacLean Hicks”, and he will include you in this learning platform.

\*Additional readings, essays and media may be assigned as needed. Any such addition will be announced in the LiveText “Announcement” box.

**Additional Questions:**

- Dr. Hicks, [mhicks@meadville.edu](mailto:mhicks@meadville.edu). (course content, learning agenda, schedule)
- Faysha Crosbie (administrator, meals, hotel logistics; [fcrosbie@meadville.edu](mailto:fcrosbie@meadville.edu))
- Ms. Lynn Penn-Hargrove, [vpennhargrove@meadville.edu](mailto:vpennhargrove@meadville.edu), (registration and fees)