

# Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North

A Documentary by Katrina Browne

## Leader's Guide

Rev. Sofía Betancourt and Rabbi Julia Watts Belser

### Introduction

#### About the Film:

*Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North* chronicles the journey of nine descendants of the largest slave-trading family in the United States, as they probe the history of their New England ancestors and confront the contemporary legacies of slavery. The documentary follows producer/director Katrina Browne as she and her family travel to Rhode Island, Ghana, and Cuba to retrace the notorious Triangle Trade – and search for the hidden history of their family, the region, and the nation. Though contemporary Americans commonly hold the South solely responsible for slavery, *Traces of the Trade* exposes New England's deep involvement in the slave trade and shows how slavery was a cornerstone of the region's commercial life. Together with the DeWolf family descendants, viewers will have the opportunity to grapple with the history and modern consequences of slavery, the corrosive role of silence in contemporary conversations about race, issues of white privilege and guilt, and questions of response, repair, and reparations. For more information about the film, please visit <http://www.tracesofthetrade.org/>.

#### Overarching Format and Program Setup:

In order to provide congregations with a variety of opportunities to engage with *Traces of the Trade*, this study guide includes designs for three different programs:

**Film Night** – a single-session program for viewing and discussing the film in a congregational setting. For all group sizes. (2.5 hours)

**Single-Session Program** – an extended program for viewing and discussing the film, including issues of silence and complicity and the role of the church. Recommended for groups of 12 to 40 people. (4 hours)

**Discussion Series** – a four part discussion series for viewing the film, providing a spiritual container for grappling with the contemporary legacy of slavery, issues of silence and guilt, and questions of response, repair, and reparations. Recommended for groups of 12 to 20 people. (4 sessions, 2.5 hours each)

Be sure to read the entire Leader's Guide in order to determine which program is best for your congregation.

**For the Facilitators:**

This ground-breaking documentary offers Unitarian Universalists an important opportunity for confronting the lasting effects of slavery on our nation and grappling with the realities of white privilege. Through *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*, the nine descendants of the DeWolf family offer viewers a window into their personal struggles to integrate these truths into their lives and to wrestle with their responsibility for ethical action and spiritual witness. In particular, the film speaks powerfully to the spiritual challenge of what it means to be a white person dealing with race and privilege in the United States – as well as the necessity of learning how to be in authentic and accountable relationship with people of color in the struggle for racial justice.

This movie evokes deep emotion, conflict, and real opportunity for spiritual growth and change. We highly recommend that facilitators work in pairs, in order to have a partner while leading charged conversations about difficult topics. The program also makes extensive use of small groups and often requires one facilitator to prepare movie clips while the other leads discussion. It is vital that facilitators do some personal work in preparation for leading this program. We have included a list of recommended resources in the Appendix. As a starting point, we particularly encourage facilitators to read Paul Kivel's *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice* or Allan G. Johnson's *Privilege, Power, and Difference*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.

As a facilitator, it is important to be aware of how participants' identities impact the group dynamics. Make sure that people of color, Latina/o Hispanic and multiracial people are not put on the spot to explain issues of race and racism, respond to white participants' comments, or be put in the role of teachers. If you notice this happening, you might want to call explicit attention to this dynamic and remind the group that one of the consequences of racism is that people of color, Latina/o Hispanic and multiracial people are continually expected to serve as teachers for white people – often at great personal cost. Encourage participants to take responsibility for deepening their own learning about racism after the program through resources recommended in Appendix J.

Be aware of similar dynamics around issues of gender, class, age, disability, sexual and affectional orientation, and religious belief. Be particularly mindful of these dynamics when there is only one person from any of these identity groups in the room.

Some white participants may seek the validation or affirmation of participants of color, Latina/o Hispanic and multiracial people. Consider, for example, the scene in *Traces of the Trade* where Juanita is asked to respond to the family's grief and guilt about racism. If this occurs in your group, encourage participants to focus on their *own* feelings.

We have chosen to create a study guide that includes three different levels of engagement, in order to provide congregations with the flexibility to pick a program that meets their needs. If you use this study guide as part of a regular film night, consider asking participants if they are interested in continuing the conversation at the close of

the program. If so, you can continue with the other materials to create a multi-session series. You will see that the longer program options begin with what you have already done during the film night.

**Where to Find the Movie:**

For up to date information on the release of the film, *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*, please visit the Traces of the Trade website at <http://www.tracesofthetrade.org/buy-use-the-film>.

**Where to Find the Book:**

For information on the book, *Inheriting the Trade: A Northern Family Confronts Its Legacy as the Largest Slave-Trading Dynasty in U.S. History*, please visit the Beacon Press website at <http://www.beacon.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=2020>.

## Film Night

### 2.5 hours

#### Preparing for the Session:

To help you plan an accessible event, we have included "Tips to Keep in Mind When You Plan Accessible Workshops, Gatherings, Classes, Meetings, etc." from the Office of Accessibility Concerns of the Unitarian Universalist Association. (Appendix A)

Before the session, read Peggy McIntosh's article, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" (Appendix B) which you will be distributing as a take-away resource.

Make sure you have:

- a copy of *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*
- a DVD player
- a chalice, candle, and matches
- newsprint, markers, and tape
- copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* hymnal
- a chime – for regathering the group (optional)

Photocopy the following handouts for the group:

- Kimberly French, "Bitter Harvest: Slavery Isn't History – And We're Reaping Its Fruit." *UU World*. November/December 2004. (Appendix C)
- Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." (Appendix B)

#### Opening: (5 minutes)

Welcome the participants, introduce yourselves as facilitators, and thank them for coming. Remind the group that the film will likely provoke a wide range of emotional responses. Be attentive to creating a safe environment for all participants. Remember that there may be people in the room who are descended from the DeWolf family or who share a similar family history.

Light the chalice with the following chalice lighting or another of your choosing:

We light this chalice to celebrate the inherent worth and dignity of every person; to reaffirm the historic pledge of liberal religion to seek that justice which transcends mere legality and moves toward the resolution of a true equality; and to share that love which is ultimately beyond even our cherished reason, that love which unites us.

Rev. Steve Stock

**Brainstorm:** (5 minutes)

*Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North* challenges the conventional story of the North as the region of abolitionists and the South as the region responsible for slavery. Before viewing the film, ask the group to brainstorm on the following question:

What are some of the images and phrases that you were taught about the North's role in slavery? *Write responses on newsprint.*

**Facilitator's Note:** If participants are hesitant to share, remind them to focus on things they were *taught* rather than what they personally believe.

**View the Film:** (85 minutes)

Once you have collected responses from the group, show the film.

**Break:** (5 minutes)

**Responding to the Film in Pairs:** (10 minutes)

Invite participants to share their emotional responses to the film with a partner. Sound the chime at the halfway point so that each person gets a chance to speak.

**Large Group Discussion:** (30 minutes)

Regather into the large group. If your group is larger than 15, consider splitting into two groups with one facilitator per group to allow more time for people to talk. As a facilitator, it is your role to ensure that people have equal chance to speak. Part way through the conversation, you may want to ask for comments from those who have not yet had a chance to speak.

1. What impact did the DeWolf's journey have on your understanding of white privilege?
2. What was the changing role of guilt in the family's understandings of personal responsibility?
3. What impact does our collective tendency to valorize the North and demonize the South have on race relations today?

**Distribute Continuing Education Handouts:**

As the session comes to a close, acknowledge that the discussion today is but a beginning. Encourage people to find ways to continue their learning and pursue these conversations. Offer these articles as take-away resources for further reflection:

- Kimberly French, "Bitter Harvest: Slavery Isn't History – And We're Reaping Its Fruit." *UU World*. November/December 2004. (Appendix C)  
Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." (Appendix B)

**Closing:** (10 minutes)

Do not skip this section. It is vital to do the Closing so that the program does not end on issues of guilt.

**Extinguishing the Chalice**

My commitment to racial justice is both on behalf of the other – my neighbor, whose well-being I desire – and for myself, to whom the gift of life has been given but not yet fully claimed. I struggle neither as a benevolent act of social concern nor as a repentant act of shame and guilt, but as an act of desire for life, of passion for life, of insistence on life – fueled by both love for life and anger in face of the violence that divides human flesh.

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker

Excerpted from: Rebecca Parker, "Not Somewhere Else, But Here: The Struggle for Racial Justice as a Struggle to Inhabit my Country," in Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley and Nancy Palmer Jones, eds. *Soul Work: Anti-Racist Theologies in Dialogue*. (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2003) : 184.

**Sing Together** *Singing the Living Tradition* #318 "We Would Be One"

Thank the group for participating and for their willingness to engage with these issues.

## Single Session Program

### 4 hours

#### Preparing for the Session:

To help you plan an accessible event, we have included "Tips to Keep in Mind When You Plan Accessible Workshops, Gatherings, Classes, Meetings, etc." from the Office of Accessibility Concerns of the Unitarian Universalist Association. (Appendix A)

Before the session, read Peggy McIntosh's article, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" (Appendix B) which you will be distributing as a take-away resource.

Make sure you have:

- a copy of *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*
- a DVD player
- a chalice, candle, and matches
- newsprint, markers, and tape
- copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* hymnal
- a chime – for regathering the group (optional)
- paper and pens for journaling

Photocopy the following handouts for the group:

- Kimberly French, "Bitter Harvest: Slavery Isn't History – And We're Reaping Its Fruit." *UU World*. November/December 2004. (Appendix C)
- Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." (Appendix B)

Be prepared to find the film clips with ease.

#### Opening: (5 minutes)

Welcome the participants, introduce yourselves as facilitators, and thank them for coming. Remind the group that the film will likely provoke a wide range of emotional responses. Be attentive to creating a safe environment for all participants. Remember that there may be people in the room who are descended from the DeWolf family or who share a similar family history.

Light the chalice with the following chalice lighting or another of your choosing:

We light this chalice to celebrate the inherent worth and dignity of every person; to reaffirm the historic pledge of liberal religion to seek that justice which transcends mere legality and moves toward the resolution of a true equality; and to share that love which is ultimately beyond even our cherished reason, that love which unites us.

Rev. Steve Stock

**Brainstorm:** (5 minutes)

*Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North* challenges the conventional story of the North as the region of abolitionists and the South as the region responsible for slavery. Before viewing the film, ask the group to brainstorm on the following question:

What are some of the images and phrases that you were taught about the North's role in slavery? *Write responses on newsprint.*

**Facilitator's Note:** If participants are hesitant to share, remind them to focus on things they were *taught* rather than what they personally believe.

**View the Film:** (85 minutes)

Once you have collected responses from the group, show the film.

**Break:** (5 minutes)

**Responding to the Film in Pairs:** (10 minutes)

Invite participants to share their emotional responses to the film with a partner. Sound the chime at the halfway point so that each person gets a chance to speak.

**Large Group Discussion:** (30 minutes)

Regather into the large group. If your group is larger than 15, consider splitting into two groups with one facilitator per group to allow more time for people to talk. As a facilitator, it is your role to ensure that people have equal chance to speak. Part way through the conversation, you may want to ask for comments from those who have not yet had a chance to speak.

1. What impact did the DeWolf's journey have on your understanding of white privilege?
2. What was the changing role of guilt in the family's understandings of personal responsibility?
3. What impact does our collective tendency to valorize the North and demonize the South have on race relations today?

**Break:** (10 minutes)



**Film Clip: The “No-Talk Rule”** (5 minutes)

Let the group know that you will be showing several film clips, in order to focus more deeply on particular issues.

The first film clip begins immediately after the first church scene in the movie. The family is sitting in a circle of chairs outside on a deck and the words Keila DePoorter are in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. The clip ends shortly after Keila's school field day 1948, when she asks, “What kind of crazy partnership do we have with silence?”

**Small Group Discussion** (15 minutes)

In this film clip, Keila asks, “What kind of crazy partnership do we have with silence?” Ask participants to gather in groups of four to discuss:

What issues of race are unspoken today in your families and/or in your congregations? What do we need to name, in order for these conversations to be possible?

**Break:** (10 minutes)

**Film Clip: “The Church on Top of the Dungeon”** (5 minutes)

This film clip begins with a boat crossing in front of a slave fort in Ghana, as Katrina Browne says, “I was shocked to find out there had been over 70 slave forts on the west African coast.” The clip ends with the pan to “The Door of No Return, Elmina Castle.”

**Small Group Discussion** (15 minutes)

This film clip speaks to the role of the Church in legitimizing and justifying slavery. Ask participants to gather in different groups of four to discuss:

As a religious person, how do you respond to the historical complicity of religion in the justification of slavery?

**Large Group Discussion** (25 minutes)

Gather participants back in the large group and invite them to share highlights from their discussion. Share with them the words of Rev. Dr. Marilyn Sewell, from *Unitarian Universalist Culture: The Present and the Promise*. (Fuller Press: Portland, 2006) pg. 28.

“What will our children and grandchildren say of us? Will they say, where was the church when the world came crashing down? How will history picture us – fighting between the humanists and those spiritually inclined? Pointing the finger at one another, as to who is racist and who is not? Having endless discussion groups in the basement, but taking little action?”

The costs of being passive, or spiritually arrogant, or divided, or unfocused are just too great. Let us leave our foolish ways, and rise to be the people we are called to be. The times demand it. We should ask no less of ourselves."

Ask participants to reflect together on the following question:

As a liberal religious tradition, how can we participate in the larger conversation about the lasting effects of slavery in the United States? What do the times demand of us as Unitarian Universalists?

### **Distribute Continuing Education Handouts:**

As the session comes to a close, acknowledge that the discussion today is but a beginning. Encourage people to find ways to continue their learning and pursue these conversations. Offer these articles as take-away resources for further reflection:

- Kimberly French, "Bitter Harvest: Slavery Isn't History – And We're Reaping Its Fruit." *UU World*. November/December 2004.
- Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack."

### **Closing:** (15 minutes)

After distributing the articles, thank the group for their participation and their willingness to take risks with one another.

### **Check Out**

Go around the circle, inviting participants to offer one sentence about how they're feeling and what they're leaving with. Remind people that it is okay to pass if they are not ready to share. At the end, go back and see if anyone who passed wishes to speak.

### **Extinguishing the Chalice**

My commitment to racial justice is both on behalf of the other – my neighbor, whose well-being I desire – and for myself, to whom the gift of life has been given but not yet fully claimed. I struggle neither as a benevolent act of social concern nor as a repentant act of shame and guilt, but as an act of desire for life, of passion for life, of insistence on life – fueled by both love for life and anger in face of the violence that divides human flesh.

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker

Excerpted from: Rebecca Parker, "Not Somewhere Else, But Here: The Struggle for Racial Justice as a Struggle to Inhabit my Country," in Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley and Nancy Palmer Jones, eds. *Soul Work: Anti-Racist Theologies in Dialogue*. (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2003) : 184.

**Sing Together:** *Singing the Living Tradition* #318 "We Would Be One"

## Discussion Series

### Session One 2.5 hours

#### Preparing for the Session:

To help you plan an accessible event, we have included “Tips to Keep in Mind When You Plan Accessible Workshops, Gatherings, Classes, Meetings, etc.” from the Office of Accessibility Concerns of the Unitarian Universalist Association. (Appendix A)

Before the session, read Peggy McIntosh's article, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” (Appendix B) which you will be distributing as a take-away resource.

Make sure you have:

- a copy of *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*
- a DVD player
- a chalice, candle, and matches
- newsprint, markers, and tape
- copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* hymnal
- a chime – for regathering the group (optional)

Photocopy the following handouts for the group:

- Kimberly French, “Bitter Harvest: Slavery Isn't History – And We're Reaping Its Fruit.” *UU World*. November/December 2004. (Appendix C)
- Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.” (Appendix B)

#### Opening: (5 minutes)

Welcome the participants, introduce yourselves as facilitators, and thank them for coming. Remind the group that the film will likely provoke a wide range of emotional responses. Be attentive to creating a safe environment for all participants. Remember that there may be people in the room who are descended from the DeWolf family or who share a similar family history.

Light the chalice with the following chalice lighting or another of your choosing:

We light this chalice to celebrate the inherent worth and dignity of every person; to reaffirm the historic pledge of liberal religion to seek that justice which transcends mere legality and moves toward the resolution of a true equality; and to share that love which is ultimately beyond even our cherished reason, that love which unites us.

Rev. Steve Stock

**Brainstorm:** (5 minutes)

*Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North* challenges the conventional story of the North as the region of abolitionists and the South as the region responsible for slavery. Before viewing the film, ask the group to brainstorm on the following question:

What are some of the images and phrases that you were taught about the North's role in slavery? *Write responses on newsprint.*

**Facilitator's Note:** If participants are hesitant to share, remind them to focus on things they were *taught* rather than what they personally believe.

**View the Film:** (85 minutes)

Once you have collected responses from the group, show the film.

**Break:** (5 minutes)**Responding to the Film in Pairs:** (10 minutes)

Invite participants to share their emotional responses to the film with a partner. Sound the chime at the halfway point so that each person gets a chance to speak.

**Large Group Discussion:** (30 minutes)

Regather into the large group. If your group is larger than 15, consider splitting into two groups with one facilitator per group to allow more time for people to talk. As a facilitator, it is your role to ensure that people have equal chance to speak. Part way through the conversation, you may want to ask for comments from those who have not yet had a chance to speak.

1. What impact did the DeWolf's journey have on your understanding of white privilege?
2. What was the changing role of guilt in the family's understandings of personal responsibility?
3. What impact does our collective tendency to valorize the North and demonize the South have on race relations today?

**Distribute Homework Handouts:**

Let participants know that the group will be discussing these articles during the next session:

- Kimberly French, "Bitter Harvest: Slavery Isn't History – And We're Reaping Its Fruit." *UU World*. November/December 2004. (Appendix C)

- Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack."  
(Appendix B)

**Closing:** (10 minutes)

Please do not skip this section. It is vital to do the Closing so that the session does not end on issues of guilt. After distributing the articles, thank the group for their participation and their willingness to take risks with one another.

**Extinguishing the Chalice**

My commitment to racial justice is both on behalf of the other – my neighbor, whose well-being I desire – and for myself, to whom the gift of life has been given but not yet fully claimed. I struggle neither as a benevolent act of social concern nor as a repentant act of shame and guilt, but as an act of desire for life, of passion for life, of insistence on life – fueled by both love for life and anger in face of the violence that divides human flesh.

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker

Excerpted from: Rebecca Parker, "Not Somewhere Else, But Here: The Struggle for Racial Justice as a Struggle to Inhabit my Country," in Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley and Nancy Palmer Jones, eds. *Soul Work: Anti-Racist Theologies in Dialogue*. (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2003) : 184.

**Sing Together** *Singing the Living Tradition* #318 "We Would Be One"

## Session Two

### 2.5 hours

#### Preparing for the Session:

Make sure you have:

- newsprint, tape, and markers
- chalice, candle, and matches
- paper and pens for journaling
- *Singing the Journey* hymnals
- chime (optional)
- a small basket or bowl
- The Journey of Guilt handouts (Appendix D)

Make several copies of "The Journey of Guilt" handouts, one for each 4 participants. Cut them apart so that a single family member's quotes appear on each strip. Place the strips in the basket or bowl. At the end of the session, participants will select a family member to work with in the next session.

Be prepared to find film clips with ease.

#### Introduction: (5 minutes)

Welcome participants back into the group, and light the chalice using the following words or another selection of your choosing:

#### **Chalice Lighting**

Divine spark from sacred dark  
 Symbol of our holy intent  
 Illuminate this hour.

Rev. Kathy Huff

**Group Go-Round:** Ask participants to share one word that describes where they are at, coming into session 2.

#### Covenant Process: (10 minutes)

When undertaking this work, it is important for groups to establish a covenant with one another about how they will work together and maintain a safe space. Invite participants into a brainstorming session. Reassure them that the list will be reviewed and adapted by the group before an agreement is made. Once the list is compiled, read it aloud and ask if any additions, clarifications, or removals are necessary. Afterwards, ask whether the group can agree to work according to these guidelines. *Make sure to save the newsprint with the group's covenant for future sessions.*

**Film Clip: The “No-Talk Rule”** (5 minutes)

Let the group know that we will be showing several film clips, in order to focus more deeply on particular issues.

The first film clip begins immediately after the first church scene in the movie. The family is sitting in a circle of chairs outside on a deck and the words Keila DePoorter are in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. The clip ends shortly after Keila's school field day 1948, when she asks, “What kind of crazy partnership do we have with silence?”

**Small Group Discussion** (15 minutes)

In this film clip, Keila asks, “What kind of crazy partnership do we have with silence?” Ask participants to gather in groups of four to discuss:

What issues of race are unspoken today in your families and/or in your congregations? What do we need to name, in order for these conversations to be possible?

**Film Clip: Around the Dinner Table** (5 minutes)

This film clip begins just as the family sits down to dinner, following the flight home from Cuba. It ends as Katrina says, “Some in the family do have other inherited wealth: railroad money, cotton money, coal, steel, and money or no money, we've stayed in the elite.”

**Journaling** (5 minutes)

Invite participants to journal about their responses to this film clip and the family's discussion of privilege. What other moments in the film were important for illuminating issues of white privilege? Why?

**Facilitator's Note:** If some participants would prefer not to journal or cannot do so due to a disability, encourage them to find a partner to share their reflections. They can also stay with that partner for the next exercise.

**White Privilege** (10 minutes)

Ask participants to find a partner in order to discuss Peggy McIntosh's article “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.” Encourage white people to partner with other white people. If possible, encourage people of color, Latino/a Hispanic, and multiracial people to partner with each other. If there is only one person of color, Latino/a Hispanic, or multiracial participant in the group, give them the option to either continue journaling or check-in with one of the facilitators.

**Facilitator's Note:** If a participant decides to check-in with you, you might ask them how the program is going for them and whether there are things you could do as a facilitator to make it easier for them to participate fully in

the group. If there is still time, ask the participant if they would like to share their responses to the family's dinner conversation.

In pairs, ask participants to share their reactions to Peggy McIntosh's article. How did McIntosh's assessment of privilege shape their responses to the family members' conversation?

**Break:** (15 minutes)

**Film Clip: "The Whole Town was Involved"** (5 minutes)

This clip occurs when the family is in Cuba, visiting the family plantation, just after the subtitles "Let's go! I'm ready to go." The clip begins with a close-up on Katrina's face, as she says, "These abandoned ruins made history so close somehow." The clip ends soon after, with Elizabeth's comment that ends "I buy stuff that's made by people that aren't getting paid what they're worth at all, all the time."

**Large Group Discussion** (25 minutes)

Slavery was a cornerstone of the United States economic system and a foundation for New England's commercial life. Even without direct involvement in slave trading, ordinary consumers helped fuel a slave-based economy and benefited from slave labor. During this clip, Elizabeth acknowledges the presence of slavery in our contemporary world.

Kimberly French's article "Bitter Harvest" shows slavery remains a pervasive part of our economic system. Ask participants to discuss the following questions:

1. How do you react to French's observation that we all continue to support and benefit from modern-day slavery?
2. What are the possibilities for ethical response and action around issues of contemporary slavery in your congregation?

**Film Clip: "The Church on Top of the Dungeon"** (5 minutes)

This film clip begins with a boat crossing in front of a slave fort in Ghana, as Katrina Browne says, "I was shocked to find out there had been over 70 slave forts on the west African coast." The clip ends with the pan to "The Door of No Return, Elmina Castle."

**Small Group Discussion** (15 minutes)

This film clip speaks to the role of the Church in legitimizing and justifying slavery. Ask participants to gather in different groups of four to discuss:

As a religious person, how do you respond to the historical complicity of religion in the justification of slavery?



**Large Group Discussion** (15 minutes)

Gather participants back in the large group and invite them to share highlights from their discussion. Share with them the words of Rev. Dr. Marilyn Sewell, from *Unitarian Universalist Culture: The Present and the Promise*. (Fuller Press: Portland, 2006) pg. 28.

“What will our children and grandchildren say of us? Will they say, where was the church when the world came crashing down? How will history picture us – fighting between the humanists and those spiritually inclined? Pointing the finger at one another, as to who is racist and who is not? Having endless discussion groups in the basement, but taking little action?

The costs of being passive, or spiritually arrogant, or divided, or unfocused are just too great. Let us leave our foolish ways, and rise to be the people we are called to be. The times demand it. We should ask no less of ourselves.”

Ask participants to reflect together on the following question:

As a liberal religious tradition, how can we participate in the larger conversation about the lasting effects of slavery in the United States? What do the times demand of us as Unitarian Universalists?

**Closing:** (15 minutes)

Thank the group for participating and for their willingness to engage with these issues.

**Preparing for the Next Session**

Let the group know that the next session will address issues of guilt and shame by following the journeys of four family members. In preparation, ask participants to draw a family member's name. (See Appendix D) Each name includes a few quotes from the film. Invite participants to reflect on their family member's journey over the course of the week. During the next session, participants will gather in small groups and develop a presentation about the journey of their particular family member's evolving emotional responses.

**Check Out**

Go around the circle, inviting participants to offer one sentence about how they're feeling and what they're leaving with. Remind people that it is okay to pass if they are not ready to share. At the end, go back and see if anyone who passed wishes to speak.

**Sing Together** Singing the Journey #1023 “Building Bridges”

## Session Three

2.5 hours

### Preparing for the Session:

Make sure you have:

- *Singing the Journey* hymnals
- extra copies of Appendix D

Handouts:

- David Whitford, "A Step Toward Reconciliation." *UU World*. May/June 2002, pg. 24-30. (Appendix F)
- Starita Smith, "His Rightful Place." *UU World*. May/June 2002, pg. 31-33. (Appendix G)
- "Reparations for the 1921 Tulsa, OK Race Riot" 2001 Action of Immediate Witness (Appendix H)
- Donald Skinner, "UUs lead as riot survivors receive payments in Tulsa." *UU World*. May/June 2002, pg. 45-6. (Appendix I)

Rehang the newsprint with the group's covenant on the wall.

### Opening: (5 minutes)

Welcome participants back into the group, and light the chalice using the following words or another selection of your choosing:

#### Chalice Lighting

For every time we make a mistake and we decide to start again:

We light this chalice.

For every time we are lonely and we let someone be our friend:

We light this chalice.

For every time we are disappointed and we choose to hope:

We light this chalice.

Rev. Maureen M. Killoran

### Introduction: (5 minutes)

This week's session deals with the complex issues of guilt and shame in white people's responses to matters of race, racism, and racial justice. To begin this conversation, we encourage you to share with the group the words of Jane Lazarre, from her book *Beyond the Whiteness of Whiteness: Memoir of a White Mother of Black Sons*.

"Guilt can of course be a destructive emotion; fired by hostility and moral righteousness, it can paralyze, alienate, even turn real contrition to anger and hate. But I also recall hearing the words of Primo Levi, speaking about the Nazi

past, saying that guilt is the emotion felt by decent people when they are witness to terrible injustice they can do or have done nothing about.”

Jane Lazarre, *Beyond the Whiteness of Whiteness: Memoir of a White Mother of Black Sons*. (Duke University Press: Durham, 1996), pg. 47-48.

**Small Group Work: Four Family Members** (40 minutes)

Invite participants to gather in small groups based on the family member they chose last session. Ask them to discuss the family member's evolving emotional responses, based upon the quotes provided. (See Appendix D)

Let them know that they will have 10 minutes to share their thinking with the large group. Invite them to use their creativity. Encourage them to evoke the different stages in their family member's journey and to share their own reflections regarding this journey.

**Facilitator's Note:** Remind the groups that they do not need to speak with a single voice. Group members will have different responses to the family members. Stress that groups can and should express multiple perspectives in their presentations.

**Break:** (10 minutes)

**Small Group Presentations:** (40 minutes)

After the break, ask the groups to share their presentations. Before beginning the presentations, remind the group that we do not all come from the same racial and ethnic backgrounds, and that people in this room have very different experiences. Ask participants to speak in their own voice and to check their assumptions about “universal” experiences.

**Break:** (15 minutes)

**Large Group Discussion:** (20 minutes)

When the group regathers, invite them to share reactions to the small group presentations. Remind people of Jane Lazarre's analysis, both the ways in which guilt can be destructive and alienating, but also the idea of shame as an emotion felt by decent people who witness injustice.

In addition to the necessity of grappling with the enormity of the wrongs of racism, the work of racial justice also calls white people to move beyond a limiting sense of guilt, embarrassment, or shame. Guilt can spur us to action, but there are also other powerful

foundations for the work of racial justice. Share with participants the words of Rabbi Julia Watts Belser:

I believe we do the work of undermining racism and all patterns of oppression not in order to save others, but in order to save our own souls and to help mend the torn fabric of this world. I believe we do this work out of an understanding of deep connection:

Not to appease the guilt and shame and despair that a racist system lays upon its beneficiaries; not to obscure and deny the power and privilege it grants us; not to fill the gaping maw of our anxieties; not to build a perilous separation between ourselves and those *other* bad-white-folks who let racism keep on going strong; not to make us good –

But to benefit and strengthen *all* creation, to bring a blessing of peace upon all people and all beings, and to become sacred renegades who fight to undermine a racist system; to live with the grace of unstilted behavior, to simply be in relationship with one another, while at the same time committing ourselves to the holy work of mending unjust power and privilege, to become humble strugglers in the awesome task of untangling dominance and denial.

Rabbi Julia Watts Belser

Ask participants to reflect upon the following question:

Why is the work of racial justice meaningful for you? What calls you to this work? What is the spiritual foundation that undergirds your involvement in issues of racial justice?

### **Distribute Homework:**

Let participants know that the next session will include closer looks at two Unitarian Universalist congregations that have engaged in reconciliation or reparations work on the local level. Ask them to read the following articles in preparation:

- David Whitford, "A Step Toward Reconciliation." *UU World*. May/June 2002, pg. 24-30. (Appendix F)
- Starita Smith, "His Rightful Place." *UU World*. May/June 2002, pg. 31-33. (Appendix G)
- "Reparations for the 1921 Tulsa, OK Race Riot" 2001 Action of Immediate Witness (Appendix H)
- Donald Skinner, "UUs lead as riot survivors receive payments in Tulsa." *UU World*. May/June 2002, pg. 45-6. (Appendix I)

**Closing** (10 minutes)

**Check Out**

Go around the circle, inviting participants to offer one brief phrase about something they are looking forward to in the next session's topic of discussion. Remind people that it is okay to pass if they are not ready to share. At the end, go back and see if anyone who passed wishes to speak.

**Sing Together** *Singing the Living Tradition* #131 "Love Will Guide Us"

## **Session Four**

### ***2.5 Hours***

#### **Preparing for the Session:**

Make sure you have:

- newsprint and markers
- chalice, candle, and matches
- chime (optional)
- handouts: 2007 General Assembly Resolution (Appendix E)

Write the working definition of accountability (see below) on newsprint.

Rehang the newsprint with the group's covenant on the wall.

#### **Chalice Lighting:** (5 minutes)

Welcome participants back into the group, and light the chalice using the following words or another selection of your choosing:

The element of fire represents passion, veracity, authenticity, and vitality. If the chalice is the supporting structure of Unitarian Universalism, then we are the flame. We are the flame, fanned strong by our passion for freedom, our yearning for truth-telling, our daring to be authentic with one another, and the vitality we sustain in our meeting together. In all of this there is love.

Rev. Sarah Lammert

#### **Peer Reflection in Triads:** (15 minutes)

Split the participants into groups of three. Ask them to consider the following question:

What has been particularly meaningful for you during these sessions? What has been challenging? What is one thing you wish for this gathered group of people?

**Facilitator's Note:** We encourage you to chime every five minutes to help groups keep track of time, so that everyone gets a chance for reflection.

#### **Unitarian Universalists Respond:** (5 minutes)

At the 2007 General Assembly, the Unitarian Universalist Association adopted a resolution calling upon congregations and the association to engage in acknowledgement, apology, repair, and reconciliation. To ground the work of the next section, read the 2007 resolution aloud and have copies available for participants:

**UUA General Assembly 2007 Responsive Resolution** (Appendix E)

President Sinkford asked, "What are our truths? To whom must we be reconciled?" We have many stories to uncover—genocide, slavery, oppression. Only by knowing our truths can we act boldly on our spiritual journey of healing.

In response to President Bill Sinkford's report, moved that delegates begin this work by encouraging their congregations and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) to research their own and the Association's history: to uncover our links and complicity with the genocide of native peoples; with slavery and the slave-based economy; and with all types of racial, ethnic, and cultural oppression, past and present, toward the goal of accountability through acknowledgment, apology, repair, and reconciliation, and that they report on their progress at the 2008 and 2009 General Assemblies.

**Awareness & Accountability, Building Right Relationship:** (10 minutes)

Read from the prepared newsprint the following working definition of accountability:

For the purposes of this conversation, we are defining "accountability" as a way for congregations to work toward right relationship with constituent groups (in this case, descendants of the US slave trade) by building authentic relationships, responding to the expressed needs of the constituent group, and acting with transparency. An accountable process affirms the agency and sovereignty of the constituent group and emerges out of sustained communication between the congregation and the group. It also ensures that groups who are supposed to benefit from the project are involved in project design and implementation from the earliest stages.

Ask participants to brainstorm examples and particular qualities of accountable relationships.

**Facilitator's Note:** The decision not to call the Tulsa, OK payments to survivors "reparations" is an example of working in accountable relationships with constituent groups, because receiving reparations now might bar survivors from participating in a contemplated class-action lawsuit for reparations from the state or city.

**UU Congregations Engaging with Slavery Reparations on a Local Level****Case One: First Church in Cincinnati, Ohio** (30 minutes)

Articles:

- David Whitford, "A Step Toward Reconciliation." *UU World*. May/June 2002, pg. 24-30. (Appendix F)

- Starita Smith, "His Rightful Place." *UU World*. May/June 2002, pg. 31-33. (Appendix G)

After the brainstorm, invite participants into a discussion on the articles about First Church in Cincinnati, OH using the following questions:

1. Reflecting on the process of reconciliation at First Church in Cincinnati, what do you think were the benefits and challenges for the congregation? What do you think were the benefits and challenges for the Carter family?
2. If this were your congregation, how would you respond to Starita Smith's challenge to "continue on [your] quest for reconciliation and to face the complex issues of race forthrightly?"
3. What was your reaction to reading that even Walter Herz, the church historian, did not know this piece of the church's history? How can we take up the responsibility called for in the 2007 GA Responsive Resolution to "research [our] own and the Association's history: to uncover our links and complicity with the genocide of native peoples; with slavery and the slave-based economy; and with all types of racial, ethnic, and cultural oppression, past and present?"

**Break:** (15 minutes)

**Case Two: Payments for Survivors of Race Riots in Tulsa, Oklahoma** (30 minutes)

Articles:

- "Reparations for the 1921 Tulsa, OK Race Riot" 2001 Action of Immediate Witness (Appendix H)
- Donald Skinner, "UUs lead as riot survivors receive payments in Tulsa." *UU World*. May/June 2002, pg. 45-6. (Appendix I)

After the break, ask the participants to regroup and consider the materials related to the Tulsa Race Riot payment using the following questions:

1. What do you believe is the moral responsibility of religious communities in the face of governmental failure to address the impact of past injustices in today's world?
2. How was that responsibility addressed in Tulsa, Oklahoma? How was it addressed in *Traces of the Trade*?

**Facilitator's Note:** You may want to remind participants that this conversation covers both the Episcopal Church's response and the US slavery reparations movement.



3. What are challenges and barriers to doing this work well?

**Imagining Possibilities:** (10 minutes)

Ask participants to split into groups of 4 and discuss the following question:

What do you see as possible next steps for your congregation in helping move this work forward? Remember that this work cannot be done in isolation.

**Exploring Next Steps:** (10 minutes)

In the large group, ask a representative from each small group to articulate concrete next steps drawn from their conversation.

**Closing:** (20 minutes)

**Personal Commitments**

Go around the group, inviting people to share one thing that they are taking from this session and one commitment for further work or learning.

**Extinguishing the Chalice**

Extinguish the chalice with the following words or with others of your choosing. Allow space for silent reflection before closing with thanks to participants.

We all have two religions: the religion we talk about and the religion we live. It is our task to make the difference between the two as small as possible.

Rev. William Gardiner

Make sure to thank participants for their commitment and risk-taking over the course of the program. Remind them that there is always more work to be done and encourage them to bring their next steps into the congregation.

## Appendix A

### TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN YOU PLAN ACCESSIBLE WORKSHOPS, GATHERINGS, CLASSES, MEETINGS, etc.

By Rev. Dr. Devorah Greenstein

We bid you welcome, who enter this hall as a homecoming,  
 Who have found here room for your spirit.  
 Who find in this people a family.  
 Whoever you are, whatever you are,  
 Wherever you are in your journey.  
 We bid you welcome.

– *Richard S. Gilbert (Singing the Living Tradition: Reading 442)*

Here are some things for you to think about as you plan gatherings:

**Accessibility inside and outside** – Accessibility includes parking (consider offering volunteer “valet” parking service if there is insufficient accessible parking) as well as the path of travel into and through the facility. If overnight stays are included, accessible accommodations should be a consideration as well.

**Adequate lighting level** – Be intentional when you dim or extinguish the lights to create a particular mood. Darkness makes it harder for some people to see written materials, music lyrics and/or readings, and for people who are hard of hearing to have enough light to use lip reading to help them understand what people are saying.

**Alternative formats of written materials** – With electronic communication and photo-copiers it can be easy to provide alternative format materials. An inelegant method is to enlarge book pages and handouts on a copier to the biggest copy you can put on 11 x 17” paper – not the fanciest way, but it may work for someone – please ask the person beforehand. Audio-taping materials may also be a solution for some people.

**Assistive listening systems and amplification** – Use a microphone (if there is a floor microphone, make sure it is adjustable so people using wheelchairs can use it); sit in a “horseshoe” or circular seating configuration; use an assistive listening system (many churches have these systems in the sanctuary); make sure each person speaking faces the audience.

**Be truly welcoming** – Some congregations have made a covenant that all church-related events (e.g. restaurant dinners, picnics, etc.) must be held in accessible venues. Because accessibility can be a problem if an event is held in someone’s home, in the case of multiple small group meetings, at least one of the groups must be accessible.

**Disability etiquette** -- Unless you know someone with a disability, you may not think about the key points that make relationships with someone who has a disability easier

and more relaxed. With the intent to create a welcoming and relaxed environment for everyone, you will find some basic rules of etiquette on our website:

[http://www.uua.org/programs/idbm/accessibilities/disabilityresources\\_etiquette.html](http://www.uua.org/programs/idbm/accessibilities/disabilityresources_etiquette.html).

**Emergency evacuation** – Make sure there is a pre-determined evacuation plan for people who have movement or sensory limitations. Do not assume that every person who has a disability will need help in an evacuation – always ask before providing assistance.

**Fragrance-free thoughtfulness** – For people who have chemical sensitivities: beeswax candles with lead-free wicks can be purchased online; attendees can be asked to refrain from wearing personal scents; burning incense and/or sage should be avoided; open flame/fire (e.g. for use in burning small pieces of paper) should be avoided.

**Meals and eating arrangements** – Buffet-style serving is difficult for people who use wheelchairs, walkers, crutches. Offer to be a “valet” – to carry a plate or tray. If you have a potluck meal, keep allergies in mind. Ask people to make index cards listing all ingredients of the dish they have brought and place these cards in front of their casserole, bowl, etc.

**Notices and publicity for the gathering** – For legibility, use simple uncluttered page design. Use a font like Arial 14 (if possible) and light colored, non-glossy paper. Registration materials should include a contact person who will be responsible for accommodations; the most important thing is to work individually to determine what accommodation(s) will help

**Scheduling, public transportation, carpooling** – Arrange carpooling if possible. Some people do not drive and some people do not drive at night or in bad weather. If there is public transportation available, try to schedule workshops, classes, and other events to coincide with bus/train schedules.

**Seating** – Arrange seating so that there is adequate integrated spaces for people who use wheelchairs. Make sure that aisles are wide enough for people to navigate comfortably inside the room without having to move seats. Provide seats with extra leg-room for people who use crutches, braces, or other walking supports. Have some chairs with arms, and some chairs that will be comfortable for people who are large.

**Sign language interpreters** – In registration material, ask people to contact the accessibility contact person at least two weeks in advance. If a person does make the request, it will not be difficult to locate a skilled sign language interpreter through your local Center for Independent Living or your local school district.

**Speaker platform, lectern, stage** – Have a wheelchair accessible podium/lectern available (a less-than-optimal alternative is to use a music-stand as an accessible lectern) and a ramped stage. Portable ramps may be available from your local durable medical equipment suppliers.

The Pacific Southwest District of the Unitarian Universalist Association has a comprehensive online accessible program planning guide: <http://www.pswd.uua.org/pswd-office/Checklists%20for%20Planners.htm>.

## Appendix B

**“White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”** by Peggy McIntosh  
<http://www.case.edu/president/aaction/UnpackingTheKnapsack.pdf>

Peggy McIntosh's article is an invaluable tool both for your personal preparation and as a continuing education resource for the group. We encourage you to use the link above to access her article in its entirety and make it available to all participants.

## Appendix C

**“Bitter Harvest: Slavery isn’t history – and we’re reaping its fruit”  
by Kimberly French  
UU World 18:6 (November/December 2004); *reprinted with permission.*  
<http://www.uuworld.org/2004/06/feature1.html>**

You, in all likelihood, own items that were produced by slaves: Chocolate. Hand-woven carpets. Cotton. Coffee. Tea. Tobacco. Sugar. Tomatoes. Cucumbers. Oranges. Grains. Clothing. Sneakers. Soccer balls. Gold. Diamonds. Jewelry. Fireworks. Steel. Glassware. Charcoal. Timber. Stone. Tantalum (a mineral used in laptops, pagers, personal digital assistants, and cell phones). Products in all of these industries have been found made with slave labor, then sold in the global market.

More items that you consume every day are tainted by slavery in less direct ways. “Your computer terminal may be made in Japan, but that company may reward executives with sex tours of enslaved prostitutes in Southeast Asia,” says Barney Freiberg-Dale, founder of Unitarian Universalists Against Slavery, one of several Unitarian Universalist groups working to fight modern slavery.

All of us who are lucky enough to be housed, clothed, and fed every day benefit from prices kept low by slave labor. Global companies we invest in, or whose stocks are part of our mutual or pension funds, provide higher returns because they buy from suppliers that pay workers very little—or not at all.

As participants in the world's largest consumer economy, with its drive for lower and lower prices, we contribute to the global economic pressure for slave labor. We are all complicit.

### **But didn't slavery end in the nineteenth century?**

Many of today's new abolitionists admit to having held that same assumption, until a news story or pamphlet or lecture shocked them out of it.

Or you may have thought the reports of human trafficking that periodically make the news—such as sex slavery rings or forced migrant farm work—were isolated cases, somewhere far from you. I did.

The truth is that slavery exists in virtually every country of the world and in almost every U.S. state, according to human rights organizations, scholars, government agencies, and journalists. A growing antislavery movement has been hard at work documenting and exposing this troubling fact. Surveying their reports and interviewing antislavery spokespeople is eye-opening, answering not only my question about the nineteenth-century “end” of slavery but raising other questions as well.

In fact, legal slavery did end. Slavery is illegal in every country of the world. Nonetheless there are more slaves today than ever before: 27 million, twice as many as the number of Africans enslaved during the four centuries of the transatlantic slave trade, according to a calculation that slavery expert Kevin Bales calls conservative. Bales, a sociologist at Roehampton University in London who spoke at the UUA's 2003 General Assembly, estimates that 50,000 people are forced to work as slaves in the United States today.

**How can this be? If slavery is illegal everywhere, how can there be slaves, and in such numbers?**

In the United States our image of slavery is defined by our own horrific history. The antebellum slavery that was practiced here is called chattel slavery, meaning one person is owned completely by another and can be inherited as property.

Today's slavery is different. Simply put, slavery is one person forcing another to work without pay, using the threat of violence or psychological manipulation. Ownership no longer defines slavery.

When slaves could be legally owned, when buying slaves required a substantial financial investment, there was an incentive for owners to take care of their "property," to provide for their slaves' housing, food, health, children's care, and other needs. In contrast, when today's slaves are no longer economically useful, they are cast aside, worked or starved into permanent illness or death, sometimes even killed.

**So why are there so many slaves now?**

First, the world's population has nearly tripled in fifty years, most dramatically in developing countries, creating a huge pool of people who are desperately poor, vulnerable, and easily preyed on.

At the same time, globalization has transformed national and local economies. Corporations turn to unregulated suppliers in developing countries, and keep pressing for lower costs. In some cases, suppliers use forced, unpaid labor.

In many countries, widespread corruption allows slavery to thrive and grow.

The most common form of slavery today is debt bondage, a tradition throughout southern Asia that keeps a society's lowest castes or tribes perpetually in debt to their masters. The number of bonded laborers in India, Pakistan, and Nepal is estimated in the millions. They must work however much the master says and ask for permission for their every move. Bonded laborers have told human rights workers they are paying off loans as small as \$10 to \$50. But the interest is always more than they can pay, and the debts are passed on through the generations.

Forced labor exists in many countries, including the United States. Wartime slavery is a problem in countries like Sudan, where government-backed militias and raiders have been kidnapping and enslaving village children and women since at least the mid-1980's, according to United Nations

reports. Even chattel slavery persists: The military dictatorship of Mauritania has repeatedly declared slavery abolished, yet the U.S. State Department reports that 90,000 people are held there as chattel slaves.

---

The pitfall of focusing mainly on the most concentrated and brutal slavery hotspots is that we can compartmentalize slavery as something that is happening somewhere else, to someone far removed us, with little we can do. In fact, we need look no farther than our own country to find the fastest-growing form of slavery, called contract slavery, in which the poor, weak, young, and vulnerable are tricked with promises of legitimate work.

The Department of Justice estimates that 14,500 to 17,500 people are trafficked into the United States annually. Slavery cases are being investigated in forty-six states. In this country, most slavery victims are foreign-born and are found working as farm workers, live-in domestics, or prostitutes. Slavery has also been found in small businesses that typically rely on low-wage temporary labor, such as restaurants, nursing homes, and small manufacturers.

A 2002 case that resulted in federal sentences of ten to fifteen years for three family members who contracted farm labor from Florida to North Carolina shows how contract slavery works:

In early 2001 three Mixe Indians from Mexico each paid \$250 to be smuggled into the United States. Penniless and stranded in an abandoned trailer with thirty others in Arizona, the three men agreed to go with a recruiter promising them jobs picking oranges in Florida. For three days they were packed in vehicles with no food and no stops to relieve themselves.

They were met in Florida by the Ramos brothers, who wrote a check to the recruiter and said each man owed \$1,000 for transportation. Anyone who tried to leave without paying would be beaten. The workers were housed in a filthy converted bar, six to a room, on bare mattresses. They worked twelve hours a day, six to seven days a week, under twenty-four-hour surveillance by guards with weapons. Each week the Ramoses deducted exorbitant fees for rent, food, work equipment, and daily transportation from the workers' "wages," then claimed to credit whatever remained to their "debt." The Ramoses were found to have "employed" thousands of undocumented workers in a similar pattern over a decade, according to Florida State University's Center for the Advancement of Human Rights.

Variations of this scenario are replayed every day in industries and countries throughout the world:

- Cacao plantations in Cote d'Ivoire, which produce half of the world's cocoa, have lured teenage boys from Mali, Burkina Faso, and Liberia with promises of jobs, then paid them nothing and beaten them into submission. Thus, a small but significant portion of the chocolate imported to the United States and Europe is slave-produced.
- Tens of thousands of children as young as six have been kidnapped or tricked to work in India's Carpet Belt in Uttar Pradesh, where they may be kept round-the-clock in the rooms where they are forced to weave.

- Wealthy people in New York, London, Paris, and other Western cities have promised young women jobs as nannies or household help and a chance to go to school, then forced them to work without pay. Joy Zarembka, director of the Break the Chain Campaign in Washington, D.C., told me she was shocked to discover an enslaved domestic worker on her very own street.
- Girls in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia have been promised factory or restaurant jobs, then forced to work in brothels in their region or in Europe and the United States.

This list could go on and on. The story often turns out the same way: Once the victims arrive to work—with no money, no idea where they are, no understanding of their rights, and unable to speak the local language—they are told they must work to pay a debt for transportation or perhaps an advance paid to their families. They may be beaten, humiliated, or threatened with harm to themselves or their families. They are often kept in deplorable conditions, forced to work long hours with little sleep, forbidden to talk to outsiders. Their debt is never paid.

---

Slavery has been with us since the birth of civilization. About 11,000 years ago, humans began to form agrarian communities and organize themselves into hierarchical societies. Those at the top of the hierarchies enslaved others for domestic, agricultural, and construction work.

As long ago as Aristotle, people have argued that slavery may in fact be a condition of civilization. William Harper, a nineteenth-century proslavery judge and senator from South Carolina, argued: “Without it, there can be no accumulation of property, no providence for the future, no taste for comfort or elegancies, which are the characteristics and essentials of civilization.”

Contemporary slavery is more complex and victimizes more people than ever before. And yet the new abolitionists see reasons to hope.

“We don't face the problems we faced in the past,” Kevin Bales says. “We don't have to win the legal fight. We don't have to win the moral argument. In many ways it's simply a resource question and an awareness question.”

Free the Slaves, the U.S. branch of the London-based Antislavery International, estimates that it costs \$32 to free a slave family in northern India—not to buy their freedom, but to support local organizations that help slaves escape or walk away, then provide education and long-term rehabilitation so they don't fall back into slavery. At that rate, the cost to help every enslaved person on earth step to freedom can be roughly estimated at \$10 billion—about the same cost as Boston's Big Dig.

In recent years, the new abolitionists have seen heartening successes. Pressure on Congress led to the 2000 passage of the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act, specifying new slavery-related crimes and expanding protection for victims. Slavery investigations and prosecutions in this country have increased threefold.



The United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, ratified in 2003 , includes a large section on human trafficking. For the first time slavery cases are being prepared for trial before the International Criminal Court.

Underlying these successes is one essential factor: better public awareness. In order for antislavery strategies to work, governments and corporations must know that people are watching and that they demand an end to slavery.

Journalistic exposés and political action have curtailed slavery in Brazilian forests and mines and Dominican sugar fields. Grassroots organizations have helped free tens of thousands of slaves in India and other countries.

“Whether we like it or not, we are now a global people,” Bales writes in *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy* . “We must ask ourselves: Are we willing to live in a world with slaves? If not, we are obligated to take responsibility for things that are connected to us, even when far away. . . . What good is our economic and political power, if we can't use it to free slaves? If we can't choose to stop slavery, how can we say that we are free?”



## Appendix D

### "The Journey of Guilt"

#### **Katrina**

"I was proud to be related to [the DeWolf family]. I was also drawn to this fairytale world of old New England."

"What hit me hard was the realization that I already knew this [family legacy of involvement in the slave trade.] Knew but somehow buried it along the way."

"I invited relatives to come with me so we could reckon with this history together as a family. It felt like more than I could take on by myself."

"Once you really start to face the history and open your heart – now that I've done that – I can say that it actually becomes very natural to want to make things right. Not out of personal guilt, but out of grief."

#### **Dain**

"There is some guilt. Some members of the family certainly feel guilt, and feel very weighted down by it. I am very fortunate in that I don't."

"I had not realized that three generations of the family were involved in [the slave trade,] so it went on for a long time, which is embarrassing. You would have thought they would have gotten it, that this really isn't something that should have been done. And they called themselves Christians at the same time."

"Certainly the most humbling experience that I've had on the trip has been that situation with the African American woman at the fort [in Ghana.] I fully understand where it comes from, but I've never had that experience before, and I also felt a little bit of guilt of having invaded some space that she considered very, very precious and valuable."

"I would have the President issue a public apology. I would have Congress participate in that. And I think that we should have Truth and Reconciliation discussions, as they did in South Africa."

### **Ledlie**

"If I try to get into my ancestor's boots, I find it very difficult. The stomach for violence must have been extraordinary."

"My fears about going to Ghana are that it won't mean a lot to me. I will see where the slaves were imprisoned and it won't come alive for me. And my other fear is that it will come alive for me."

"When I stood at the Door of No Return in the dark in that fort, that experience felt like I, in fact, did carry some guilt for it. I renounce that with my mind, but my heart says something else."

### **Tom**

"I don't want to defend anything that happened in this family, or in New England, or in America, but I don't want to vilify these people either. 'Cause I don't know, I wasn't walking in their shoes."

"We've heard people talk about... 'you've got to place it in the context of the times' and 'this is the way things were done' and 'this is how life was'... I sit in that dungeon and I say 'bullshit.' It was an evil thing and they knew it was an evil thing and they did it anyway. I couldn't have said that before tonight."

## Appendix E

### UUA General Assembly 2007 Responsive Resolution

<http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/socialjustice/statements/31571.shtml>

President Sinkford asked, "What are our truths? To whom must we be reconciled?" We have many stories to uncover—genocide, slavery, oppression. Only by knowing our truths can we act boldly on our spiritual journey of healing.

In response to President Bill Sinkford's report, moved that delegates begin this work by encouraging their congregations and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) to research their own and the Association's history: to uncover our links and complicity with the genocide of native peoples; with slavery and the slave-based economy; and with all types of racial, ethnic, and cultural oppression, past and present, toward the goal of accountability through acknowledgment, apology, repair, and reconciliation, and that they report on their progress at the 2008 and 2009 General Assemblies.

## Appendix F

### "A Step Toward Reconciliation"

by David Whitford

UU World 16:3 (May/June 2002); 24-30; *reprinted with permission.*

<http://www.uuworld.org/2002/03/feature1a.html>

Leslie Edwards believes it was a "miracle," that's the word he uses. A miracle that he was even in the sanctuary to hear the sermon that day. "A lot of times I didn't come to church," he says now, nearly four years later. "In fact, during that time I was bouncing in and out of church. Maybe I may miss church for two months. And how it happened I came that time in *May*, you know." He just smiles and shakes his head.

The Rev. Sharon Dittmar's year as interim minister at the Northern Hills Fellowship in Cincinnati, Ohio, was almost over. In the fall she'd be moving downtown to the pulpit at the historic First Unitarian Church, some of whose members founded Northern Hills in the early 1960s. The sermon was on her list of things to do before she left. The idea for it arose from a class she had taught on Unitarian Universalist history — specifically the section on the African-American experience in Unitarian Universalism. "The members of the class were surprised, concerned, and fascinated by what they learned," Dittmar explained by way of introduction. "One member said, 'You have to share this with the congregation. They need to know.'"

Drawing from the Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed's *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*, Dittmar traced what she described as Unitarian Universalism's long "history of dis-ease" on matters of race — a history all the more troubling, she argued, for there being so many genuine Unitarian Universalist heroes, from famous abolitionists like the Rev. Theodore Parker to civil rights martyrs the Rev. James Reeb and Viola Liuzzo. She pointed out that in 1998 African Americans filled a mere 1 percent of UU pulpits, and roughly the same percentage of UU pews. She recalled the bitter rupture a generation ago over funding for the Black Affairs Council, which led to a walkout by several hundred delegates attending the 1969 General Assembly in Boston. And she gave vent to her own "great frustration" with Unitarian Universalism: "I love and believe what it stands for: The dignity and worth of every person, acceptance of one another, and encouragement of individual journeys of spiritual growth. Then I read about our history with African Americans and I am ashamed."

Flipping through her copy of *Black Pioneers* while preparing for the sermon, Dittmar continued, "I came upon a section I had never noticed before, a paragraph about an African-American Unitarian church that formed in Cincinnati in 1918, probably the only one of its kind in America at the time. The church was called the Church of the Unitarian Brotherhood." Other Unitarians in Cincinnati knew about the church and its founder, the Rev. W.H.G. Carter, but turned their backs. They made no effort to forge personal connections, and offered no material support to the struggling congregation beyond a box or two of old hymnals. For two decades no one even bothered to inform the American Unitarian Association (AUA) in Boston of its existence. When the AUA finally did find out, in 1938, it sent the Rev. Lon Ray Call to investigate. Call's official report captured perfectly the tone and substance of mainstream Unitarian attitudes at the time toward blacks. It described Carter as "a kindly man, quite intelligent." It noted, however, that the

neighborhood surrounding his storefront church was "poor and characterized by rowdiness" and that two local Unitarian ministers (one from First Church) who had spoken there agreed that the response they received was "not very intelligent." Call's conclusion: "I do not recommend Unitarian fellowship for Mr. Carter, or subsidy for his movement." Shortly afterwards the Church of the Unitarian Brotherhood closed down and its sixty or so members dispersed. Race and class trumped a genuine spiritual bond.

Many who heard Dittmar's sermon were powerfully affected, but none more than Edwards, seventy-six, a retired meat inspector and now a member of the Northern Hills board. Edwards says that before joining Northern Hills, in 1993, he spent two decades searching for a spiritual home, a place where "if I needed to express myself in any way about how I truly felt, I would not have any problem whatsoever." But until that Sunday in May 1998, he had no inkling that the roots of his quest were buried deep in family history.

"That's my grandfather you were talking about," Edwards said to a hushed congregation during the discussion period after the sermon. "I never thought I'd hear his name mentioned in a Unitarian church."

It was "a moment of grace and awe," says Dittmar. But unlike other such moments that can flare and fade on Sunday morning, this one is still glowing. It sparked an extraordinary act of reconciliation involving two mostly white UU congregations, five generations of a remarkable African-American family, a city scarred by recent incidents of police brutality and race riots, and a liberal religious movement struggling to live up to the promise of its principles and purposes. And while it would be saccharin to suggest that this story holds the cure for racial and economic dis-ease within Unitarian Universalism, much less the wider world, there's hope in it, absolutely. It represents, says Morrison-Reed, who is black, "a great model of what's possible."

---

First Church was among the first wealthy institutions in Cincinnati to abandon the inner city. The majestic stone-and-slate Victorian sanctuary, with its warm oak paneling and rich stained glass windows, was dedicated in 1889, following "the movement of population of the class from which the congregation was likely to be drawn towards the cleaner air and wider spaces of the hilltop suburbs," according to a 1917 church history. But what was once Cincinnati's wealthy outer rim (former church member and U.S. President William Howard Taft was raised in a nearby mansion) today qualifies as an extension of the urban core — a racially mixed though mainly black neighborhood, dominated by high-rise medical buildings, low-income housing, and empty lots.

Taft is not the only presidential name on the membership rolls of First Church. The current UUA president, the Rev. William Sinkford, remembers being "dragged kicking and screaming to First Church when I was fourteen years old by my mother, who believed that we needed a religious home." Sinkford, the first African American to head a traditionally white U.S. denomination, did find his religious home at First Church but left it temporarily in response to the racial upheavals of the 1960s, from which both First Church and Unitarian Universalism have yet to recover fully.

"The history of the last thirty-five years is part of our history too," Sinkford says. "That was a history of retreat from racial justice, and there was a price to pay, spiritually." Today First Church, like most UU congregations, has more racial diversity in its religious education program than among its mostly white, mostly upper middle-class members. It's a sad fact that no one currently attending First Church lives close enough to walk to services on Sunday morning.

That said, even before Dittmar arrived in the fall of 1998, First Church was looking for ways to capitalize on its setting and redefine itself fully as an urban church, with all that implies. When it came time to call a new minister, the search committee went beyond the list of candidates provided by the UUA to snare Dittmar — despite her youth (she's thirty-five) and inexperience (she graduated from Harvard Divinity School in 1997) — because of her passion for urban ministry. "We were ripe," says church member Linnea Lose, "we were ready. But she came in and just ignited us."

The catalyst was Dittmar's sermon of February 17, 1999, "Get Back on the Bus," in honor of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In it she retold the story of W.H.G. Carter and his Church of the Unitarian Brotherhood, this time adding Leslie Edwards's miracle; and she challenged First Church, having once turned its back on Carter, to finally make good on the promise of urban ministry. "We all have a role in affirming and supporting a vision of an antiracist, multicultural Unitarian Universalism," she said in closing. "I came to First Church to get back on the bus. Will you join me?"

Part of the answer lay in closely reexamining First Church's past. That summer, after learning about the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (set to open in Cincinnati in 2004) some parishioners began researching how members of First Church had responded to the moral challenge of slavery in the nineteenth century. As expected, they found many outspoken abolitionists, as well as evidence of involvement by some church members in the Underground Railroad. But it soon became clear that many of First Church's most respected members at the time had profited, at least indirectly, from the slave economy. A mixed legacy, in other words, exemplified by the parishioner who made his fortune selling salt pork to the Southern plantations, even while his wife was venturing out at night on horseback, presumably to aid runaway slaves. But nothing galvanized First Church like the story of W.H.G. Carter. "My feeling was, 'My God, where have I been?'" says Walter Herz, who has been a Unitarian since 1958. "Here I am the church historian and have published work on the church's history, and I knew nothing about this."

You don't have to be a member of First Church to feel shame at the way Carter was rebuffed by Cincinnati church officials and the AUA. Even Call, more than half a century after filing his report with the AUA, expressed his remorse to Morrison-Reed in a letter written shortly before he died. "Sorry if I kept a good man from fulfilling his mission," Call wrote. Which begs the question, What kind of response could an uncredentialed black minister trailing an impoverished congregation expect from the UUA today?

When I posed the question to President Sinkford, he was silent for several moments. "I wish that I could tell you it would be a completely enthusiastic one," he finally said. "Since the 1980s, we have tried to support — have in fact supported — congregations built around particular ministers

of color. None of them have proved to be self-sustaining over time. If I were talking to a Carter today, and what he or she said was that we need support but we're going to make this work ourselves, I would say absolutely, welcome in. The problems we've had have been creating dependent relationships with ministers of color and congregations that were formed around them. And that's a dangerous place for this largely white institution to travel. Things aren't quite as simple as we would like."

Morrison-Reed agrees. "It would be tough for us," he says. "I can't predict the outcome because it would cross so many of our taboos as far as what we expect in ministry and education and such. But I think what would happen now is we'd take it seriously."

Which, it happens, is precisely the task that concerned members of First Church assigned themselves, all these years later: to take Carter seriously. To not turn their backs on him, not again. "We can't let this drop," Herz remembers thinking. "We ought to find out more about this family."

---

What is known about W.H.G. Carter comes from his self-published autobiography, Call's report, and the recollections of his descendents, interviewed over many months by Edwards, Herz, and Richard Bozian. By all accounts, Carter was larger than life. Light-skinned, six-feet-two, a man of charm, energy, imagination, and learning, he towered, literally and figuratively, over his wife, Beulah, who was only five feet tall, and their fifteen children. He trained as a minister in the African Methodist Episcopal church, following in his father's footsteps, but never served the denomination owing to deep theological differences, beginning with his disavowal of the divinity of Jesus. He supported himself variously as a photographer, a mural painter, a teacher, a postal worker, a fun-house operator (on Beale Street in Memphis), and a real estate speculator. He sold a tip sheet to horse bettors, kept a roulette wheel in his church (to make the point that gambling in and of itself was not sinful), and operated a friendly neighborhood pool hall (no swearing allowed).

Soon after moving his family from Memphis in 1918, he became a fixture in Cincinnati's West End. Like his maternal grandfather, William Henry Gray — a free-born African American who seconded the nomination of Ulysses S. Grant at the 1872 Republican national convention and served briefly as Arkansas land commissioner during Reconstruction — Carter was a political activist. He was a four-time candidate for city councilman on the Republican ticket (never successful), the founder of a fraternal organization called the Grand Order of Denizens (G.O.D.), and a dedicated provider of food, money, clothing, and advocacy to poor blacks in Cincinnati.

With his own family he could at times be playful (carving carrots at the dinner table into hearts, spades, diamonds, and clubs) and generous (he took the whole family to the 1934 Chicago World's Fair), but also strong-willed, uncompromising, and severe. "You were supposed to come up to a certain standard," says Edwards. "And he'd make you know." Among the forbidden phrases in the Carter household were "I don't care" and "It's not my fault." Carter's son Andrew, seventy-nine, a retired postal worker, remembers the day that he and his brother discovered an



anatomy book in their father's extensive library. They found the book so absorbing that they didn't hear him coming until it was too late. "We slammed the book together," says Andrew. "He came in. He said, 'What are you looking at?' We were a little reluctant, but we told him. He said, 'I'm going to give you a whipping.' So he whipped us." And then he told them why: "He said, 'I didn't whip you because you were looking at it. It's because you thought you were doing something wrong. Now open that book up and look at it!'"

Carter discovered Unitarianism on his own by reading and thinking, and discussing his ideas with anyone who would listen. He was especially fond of drawing ideas out of others by use of the Socratic method. He viewed Jesus as an exemplary man but no son of God (and was offended by lyrics that suggested otherwise in the hymnals he got from the Unitarians). He had faith instead in the divinity of all creation, exemplified by a painting depicting the evolution of man, from the apes all the way to Jesus, which decorated the window of the storefront on West Fifth Street that served as a church, a community center, and a home for the Carter family. When Call arrived in 1939, he found "a vacant store in which Mr. Carter has assembled a small coal stove, hat rack, bookcase, other shelves of books, radio, piano, clock, two printing presses, architect's desk, bulletin board, about thirty chairs, some of them old pews, and a crude drawing of Jesus. Mr. Carter rents this himself and lives in the rear. He pays \$18 monthly. Outside the store in vivid paint is 'Unitarian Brotherhood Church.'"

Much of Carter's preaching fell on deaf ears, even among the members of his family. Beulah, who played piano during services and was his constant partner in charitable works (though she is never mentioned by name in Carter's autobiography), was a Christian who worshipped elsewhere. And while many of the Carter children inherited their father's skepticism toward received religious truth, only one, Daniel, who became a lawyer, embraced Unitarian Universalism as an adult.

Carter died in poverty in 1962. He was buried in an unmarked grave. As the years went by, even the knowledge of which Cincinnati cemetery contained his remains was lost among the living members of the Carter family.

---

"I know you, Andrew, and James are curious about what we plan on doing with all the information [about W.H.G. Carter] once we have exhausted all potential sources," Herz wrote in an early letter to Leslie Edwards, thanking him for arranging a meeting with his uncles. "We are curious, also!"

There was talk among the members of the ad hoc Carter committee at First Church of starting a memorial fund, of writing an article for *UU World* or making a presentation at General Assembly, of posthumously welcoming the Unitarian Brotherhood Church into the UUA. But the keystone, they decided, should be an apology to the Carter family, some kind of formal admission, as Herz put it in a letter to Dittmar, of the "stain on the Unitarian Movement and on our local Unitarian Churches occasioned by our rejection of Carter's Brotherhood Church sixty years ago."

Dittmar agreed. "At some point [an apology] became very important to me," she says. "I felt like the AUA was prevented from seeing Carter in the fullness of his person because of his color, because of money, because of his location in the city. And I just thought, 'That's not our values.' I know we didn't have our principles and purposes then, but we had similar values, and it pained me that we had not lived them. I honestly thought it was a chance for the descendants to redeem the association. I think we have the potential and the ability to make a better ending to stories when we see wrongs."

Edwards embraced the idea from the start, but other Carter family members were hesitant. Indeed, in planning the event, the energetic, guilt-ridden, well-intentioned Unitarian Universalists of First Church blundered into a half-century-old reservoir of bitterness toward their new hero on the part of those who had known him best — his surviving children. "We learned it had been difficult at times for some of the children of Carter to see the father be so strict and tough, especially with Beulah," says Dittmar. "Not that he was abusive but he was demanding, and their mother was the one they felt closest to and they felt the love for." It took a while, but they worked it out by listening to the Carter family, by taking pains to honor Beulah's role in the family saga, and by bestowing on the Carter family the gift of their own fresh perspective on the life and legacy of a complicated man.

---

January 13-14, 2001. Racial reconciliation weekend at First Church. Two days of sermon and song, food and fellowship, hugs and tears, among and between the parishioners of First Church and the more than one hundred descendents of Beulah and W.H.G. Carter and their families (including a one-year-old great-great-grandson, Santi Sander) who crowded into First Church on that cold, bright mid-winter Sunday, having flown in from all over the country. Among the other visitors were members from Northern Hills and Morrison-Reed, down from his home church in Toronto, who delivered the main sermon on Sunday morning, entitled "The Burden of Guilt."

"Remembering the past with regret can strengthen the resolve to do the only thing we can do together to shape a more just tomorrow," was the point Morrison-Reed landed on. "For in that moment when the one person feels hurt and the other feels sympathy, a bond is established. That connection can be built upon. And as the relationship grows, we can move beyond avoidance, guilt, and self-hatred, and let go of the anger and recrimination to embrace the only things that can sustain us over the long haul — the love of God, which we find in one another, and our shared vision of tomorrow. For alone our vision is too narrow to see all that must be seen, and our strength too limited to do all that must be done, but together our vision widens and our strength is renewed, and that is cause, as it is today, to celebrate and recommit with our souls."

But the most memorable speaker that day wasn't even listed in the order of service — a deliberate omission, says Dittmar, who thought it presumptuous to assume the Carter family would accept her apology before they'd had a chance to hear it. But when Dittmar stepped down from the pulpit, Starita Smith of Denton, Texas — mother of two grown children, graduate

student in writing, practicing Baha'i, and great-granddaughter of W.H.G. Carter — took her place.

Smith admitted she was skeptical of "the recent wave of apologies to black people for everything from slavery to neglect of Africa. . . . We read the headlines and we say, 'So what changes now?'" She expected more from Unitarian Universalists. "You are supposed to be the most liberal of the mainstream denominations," she said. "It is very meaningful to me that you took the initiative to acknowledge a history that must be embarrassing for you, and to attempt to make amends in the present for what was wrong in the past. . . . But we must also acknowledge that racial reconciliation, true racial reconciliation, requires commitment. . . . I hope you will reflect on this weekend often and let it galvanize you. I hope that it will cause you to go beyond the comfortable friendships you have with your black Unitarian friends to attempt to bring honesty, light, and compassion into the thorny arena of race relations beyond the boundaries of your church. We Carters encourage you to continue to look into your hearts, ask difficult and complex questions, and take action. We accept your apology."

The silence in the sanctuary was broken by a sudden burst of applause. Smith found herself in Dittmar's arms. The minister's black robe enveloped them both. "When the hug seemed to go on a beat or two too long," Smith later wrote, "it dawned on me that she was crying and leaning on me for support."

---

The months that followed the Carter reconciliation weekend were trying ones for the citizens of Cincinnati, challenging all notions of racial progress. On April 7, 2001, Timothy Thomas, an unarmed black teenager, was shot and killed by a Cincinnati police officer. He was the fifth black male in the city to die while being pursued or taken into custody since the previous September. There followed three days of rioting, and a curfew that darkened Cincinnati on Easter weekend.

In her office at First Church, Dittmar stares at a photograph of W.H.G. Carter given to her by Leslie Edwards. "During the riots, it was really hard to know what to do, how to position oneself," she says. "Cincinnati doesn't like trouble. It's a polite town, a kind town, but sometimes under that is a layer of, 'We'll just accept the injustice if we can get along on top.' And I'll tell you, I would look at this photo, and I'd look at W.H.G. Carter, and I'd think, 'What did he go through? What did people think of him?' He was a hero, he was a role model for me. I kept thinking, 'What does this man call me to do?' I felt like I owed him something. This is the guy who tried to minister in the West End. The riots were right next door. I just felt like I couldn't completely let him down. He really called me to something better, a higher standard."

Dittmar joined publicly with other concerned clergy, black and white, in calling for a deeper understanding of the roots of racial violence. She opened the doors of First Church to a series of citywide teach-ins, and participated in a pulpit exchange program with a nearby black church, West Cincinnati Presbyterian, which has led to an ongoing relationship. In October, members of First Church and West Cincinnati Presbyterian, marching side by side, were among the several

thousand Cincinnatians who participated in a six-mile walk to raise money for the National Conference for Community and Justice and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

All of which Starita Smith praised when she returned to Cincinnati this past January for the one-year anniversary of the Carter weekend. "So many people jump to condemn black people for rioting before they understand what drives them to express their rage in the streets," she said in her sermon. "Destruction of property isn't right, but then neither is destruction of human beings through neglect and oppression. The important thing to me about your work is that it continues, and you remain committed to a mission that sometimes has no big, dramatic victories in sight. I think that my great-grandparents would be pleased that you are willing to try to continue their ministry."

---

One afternoon last fall, I drove out to Northern Hills to meet Leslie Edwards. He greeted me in the parking lot wearing a red baseball cap with the insignia of the Tuskegee Airmen and carrying a folder stuffed with documents relating to his grandfather. Among them was a letter he'd received from Richard Bozian saying that he'd finally located the graves of W.H.G. and Beulah Carter in Beech Grove Cemetery. "That's right next to Northern Hills!" Edwards says now, remembering the effect the news had on him at the time. "When I read that I almost collapsed."

So now we go for a little walk, to the end of the empty parking lot, through a narrow band of trees, emerging after a few steps on an untidy country burying ground, overgrown with weeds and tall grass, headstones glowing in the horizontal rays of the afternoon sun. Beech Grove Cemetery. We're close enough to where Edwards sat listening to Dittmar's sermon that day that in all probability, the dead were listening, too. And here it is, the grave of W.H.G. Carter, marked with a new stone paid for by the members of Northern Hills and the Carter family. The inscription reads: "Pioneer Unitarian Minister."

"Often times when you see a flow of events, with music or even with writing, you see how it's been done to do just the right thing at the right time," Edwards says on the way back to my car. "This flow was not something that a human being had planned. But it flowed just the right way at the right time. And the flow that I'm aware of is based on the religious faith of W.H.G. Carter."

**David Whitford**, editor at large at *Fortune Small Business* magazine, is a member of the First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Arlington, Massachusetts.

## Appendix G

### “His Rightful Place”

by Starita Smith

UU World 16:3 (May/June 2002): 31-33; *reprinted with permission.*

<http://www.uuworld.org/2002/03/feature1b.html>

The white Unitarian ministers who went to check out my great-grandfather's ministry were appalled that the little storefront Church of the Unitarian Brotherhood was in the worst part of town, the West End, where I would be born and grow up. Great-grandpa had been raised by an African Methodist Episcopal preacher father and mother in Arkansas and had been educated and taught at a small black college there, but he had chosen not to be ordained in the AME church. He had embraced Unitarianism because he was a very independent thinker, yet he retained for the rest of his life his parents' dedication to helping poor black people. The white ministers who came to visit his church, which was active from 1918 to 1938, didn't care about all that. They said it was wrong for a Unitarian church to be in a "rowdy neighborhood" and turned their backs on it, eliminating any chance for help for the poor of Cincinnati from the denomination and denying Great-grandpa his rightful place in church history.

In 1998, six decades after the all-but-forgotten little church closed, the Rev. Sharon Dittmar mentioned my great-grandfather and his congregation in her sermon one Sunday, setting off the events that led to the racial reconciliation weekend for the Carter descendants and the members of two Unitarian congregations in Cincinnati.

I was very excited about the event. I had gone to First Unitarian for about a year when I was a teenager in the mid-'60s, but I had been treated much like my great-grandfather. I lived in the wrong neighborhood for my Unitarian friends to attend my birthday party, even though the church building was located within walking distance of my house. It is that way with a lot of old churches, both black and white, in central city locations. The parishioners drive in from the suburbs, arrive at about 10:45 a.m. and get back in their cars at about 12:15. The people who live next door to their churches could be people who live on the moon, for all some parishioners know.

Dittmar was trying to change that. She was looking for a way to bring her church into the neighborhood. With her urging, the congregation decided to make the Carter weekend the launching pad for a new commitment to better race relations.

This was all great to me, partly because I thought that someone else would be doing the work and organizing, and all I had to do was fly to Cincinnati from Dallas and enjoy myself. At the Greater Cincinnati Airport, I hugged my sister and niece from New York City, whom I had not seen in years, and we blissfully waited in the airport terminal for Cousin Leslie Edwards to show up and give us a ride to the home of the Unitarian couple with whom we would be staying for the weekend. Things were fine until Leslie turned to me as we were driving over one of Cincinnati's many bridges over the Ohio River and said, "Now, I want you to give the family's response on Sunday." Without thinking, I said I would. This was a family elder asking me to do this. It was a request for which there could be no answer but the affirmative.

Then I thought about what Leslie was asking me, and my stomach dropped. As part of the service on Sunday the Unitarians would give a formal apology to my family for what had happened to my great-grandfather. Leslie wanted me to respond to that apology. I felt honored, humbled, and terrified all at the same time. As if he could feel my feelings, Leslie added as an afterthought, "I know you can write something real good." That was it. My fate was sealed.

---

As we gathered at the church for a special dinner, I couldn't fully relax and enjoy anything. I looked into the faces of my relatives, who were, as usual, running around greeting each other, hugging and talking nonstop in everything from gentle southern inflections to clipped, brusque bursts. They didn't see me often, so there were emotional reunions, and there was too much confusion to get people's guidance about what to say on Sunday.

There was so much to do. I owed my sisters and niece time alone after we had been apart for years. I owed my grandmother a brief visit. She still lives in the apartment I had visited as a child, only now ruins surround her building. They are tearing down the old projects to make way for "mixed-use" housing. We had had mixed-use housing in those projects full of families and old folks when I was a child. The twenty-first-century incarnation of "mixed-use" housing would include single young professionals, families, old folks, and, for the first time in the more than sixty years my grandmother had lived in her apartment, lots of white people. I returned to discover that my childhood homes were about to be wiped out in the name of economic revitalization. Part of my life was being erased. It made me sad.

Sunday morning, I got up hours before anyone. I was counting on the deadline-pressure response I had cultivated for more than twenty years as a journalist to kick in. I had snatched moments riding in cars from event to event to write notes about what I wanted to say, far more than what I thought I needed for the service. Now it was just a matter of typing them out and cutting down the material. Had I waited too long? I was afraid I had. The fear allowed me to tune out everything except the writing before me.

All Carters — regardless of whether they are Muslims, Baptists, Pentecostals, African Methodist Episcopalians, Unitarians, Buddhists, Catholics, agnostics, atheists, or something I haven't heard about yet — share one Unitarian lesson handed down from Great-grandpa. It is: Think for yourself. I felt that every single one of them from the oldest to the youngest child could formulate a thoughtful response to the Unitarians, each of which would be eloquent and totally different. I love my family, but the clan is a tough crowd and loves debate. I soon closed those thoughts out of my mind and tried to feel their collective wish (at least the majority wish) for our response. I was saving my last version of my remarks on the computer when everyone in the house came downstairs fully dressed for church. I was in my pajamas! I jumped up with the speech hot off the computer printer and got dressed in record time.

Carters streamed into the church. About 600 people were there that morning, including 125 Carters, who made up the majority of the black people present. The minister asked us to stand by generations. Only two of the original fifteen Carter children are still alive, and both were there. My mom's first cousins, beautiful yellow-brown silver-haired little women who look just like



her, hovered over me all weekend. They gave me strength and the power of knowing that someone loved my mother when she was a girl and still remembered her as she was in all the stages of her life. One of them held my hand as I waited to say my piece.

Leslie, being Leslie, didn't tell me when I was supposed to speak. The service progressed, and I relaxed for a few minutes. Then Dittmar called Leslie to the podium and he called my name, "Starita" (with an implied, "you come on up here now"), just as if I was a little girl being called forth to recite her ABCs or a poem in school.

---

It felt good to be called that way, and it grounded me. I was doing my part for my family where I knew my place in the world. I felt my great-grandparents, as I often do, watching me, encouraging me. I looked up and through the glare of the lighting, I saw the Old Ones, their weathered dark African and American Indian faces shining with silent love and dignity, watching from above the crowd. Whenever they show up, I am attempting something important and difficult, and they know I need their support to accomplish it. Then I looked down at my sisters and niece and the little old women who look just like my mom and spoke for our family.

"Our shared identity as Carters has everything to do with the principles and struggles of W.H.G. and Beulah Carter," I said, invoking the names of my great-grandparents. "Being a Carter means something specific and life-affirming to all of us and helps determine how we see ourselves as human beings."

I touched on my family's European, African, and Native American heritage and said, "we are fifteen different colors, but we are all one family." Just then I heard some affirming *amens* and *hmphs* from the Carters, and that let me know I was doing okay by my family. This was good, because I was fully aware that it takes some nerve to stand in somebody's church and even suggest that I might be able to tell them what to do. Yet I had to do it, or I would let my great-grandparents and my family down. Great-grandpa would have done it forcefully. I knew that from the little books he had written. I took a deep breath and gathered myself from all the way down in my toes.

"In recent years, there has been a wave of apologies to black people for everything from slavery to neglect of Africa. The reaction among many blacks to apologies from groups like the Southern Baptists, a denomination founded on the support of slavery, has been mixed. We read the headlines and we say, 'So, what changes now?' Many black people know that race is still a factor in nearly every option we have in life — how we earn our living, where we live, what house or car we can buy, how our children are educated, where we go to church, or whether we eschew church altogether. I look at efforts like this W.H.G. Carter reconciliation weekend here in Cincinnati as different from the rest of the apologies, perhaps, because I expect more from Unitarians than Southern Baptists." The Unitarians laughed so long and loudly I had to stop speaking until it died down. I continued, "It is very meaningful to me that you took the initiative to acknowledge a history that must be embarrassing for you and to attempt to make amends in the present for what was wrong in the past."

Then I said that the Carter family accepted the apology, and this big sigh of relief came from the ministers gathered behind me. I guess they were worried that we wouldn't accept their apology until we actually said we would. I challenged the Unitarians to continue on their quest for reconciliation and to face the complex issues of race forthrightly. Then I heard applause, and I was enveloped in this gigantic hug from a black-robed Dittmar who had to lean over to do it because she is tall, and I'm short. When the hug seemed to go on a beat or two too long, it dawned on me that she was crying and leaning on me for support. I was pretty much a pile of emotional jelly myself. The male ministers, including the Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed, the black Unitarian minister from Toronto whose book first publicized my great-grandpa's ministry, bent over and hugged me, too.

**Starita Smith**, after more than twenty years writing for newspapers, now teaches composition at the University of North Texas in Denton, where she is studying for a master's degree in creative writing.

**UUWORLD**  
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION  
UU World XVI:3 (May/June 2002): 31-33



## Appendix H

### Reparations for the 1921 Tulsa, OK Race Riot 2001 Action of Immediate Witness

<http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/socialjustice/statements/13999.shtml>

Guided by our commitment to justice and by the findings and recommendations of The Tulsa Race Riot, A Report by the Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921; and

Because our Tulsan Unitarian Universalist forebears witnessed an atrocity of ethnic cleansing for which we are responsible to account, to reconcile and to repair; and

Whereas the Tulsa Race Riot is consistent with a pattern of assaults and riots in many communities across America; and

Whereas, following the Tulsa Tribune's editorial suggesting the probability of a lynching in Tulsa that night, frenzy spread throughout Tulsa. That evening, in the presence of two thousand white Tulsans, seventy-five African American World War I veterans met the sheriff at the courthouse, offering to protect a young black man jailed for assaulting a white elevator operator based on accusations that were later recanted; and

Whereas, after rioting began, the City of Tulsa Police Department deputized five hundred members of the white mob, and the State of Oklahoma mobilized units of the National Guard armed with the city's machine gun mounted on a flatbed truck; and

Whereas the District of Greenwood's citizens defended their community through the nighttime hours and faced at daylight an overwhelming assault by five thousand to ten thousand white Tulsans, whom the Ku Klux Klan probably helped to mobilize; and

Whereas the mob systematically emptied homes, detained residents, murdered those found to be armed, looted homes and businesses, and then burned them down resulting in:

- Around three hundred deaths, according to the official report of the Red Cross,
- Forty square blocks burned to the ground including 1,265 homes, as well as hospitals, schools, and churches,
- One hundred and fifty businesses leveled in the district known as Black Wall Street, and
- Six thousand black Tulsans detained; and

Whereas the Commission has now submitted its report to the governor of Oklahoma on February 28, 2001, and the Tulsa Reparations Coalition has just launched a campaign to implement the Commission's recommendations in the coming year, because the 118 survivors of the 1921 Riot are dying;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the 2001 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association endorses the recommendations of the Commission as stated in its final report:

1. The direct payment of reparations to survivors of the Tulsa Race Riot;
2. The direct payment of reparations to descendants of the victims and of the survivors of the Tulsa Race Riot;
3. The establishment of a scholarship fund available to students affected by the Tulsa Race Riot;
4. The establishment of an economic development enterprise zone in the historic area of the Greenwood District; and
5. The creation of a memorial for the reburial of any human remains found in the search for unmarked graves of riot victims.

## Appendix I

**Donald Skinner**

**“UUs lead as riot survivors receive payments in Tulsa.”**  
***UU World 16:3 (May/June 2002): 45-46; reprinted with permission.***

Leadership by Tulsa, Oklahoma, Unitarian Universalist congregations, supported by a \$20,000 contribution from the Unitarian Universalist Association, has made it possible for 130 elderly African-American survivors of a 1921 race riot in Tulsa to begin to be compensated for that devastating experience. It appears to be only the second time in U.S. history that survivors of racist violence have received compensation payments.

The 130 survivors, all over the age of eighty, received checks for about \$215 in March from Tulsa Metropolitan Ministries (TMM). The Rev. Marlin Lavanhar, senior minister of All Souls Unitarian Church, Tulsa, is chair of TMM's Committee Against Racism, which was instrumental in the creation of the payment plan.

In June 1921 a white mob of several thousand rampaged through the Green-wood section of Tulsa, then a prosperous black area, burning about forty square blocks of homes, businesses, and churches. Estimates of those killed range from 38 to 300. Property damage was estimated at \$1.6 million, which in today's dollars would amount to more than \$16 million.

In the mid 1990s, after decades of silence, black legislators persuaded the state to investigate the riot. In April 2001, a state commission recommended five forms of reparations, including direct payments to survivors. That plan remains unfunded, but it helped inspire the Tulsa religious community to move ahead with its own plan.

In November 2001 TMM, at the request of Lavanhar's committee, authorized collecting donations for payments to survivors. There was a sense of urgency. "In recent months seven of the survivors had died," said Lavanhar. "We didn't have years to discuss this. We had to take immediate action."

The first contribution was the \$20,000 from the UUA's James Reeb Fund for supporting victims of racism. Other contributions include more than \$5,000 from All Souls Tulsa and \$1,200 from Church of the Restoration, a UU church established in 1988 in the former riot district. "We're only a congregation of fifty people," says the Rev. Gerald Davis of Restoration. "For us to raise \$1,200 was remarkable. This has been a long road, but there's a good collaborative spirit. It feels like a movement." Tulsa's two other UU congregations, Community UU Congregation and Hope Unitarian, are also committed to the effort.

The \$28,048 collected by March was all disbursed to survivors. The plan is to make distributions quarterly if donations on hand total at least \$100 per survivor. Contributions should be made to Tulsa Metropolitan Ministries, 221 S. Nogales, Tulsa, OK 74127.

The Tulsa UU and the UUA donations are consonant with an Action of Immediate Witness recommending reparations approved by delegates to the 2001 UUA General Assembly.

The new payments are not being called reparations because to do so might bar the survivors from participating in a contemplated class-action lawsuit to obtain reparations from the state or city, Lavanhar said. Instead, the payments are being called “a gift to acknowledge that reparations are owed.”

Lavanhar said the reparations gift fund had generated discussions in many churches, synagogues, and religious groups in Tulsa. “The fund was an act of conscience by the religious community,” he said, “a way of inspiring the rest of the community to come forward.” After TMM’s fund was announced, a task force of the Tulsa Chamber of Commerce announced it was also starting a fund, to try to raise \$5,000 per survivor.

Lavanhar has been spokesperson for the payment effort. “It’s been good publicity for our church and for the UUA,” he said. “The community knows we’re standing behind this issue. Most of all, it’s been a significant step in furthering the process of healing, justice, and reconciliation in our city.”

“The gift payments give us an opportunity to write one of the last chapters of the story,” says Lavanhar. In an opinion piece in the *Tulsa World*, he wrote, “Tulsans today are playing a part in the final chapter in the lives of the remaining survivors. If we do it well, we can make it an uplifting story of values, courage, integrity, and love. It can be an intergenerational, multi-ethnic, interfaith endeavor, just the kind of effort the world needs right now.”

For most of history, reparations have been something that was paid by losers to victors in war. But more and more they are compensation paid to those who have suffered loss of life, property, or cultural identity.

Just after the Civil War Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman proposed that each freed slave be given “forty acres and a mule.” Congress and President Andrew Johnson refused.

A century later, calls for black reparations came during the Black Power movement of the 1960s. In 1988 the issue of reparations came to the attention of the American people when Congress authorized restitution to 80,000 Japanese Americans who had been interned during World War II. Each survivor got \$20,000.

In the past several years a coalition of prominent civil rights lawyers—the Reparations Coordinating Committee has begun planning national legal action on behalf of the descendants of America’s slaves. One committee member, Charles Ogletree Jr. of Harvard Law School, has said in interviews that reparations would not take the form of “a check in the mail,” but would probably be a renewed emphasis on solving urban problems such as unemployment, poor health care, and an inadequate education system, all of which harm African Americans disproportionately. Bills have been introduced in Congress to establish a national commission on slave reparations and formulate a national apology for slavery but none has made much progress.

Aetna Inc., the nation’s largest health insurer, has apologized in recent years for selling policies in the 1850s that reimbursed slave owners for financial losses when their slaves died. The *Hartford Courant* newspaper in Connecticut has published a front-page apology for running

ads for slave sales and the recapture of runaways in the 1700s and 1800s. Such ads were common before the Civil War. Canada and the U.S. have paid millions to Native American groups for persecution in past centuries. The German, Austrian, and Swiss governments have apologized for actions toward Jews during the Nazi persecution.

There has apparently been only one case in the U.S. where monetary reparations have been made to blacks as the result of racist violence. In 1994 the state of Florida paid nine survivors of the 1923 Rosewood massacre, in which an entire black town was destroyed by angry whites, \$150,000 each.

In addition to its \$20,000 contribution, the UUA has provided \$5,000 for anti-oppression and antiracism efforts in Tulsa. UUA President Bill Sinkford said, "I am delighted we're able to be supportive of the energy in our congregations in Tulsa. This is a model of how the UUA can do its most effective justice-making work in partnership with congregations. Unitarian Universalism has once again taken a leading role in justice making."

He noted that Unitarian Universalists are often able to recognize racism sooner than others because of the antiracism work done both by the denomination and by congregations. "We may have a higher level of consciousness on the impact of racism and its presence in the institutions of this culture. This is a sign of our success in this area."

## Appendix J

### Further Resources

Anne C. Bailey, *African Voices of the Atlantic Slave Trade: Beyond the Silence and the Shame*. (Beacon Press: Boston, 2005)

Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley and Nancy Palmer Jones, eds. *Soul Work: Anti-Racist Theologies in Dialogue*. (Skinner House Books: Boston, 2003)

Brad Christerson, Korie L. Edwards, and Michael O Emerson. *Against All Odds: The Struggle for Racial Integration in Religious Organizations*. (New York University Press: New York, 2005)

David Brion Davis. *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World*. (Oxford University Press, 2006)

Curtiss Paul DeYoung, Michael O Emerson, George Yancey, and Karen Chai Kim. *United By Faith: The Multiracial Congregation as an Answer to the Problem of Race*. (Oxford University Press: New York, 2003)

Thomas Norman DeWolf, *Inheriting the Trade: A Northern Family Confronts Its Legacy as the Largest Slave-Trading Dynasty in U.S. History*. (Beacon Press: Boston, 2008)  
<http://www.beacon.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=2020>

Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jennifer Frank. *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged and Profited from Slavery*. (Ballantine Books, 2005)

Alicia McNary Forsey, ed. *In Their Own Words: A Conversation with Participants in the Black Empowerment Movement within the Unitarian Universalist Association*. (Starr King School for the Ministry: Berkeley, 2001) [www.sksm.edu/research/publications.php](http://www.sksm.edu/research/publications.php)

Allan G. Johnson. *Privilege, Power, and Difference*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. (Mayfield Publishing Company: Mountain View, CA, 2001)

Ira Katznelson. *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth Century America*. (Norton, 2005)

Paul Kivel. *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice*. (New Society Publishers: Gabriola Island, BC, 2002)

Jane Lazarre, *Beyond the Whiteness of Whiteness: Memoir of a White Mother of Black Sons*. (Duke University Press: Durham, 1996)

Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "Race" In New England, 1780-1860*. (Cornell University Press, 1998)

Mark D. Morrison-Reed. *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*. (Skinner House Books: Boston, 1980)

Orlando Patterson, *Rituals of Blood: Consequences of Slavery in Two American Centuries*. (Civitas/Counterpoint: Washington, 1998)

*Slave Reparations: The Final Passage*. (Crabtree Pictures, 2004)

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/leaderslibrary/27194.shtml>

Thandeka, *Learning to Be White: Money, Race, and God in America*. (Continuum: New York, 2000)

*Unitarian Universalism and the Quest for Racial Justice*. (Unitarian Universalist Association: Boston, 1993)