

RENOVATING A HOUSE FOR HOPE: Theology for Unitarian Universalists Today

We Unitarian Universalists are sometimes told that we each have to ‘build our own theology.’ But before we ever arrived here, our forebears in liberal religion designed a framework of shared meaning by giving more progressive answers to classic theological questions. Though in need of some renovation, expansion, and updating, this “house for hope” endures, and can actually help us to identify commonalities that not only unite us across the various theological groupings we see within our own midst, but show us how much we have in common with other progressive religionists today. Drawing on his latest book, *A House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion in the 21st Century*, written with Rebecca Parker, John Buehrens will introduce participants to the structure of progressive religious thought in response to seven key questions in religion today, all in relation to their relevance to congregational life and contemporary issues.

Leading Through Change: The Practice of Adaptive Leadership

Congregations are living organisms that are constantly adapting and adjusting: members come and go, church programs evolve, staff turns over, demographic bubbles move through the organization, and new lay leaders are elected. In short, congregations are cauldrons of change. Meanwhile, many lay and professional leaders feel tremendous pressure to devise the perfect plan to manage the congregation in the midst of these changes, with the hope of keeping people happy.

Leading Through Change will help lay and professional leaders build the skills they need to lead in the midst of these pressures. The workshop will help leaders:

- use change as an opportunity to learn rather than a crisis to be solved
- reinvigorate congregational mission as a discernment and priority-setting tool
- identify how congregational systems react to change, and how leaders can work to build health in the system
- understand the conflicts that companion meaningful change
- identify spiritual resources for leadership

Faith Development in the 21st Century

Using current research studies such as the “Faith Formation 2020” report, we will explore the demographic and sociological trends that will have significant impact on the learning ministry of our congregations in the early part of the 21st century. Participants will hear about the latest models, share their own best practices, and have an opportunity to build a lifespan faith development strategy for a 21st century multigenerational, multicultural faith community.