

Engaging Science and Spirituality: Understanding the Journey of the Universe

Hedgerow- Spring 2012

Description: Today through science, we in Western culture have a new, deeper understanding of the larger, evolutionary story which is inclusive of the universe, earth and human stories. We have an opportunity to integrate what the ancients have intuited all along: All that exists is connected.

The following questions will guide the course reading and content:

- Why is this great story important to us at this time?
- What are the implications?
- How does this change our world view and images of God?
- How does this impact our understanding of the divine and human?
- What does it call us to as individuals and as local and global communities?

This seminar is an opportunity to create and integrate the emerging theologies inspired by this new cosmology.

“... now we are being seized by a new revelatory experience of the divine..... It is the supreme challenge of our period to bring this new origin story into its fuller articulation.” *Evening Thoughts* by Thomas Berry.

Class Schedule: Mondays, February 13-May 7th from 6:30-8:30 p.m (no class on March 19th) . At Carondelet Center, 1890 Randolph Ave. St. Paul, MN 55105. Register through Wisdom Ways Center for Spirituality, www.wisdomwayscenter.org or call 651-696-2788.

Special Guest Presenter, February 27th: Kathleen Duffy, SSJ, Physicist, Chestnut Hill College. Kathleen Duffy received her PhD in Physics from Drexel University. Currently, she is Professor of Physics at Chestnut Hill College where she chairs the physics department and directs the Interdisciplinary Scholars Program. She has published research in atomic and molecular physics and in chaos theory in journals such as Physics Review Letters, Journal of Chemical Physics and Chemical Physics Letters. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Center for Religion and Science and a regular participant in Cosmos and Creation. In 2005 she coordinated Teilhard's Legacy: Rediscovering Fire, an international, interdisciplinary conference marking the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Teilhard de Chardin. She recently received a grant to establish an Institute for Religion and Science at Chestnut Hill College.

Common Text: *Journey of the Universe* book by Mary Evelyn Tucker PhD and Brian Thomas Swimme PhD. Yale University Press, 2011. Integrative reflections and project will be incorporated.

Other resources: *Journey of the Universe* film and DVD educational series plus articles reproduced for participants. List of optional readings includes: *Christianity and Ecology* edited by Dieter Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether; *Awe-Filled Wonder: The Interface of Science and Spirituality* by Barbara Fiand; *Radical Amazement* and *Field of Compassion* by Judy Cannato; *Emergent Christ: Exploring the Meaning of Catholic in an Evolutionary Universe* by Ilia Delio; *The Dream of the Earth* by Thomas Berry; *World as Lover, World as Self* by Joanna Macy; *A New Harmony: The Spirit, the Earth, and the Human Soul*, by John Philip Newell.

Course facilitators: Mary Kaye Medinger, M.A.; Joan Pauly Schneider, M.A., M.Div.; Cathy Steffens M.A., M.Ed. and Jill Underdahl, M.A.

Guest presenters and responders will include: Kathleen Duffy, PhD-Physicist, Katherine McLaughlin, PhD-Theology; Jill Welter, PhD-Biological Science; Karen Hilgers, PhD- Science; Kay Egan, PhD-Education; Nancy Cosgriff, DMin-Theology/Cosmology & Spiritual Guidance; Brianna Lloyd, MA in Ethics and Food Systems, and Roseann Giguere, DMin- Theology & Spiritual Guidance.

Course Outline: (* these articles will be distributed the week before)

I. Science That Inspires Awe & Wonder

1. February 13th : Weaving Our Stories into the Story of the Universe

Introduction to Film *Journey of the Universe* and Viewing of Film
What has been your experience of the natural world? What do we know?
Reading for February 20: *Journey of the Universe*, Chapter 1-10.

Presenters: Jill Welter, Karen Hilgers, CSJ and Cathy Steffens, CSJ

2. February 20th : WOW Things of Nature- Science and Understanding

Reading for February 27: *Journey of the Universe*, Chapter 11

Presenters: Jill Welter and Karen Hilgers, CSJ

3. February 27- Global Spiritualities and the New Universe Story

Drawing on her background as a physicist and the work of French Jesuit paleontologist and mystic, Teilhard de Chardin, Kathleen will draw out the significance & implications of global spiritualities. (*)

Special Guest Presenter: Kathleen Duffy, CSJ PhD Physics, Chestnut Hill College

II. Spiritual and Theological Implications of the Universe Story

4. March 5- Tracing the Lineage and Eco-Feminist Theology

Tracing the lineage of the new cosmology- Hildegard of Bingen to Pierre Teilhard de Chardin to Thomas Berry and what it means to "Do Theology." (*)

Presenters: Mary Kaye Medinger and Joan Pauly Schneider

5. March 12- How do we now understand Jesus, Incarnation, Salvation, Resurrection?

Exploration of Christology in light of the Universe Story... "When you think of incarnation- what makes sense to you? Jesus as one among the many great lovers of the earth and the heavens... in touch at every turn? Trinity.. explosive dynamism of relationship? All things reveal the Divine?" (*)

Presenter: Katherine McLaughlin, CSJ

6. March 26- How do we now understand God-Divine Energy?

Exploration of the creative power of the Great Radiance and other transformed concepts of God. (*)

Presenter: Nancy Cosgriff

7. April 2- How do we now understand what it means to be human? – Why the Universe story matters.

Responding to this new world view, how do humans fit within the sacred evolutionary story? Where is it taking us? Exploration of cosmological principles and ongoing theological insights and questions. (*)

Break Through Communities- Carl Anthony (*Journey of the Universe Series*)

Presenters: Joan Pauly Schneider and Roseann Giguere, CSJ

III. Ecological Ethics

8. April 9th Introducing Ecological Ethics

Looking at how compassion has developed in the human throughout the evolution of species, we will explore what it means to become a Planetary Presence and how it calls us to new eco-spiritual practices. We will walk the "Cosmic Spiral" and experience our human selves in perspective with all that exists. (*)

Introduction to Emerging Earth Community (*Journey of the Universe Series*)

Presenters: Cathy Steffens, CSJ and Jill Underdahl, CSJ

9. April 16th Sustainable Energy/Transition Towns

Learning different models for how to harness solar power and other natural systems for energy, we will learn how towns and communities are transitioning from oil dependence to local resilience. (*)

Sustainable Energy – Paula Gonzalez, SC, EarthConnection, Cincinnati (*Journey of the Universe Series*)

Presenters: TBA

10. April 23rd Healing and Revisioning Community

Seeing how the Universe Story provides a basis for peoples to heal and reconcile by seeing themselves and their place more broadly, we will look at how the values of the Universe Story can influence new models of ethics and economics. (*)

Healing and Revisioning– Belvie Rooks, Co-Founder, Growing a Global Heart, Elk, California (*Journey of the Universe Series*)

Sacred Economics - the work of Charles Eisenstein Ethics of Care

Presenters: Brianna Lloyd and Jill Underdahl, CSJ

11. April 30th Transforming Dialogue

Exploring and practicing models of dialogue and meditation to transform conflict. (*)

Presenter: Jill Underdahl, CSJ

12. May 7th Sustaining Power of Ritual

Experiencing how rituals based on the Universe Story have the power to sustain our spirits and our lives in community. (*)