

TORDA450 REFLECTION MODULE 3 (May 2018)

Freedom and Resistance

Note: This module is designed for a small-group setting. However, it can be adapted for individual use or for a larger group. For example, an individual could substitute journaling for small-group discussion. For assistance with adaptation, please contact international@uua.org.

MATERIALS

- Chalice, Candle and matches or LED battery operated candle
- Projector/Screen or computer monitor to play the April Theologian Panel discussion at the UUA UN Office Spring Seminar: You can find the archived dialogue [here](#). (Alternatively, participants could be invited to view the video before the small group session.)
- Projector/Screen or paper copies of
 - [Upcoming Torda450 Events](#)

LEADER PREPARATION

- Find some quiet time before beginning to ground yourself.
- Set out the chalice and prepare the projector and paper

OPENING (15 minutes)

- Welcome participants and light the chalice using these or similar words by: Rev. Christian Schmidt

Let us wake up. Not just from the morning exhaustion, from the wish for a few more drowsy minutes in bed. Let us wake up to this world we live in: to its beauty and wonder, and also to its tragedy and pain. We must wake up to this reality: that not all in our world have what we do, however much or little that is. We must wake up to the idea that our wholeness, our lives, are only as complete as the lives of those around us, of those we are inextricably tied to in a great web of mutuality, of which all of us are part. We must #staywoke, in the words of our friends and colleagues involved in working every day for racial justice in our country. Let us wake up, let us stay awake.

- Invite participants to share their names and to check in briefly about the last day or two—maximum of 1 minute each.

THEOLOGIANS PANEL DISCUSSION ON FREEDOM and RESISTANCE (90 minutes)

- If you intend to watch the panel video as a group, plan to do so now. You can find the archived dialogue [here](#). Alternatively, invite participants to watch the video before the small group session.

FOCUSED CHECK-IN (2 minutes per person)

- Invite participants to take a deep breath together and sit in silence, taking in the information shared during the webinar. Then, begin the focused check-in using the question, “How did the experience of the theologian panel discussion interact with your spiritual journey?”

REFLECTION (45 minutes)

- Invite each person to name the core theological ideas that motivate them toward working for justice. Give each person a few minutes to share without interruption, then invite open conversation about what was shared.
- Ellen Nugroho, in her keynote essay states that one of the foundations of the Unitarian faith in Indonesia, is “that all human lives are equally sacred and should be equally respected and protected.” Rev. Fulgence Ndagijimana refers to the same idea through the African concept of Ubuntu of “I am because others are.” Yet, Nugroho argues, “we...witness continually acts of injustice, manifestations of hypocrisy, falsehood, outrage, misery, but our moral indignation is short-lived” If both of these are true, what in yourself stops you from following in the footsteps of our prophetic forebears? How is it you interpret, “few are guilty, all are responsible”? What is your theological imperative to affect systemic change? What would your “subversive prayer” be? What would a revolutionary liturgical movement look like?
- Rupaia Lamarr articulates the Khasi Unitarian core belief in the “religion of love to humanity, love to God.” He also talks about “To Nangroi,” an understanding that humanity is always progressing, always moving forward. He argues that to love God, we must also love humanity. Or as he more accurately puts it, “If we are not able to love those who we see and interact with, how can we love God which is abstract?” Stephanie Mitchem, put it this way, “religious tolerance is not enough, we must learn to listen and to understand.” Lamarr states that from the Khasi & Jaintia Unitarian perspective, we must earn righteousness. What does that mean to you? How is it you imagine earning righteousness? Can you love that which is Holy, yet not love humanity as well? What does that love look like in action? What does To Nangroi - Keep Progressing mean to you?

- If you had to identify the source of your religious authority, what would that source be?

LOOKING AHEAD

- Distribute or project the schedule for the Torda450 Theological Dialogue: <https://www.uua.org/international/torda450/theological-reflection>.
- Reach agreement about any research or other exploration that participants will do before the next meeting.
- Remind the group of its next meeting date.

CLOSING READING (5 minutes)

Share these words: Cathy Rion Starr (adapted)

May we engage in the work of building beloved community sustained with love. May we engage in accountable relationships with those most impacted by the injustices we seek to address. May we engage with humility, passion, love, and determination. May we make a difference in our wider community. May we find in this faith of Unitarian Universalism the strength and power to carry on in creating that city of light.

Extinguish the chalice.

Torda450 Schedule

Online at

<https://www.uua.org/international/torda450/theological-reflection>

- **January 17, 2018 - Webinar and Reflection: Grounding and Context**

Begin the year of reflection with study and exploration of the history, context, and current relevance of the Anniversary of the Edict of Torda.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAOX22Uel2w&t=1s>

- **February Dialogue: Theology and U/U Identity**

The first of five formal gatherings of U/U theologians from around the world will take place in Kathmandu, Nepal during the Conference and Council meeting of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) on Wednesday, February 14. Join us live at 10 a.m. (US-Eastern) or watch an archived version later. This dialogue will focus on how Theology informs U/U Identity.

- **March Reflection: Theology and U/U Identity**

After watching the dialogue, engage in individual or **small group reflection** using a small group ministry module available here on March 1.

- **April 7, 2018 Dialogue: Freedom and Resistance**

The second gathering of our global theologians will take place at The Community Church (UU), New York City, on April 7, 2018 at 3pm (US-Eastern) as the final event of the annual **UU United Nations Office Spring Seminar**. Join us in person, online, or watch an archived copy of the discussion. This dialogue will focus on how U/U theology guides and sustains us as leaders and partners in #Resistance movements.

- **May Reflection: Freedom and Resistance**

After watching the dialogue, engage in individual or small group reflection using a small group ministry module available here on May 1.

- **June Webinar and Celebration: Reviewing the Dialogue and Celebrating During GA**

This month will be a chance to look back on what has emerged during the first 5 months of exploration. Join an online webinar reviewing what's been explored and shared. And, join us online or in person at [UUA General Assembly](#) in Kansas City for a special celebration of Torda450.

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://zoom.us/j/6179486412>

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +16465588656,,6179486412# or +16699006833,,6179486412#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 646 558 8656 or +1 669 900 6833

Meeting ID: 617 948 6412

International numbers available:

https://zoom.us/join?m=Od0ks_Qcm0_88pMJfwQsHxTnWbWcmCyg

- **July 8, 2018 Dialogue: Religious Freedom in the Era of Rising Intolerance**

The third gathering of our global theologians will be held in Kolozsvár, Transylvania (Romania) during the Inauguration of the Hungarian Unitarian Church's new Religious Freedom Center. Join us in person or online at 9 a.m. (US-Eastern) as the dialogue explores how Unitarian history, theology and practice can further the hope of religious liberty worldwide.

Later in the month, a multi-organization interreligious conference entitled '[Reimagining Interfaith Cooperation](#)' will take place in Washington, DC. Conference participants will have opportunities to engage each other in Torda450 themes. Join us!

- **August Reflection: Religious Freedom in the Era of Rising Intolerance**

After watching the dialogue, engage in individual or small group reflection using a small group ministry module available here on August 1.

- **September 22, 2018 Dialogue: The Role of Classical/Traditional Unitarianism in the 21st Century**

The fourth gathering of our global theologians will take place online, like a 21st century analog to the in-person Diet of Torda. Join us online at 3pm (US-Eastern) as the dialogue explores how Unitarian theology informs global U/Uism in the 21st century.

- **October Reflection: The Role of Classical/Traditional Unitarianism in the 21st Century**

After watching the dialogue, engage in individual or small group reflection using a small group ministry module available here on October 1.

- **November 1, 2018 Dialogue: The Challenges of 'Universality' and Multiple Spiritual Identities**

The location of the fifth and final gathering of the theologians is yet to be determined. However, the conversation will address Unitarian/Universalism's role in contexts where people have multiple spiritual identities.

- **December Reflection: The Challenges of 'Universality' and Multiple Spiritual Identities**

After watching the dialogue, engage in individual or small group reflection using a small group ministry module available here on December 1.

- **January 2019 Webinar: A Look Back, and a Look Ahead**

We'll gather online to explore what discoveries and understandings emerged through Torda450's Year of Dialogue, Study and Reflection.