

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SAN DIEGO

Journey Toward Wholeness Team

BELOVED CONVERSATIONS: VIRTUAL - WITHIN

UPDATED/NEWLY RELEASED

Information for Potential Participants - Fall 2020

September 5, 2020

ABOUT *BELOVED CONVERSATIONS*

- *Beloved Conversations*—the signature offering of The Fahs Collaborative at Meadville Lombard Theological School—is a program for Unitarian Universalists seeking to embody racial justice as a spiritual practice. In *Beloved Conversations*, we are here to heal the impact of racism on our lives, in order to get free together.
- The traditional, in-person version of *Beloved Conversations* has been offered in more than 200 congregations across the continent over the past decade & many communities made the program a part of their faith formation & social justice work. The Fahs Collective always hoped to expand the program out further & to create an online version, for increased accessibility & to include folks for whom the in-person program was not a good fit. With the in-person program suspended, *Beloved Conversations* program staff immediately began revisioning a program that could be offered virtually. This original version may or may not be offered in the future.
- First UU was in the middle of our 3rd cohort of the original format (required retreat + 8 2-hour sessions) when in-person congregational activities were suspended. 65 completed the program & 21 were mid-way through when the program was suspended.

ABOUT the BRAND-NEW PROGRAM: *BELOVED CONVERSATIONS: VIRTUAL (BCV)*

- First UU was pleased to discover that feedback from our *Beloved Conversations* experiences has been integrated into this new program. Because anti-racism work is a lifelong commitment, we're excited about this next step in moving our congregation forward in our work. **The significant changes will ensure a different, deeper experience for our Black/Indigenous/People of Color (BIPOC) & our non-BIPOC (White) participants.**
- All are encouraged to attend this entirely new program including those who were in one of First UU's 3 in-person cohorts.
- BCV is designed & intended for online participation in the 2020-2021 church year, with many updated & improved new features:
 - A digital format that allows users to participate as individuals, to prepare for congregational & community-level systemic work
 - An opportunity to engage in lots of different styles of learning & processing
 - Teaching & learning strategies & small group structures organized by racial/ethnic affiliation ("caucuses"), allowing differentiated learning for BIPOC as well as for non-BIPOC
 - Explicit resources developed to meet the intellectual, historical, & spiritual needs of BIPOC living in a world (& a religious community) that privileges white cultural norms.
 - Separate focused material for religious professionals (ministers/seminarians, religious educators, musicians, church administrators, & other paid staff), including opportunities to meet in religious professional-only spaces

- A framework that acknowledges & honors the spiritual nature of this work & an understanding that it is essential to our personal & religious development.
- **Phased Roll-Out** over the next several church years, beginning in September 2020—released in three phases:
 - ***Within*** (the individual, personal work we each need to do as we engage in racial justice—which is different for BIPOC & for non-BIPOC folks);
 - ***Among*** (the institutional, systemic change needed in our congregations); &
 - ***Beyond*** (the work outside our congregations, with our local communities)
- **Within (Phase 1):**
 - Fall 2020 registration open now
 - Can sign up as an individual or as a congregational group. (**First UU will sign up as a congregation in order to receive a group discount**—if enough folks complete our sign-up form.)
 - Separate courses for BIPOC & non-BIPOC folks done entirely in race-based caucuses in recognition of the vast differences in our spiritual & learning need
 - Includes:
 - > individual **Lessons** using videos, music, & readings, accompanied by reflection prompts & suggested conversations with **Critical Friends** chosen by participants;
 - > bi-weekly small group/**Learning Pod** conversations;
 - > larger, monthly, facilitated **Meaning-Making Sessions** on Zoom;
 - > separate materials, caucus-based Learning Pod gatherings, & Meaning Making Sessions for religious professionals & paid staff .
 - 2 separate terms—Fall & Spring—containing different content. Participants can sign up for one or both & may begin in Fall 2020 or Spring 2021.
- **Learning Goals & Outcomes**
 - By the end of this program, participants will be more clear about their own racial identity & personal history in relationship to racial justice.
 - The curriculum offers tools & strategies to continue to deepen participants’ learning & commitment to racial justice.
 - This first phase of the work will better prepare participants to engage in the next phases—Among & Beyond—where we’ll start to look at how race, racism, & white supremacy impact the systems of our congregations & communities & work together to shift them. Completing *Within* is required to be eligible for *Among & Beyond*.
 - While personal work is an essential precursor to systemic work, it’s also a worthy & needed focus in its own right & should not be seen only as a means to an end.
 - The aim of this program is to underline that racial justice work is the work of our lifetime & we engage it in different ways. There is no rush & no deadline. Everyone has work to do & all will have different learning goals & outcomes.
- **Centering the SPIRITUAL needs of BIPOC:**
 - BIPOC work has been a neglected conversation, as much anti-racism work has been focused on the learning needs of non-BIPOC/white folks. For those who identify as BIPOC, there’s a need to understand the impact of racism in their lives—particularly their spiritual lives—& the choices made to survive. This is very exciting work—conversations some of the writing team have been waiting FOREVER to have!
 - In this curriculum, BIPOC will look at issues such as:
 - > how & why Unitarian Universalist values matter to them,

- > how race has shaped their personal & communal lives,
- > the dynamics of why & how they stay in the faith, &
- > what a theology for people of color in a white world might look like.
- Non-BIPOC work focuses on gaining a deeper understanding of how they've been indoctrinated by patterns of white supremacy culture to believe in their superiority & to not understand their own complicity in structures of racism & oppression.
- In this curriculum non-BIPOC will look at:
 - > the ways they benefit from structural racism,
 - > endeavor to deeply understand the spiritual harm of white supremacy on their own lives, making it impossible for them to see the world as it really is & very challenging to engage in healthy relationships across difference.
 - > What are the barriers to & complexities of following the leadership of BIPOC in racial justice?
 - > How can they gain courage & learn practices for sitting with discomfort?
 - > How are spiritual skills for resilience & long-haul commitment to liberation developed?

PROGRAM STRUCTURE & PACING

- 2 Within Terms - Fall 2020 & Spring 2021:
 - Each contains different content.
 - May begin either in Fall or in Spring.
 - ONLY Fall 2020 registration open now.
 - Must complete *Within* to be eligible to participate in *Among & Beyond*.
- Each term consists of:
 - **6 online Lessons** with resources for learning, including videos, readings, music, & artistic resources, as well as questions for reflection & projects to explore your inner landscape vis-a-vis racial justice:
 - > Available via the learning platform Teachable
 - > New Lessons become available approximately every 2 weeks, starting October 1.
 - > Participants may take as much time as needed with each Lesson.
 - > Lesson content will be available for up to a year following the start of the term.
 - > Estimated 2.5 hours for reading/watching/listening to Lesson resources & doing personal reflection.
 - > Given the additional challenges of leading anti-racism work in congregations & communities, religious professionals will be sorted into & gathering in caucus-based religious professional-only Learning Pods & Meaning-Making Sessions.
 - **6 Learning Pod Gatherings** where participants engage this material in small groups of 4-5 other folks from the Fall Term learning community.
 - > Pods will be self-facilitated & meet approximately every two weeks online.
 - > A suggested agenda & discussion questions for your Learning Pod will be included in each Lesson.
 - > 2 ways to form Learning Pod:
 - Random placement by *Beloved Conversations* staff with others in your time zone & racial caucus (from other congregations) OR
 - Participants send names & email addresses for those they're already in relation with who they want to be in a Pod with.

- > You'll receive an email with contact information for the members of your Learning Pod after 9/20.
 - > Your Learning Pod determines day & time to meet.
 - > Estimated 1.5 hours with your Learning Pod (every 2 weeks).
- **4 Meaning-Making Sessions** where racial caucuses come together in a large caucus-based group via Zoom to worship, learn, & share our evolving understanding of this journey:
 - > Facilitated by members of the Fahs Team & their partners.
 - > Participants choose 1 of 2 Zoom meeting dates/times designated for their racial caucus. (See "Important Dates" section for specific dates & times.)
 - > Recording of presentation parts of the sessions will be made in case a participant can't make either date.
 - > Estimated 1.5 hours for each live session (4 times over 3 months).

IMPORTANT DATES - WITHIN - FALL 2020

Overview:

- **September 1 – 10: First UU Sign-Up Form registration.** (If you miss the 9/10 due date, contact Jan Garbosky (jgarbosky@cox.net) & she'll try to add you to the First UU group. If it's not possible, you can still register as an individual.)
- **September 11 – 14: First UU submits # of participants to *Beloved Conversations* & requests discount &/or sliding scale & scholarships.**
- **September 15 – 20 & based on instructions from Jan Garbosky:**
 - Registration & payment for participation in the Fall Term.
 - A Welcome & Orientation Lesson will be available on the learning platform to those who have registered & paid.
- **October 1:** The first **Lesson** drops onto the learning platform for individual study & reflection at your own pace (followed every two weeks by Lessons 2-6).
- **Ongoing:** Small Group **Learning Pod** gatherings, every two weeks online

Specific Meaning-Making Session Dates by Caucus Group & Participant Group: When registering online with *Beloved Conversations*, participants must choose one date/time per session (1-4) to participate in a Zoom gathering. **Presentation parts of the sessions will be recorded & posted for those who can't make either Session date.** The discussion/conversation portions will not be recorded. When registering with *Beloved Conversations*, you must select a date/time for each session. Pick one & know you'll really watch that session's recording once it's posted.

- **BIPOC Laypeople**
 - Session 1: Sat, **October 3** at 2:00 - 3:00 pm (EDT)/**11:00 am-12:00 pm (PDT)**
OR Tue, **October 6** at 8:00 - 9:00 pm (EDT)/**5:00-6:00 pm (PDT)**
 - Session 2: Thu, **October 22** at 8:00 - 9:00 pm (EDT)/**5:00-6:00 pm (PDT)**
OR Mon, **October 26** at 2:00 - 3:00 pm (EDT)/**11:00 am-12:00 pm**
 - Session 3: Thu, **November 19** at 8:00 - 9:30 pm (EST)/**5:00-6:30 pm (PST)**
OR Sat, **November 21** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EST)/**11:00 am-12:30 pm (PST)**
 - Session 4: Thu, **December 3** at 8:00 - 9:30 pm (EST)/**5:00-6:30 pm (PST)**
OR Sat, **December 5** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EST)/**11:00 am-12:30 (PST)**

- **BIPOC Religious Professionals**
 - Session 1: Thu, **October 1** at 10:00 - 11:00 am (EDT)/**7:00-8:00 am (PDT)**
OR Fri, **October 2** at 1:00 - 2:00 pm (EDT)/**10:00-11:00 am (PDT)**
 - Session 2: Mon, **October 19** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EDT)/**11:00 am-12:30 pm (PDT)**
OR Thur, **October 29** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EDT)/**11:00 am-12:30 pm (PDT)**
 - Session 3: Mon, **November 16** at 10:30 am – Noon (EST)/**7:30 am – 9:00 am (PST)**
or Thu, **November 19** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EST)/**11:00 am – 12:30 pm (PST)**
 - Session 4: Mon, **November 30** at 10:30 am – Noon/(EST)/**7:30 – 9:00 am (PST)**
or Thu, **December 3** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EST)/**11:00 am – 12:30 pm (PST)**

- **Non-BIPOC/White Laypeople**
 - Session 1: Sat, **October 3** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EDT)/**11:00 am – 12:30 pm (PDT)**
OR Tue, **October 6** at 8:30 - 10:00 pm (EDT)/**5:30 – 7:00 pm (PDT)**
 - Session 2: Wed, **October 21** at 8:30 - 10:00 pm (EDT)/**5:30 – 7:00 pm (PDT)**
OR Sat, **October 24** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EST)/**11:00 am – 12:30 pm (PDT)**
 - Session 3: Sat, **November 21** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EST)/**11:00 am – 12:30 pm (PST)**
OR Mon, **November 23** at 8:30 - 10:00 pm (EST)/**5:30 – 7:00 pm (PST)**
 - Session 4: Wed, **December 16** at 8:30 - 10:00 pm (EST)/**5:30 – 7:00 pm (PST)**
OR Sat, **December 19** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EST)/**11:00 am – 12:30 pm (PST)**

- **Non-BIPOC/White Religious Professionals**
 - Session 1: Thu, **October 8** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EDT)/**11:00 am – 12:30 pm (PDT)**
OR Fri, **October 9** at 5:00-6:30 pm (EDT)/**2:00 – 3:30 pm (PDT)**
 - Session 2: Wed, **October 21** at 5:00-6:30 pm (EDT)/**2:00 – 3:30 pm (PDT)**
OR Thu, **October 22** at Noon - 1:30 pm (EDT)/**9:00 – 10:30 am (PDT)**
 - Session 3: Thu, **November 19** at 5:00 - 6:30 pm (EST)/**2:00 – 3:30 pm (PST)**
OR Fri, **November 20** at 1:30 - 3:00 pm (EST)/**10:30 am – Noon (PST)**
 - Session 4: Wed, **December 16** at 5:00 - 6:30 pm (EST)/**2:00 – 3:30 pm (PST)**
OR Thu, **December 17** at 2:00 - 3:30 pm (EST)/**11:00 am – 12:30 pm (PST)**

TENTATIVE Dates for Spring Term 2021 - Within:

- February 1 - 20: Registration & payment for participation in the Spring Term
- Beginning of March: First Lesson drops onto website, Meaning Making Session 1
- Mid-March: First Learning Pod Meetings, Meaning Making Session 2
- Mid-April: Meaning Making Session 3
- Mid-May: Meaning Making Session 4/Spring Term Wrap-Up
- Ongoing: Online Lessons, released every two weeks
- Ongoing: Small Group Learning Pod Meetings, every two weeks

**QUESTIONS YOU'LL EVENTUALLY NEED TO ANSWER WHEN REGISTERING
with *Beloved Conversations* (after Jan Garbosky gives the go-ahead)**

QUESTION 1: *Do you want to be in a Learning Pod (small group of 4-5 people, who you'll meet with virtually every two weeks) with people you already know who are also signing up for the program?
Or sorted into a Learning Pod with people you may not already know?*

Reminder: *It's important to note that since the entire Within Phase will take place in racial identity-based groups, you'll only be in a Learning Pod with other people who share your racial identity (BIPOC or non-BIPOC/White).*

Being in a caucus-based Learning Pod with people you ALREADY KNOW might look like:

- Forming a Pod with up to 4 other folks from your congregation or community
- Forming a Pod with up to 4 other religious professionals who you're already in conversation with on this topic
- Forming a pod with up to 4 people who you only get to see at GA or other national gatherings

NOTE: **If you choose this option, you'll need to indicate on your registration form the names & emails of the other people you'd like to be in a Pod with & you'll eventually need to figure out amongst yourselves when the best times/dates to meet will be.**

Being in a caucus-based Learning Pod with people you *may NOT* ALREADY KNOW might look like:

- Being sorted into a pod with other people who share the same time zone
- Being sorted into a pod with other people who share your same date/time preference for your meetings
- Having a chance to talk with people whose perspective or experiences may be different from the folks with whom you already discuss these topics

NOTE: **If you choose this option, you'll pick a preference for a day & time on your form & we will do our best to sort you into a Pod with other people who share those same preferences, but you will eventually still need to schedule the exact dates & times for yourselves as a Pod.**

QUESTION 2: *What are your day & time preferences for meeting in a Learning Pod?*

If you choose the option to be sorted into a Learning Pod with people you DO NOT ALREADY KNOW, you'll need to indicate your best option for a day of the week to meet & whether you prefer Daytime or Evening. With this information, *Beloved Conversations* will do their best to place you into a Learning Pod with other people whose schedules are complementary.

QUESTION 3: *Which of the two time/date options for the Meaning-Making Sessions will you sign up for?*

For each of the four Meaning-Making Sessions throughout the Fall, indicate which of the 2 time/date options (listed above under **Important Dates for Fall Term 2020**) you plan on joining so *Beloved Conversations* can send you the information when it comes time to join the Zoom call for that Session. **If neither date/time work for you, select one anyway. When the recording for that session is posted, you'll be able to watch on your own.**

FALL 2020 PRICING GUIDE

Notes/Caveats:

- Prices are per term—Fall Term & Spring Term will have different content. Spring 2021 prices may differ from Fall 2020.
- You may participate in one or both but only Fall 2020 registration is open now.
- Sliding Scale & Scholarships available. No one will be turned away. **(JTW will do everything possible to raise funds to defray per/individual cost.)**
- Discount of 10% overall if First UU has a group of 10-19 or 20% of total of 20 or more register.
 - **MUST sign up FIRST via First UU form.**
 - **If we qualify for a discount, Jan Garbosky will let *Beloved Conversations* know & will receive a coupon code to enter when you register with *Beloved Conversations*.**
 - **DO NOT register on the *Beloved Conversations* until you hear from Jan Garbosky!**

Phase 1 Individual Pricing:

- Laypeople (18 & older):
 - **\$150 base**/\$200 with reparations (see below)
 - Sliding Scale = whatever you can pay
 - Full Scholarship = \$0
- Religious Professionals/Paid Staff:
 - **\$200 base**/\$250 with reparations (see below)
 - Sliding Scale = whatever you can pay
 - Full Scholarship = \$0

Pricing Notes:

- Reparations Note: Non-BIPOC/white participants are encouraged to consider paying an additional \$50, in recognition of the historic legacy of racist economic policies & the ways in which generational wealth & greater access to economic opportunity have privileged non-BIPOC/white people as a group for hundreds of years to help to provide scholarships to those who couldn't participate otherwise. *Beloved Conversations* will use these extra funds to provide scholarships to those who need it to participate in this program.
- Interdependence Note: Regardless of your racial identity, if your class privilege/professional expense budget allows you to pay more so others may pay less, please consider adding an additional contribution to your total. *Beloved Conversations* will use these extra funds to provide scholarships to those who need it to participate in this program.
- Equity Note: Regardless of racial identity, sliding scale pricing & full scholarships are available to those who need them. This includes religious professionals who do not have access to professional expenses or whose professional expense budget is limited.

**Please complete & submit the First UU Sign-Up/Interest form to Jan Garbosky
(jgarbosky@cox.net)
NO LATER THAN Thursday, September 10, 2020.
??Questions?? Contact Jan**