

The Forum on Religion and Ecology Newsletter
7.10 (October 2013)

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1. Editorial, by Elizabeth McAnally

Greetings,

Welcome to the October issue of the newsletter for the Forum on Religion and Ecology. I have much to share with you this month with regards to developments in the field of Religion and Ecology, including publications, conferences, events, and more.

The EMMY® award-winning *Journey of the Universe* film is now available on iTunes and Reelhouse. The film and Conversations (formerly titled “Educational Series”) are also available on Amazon.com and a number of other online stores listed at: <http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/buy/>. The film has been translated into Spanish and the

book into French, Italian, and Korean. For a new Overview Statement of the *Journey* project, visit: http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/storage/JOTU_Overview_8-28-13.pdf

The *Emergent Universe Oratorio*, composed by Vermont composer and classical guitarist, Sam Guarnaccia, premiered on September 15th at the historic Shelburne Farms in Shelburne, Vermont, with over a thousand people in attendance. Based on the *Journey of the Universe* film, the *Oratorio* is a choral and chamber orchestra composition that tells the “New Story” of our emerging and expanding Universe through integrated recitatives woven amidst major choral works. The work was presented with a dramatic stage set of paintings by visual artist Cameron Davis. See below for more about this remarkable event.

A day-long conference on “Evolving Spirituality for the 21st Century” will be held at All Saints Parish in Brookline, MA on October 18, 2013. Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim will introduce the *Journey of the Universe* film, after which they will speak and then lead a discussion on the day’s theme. The afternoon group workshops will be introduced with a theological reflection by the artist and author Mary Coelho, and the day will close with a summary discussion. You can register at: <http://cmmjourneyoftheuniverse.eventbrite.com/>

I hope this newsletter supports your own work and helps you further your own engagements with the field of Religion and Ecology.

Warm wishes,
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2. Premiere of *Emergent Universe Oratorio* at Shelburne Farms

The *Emergent Universe Oratorio*, composed by Vermont composer and classical guitarist, Sam Guarnaccia, premiered on September 15th at the historic Shelburne Farms in Shelburne, Vermont. The response was unprecedented, with over a thousand people in attendance.

This groundbreaking work is based on the EMMY® award-winning documentary film, *Journey of the Universe*, written by evolutionary philosopher Brian Swimme and Yale University historian of religions, Mary Evelyn Tucker. The film expands upon the work of geologist Thomas Berry (*Dream of the Earth*, Sierra Club Books) and scientist and philosopher Teilhard deChardin, among others. *Journey of the Universe* has appeared on PBS stations around the country, and its themes and message are expanded upon in the book by the same name from Yale University Press and a 20-part educational DVD series, *Journey of the Universe: Conversations*.

Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, Yale University scholars and co-producers of the film *Journey of the Universe*, participated in the premiere weekend by hosting an invited salon to

discuss the themes that underlie both the *Journey* film and the *Oratorio*. They also appeared at a screening of *Journey of the Universe* on the Burlington waterfront that was followed by a lively discussion period.

The *Oratorio* is a choral and chamber orchestra composition that tells the “New Story” of our emerging and expanding Universe through integrated recitatives woven amidst major choral works. More than 50 area singers, musicians, and orators assembled to bring this composition to life, and the work was presented with a dramatic stage set of paintings from the series, *Endless Spring*, by visual artist Cameron Davis, of the University of Vermont. At a time when so much of the world is driven by technology and industry, Bill McKibben asks us, “Where is the art and music to express our troubled times?” Recognizing the need for an artistic expression of our human role in both the current crisis and the future flourishing of the planet, the *Oratorio* offered an opportunity for the gathered community to celebrate the magnificence of our home, planet Earth, through music and art and raise awareness of our responsibilities and the challenges ahead.

3. Chancellor Assesses UMass Boston Campus Environment During 2013 Convocation

By Colleen Locke
UMass Boston News
September 13, 2013

As UMass Boston Chancellor J. Keith Motley took stock of the university’s physical, academic, and cultural environment on Thursday, one of the winners of the university’s first Joint and Common Future Award identified UMass Boston as an institution from which others can learn. [...] Following his convocation address, Motley presented the inaugural Joint and Common Future Award to Yale University professors Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim. Motley said the co-directors of Yale’s Forum on Religion and Ecology have demonstrated years of commitment to “raising our consciousness of the interdependence of all things and a deeper dialogue between science and religion.” UMass is inaugurating a new School for the Environment this year.

Read the full article:

http://www.umb.edu/news/detail/chancellor_assesses_campus_environment_during_2013_convocation

Read the text of the chancellor’s remarks:

http://www.umb.edu/the_university/chancellor/communications/assessment_our_environment_2013_convocation_address

Watch the video of the chancellor’s remarks:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkOoc-lqpN8&feature=c4-overview&list=UUyXH8k7w7atZUXIYVOj8bVw>

Watch the video of the remarks by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZYgu2yDpKs&feature=c4-overview&list=UUyXH8k7w7atZUXIYVOj8bVw>

4. New Publications

“Earth Charter Bibliography”

Earth Charter International, 2009 (updated 2013)

<http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/articles/985/1/Earth-Charter-Bibliography-updated/Page1.html>

This carefully revised document serves as a "Bibliography of Books, Essays and Papers Related to the Earth Charter". The bibliography was recently updated and is constantly growing. It currently includes almost 300 publications, many of which are available in the Earth Charter Virtual Library at <http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/invent/index.php>

Download bibliography at:

<http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/invent/images/uploads/Earth%20Charter%20Bibliography%20latest%20July%202013%20-%20UPDATE.pdf>

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Climate Change - Cultural Change: Religious Responses and Responsibilities

Edited by Anne F. Elvey and David Gormley-O'Brien

Mosaic Resources, 2013

<https://mosaicresources.com.au/titles/9781743240526>

This book tackles the urgent issues arising from climate change and explores how hidden resources in our religious traditions can guide our responses. Various chapters in the book draw from the Scriptures startling and fresh insights on how both Hebrew and Christian writers see God at work in the entire Creation, loving it and holding it in being. Other chapters recover patristic and later theological thinking on how deeply connected we humans are with matter itself, along with all living things, and hence our responsibility to reverence the entire Creation as a part of God's handiwork.

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Earth's Cry: Prophetic Ministry in a More-than-Human World

By Jan Morgan

Mosaic Resources, 2013

<https://mosaicresources.com.au/titles/9781743241233>

For Christians, a strange dislocation often seems to exist between the ecological crisis and a heritage that includes a Creator God. This book turns to the prophetic tradition - a tradition generated in the dislocation of crises in the past. Drawing this tradition into engagement with the ecological humanities, and with ministry studies, the author discovers root memories that hold.

Here is wisdom and that could unleash our passion and energy by challenging us to attend to Earth's cry.

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Measuring and Evaluating Sustainability: Ethics in Sustainability Indexes

By Sarah E. Fredericks

Routledge, 2013

<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415836371/>

The indexes used by local, national, and international governments to monitor progress toward sustainability do not adequately align with their ethical priorities and have a limited ability to monitor and promote sustainability. This book gives a theoretical and practical demonstration of how ethics resonant with diverse religious and philosophical traditions as well as technical considerations can aid the development of sustainability indexes to overcome this division in the literature and aid sustainability initiatives.

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Avatar and Nature Spirituality

Edited by Bron Taylor

Wildrid Laurier University Press, 2013

<http://www.wlupress.wlu.ca/Catalog/taylor-avatar.shtml>

Avatar and Nature Spirituality explores the cultural and religious significance of James Cameron's film *Avatar* (2010). Its success was due in no small measure to the beauty of the Pandoran landscape and the dramatic, heart-wrenching plight of its nature-venerating inhabitants. To some audience members, the film was inspirational, leading them to express affinity with the film's message of ecological interdependence and animistic spirituality. Some were moved to support the efforts of indigenous peoples, who were metaphorically and sympathetically depicted in the film, to protect their cultures and environments. To others, the film was politically, ethically, or spiritually dangerous. Written by an interdisciplinary team of scholars, *Avatar and Nature Spirituality* provides an opportunity for considering afresh the ongoing struggle to determine how we should live on our home planet, and what sorts of political, economic, and spiritual values and practices would best guide us.

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Civil Society in the Age of Monitory Democracy

Edited by Lars Trägårdh, Nina Witoszek, and Bron Taylor

Berghahn, 2013

<http://www.berghahnbooks.com/title.php?rowtag=TragardhCivil>

Since the emergence of the dissident "parallel polis" in Eastern Europe, civil society has become a "new superpower," influencing democratic transformations, human rights, and international co-operation; co-designing economic trends, security and defense; reshaping the information

society; and generating new ideas on the environment, health, and the “good life.” This volume seeks to compare and reassess the role of civil society in the rich West, the poorer South, and the quickly expanding East in the context of the twenty-first century’s challenges. It presents a novel perspective on civic movements testing John Keane’s notion of “monitory democracy”: an emerging order of public scrutiny and monitoring of power.

5. New Videos

America the Possible

Center for a New American Dream, 2013

<http://www.newdream.org/resources/videos/america-the-possible>

We all love America and feel lucky to live in a free country with so many opportunities. But we also know that in many ways, our country is falling behind and heading in the wrong direction. In this short animation, noted environmentalist and author Gus Speth shows us another America: America the Possible. This is the place we truly want for our children and ourselves — an America where the pursuit of happiness is sought not in ever-more getting and spending, but instead in the growth of human solidarity, real democracy, and devotion to the public good. Here's the good news: We can start building America the Possible right now in our own homes, streets, neighborhoods, and cities. Watch the video to learn more:

<http://www.newdream.org/resources/videos/america-the-possible>

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Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai

Marlboro Productions, 2008

<http://takingrootfilm.com/>

TAKING ROOT tells the story of the Green Belt Movement of Kenya and its founder Wangari Maathai, the first environmentalist and first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize. Professor Maathai discovered her life's work by reconnecting with the rural women with whom she had grown up. They told her they were walking long distances for firewood, clean water was scarce, the soil was disappearing from their fields, and their children were suffering from malnutrition. 'Well, why not plant trees?' Maathai suggested. These women found themselves working successively against deforestation, poverty, ignorance, embedded economic interests, and government corruption, until they became a national political force that helped to bring down Kenya's 24-year dictatorship. Through TV footage and chilling first person accounts, *TAKING ROOT* documents the dramatic confrontations of the 1980s and '90s and captures Maathai's infectious determination and unwavering courage. *Cinema verité* footage of the tree nurseries and the women and children who tend them brings to life the confidence and joy of people working to improve their own lives and ensure the future and vitality of their land. *TAKING ROOT* captures a world-view in which nothing is perceived as impossible and presents an awe-inspiring profile of Maathai's thirty-year journey of courage to protect the integrally connected issues of the environment, human rights, and democracy.

6. Events

“The Emerging Alliance of Religion and Ecology”

Lecture by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim

Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA, USA

October 17, 2013

<http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/stm/edevnts/events/2013/10-17-2013.html>

“Climate Change and the Humanities Workshop”

Hosted by the Centre for Social and Political Thought and the Centre for World Environmental

History at Sussex University, UK

October 17, 2013

<http://permalink.gmane.org/gmane.science.philosophy.region.europe/5447>

“Evolving Spirituality for the 21st Century”

A Day with Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, with reflections by Mary Coelho

All Saints Parish, Brookline, MA, USA

October 18, 2013

http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/MET-and-JG_10-18-13.pdf

<http://cmmjourneyoftheuniverse.eventbrite.com/>

“Fracking - How Should People of Faith Respond?”

Bloemfontein, South Africa -- October 22, 2013

Upington, South Africa -- November 6, 2013

Cape Town, South Africa -- November 27, 2013

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/item/fracking-how-should-people-of-faith-respond/>

“Sensing Wonder, Serious Play: Ecology and Children’s Literature”

A Graduate Student Conference

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

October 25, 2013

<http://www.sensingwonder.us/>

International Association for Environmental Philosophy 17th Annual Meeting

Hilton Eugene and Conference Center, Eugene, OR, USA

October 26-28, 2013

<http://environmentalphilosophy.org/>

“Thomas Berry and Dante’s Divine Comedy: The Journey and the Vision”

A Three-Part Series led by Andrew Levitt

The Treehouse, Timberlake Earth Sanctuary, Whitsett, NC, USA

Part One: Inferno, October 27, 2013

Part Two: Purgatorio, November 17, 2013

Part Three: Paradiso, December 8, 2013

<http://beholdnature.org/dantesdivinecomedy.php>

“The Roles of Climate Models: Epistemic, Ethical and Socio-political Perspectives”

Eindhoven University of Technology, The Netherlands

October 31 - November 1, 2013

<http://p-e.ieis.tue.nl/node/122>

“Climate Action: A Moral Imperative for Connecticut Communities of Faith”

Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford, CT, USA

Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim will be presenting at this event.

November 7, 2013

http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/Program--Climate_Stewardship_Summit.pdf

<http://irejn.org/what-we-do/climate-stewardship-summit/>

“The Many Sides of Peace”

Book Reading with Brayton Shanley

Yale Divinity School and St. Thomas More Roman Catholic Chapel, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA

November 18, 2013

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/item/the-many-sides-of-peace-book-reading-with-brayton-shanley1/>

“Living Waters: An Interfaith Summit”

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond, VA, USA

November 19, 2013

<http://www.cbf.org/livingwaters>

For more events, visit:

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/>

**7. “Mapping the Field of Religion and Ecology: Theories, Methods, and Future Directions”
(November 22, 2013 at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion,
Baltimore, MA, USA)**

The Religion and Ecology Group invites you to take part in a pre-AAR (American Academy of Religion) colloquium on November 22 at 1:45-5:00 pm to survey and map the theoretical and methodological diversities within the field of religion and ecology. This research area is now robust with multiple avenues of research and activities, including many traditions, voices, theories, approaches, discourses, methodologies, and emphases. It is our goal to collectively discuss and assess where we have come from, where we are, and where we are going. This colloquium is envisioned as a participatory event designed both for those who have long contributed to this groundbreaking work as well as those who are new to such scholarly conversations.

Read the full description: <http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/item/mapping-the-field-of-religion-and-ecology-theories-methods-and-future-direc/>

The Religion and Ecology Group has increased the number of seats available in this workshop. Due to high demand, we expect the remaining seats to fill quickly. Please register now: <https://www.aarweb.org/publications/religion-and-ecology-workshop-on-mapping-the-field-of-religion-and-ecology-theories>

Questions may be directed to Matt Riley at matthew.timothy.riley@gmail.com

8. Northeast Eco-Dharma Conference (August 7-11, 2014 in Springfield, NH, USA)

Join us in the foothills of the White Mountains of New Hampshire for a unique event featuring prominent Buddhist teachers, scholars, and environmental activists discussing in depth the intersection of Buddhist practice and stewardship of the earth. The conference will address questions such as

- What practices can help us deal with the pain that arises in relationship to ecological devastation?
- What is the nature of our ecological crisis?
- What do activists have to offer Buddhists for engaging in existing activist causes?
- What does Buddhism have to offer activist communities?
- How can we integrate eco-dharma into our communities?

The long weekend will include panel discussions, breakout groups, nature walks, meditation practice, and time to informally get to know one another. This is a precious opportunity to connect with key teachers and activists in North America who have made this topic a priority in their communities. Accommodations and meals provided.

Register online:

<http://wonderwellrefuge.org/events/calendar/eventdetail/363/-/northeast-eco-dharma-conference-2014>

9. Calls for Papers

Penn Bioethics Journal

Open to all Undergraduate Students

Submission Deadlines: Oct. 14, Nov. 4, Nov. 18, Dec. 3, 2013

http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/PBJ_call_for_papers_Fall_2013.pdf

“Greening the Gods: Ecology and Theology in the Ancient World”

Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK

March 18-19, 2014

Submission Deadline: October 31, 2013

<http://philevents.org/event/show/11055>

“Sustainable Alternatives for Poverty Reduction and Ecological Justice (SAPREJ-2014)”
2nd International Conference
University of Antananarivo, Madagascar
April 28 - May 3, 2014
Application and Submission Deadline: November 15, 2013
<http://saprej2014madagascar.webs.com/>

“Climate Change, Sustainability, and the Ethics of an Open Future”
Special Issue of *De Ethica* journal
Submission Deadline: November 15, 2013
<http://www.de-ethica.com/CFP/default.asp>

“Religion, Ecology, and the Environment in Africa and the African Diaspora”
6th Conference of the African Association for the Study of Religion (AASR)
University of Cape Town, South Africa
July 30 - August 3, 2014
Submission Deadline: November 30, 2013
<http://www.a-asr.org/meetings/>

“Post Crash City: Environments and Ecologies”
The University of York, Heslington, York, UK
December 12-13, 2013
Submission Deadline: open
<http://www.york.ac.uk/sociology/research/groups/curb/events/#tab-2>

“The Future of Science and Religion in a Globalizing World”
60th Anniversary Conference of the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science (IRAS)
Star Island, NH, USA
August 2-9, 2014
Submission Deadline: February 1, 2014
http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/IRAS-Call_For_Papers.pdf
<http://www.iras.org/2014-conference.html>

10. Advent 2013: In Praise of Light

Looking for relevant Advent material to help yourself or groups prepare for Christmas? Consider using *Advent 2013: In Praise of Light*, this year's four session Advent program from Terri MacKenzie, SHCJ. Groups in many countries have used Terri's resources to deepen their understanding of the divine presence living and acting within our Universe Story and to motivate participation in the Great Work. Participants reflect on divine light within creation, the Christ Light, darkness, and the light within. Meetings include quotes from Sunday's Scripture, silence, prayer, input, discussion, and action suggestions. Adaptable and free, *In Praise of Light* is available at <http://ecospiritualityresources.com/advent/>

11. Grassroots Communities Mining Mini-Grant Program

2013-2014 Grassroots Communities Mining Mini-Grant Program is organized by the Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN) and Western Mining Action Network (WMAN). The goal of the Mining Mini-grants Program is to support and enhance the capacity building efforts of mining-impacted communities in the U.S. and Canada to assure that mining projects do not adversely affect human, cultural, and the ecological health of communities.

Application deadline: February 1, 2014

For the guidelines and application, visit:

<http://www.mynewsletterbuilder.com/tools/refer.php?s=52402b46af52254a4c0008fb&u=30478181&v=3&key=dc14&skey=fac2e009aa&url=http%3A%2F%2Fienearth.org%2Fdocs%2F2013-14-updated-mini-grant-application-form.doc>

12. Spiritual Ecology website: <http://www.spiritualecology.info>

A very informative website has been developed by Dr. Leslie E. Sponsel (Professor Emeritus, Anthropology, University of Hawai'i) to supplement his latest book, *Spiritual Ecology: A Quiet Revolution* (Praeger, 2012). Besides information on the book and author, there are growing lists of relevant new books, films, websites, and graduate programs as well as extensive course syllabi. Drafts of chapters not included in the book because of page limits set by the publisher are being added to the Research Notes folder with currently available files on Catholic Spiritual Ecologists, Rachel Carson, Aldo Leopold, and Gary Snyder. The website is:

<http://www.spiritualecology.info>

Read a recent interview with Leslie Sponsel on “Spiritual Ecology, Connection, and Environmental Change” in the Anthropology and Environment Society Engagement Blog:

<http://www.aaanet.org/sections/ae/index.php/leslie-sponsel-on-spiritual-ecology-connection-and-environmental-change/>

13. *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology*

Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology has as its focus the relationships between religion, culture and ecology world-wide. Articles discuss major world religious traditions, such as Islam, Buddhism or Christianity; the traditions of indigenous peoples; new religious movements; and philosophical belief systems, such as pantheism, nature spiritualities, and other religious and cultural worldviews in relation to the cultural and ecological systems. Focusing on a range of disciplinary areas including Anthropology, Environmental Studies, Geography, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Sociology and Theology, the journal also presents special issues that center around one theme. For more information, visit: <http://www.brill.com/worldviews-global-religions-culture-and-ecology>

For more information on other journals related to religion and ecology and to environmental ethics/philosophy, visit: <http://fore.research.yale.edu/publications/journals/>. If you know of a publication that needs to be added to this list, email news@religionandecology.org

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For the archive of previous Forum newsletters, visit:

<http://fore.research.yale.edu/publications/newsletters/>