

# GTU DEAN'S NEWSLETTER



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December! Congratulations to us -- we made it to the end of another challenging year. We were rocked to the core by the January 6 Capitol Insurrection; we soared with [Amanda Gorman](#). We anguished over verdicts that neglected to hold murderers to account; we sighed with relief when justice was done.

Oh, and the pandemic.

Last December, we had hopes of returning to campus for the Spring 2021 semester, but those aspirations were tempered by the pandemic's persistence. The 2021 commencement was, again, a Zoom affair. In Fall, we cracked the door open...but the mask mandate complicated our thoughts on teaching/learning in-person. As a community, we have weathered these ups and downs. Accustomed to advance planning and thorough organization, we've had to adapt to "just in time" decision making. For sure, this is often an uncomfortable place to be! We've managed, thanks to the resilience and collegiality of the entire GTU community. News reports of how other academic institutions and workplaces have managed these challenges have really brought into focus how fortunate we are to be at a place that prioritizes our individual and collective health and well-being.

I wish I could say that 2022 will bring an end to the extraordinary challenges we've faced these past few years. Instead, we must redouble our efforts to improve our community and the world in which we live. At the GTU, our work is not passive, but represents a form of activism. To that point, this year's inspiring [Distinguished Faculty Lecturer, Dr. Valerie Miles-Tribble](#), tells us that our pedagogical charge requires that we be open to justice movements across ideological spectrums, and that we must engage conflicting viewpoints with analytical integrity and critical self-reflection. Thank you, Dr. V., for that guidance.

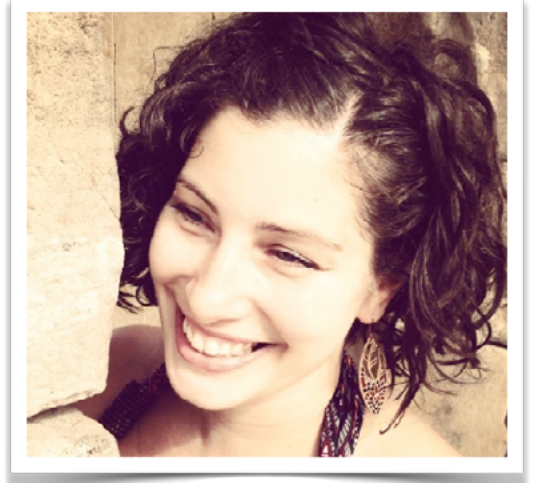
I hope that each and every one of you has a relaxing and refreshing winter break. Happy Hanukkah, Joyous Kwanzaa, Merry Christmas, and Season's Greetings!



*Elizabeth S. Peña, PhD*  
*Interim Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs*

## Winner of the 2021 Borsch-Rast Book Prize and Lectureship: Dr. Ashley L. Bacchi

The Graduate Theological Union is pleased to announce that Dr. Ashley L. Bacchi (MA, 2010; PhD, 2015), faculty chair of the Women's Studies in Religion program has been awarded the fifth annual Borsch-Rast Book Prize and Lectureship for her 2020 book, *Uncovering Jewish Creativity in Book III of the Sibylline Oracles: Gender, Intertextuality, and Politics*.



**Dr. Ashley L. Bacchi**

In her award winning book Ashley L. Bacchi reclaims the importance of the Sibyl as a female voice of prophecy and reveals new layers of intertextual references that address political, cultural, and religious dialogue in second-century Ptolemaic Egypt. This investigation stands apart from prior examinations by reorienting the discussion around the desirability of the pseudonym to an issue of gender. It questions the impact of identifying the author's message with a female prophetic figure and challenges the previous identification of paraphrased Greek oracles and their function within the text. Verses previously seen as anomalous are transferred from the role of Greek subterfuge of Jewish identity to offering nuanced support of monotheistic themes.

From former Dean Margaret Miles, Borsch-Rast committee member: Deeply grounded in succinctly and knowledgeably described feminist discourse, Dr. Bacchi argues that a dualistic view of Hellenistic Judaism does not reflect the “intersectional and fluid nature of gender identity” evident in Book III of the Sybylline Oracles (second century BCE Egypt). *Uncovering Jewish Creativity* enters a lively critical conversation in which she suggests that in Book III language relating to the gods is not rendered meaningless or abandoned, “but expanded to accommodate new conceptions of belief.” Bacchi’s book seeks to open research, discussion, and debate not only on her source and, more generally, on historical interpretation more generally. She proposes that scholarly discourse can impact popular attitudes and allegiances in lively and productive ways.

**Stay tuned for more information on Dr. Bacchi's Spring Lecture!**

## Borsch-Rast Book Prize Honorable Mention Dr. Valerie Miles-Tribble



The committee awarded an honorable mention to Dr. Miles-Tribble for her book, ***Change Agent Church in Black Lives Matter Times: Urgency for Action.***

Dr. Valerie Miles-Tribble presented the 46th annual Distinguished Faculty Lecture titled, “Our Pedagogical Charge: Weaving Hope and Justice into the Gossamer-thin Fabric of Religious Democracy”

If you missed the lecture, please visit the [Distinguished Faculty Lecture page!](#)

From former Dean Margaret Miles, Borsch-Rast committee member: Miles-Tribble’s *The Church as Change Agent in Black Lives Matter Times* contests the assumption that justice work is necessarily a secular issue. Arguing that piety and praxis should not be understood as opposed choices in the life of religious communities, but must be integrated in religious conviction and social action. Miles-Tribble’s experience in organizational leadership gives her perspective on the importance of overcoming institutional lethargy in the face of complex and overlapping oppressions. Her tools are adaptive change theory, public justice theory and social reform activism as public discipleship in order to achieve restorative justice in churches.

## A Message from President Uriah Kim



Since introducing the GTU's 5-Year Strategic Vision to our wider community last spring, a great deal of valuable feedback from many constituencies has been received and integrated into our plans. On behalf of myself, the Executive Leadership Team, as well as the Board of Trustees, please accept our heartfelt gratitude for your interest and engagement as we together embark on this new chapter in the history of the GTU, and the future of theological education. This is an effort that will require our collective, ongoing involvement and collaboration; I am grateful for your participation in making GTU 2.0 a reality.

With that in mind, it is with great pride in the strides that our institution has taken towards implementation of GTU 2.0 that I offer the following update on our progress with several key initiatives included in our Strategic Vision:

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Under the leadership and guidance of Marie Lucero, Chief Operating Officer, the GTU has retained the expertise of [Anna Fontus](#), a seasoned DEI professional with experience in higher education, to work closely with the Executive Leadership Team, Board of Trustees, and many others across our institution in developing a detailed plan for integrating the DEI Select Committee's recommendations within the GTU's organizational framework. This undertaking remains one of the GTU's leading priorities, and the intention is to knit a culture of DEI deep into the fabric of our institutional identity and practices, across all constituencies and areas.

In addition, for the community's reference, an Executive Summary of the DEI Select Committee's recommendations are available on the Board of Trustees web page, [here](#).

### **Consolidation of Our Campus Footprint**

Also guided by Marie Lucero, tremendous progress has been made in consolidating our physical campus. Beginning with the successful lease of the GTU's North Building (2465 LeConte Avenue) in August, the GTU has initiated the process of further centralizing our operations within the Hewlett Building at 2400 Ridge Road.

By undertaking a consolidation of the GTU's useable real estate, the GTU will achieve several primary objectives:

- o Generating rental income
- o Incremental conservation of operational costs
- o Fostering a more collaborative culture by increasing opportunities for synergy among employees and faculty

As we continue to take this work forward, a series of alterations will be made to the Hewlett Building over the course of three phases, beginning this month and planned to continue through summer 2023.

### Library

The Hewlett Library, led by Colyn Wohlmut, has begun the deduplication process to reduce its physical footprint. In addition, our partnership with the [Internet Archive](#) will continue in December, as they receive microforms and print materials pageable from Berkeley School of Theology and the Hewlett building basement and build our digital holdings on [archive.org](#). You'll notice some disruptions to the space on the Lower Level as we move materials for the next stage of building alterations.

### GTUx

Spearheaded by Sephora Markson, Chief Strategy Officer, since launching our GTUx Pilot Initiative ([gtu.edu/x](#)) in spring 2021, the platform has attracted well over 1,000 registered users, generating interest and engagement from a wide network of new audiences.

As we look ahead to the launch of a larger, more robust platform in spring 2022, a new array of content is currently under development in collaboration with several faculty across the consortium, including a new suite of GTUx Originals as guided by the recently formed Content Review Panel, an academic body comprised of faculty representatives from each of the GTU's four departments, as well as the GTU's Director of Digital Learning.

The updates above will also be made available on the web page for the Office of the President, [here](#), as well as the Board of Trustees, [here](#), for easy future reference by all community members. Additionally, going forward, similar updates and opportunities to ask questions about the implementation of GTU 2.0 will be provided each semester.

With peace and blessings,  
Uriah

# Announcements

## Faculty Openings

### Assistant Professor of Latter Day Saint/Mormon Studies

Applicants should send application materials electronically to the office of the GTU dean, in care of Sabrina Kennedy, [skennedy@gtu.edu](mailto:skennedy@gtu.edu). Materials should include a letter of application, a curriculum vitae, and three letters of recommendation. The application deadline is January 7, 2022.

For more information: <https://www.gtu.edu/about/employment>



**PDP WORKSHOP ON  
HOW TO APPLY FOR  
FELLOWSHIPS AND  
GRANTS?**

with Dr. Sheryl Johnson

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**DECEMBER 1, 11 AM - 12 NOON**  
**[HTTPS://GTU.ZOOM.US/J/97868404257](https://gtu.zoom.us/j/97868404257)**  
**MEETING ID: 978 6840 4257**



DEAR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS:

## MID-YEAR ORIENTATION

**FEB 2, 2022, WED, 12 NOON - 1 PM**

Zoom ID: 995 9991 5692

## Academic Achievements & Deadlines

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### *Comprehensive Proposal Approved*

Rachelle Elizabeth, THET

### *Oral Comprehensive Passed*

Leonard McMahon, THET

Kwangsuo Choi, REPR, Distinction

### *Advanced to Candidacy*

Leslie Bowling-Dyer, HCSR

Robert David Coolidge, HCSR

## January Biblical Hebrew and Greek Language Examination

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The Biblical Hebrew exam is scheduled for **Wednesday January 12, 2022**

The Biblical Greek exam is scheduled for **Thursday January 13, 2022**

Students must sign-up by **Friday December 10, 2021** contact Fredonia Thompson  
[ftompson@gtu.edu](mailto:ftompson@gtu.edu) for the sign-up form.

## Deadline for Submitting Dissertation Proposals

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submit by **(Noon) for February Doctoral Council is Monday January 24, 2022**

## Intent to Graduate form for Spring 2022

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**Deadline is Saturday January 15, 2022**

MA Intent to graduate form <https://forms.gle/pZAurpRcDSc2hHAa8>

PHD Intent to graduate form <https://forms.gle/vNNsKH321HHMzE8x5>

## Fall 2021 Student Awards

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### Chan Essay Prize

On behalf of the Core Doctoral Faculty Awards Committee, the Dean is pleased to announce **Barbara Anne Kozee** as the winner of this year's 2021 Chan Essay contest for her paper,

“Interfaith Collaboration between Catholic and Muslim Queers”



### Student Travel Grant Winners

Students who have papers accepted for the program of the Annual Meeting of the AAR, SBL, or other comparable national meeting or conference may compete in the GTU's Student Travel Grant competition. Winners are given cash awards to support the costs of attending the meeting. The Dean and Core Doctoral Faculty Awards Committee select recipients for this award. The Dean is happy to announce grant recipients for this semester are:

**Joshua Garcia**

**Matthew Korpman**

**Pamela Stevens**

**Matthew Hartman**

**Emily Pothast**

**Hanna Kang**

**Carmelo Sorita**



## Library News

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The library is proceeding with the transfer of public domain works to the Internet Archive for digitization.

### **How will we know what has been sent to IA for digitization?**

The catalog record will reflect that a title is unavailable and that it has been sent to IA. We can expect access to the digital surrogate within 18 months.

### **How will I connect to the digital version once it's available?**

We will import links to the IA digital copy into our catalog. This means that you can access newly available eversions by either going directly to IA or remaining in our library catalog. You will be taken directly to the IA copy from GRACE or Summon from a link in our record.

### **Will I be able to download pages from the book?**

All works in the public domain are fully accessible to multiple users and available for complete download through [archive.org](https://archive.org). Works still subject to copyright regulations will be checked out to you under a controlled digital lending process.



## Student Spotlights

*Every month, the Dean's Newsletter will feature a selection of incoming students representing a range of GTU departments. Welcome to all!*



### Maurena L. McKee

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MA Religion and Practice

Hello! I am a first-year MA student with the Center for Dharma Studies, focusing on sacred union with the divine as depicted in the Vedas. You can often find me in nature life settings, with my canine friend Darwin, while cultivating self-knowledge and inner vision. I work with children as a tutor and coach, aiming to co-create a brighter and enjoyable world.

### Diane Saunders

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PhD Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion

I am from Arizona and currently working as Director of Learning at St. Charles Borromeo in Livermore. My Masters at Boston College led me to Curriculum Writing for Lectionary/Family Catechesis and Spiritual Direction and the Arts. I am exploring the feminine attributes of the Divine and hope to do this through the lens of Art History and the Christian Mystical Tradition.



### Michael N. Simler

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MA Sacred Texts and Their Interpretation

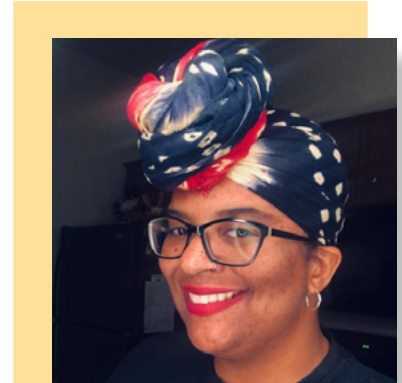
Michael's research focuses on the experience of prophecy in the Hebrew Bible. He is investigating the relationships between mystical-unitive states and interactive-relational states of consciousness. His research aims to provide deeper insight into the experience of prophecy in Abrahamic religions and hopes it will inform research between psychedelics and Divinity.



## Ashley Smiley

PhD Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion

Smiley is a native AfroFranciscan dedicated to investigating how the syncretization of theatre and ritual based theology can bring about healing for survivors of trauma.



## Shadow Wilf

MA Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion

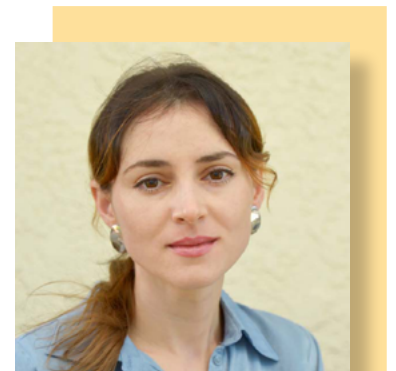
Shadow Wilf is a new student to the Buddhist studies program focusing on art in Buddhism and Queer Theology. They had a crisis of faith after their Bar Mitzvah and every since then has been trying to learn as much as they can from all different schools of faith.



## Liliya Yakymchko

PhD Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion

I am originally from Ukraine and hold degrees in modern art history and interior design. My admiration of art history gradually brought me to the interdisciplinary view on art and art history and to its connection with religion and spirituality. My area of research includes ethics, aesthetics, environmentalism, and psychology.



# Center for the Arts and Religion

## Art Break with Benjamin Heller

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*Friday, December 10 | 12-1pm (Pacific)*



Benjamin Heller is a cross disciplinary artist, blurring the traditional boundaries of media to uncover newfound vitality in their intersections. Drawing from a diverse background and training in visual arts, photography, dance, and physical improvisation, his works are rooted in the movement of the body and the creation of intimate environments that can be entered, opening a space for discovery via the body, senses, and the imagination.

Benjamin's projects focus on the conflict and unity that can be found in the space between the hold of opposing forces, such as inside and outside, emergence and disappearance, rest and awakening. By engaging his body directly with materials that are often organic, such as wood, stone, reed or found within his local environment. He creates sensitizing structures that afford physical conversations between the natural dynamics of the material and a new experience for the body. These sculptures and environments can then be expanded by performance or met by others.

He has created immersive site-specific public sculpture installations "Terrapin Basin" at the Pleasure House Point Natural Area and "Spines Alluvial" carved into quarry blocks at the Marble House Project in Dorset VT, "The Vital Contour of U+US" an interactive installation in New Orleans, and the "Inverted Constellation" as a visiting artist at the Museum of Old and New Art in Tasmania, Australia.

**[Register for this free, public event here!](#)**

# Center for Dharma Studies



The Center for Dharma Studies (CDS) is deeply honored to be invited to be a partner in the John E. Fetzer Institute's Shared Sacred Story: Diversity and the Solidarity of Love Project. The multi-institution project seeks "to harvest the 'spiritual ways of knowing' present in nine traditions, nine scholar-practitioner cohorts will be constituted to faithfully and creatively 're-tell' their historic sacred story in public language to the entire human family in its present circumstances of promise and peril. These teams need to be composed of persons with a blend of requisite competencies, including their abilities to reflect 'representative authenticity' by means of the roles their respective communities have vested

in them, depth of religious experience, scholarly competence, and ability to understand and communicate effectively to the human family today. Attention will be duly paid to concerns of diversity (different streams within traditions, gender, and culture/geography) within religious communities.

Center for Dharma Studies is proud to note that GTU CDS Alum, Laura Dunn, PhD, will be joining the flagship journal of the field, as the new Co-Editor-in-Chief under a new title which expands the reach of the publication's impact: *Journal of Dharma Studies: Asian and Transcultural Religion, Philosophy, and Ethics* (Springer, New York & Dordrecht). Thomas Calobrisi, PhD, GTU/IBS Alum, who has done stellar work as Assistant Editor of the Journal, will now join as Editorial Manager. The latest issue can be viewed here:

<https://link.springer.com/journal/42240/volumes-and-issues/4-2>




**FAITHS IN CONVERSATION**  
AN ONLINE MONTHLY 6-PART SERIES

**Session 4: Hinduism & Justice**  
Monday, December 13, 2021  
4:00 to 5:30 p.m. CST Live Webinar

REGISTER AT: <https://bit.ly/3W0Q6L>

**DR. RITA D. SHERMA** holds an MA in Religion and PhD in Theology & Ethics from Concordia University, USA. She is the Director of the Center for Dharma Studies, Chair of the Department of Theology & Ethics, Vice-Divisional Faculty, and Co-Chair of Sustainability 360 initiative at the Graduate Theological Union (GTU), Berkeley, California. She was the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Young Professor in Theology, Graduate at USC, Los Angeles. She is Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Dharma Studies, the Associate Editor of Springer's multi-cultural Encyclopedia of World Religions, and on the Editorial Board of the AAU's publishing journal, *Hinduism*. She is the Founding Vice President of the Academy of North America (ANAM), a learned society for interreligious studies in the Religions of India. She is currently directing a multi-media project on Gender, Hinduism and Asian Religions.

**DR. JONATHAN HYM SCHOFFER** is Associate Professor of Religious Studies, with affiliation with the Center for Jewish Studies. His primary research interests are in classical rabbinic Judaism. His first book, *The Making of a Sage & Saint in Rabbinic Ethics* (Macon, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002) was awarded a grant for a postdoctoral fellowship from the Association for Jewish Studies in 2008. His second book is *Constructing Wakefulness: The Body and the Divine in Rabbinic Ethics* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2010). Since then, he has published several papers on the intersections between law, theology, and ethics in classical Jewish sources of law and ethics. He currently is preparing two book manuscripts, one on rabbinic jurisprudence, law, and domestic space, and one on rabbinic literature and its biblical text.

**PRESENTED BY:** The Interfaith Council of Theology, Giving Square, The Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum, and SMU Parkland School of Theology

**CO-SPONSORS:** SMU Office of the Chaplain and Religious Life, Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture, and Dallas Bar Association Equality Commission

Faiths in Conversation hosts a new topic each month from September 2020 to February 2022. Visit [thanksgiving.org](http://thanksgiving.org) for full details.

CDS is delighted to announce that Faiths in Conversation, a national and international interreligious forum for scholar-practitioners to meet the public, has invited Dr. Rita D. Sherma to present on 'Hinduism & Justice' and Dr. Jonathan Schofer will respond to Dr. Sherma's presentation from the viewpoint of the Jewish tradition.

**Monday, December 13 | 4-5:30pm (CST) Webinar**

**Register for this event here**

For more information visit [thanksgiving.org](http://thanksgiving.org)

# Center for Islamic Studies

## Madrasa-Midrasha Program

### Jurisprudence & Diaspora

Wednesday, December 1 | 1:30pm (Pacific) | Zoom



The poster features the GTU logo and the text "The Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies & the Center for Islamic Studies Madrasa-Midrasha Program". The event title "Jurisprudence & Diaspora" is prominently displayed, along with the date and time "December 1st, 2021 | 1:30 PM PT". Three speakers are listed with their names and titles: Mark Fathi Massoud (Professor of Politics at UC Santa Cruz), Charlotte Fonrobert (Associate Professor of Jewish Studies at Stanford University), and Sam S.B. Shonkoff (Taube Family Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies at GTU). A registration link is provided at the bottom: [gtu.edu/events/madrasa-midrasha-jurisprudence-diaspora-2021](https://gtu.edu/events/madrasa-midrasha-jurisprudence-diaspora-2021). A note at the bottom states: "The Madrasa-Midrasha Program is made possible by the generous support of the Walter & Edna Haas Fund."

Join us Wednesday, December 1st at 1:30pm PT for a Madrasa-Midrasha event on “Jurisprudence & Diaspora.” The event will feature Mark Fathi Massoud, Professor of Politics at UC Santa Cruz, and Charlotte Fonrobert, Associate Professor of Jewish Studies at Stanford University and Visiting Faculty at the Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies at the GTU. The event will be moderated by Sam S.B. Shonkoff, CJS Taube Family Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies at the GTU. This event is a Zoom webinar; [please visit the event page](https://gtu.edu/events/madrasa-midrasha-jurisprudence-diaspora-2021) for more information and to register

### **Congratulations May Kosba**

CIS is delighted to share that May Kosba, GTU presidential scholar and doctoral candidate, will be presenting at the Middle East Studies Association's (MESA) annual conference on her forthcoming publication in *Egypte/Monde Arabe Journal*: "And Bid Him Sing: A Tale of Longing and (un)Belonging Centering 1960s Cairo in African Diasporic Memory" on a panel titled, "Between Empire and the Post-Colony: Memory, (un)Belonging, and Reproducing State." December 2, 2021.

### **Congratulations Sakinah Alhabshi**

CIS is delighted to share that Sakinah Alhabshi, CIS MA student, will be presenting at Kasih Hospice Interfaith Foundation (Malaysia) Interfaith Panel on Confronting Life and Death in Pandemic: Spiritual & Secular Perspectives

### ***Friday, December 3 | 6-8 pm (PST) Zoom Open to all***

For more information: <https://www.facebook.com/Kasih.Interfaith/>

Congratulations to Sakinah for also presenting the following at Muktamar IMSA-MISG 2021, the Malaysian and Indonesian Muslim communities US nationwide conference: "Hardship and Suffering Bringing Community Together," "Lessons for the Community from Being with the Dying," "Quiet in Chaos: Self-Awareness and Spiritual Resilience," "HusnulKhaatimah: Your Goals for the End," and an interactive breathing.

### ***Los Angeles, December 3 | 6-8 pm (PST)***

For more information: <https://muktamar.us/speaker>

### **Congratulations Carol Bier**

CIS is grateful for the ongoing scholarship and reviews by Carol Bier, CIS research scholar, who has been peer reviewing manuscripts for the journal, *Leonardo*, *Journal of Mathematics and the Arts*, a book manuscript for University of Amsterdam Press, and two books for the journal, *Textile History*.

### **Congratulations Dr. Sulaiman Mappiasse**

CIS is delighted to share that Dr. Sulaiman Mappiasse, a Fulbright Scholar from Indonesia at CIS/GTU, will share his research, "Social Relations in a Post-Religious Conflict Area, Poso, Indonesia: An Interreligious Learning Perspective." Islamic Studies @ GTU gathering

### ***Friday, December 10 | 4 pm (PST) Zoom***

For more information: <https://www.gtu.edu/events/islamic-studies-gathering-december-2021>

### **Congratulations Dr. Munir Jiwa**

Congratulations and gratitude to Dr. Jiwa for his service as the Chair of the Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession (2019-2021) at the American Academy of Religion and for leading the committee's work at the annual AAR/SBL meetings.

Congratulations and deep gratitude to all the Islamic studies students, graduates, staff, faculty and scholars for their extraordinary work and achievements this semester, and for continuing to build bridges of understanding within academia and the wider public.

# Center for Jewish Studies

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## The Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies



CJS is pleased to offer a fellowship for Bay Area Jewish educators and community professionals. Established in 2017, the Jewish Community Fellowship provides full tuition for a single course in Jewish Studies at the GTU. Participants in the fellowship will become part of a cohort of students exploring the intersection of critical studies and Jewish communal endeavors. In addition to the course for credit, fellows participate in a two-day workshop on Jewish education led by senior faculty in the field.

Applicants should have at least one year of experience as a Jewish educator or as a Jewish community professional. The fellowship is open only to individuals who are not currently enrolled at the GTU. [Learn more here!](#)



# Interreligious Chaplaincy Program

## ICP-Jewish Studies Fellows 2021



**Sean Raman** was brought up in a religious Hindu family in India and moved to the US in 1981. He converted to Judaism in 2015 and is now a member of the Jewish Reform Congregation in Fremont. Sean said, "What drew me to GTU's Interreligious Chaplaincy program: Though an observant Jew, I respect all religions. We are all equal and serve the same God, albeit under different names. I chose GTU's program to give me a horizontal perspective of chaplaincy and across different religions. I found the interaction with GTU personnel friendly and inviting, and the fact that the program is all online and I can get an education with some minor adjustments in my day job helped me decide to join GTU."

**Dorian Seamster** is a graduate of Mills College in Oakland (BA) and the University of Chicago at Illinois (Master of Public Health.) As a healthcare administrator, Dorian has worked for both local community health centers and the state level, ensuring access to health care for all residents of Santa Cruz County. Currently, she is a coach and mentor, and community activist through her work on nonprofit boards and political organizing. Dorian said, "I was delighted to find the ICP program because as a cultural Jew and person of faith, I can both learn about many religious traditions and develop skills as a chaplain. Being a chaplain will allow me to bring together my desire to serve others and my community and be a conduit for others who are suffering to find a path to healing and find meaning in their struggles through their religious and spiritual beliefs."



**Tracy Segal** is an attorney living in Florida and attends a conservative synagogue. She participates in meditation and spirituality programs through the Jewish renewal movement and a local Buddhist sangha. In reflecting on what drew her to the GTU's Interreligious Chaplaincy Program, Tracy said: "Although I am deeply rooted in Jewish thought, ritual, and liturgy, my spirituality doesn't fit neatly in the 'Jewish' box. I was drawn to the GTU Interreligious Chaplaincy Program as a way to broaden my heart-mind and learn to understand and support people of all backgrounds. I could not be more excited for this journey."

To meet all ICP-Jewish fellows, visit <https://www.gtu.edu/projects/icp/icp-jewish-studies-fellows>

## ICP Graduates its First Student



### **Congratulations to Doria Charlson, Ph.D.!**

Dr. Charlson joined the ICP in September 2020 and completed all the program requirements on August 15, 2021. She is a research fellow at Mills College in Oakland, working on labor crises and how theatre and performance intersect with labor history. She was the recipient of the ICP Jewish Studies fellowship for fall 2020. She completed a clinical rotation at San Francisco Night Ministry, providing spiritual care and counseling to people living on the streets of San Francisco. She is currently a resident chaplain at the medical center of the University of California, San Francisco.

### **Welcome to the new ICP advisory board**

The ICP assembled a distinguished group of scholars and professionals with immense contributions to the field of spiritual care to serve for a two-year term. Advisory board members will help determine innovative approaches to chaplaincy through a commitment to care for diverse and vulnerable communities. The primary purpose of the advisory board is to be instrumental in shaping how the GTU prepares chaplains to achieve competency grounded in pluralism and diversity. Board members will deepen the ICP's collaboration and enhance outreach to professional chaplaincy organizations, educators, and chaplains representing diverse faith and ethnic communities. A complete list of the members of the advisory board is online: <https://www.gtu.edu/projects/icp/advisory-council>

### **ICP Announces New Partnership with the Hindu Community Institute**

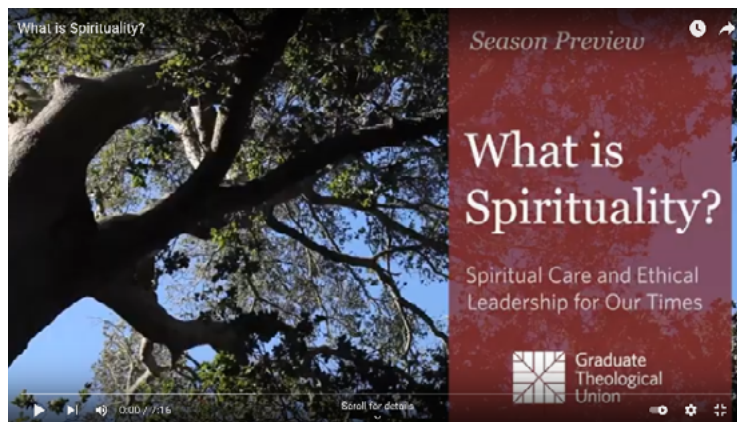
Hindu Community Institute and the ICP partnered to train a global network of spiritual care providers to serve in various chaplaincy settings. HCI's "Pathway 108 Program" aims to fill the demands for spiritual care rooted in Hindu tradition at hospitals, colleges, prisons, corporations, the military, and families. Dr. Kailash Joshi, HCI President, said, "We are pleased and thankful to have worked with GTU in creating this first-ever opportunity for aspiring individuals to achieve Hindu Chaplaincy credentials. We see this service brings to the community a unique combination of Hindu tradition and the best of norms and protocols of chaplaincy".

Ashis Khan, Neeti Sota, and Usha Narasimhan joined the ICP's first Hindu cohort in fall 2021. ICP Director Dr. Kamal Abu-Shamsieh stated, "the Interreligious Chaplaincy Program welcomes students from all backgrounds, especially minorities, to explore and study in an affirming environment that celebrates diversity and pluralism. To this end, we welcome chaplaincy students from Hindu communities from across the United States and abroad to join us and establish a foundation of spiritual care rooted in Vedic practices of yoga, meditation, Ayurveda, and prayers."

# Spiritual Care and Ethical Leadership Series

This initiative will feature written reflections and videos from scholars, spiritual leaders, and cultural critics from across the GTU, exploring the meaning of spiritual care, ethics, and leadership from a broad array of interreligious and interdisciplinary perspectives. We will also be curating resources to help you build and maintain community in a time of social distancing and uncertainty.

What is Spirituality? GTU faculty and alumni explore this question in the first video of our new Spiritual Care and Ethical Leadership for our Times series. [Learn more here](#)



Continuing the work that began in March of 2020, our new [Spiritual Care and Ethical Leadership for Our Times](#) series is now available!

Each week, GTU community members will share written and video reflections on the ways spirituality is expressed, experienced, and explored in our world today.

## The Center for LGBTQ and Gender Studies in Religion (CLGS) at Pacific School of Religion

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### ***A CLGS Jewish Roundtable Queeries Series Event***

Rabbi Jane Litman and Rev. Jakob Hero-Shaw

### ***Transkeit: Expanding Gender for Jews and Allies: A Pre-Publication Book Preview***

*Thursday, December 9 | 1-2:15 pm (Pacific) | Online*

[Join via Zoom](#)



### **A CLGS Lavender Lunch with Jude Johnson**

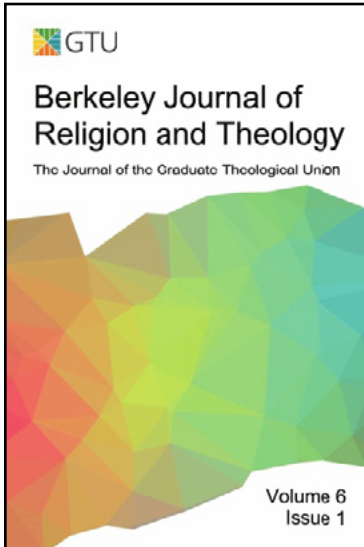
Jude Johnson

### ***Spiritual Care in LGBTQ Deserts***

*Tuesday, December 14 | 12:15-1:15 pm (Pacific) | Online*

[Join via Zoom](#)

## Berkeley Journal of Religion & Theology (BJRT)



The BJRT is pleased to accept article submissions and book review requests for Volume 8, due out in 2022. Please visit our website at [bjrt.gtu.edu](http://bjrt.gtu.edu) for more information as well as the BJRT Style Guide. This is a great way to gain experience with an academic journal and convert a term paper or writing project into a published article, or contribute to the discourse of current scholarship in your field by writing a book review.

Additionally, the BJRT is looking for candidates to serve on its volunteer Peer Review Board. The Peer Review Board is made up graduate students and established scholars who review articles in the Journal's double-blind review process. Reviewers are typically assigned no more than 2 articles per volume. If interested, please send an email to [bjrt@ses.gtu.edu](mailto:bjrt@ses.gtu.edu)

The deadline for publishing consideration in Volume 8 is March 1st, however the BJRT accepts submissions on a rolling basis for future consideration.



**The GTU Dean's Office wishes you a safe & joyful Winter Break!**





## The Dean's Newsletter

The Dean's Newsletter is for official notices from the Graduate Theological Union Dean's Office regarding academic affairs and for announcements of educational events focusing on academic research and thus of particular interest to faculty and MA and PhD students.

Send submissions by the second-to-last Friday of the month to [skennedy@gtu.edu](mailto:skennedy@gtu.edu)  
Sabrina Kennedy, Executive Assistant to the Interim Dean

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Graduate Theological Union Office of the Dean

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