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Boston University School of Theology
**ANNA HOWARD
SHAW CENTER**

Volume 38 Issue 1 Fall 2020

**I KNOW YOUR STORY
BECAUSE I KNOW MINE:**

Transforming the World Through Solidarity and
Mutual Empowerment



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DEAR FRIENDS OF THE ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER

Dear Friends of the Anna Howard Shaw Center,

While our engagement looks different this year because of COVID-19 safety precautions, the Anna Howard Shaw Center continues to adapt to student life through the leadership of Rev. Dr. Choi Hee An. Students continue to need support during seminary in our spiritual life, our practical application of academic learning, and our understanding of the multiple pandemics that affect our world. As a native Californian, I am not only discerning God's calling in the COVID-19 global pandemic and racial violence against black and brown bodies, but also the annual uncontrollable wildfires that burn along the West Coast. How are we to respond as people of faith and people in the academy?

As a Yonsei (fourth generation Japanese American) woman and seminarian, I feel a particular ache in my heart and pull of my spirit to seek mutual empowerment across the axis of race, gender, and ability. I know this is because of the people I have built love for and relationship with at the School of Theology. Diversity matters at STH, yet I believe it takes intentional and individual effort to embrace the fullness and messiness that diversity has to offer. The Shaw Center is making conscious efforts to have conversations over Zoom with students, faculty, student organizations, and the STH community at large about racial injustice and white supremacy. Through each conversation, we resist the efforts of white supremacy to keep us divided by our identities. We have made plans to host our annual Women in the World Conference online next Spring on March 26, 2021. Save the date in your calendars! We look forward to seeing you all there.

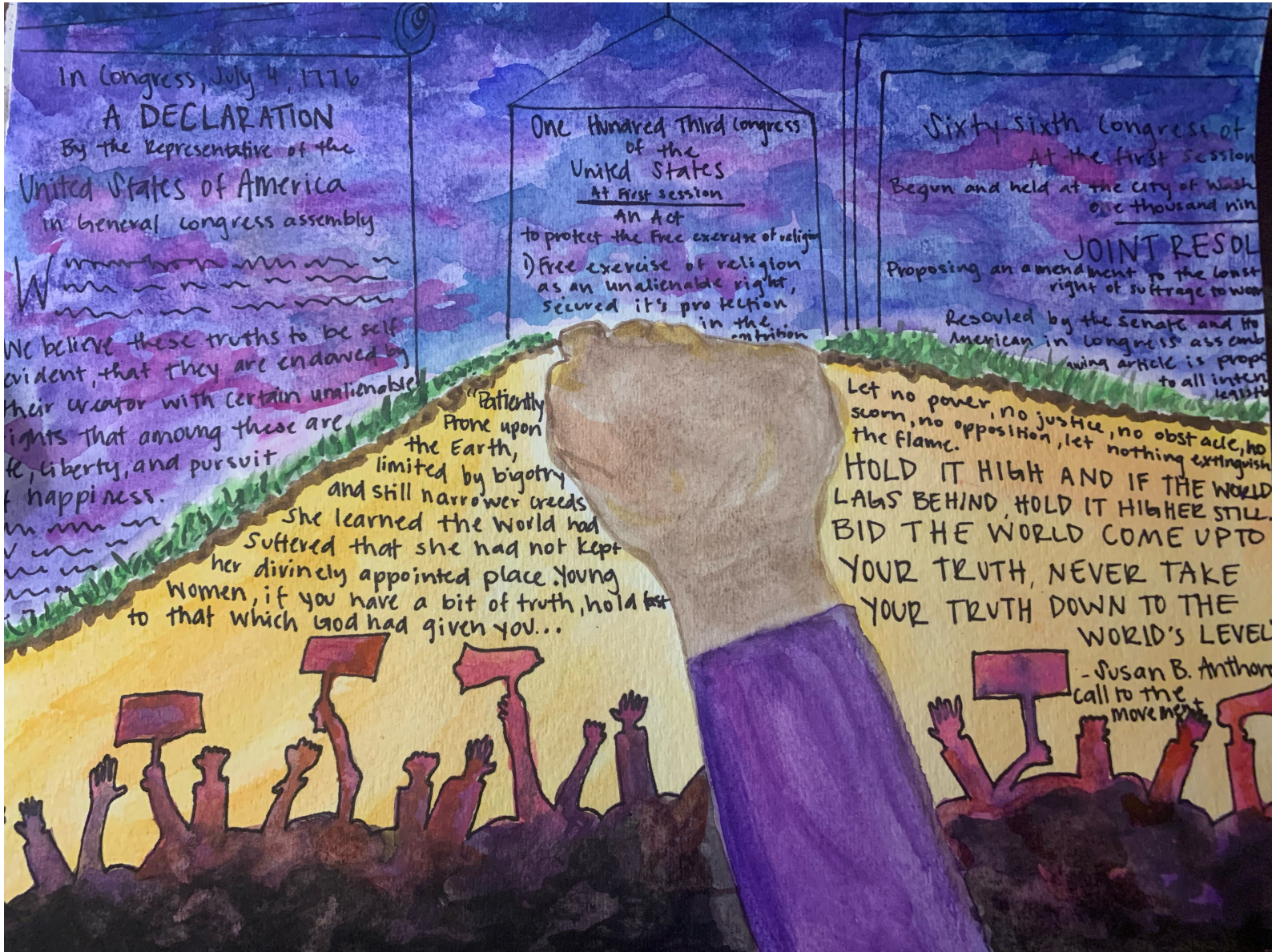
We move with courage and resistance, which we inherit from Rev. Dr. Anna Howard Shaw and the rest of our ancestors. In her own words, spoken at the International Council of Women in 1888, she said:

if you have a bit of truth, hold fast to that which God had given you; let no power, no injustice, no obstacle, no scorn, no opposition, let nothing extinguish the flame. Hold it high and if the world lags behind, hold it still higher. Bid the world come up to your truth, never take your truth down to the world's level.

May we take Rev. Dr. Shaw's words with us as we continue to uncover the path of racial solidarity and mutual empowerment through story telling and story listening.

Camille Obata (she/her), Shaw Center Staff





Description: As she holds up her truth, the dawn sets on declarations that never announced her freedom. A new light arises through protest and wholly resistance with an eternal commitment to her humanity, her roundness, her color. She unveils the light of the Earth that resides in all of us, calling us back to ourselves and our true nature. Media used is watercolor, sharpie, and the feeling of hope.

Eden Johnson they/them
Second Year Masters of Divinity, STH



I identify as a Black woman born and raised in the United States who is dedicated to resisting racial injustice and dismantling systematic racism in this country as well as standing in solidarity with other oppressed peoples across the globe who have similar goals in diverse contexts. There was nothing that meant more to me than my beloved community- the Black community. I fell in love with Black people and the mystic nature Blackness during my process of liberation- process of decolonizing my mind. Nothing was more important than my beloved community until I became a mother of a beautiful Black baby girl. Lola Wedianu Selenga. Lola, meaning Heaven or Paradise in her father's Congolese dialect. Wedianu, meaning first born girl and a traditional name passed to all first born girls in her father's tribe. Lastly, Selenga, my husband's family name that is untainted by the decay of colonialism, slavery, and exploitation.

To me, Lola embodies the Black community and represents us as well. Lola's existence testifies to the unity of African Americans with our ancestral lands and people- Africa, West Africa to be specific and in Lola's case Congo. For centuries white supremacy has successfully deceived both African Americans and Africans into hating and misunderstanding each other. That no longer applies to us. We can acknowledge that we are one people.

Black Lives Matter has never meant more to me than it does as a Black mother. I have joined countless Black women who pray without ceasing for the safety and protection of our children- which is just the bare minimum. I dream for Lola to not only be safe but to also dream, explore, discover, resist, grow, learn, defy, rebel, and think for herself. I pray she embodies self-love, compassion, self-liberation, joy, and also loves her people fiercely. I've allowed my heart to be entangled so much more deeply than I ever thought possible by becoming a mother. I refuse to let the hate of this world consume my family and have even more of a reason to fight for the equity of Black lives. The fire in my belly has been multiplied.



Chasity Jones she/her
Third Year Masters of Divinity, STH



I was born at twenty-eight weeks, and due to complications, I have a disability called Cerebral Palsy. Medical doctors confirmed this diagnosis over and against a certain standard of health and bodily wholeness. Similarly, society labels my body as inferior to affirm the superiority of wholeness represented in non-disabled bodies. Thus, defining disability as the "other" reinforces a societal norm and structure that blatantly gives power to abled bodies, particularly white abled bodied men. Through constant stares and pity of strangers on the streets, I quickly realized that my body was a spectacle that either threatened or affirmed the dominant social hierarchy of white supremacy and ableism.

In the nineties, the American Disability Act was passed mandating that people with disabilities be treated as human beings, equal to abled body folks. Almost thirty years later, and the dominant socio-political and religious structures writ large continue to put people with disabilities on the peripherals of society. For example, just the other day, a subway driver literally closed the doors on me while I attempted to exit the train because my pace wasn't "fast" enough. Every day, through one thing or another, the disabled community is reminded that this world is not built for us. Yet these ablest structures determine and preserve our place and value in the world. The truth is, a system that privileges particular bodies over others forces the disabled community to struggle in order to survive.

The shame and humiliation that society makes the disabled "wear" turns our bodies into literal "apologies." (1) For some reason, when the subway door closed on me that day for not moving "quick" enough, I instinctively felt the need to apologize to the driver for my body and its limitations. "I am sorry that I am not normal. I am sorry I have a disability. I am sorry that I can't change." The dominant structures that often evoke my body's apology continue to discriminate against the disabled community and other bodies that aren't white abled bodied men.

The prevailing socio-political structures that dehumanize my body and perpetuate inequality between the abled and disabled are the same system that killed George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Trayvon Martin, to name a few. This systemic injustice deeply rooted in every inch of our culture, religion, and politics affirms that white abled bodies are the norm. Therefore, black bodies are made inferior so that white bodies can remain superior. Although the civil rights movement ensured equality for African Americans in the sixties, white supremacy is still apparent especially in the recent killings of African Americans. Even though slavery has been abolished the mistreatment and violence of African Americans remains prevalent in our society.



I want to acknowledge that I am a white, disabled female, so I am not pretending to know the pain, violence, and terror that African Americans feel every day. But it is this same system that keeps black and disabled bodies on the margins. So, if I apologize to the subway driver, I am inadvertently apologizing for all the bodies that aren't white, able-bodied men. Thus, fighting against racism and ableism inherent in our culture begins by proudly and unashamedly claiming the existence and dignity of black and disabled bodies, which are largely ignored. The disabled community is bound up with the black lives matter movement in a struggle for liberation to be treated as fully human. Currently, black bodies are the ones being murdered and publicly oppressed. So, the disabled community is called to declare the value of the black bodies who are also sitting on the margins; because human dignity for disabled bodies doesn't exist if it doesn't also exist for black lives. (2)

(1) Sharon Betcher, "Running the Gauntlet of Humiliation: Disablement In/as Trauma." In Post-Traumatic Public Theology, 63-88. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2016, 64.

(2) Inspired by Sonya Renee Taylor, "The Body Is Not an Apology: The Power of Radical Self-Love."

Michelle Eastman she/her
Second Year Masters of Theological Studies, STH



Fourth Grade Teacher

September 16, 2020

My fourth-grade teacher
 Told the story of how I lost something I did not
 know I had lost
 In front of the whole class
 She said something terrible happened to a
 family I did not know I had
 And I could feel eyes on me
 Looking at the evidence
 That I was related to
 The people she spoke about

I could feel them feeling sorry for me
 Or just feeling towards me in ways
 I did not know how to describe at the time
 Back then I could have only wished she
 Pulled me aside and said
 “Today I am going to share a public secret with
 the class
 You are free to cover your eyes.”

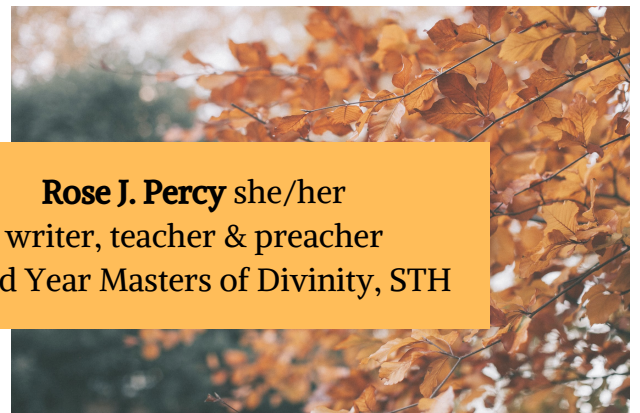
She could have said
 “My ancestors were responsible
 We made this ugly thing happen.”
 Then maybe some of the eyes would have
 looked at her
 And investigated her skin
 She could have said,
 “This is not just in the past but the present, ask
 your families for their stories.”
 Then maybe some eyes would have looked at
 their desks
 Wondering what conversations they would
 have at home

She said none of those things
 But I would know from that day forward
 Something about my skin connected me to two
 stories in our history books:

The first,
 of my relatives enslaved in America

And the second, of my parents’ home,
 With the words “poorest country in the
 Western Hemisphere” next to it

Next week, we would move on to discuss the
 man who invented peanut butter.



Rose J. Percy she/her
 writer, teacher & preacher
 Third Year Masters of Divinity, STH



For the Newly Tired: An Orientation to the Night*June 11, 2020*

I'm glad you hear the sound of the sirens
That have been going all night long
They have been keeping me awake for years

I'm glad you are finally asking yourself
And everyone else
Why we have let them ring for so long
They've been ringing since before I was born

I'm glad you are now in the same insomnia as
me,
Even if a little differently.
Often, I have watched you nod off,
Until the next alarm forces you awake

I have often thought it tender that you can even
sneak in a nap in between them

Sometimes I have been able to pretend I am
sleeping
Sometimes I've been able to make daydreams
feel like rest

We may be wide awake together
But we are not the same.
You haven't started seeing things in the dark yet
Shadows you are trying to make sense of
Movements you are trying to understand—

The night has yet to become a language to you
You still need me to tell you what I see, since
your eyes are still adjusting—

Perhaps one day, morning will come and we
will no longer have to squint with tired eyes

Perhaps morning will come,
and it will feel good to rest
Even as the day moves on
And so do you

Or maybe
We may never sleep again—

For now, I name the shadows,
Like an Adam made in the night
I've been naming these shadows for years,
I'd be happy to introduce you

But as I do, I must confess,
I have given you a name as well
In this long night, you have been called
Newly Tired,

It is not the best way to live
I hope, it is not the only way to live
But so long as we live to long for Day
At least here I am your senior.



This has been a super rough year for everyone. There is a fun meme circulating where 2020 having a body hits 2012 in the head and says, "Learn! this is how the end of the world looks like". It is sad but real. This year - the closest one to a "final times" experience - I faced fear, exile, concern for my relatives' health, anxiety, and mourning. Somewhere in between appeared hope, joy, quietness, relief, and gratitude. This has been a rollercoaster. My body feels tired, but my soul feels ready to go back to my grandparents' house in Zipa, a small town near Bogotá, to spend Christmas. I am also looking forward to going back to Boston and pursuing my dreams at STH next Spring. I miss Boston very much.

The COVID-19 crisis was extreme, but we also had to face the Election. What a way to end this year! To be completely transparent, I was afraid. I was afraid of the violence on the U.S. streets, mainly against my friends of color remaining in Boston. Afraid of the Election's outcome and shocked by the high number of Latinx communities supporting the republican party. What can I say? We decide based on our narratives and life experiences. Now I feel more committed to understanding my fellows Latinx and Latin-Americans' motivations to support Trump. I had to experience the Election from Colombia, my hometown, where people were divided in supporting the candidates, as in the U.S. It sounds silly, but the truth is that we are still a U.S. colony. Anything happening in the U.S. will have a direct effect here.

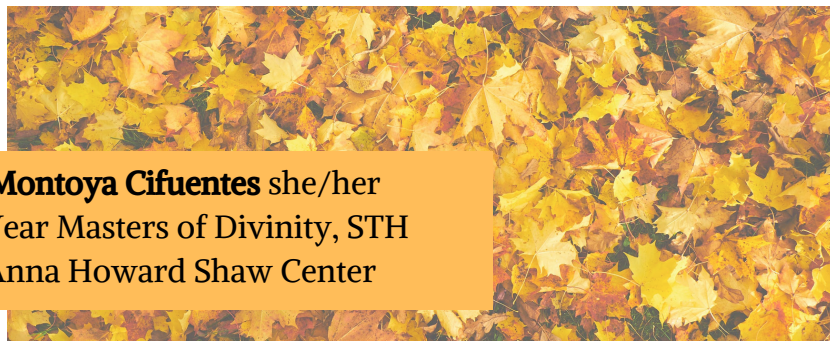
In any case, I think about all the people fighting against discrimination in the U.S. All groups of African Americans, women, especially women of color, and immigrants. I feel their suffering and struggles to be heard and to survive. I also think about my people here in Latin America, working restlessly to get the daily bread while hiding from bullets. The peasants are currently protesting against the Free Trade Agreement signed by the Colombian and U.S. governments a couple of years ago. They are broke because their products could not compete with the prices of imported products.

What can I do? What can I say? Who am I to say anything? What do I have to offer? How can we heal in here and in the U.S.? My hands, my thoughts, my laughter, but mainly my heart. Fito Páez, and Argentinian singer, Mercedes Sosa, a Chilean singer, and Pablo Milanés, a Cuban singer, have brought to the world this beautiful, amazing song-poem called Yo Vengo a Ofrecer Mi Corazón (I come to offer my heart.) I want to share it with you because it has come to my mind several times during these challenging times.

(Song on page 14.)



Laura Montoya Cifuentes she/her
Second Year Masters of Divinity, STH
Staff, Anna Howard Shaw Center



Yo vengo a ofrecer mi corazón

¿Quién dijo que todo está perdido?
Yo vengo a ofrecer mi corazón
Tanta sangre que se llevó el río,
Yo vengo a ofrecer mi corazón

No será tan fácil, ya sé qué pasa,
No será tan simple como pensaba,
Como abrir el pecho y sacar el alma,
Una cuchillada del amor

Luna de los pobres siempre abierta,
Yo vengo a ofrecer mi corazón
Como un documento inalterable
Yo vengo a ofrecer mi corazón

Y uniré las puntas de un mismo lazo,
Y me iré tranquila, me iré despacio,
Y te daré todo, y me darás algo,
Algo que me alivie un poco más

Cuando no haya nadie cerca o lejos,
Yo vengo a ofrecer mi corazón
Cuando los satélites no alcancen,
Yo vengo a ofrecer mi corazón

Y hablo de paí-ses y de esperanzas,
Hablo por la vida, hablo por la nada,
Hablo de cambiar ésta nuestra casa,
De cambiarla por cambiar, nomás

¿Quién dijo que todo está perdido?
Yo vengo a ofrecer mi corazón

(Original Song by Fito Páez)

I come to offer my heart

Who said everything is lost?
I come to offer my heart
So much blood that the river carried away,
I come to offer my heart

It won't be that easy, I know
It won't be as simple as I thought
It is like open the chest and rip out the soul.
Like a stab of love

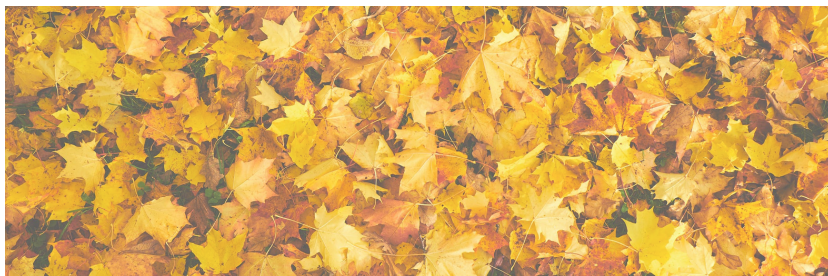
Moon of the poor always open,
I come to offer my heart
Like an unalterable document
I come to offer my heart

And I will join the ends of the same loop,
And I'll go easy, I'll go slowly,
And I'll give you everything, and you'll give me
something
Something to ease my life a little more

When no one is near or far,
I come to offer my heart
When the satellites don't reach,
I come to offer my heart

And I speak of countries and hope,
I speak for life, I speak for the nothing,
I'm talking about changing this our house,
To change just for changing

Who said everything is lost?
I come to offer my heart



ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER LECTURE SERIES

ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER
THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

ARE YOU A PERFECTIONIST?

WITH
REV., DR.
CHOI HEE AN



CLINICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY, BUSH, DIRECTOR OF THE ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER

THURSDAY 12-1 P.M.
MEETING ID: 957 1192 5882
PASSCODE: 590975

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THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

ON NOT GOING IT ALONE AS AN ANTIRACIST

WITH
DR. COURTNEY GOTO &
DR. CHRIS SCHLAUCH




ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BUSH / ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION BUSH

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THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

WHAT JUST HAPPENED?!? THE 2020 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

WITH
REV.
CHARLENE
ZUILL



SPIRITUAL LIFE COORDINATOR BUSH

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THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

A TIME FOR GRATITUDE

WITH
DEAN MARY
ELIZABETH
MOORE



THURSDAY 12-1 P.M.
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THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

JAPANESE AMERICAN INTERNMENT AND THE MODEL MINORITY MYTH

LECTURER
CAMILLE
REI OBATA



2ND YEAR MDIV - STH

THURSDAY 12-1 P.M.
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THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

Migration Stories: Exploring God's Heart through Stories of Immigration

LECTURER
DANIEL
MONTAÑEZ



PHD STUDENT - STH

THURSDAY 12-1 P.M.
MEETING ID: 957 119 5882
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THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

MY EXPERIENCES AS AN AFRICAN WOMAN IN A CLINICAL PASTORAL SETTING

LECTURER
UCHENNA
AWA



STM STUDENT - STH


THURSDAY 12-1 P.M.
MEETING ID: 957 119 5882
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ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER
THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

TOWARD AN ECOLOGICAL ECCLESIOLOGY • GOD, CREATION, CHURCH

LECTURER
REV. THOMAS
HERMANS-
WEBSTER




PHD. STUDENT & ADVISOR OF THEOLOGY

THURSDAY 12-1 P.M.
MEETING ID: 957 119 5882
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ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER
THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

RELIGION AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY



LECTURER: DIANA ATOUI

THURSDAY 12-1 P.M.

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ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER
THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

BLACK REPRESENTATION MATTERS • HAIR LOVE

LECTURER
CHASITY
JONES



THIRD YEAR MDIV

THURSDAY 12-1 P.M.

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ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER
THURSDAY LUNCH LECTURES

HOW DO YOU EXPERIENCE THE PANDEMIC?

THURSDAY 12-1 P.M.

LECTURER:
ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER STAFF

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WOMEN IN THE WORLD

A PREVIEW OF THE 2021 CONFERENCE

LATINAS AND RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

Friday March 26, 2021 10:00am – 3:30pm

- | | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| 10:00am | Welcome and opening/centering ritual |
| 10:30am | Keynote speaker – Dr. Daisy Machado |
| 11:30am | Responses in Small groups |
| 12:00pm | LUNCH Break |
| 1:00pm | Centering ritual |
| 1:10pm | Keynote speaker – Dr. Mayra Picos-Lee |
| 2:10pm | Small group systematizing |
| 2:40pm | Break |
| 2:50pm | Plenary reporting |
| 3:10pm | Closing celebration/awards ceremony |
| 3:30pm | Closing remarks |



FEATURED SPEAKERS

Dr. Daisy Machado, Union Theological Seminary

Professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary

Dr. Mayra Picos-Lee, Palmer Theological Seminary

Senior Lecturer in Counseling & Director of MTS in Latino/a Ministry





Edina Škaljić

Acting Director of Finance, School of Theology

Since June 1st, Edina has been splitting her time between her roles, as a Financial Analyst at BU Global Programs, and Acting Director of Finance and Administration at BU School of Theology. Prior to joining the Global Programs team, she was the Finance and Administration Coordinator at BU Events and Conferences. She has also held the role of a Senior Community Programming Manager with an international non-profit human rights and cultural organization, and an Income Auditor position at an Interstate Hotels and Resorts-managed hotel in Cambridge, MA. Edina holds a B.A. in Business Management from Simmons University. Volunteering for an array of non profit organizations and community projects, focused on women's rights and empowerment, refugees, human rights, genocide awareness, interfaith collaboration, art and other causes, has always been an integral part and a huge passion of hers.

Rev. Elise Feyerherm

Episcopal/Anglican Mentor and Adjunct Faculty

Elise Feyerherm is an ordained priest in the Episcopal Church (Diocese of Massachusetts), currently serving as Associate Rector at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Brookline. She received her MDiv from Yale Divinity School and her PhD in Theological Studies from Boston College and has taught at the undergraduate and graduate level for over twenty years. Her teaching and writing have been in the areas of church history, Christian spirituality, and liturgy. She currently teaches in Anglican Studies, including courses on the Book of Common Prayer, the English Reformations, and Episcopal Church history.



Camille Obata

Staff Member, Anna Howard Shaw Center

Camille is a Northern California native in her second year of the Masters of Divinity program. She has a Bachelor's degree in Media and Cultural Studies and a minor in Sociology from the University of California, Riverside. Prior to seminary, Camille was a production assistant for two documentary films *Norman Mineta and His Legacy: An American Story* and *Alternative Facts: The Lies of Executive Order 9066*. She has eight years of experience working with youth and young adults at Asian American Christian summer camps on the West Coast. Currently, she is collaborating with activists and organizers to lead a five part conversation series on Asian American racial justice and solidarity with Black Lives Matter at Buena Vista United Methodist Church in Alameda, CA.



ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER NEWSLETTER

Volume 38, Issue 1 Fall 2020

MANAGING EDITOR

Rev. Dr. Choi Hee An

EDITORS

Camille Obata & Laura Montoya Cifuentes

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