

Fellowship Projects 2012-2013

Art as Inquiry into Interfaith Leadership

Audra Teague & Adina Allen

Art is a powerful tool for investigation, introspection, and communication. This CIRCLE peer group provides experiences for ANTS and Hebrew College students to delve deeper into the texts and theologies of each others' traditions while getting to know each other. We will experiment with diverse tools of creative exploration – including painting, photography, 3D art, movement, drawing, and spoken word – to explore our sacred texts and rituals. Each session will include a different art form and text/ritual, reflective writing and group sharing. In encouraging one another to try out new techniques we will create a safe, open, and dynamic group in which vulnerabilities, questions of faith and leadership, and the joys and tensions of interfaith work can be explored and shared.

Prison Justice and Ministry Group

Dena Trugman & Sarah Gillespie

The Prison Justice and Ministry group has been an active CIRCLE peer group for three years. It is a service-learning project that combines prison visits with monthly group discussions about various topics related to issues of prison justice as well as the resources from our respective traditions that speak to these issues. This peer group works with Partakers, Inc. which provides mentors to incarcerated men and women enrolled in Boston University's "College Behind Bars" program. Members of the group are assigned to small teams that both exchange letters and visit men and women incarcerated in Massachusetts Correctional Institutions.

CIRCLE Choir

Vera Broekhuysen

The CIRCLE choir is a non-auditioned choir that does not depend on musical literacy or prior choral experience. We meet a couple of times a month to share and study together, repertoire from our sacred music traditions. All participants are encouraged to bring music that speaks to them, to teach it to the group, and to lead discussions around it. Starting from points of similarity – musical similarity, a common text, such as a psalm, or a shared topical theme, such as thanksgiving – we explore our aesthetic, emotional and theological reactions to hearing, and then participating in, music of other faith traditions as well as our own. We begin the year by establishing our comfort zone, boundaries, tenets, and trust as a group, and then work to investigate and sometimes challenge ourselves and our reactions. Musical conversation sparks and encapsulates theological conversation. The CIRCLE choir sings and leads workshops at CIRCLE events throughout the school year.

Voices of Islam: An Oral History

Debra Rose Brillati & Salma Kazmi

This project will engage Christian, Unitarian Universalist, and Jewish students from Andover Newton Theological School and Hebrew College to collect the stories of a broad range of Muslims in Greater Boston using oral history interviewing techniques. Participants in the project will engage deeply at a personal level across differences of faith. The resulting oral histories will be used to develop teaching materials to enable more robust discussions on Muslim life in America, both within the Muslim community and to a broader interfaith audience.

Queer Interfaith Community

Becky Silverstein

By fostering fellowship between Queer seminarians and clergy, the Queer Interfaith Community at Hebrew College and Andover Newton Theological School hopes to support Queer seminarians and their allies in finding their voices in faith communities. We believe that creating Queer-Interfaith programming and conversation is one step in creating more diverse, open, and inclusive faith communities.

Text and Context

Lance Wisner

Texts & Contexts is an open-ended covenantal group, with minimal structure that allows for participation and mutual exploration of the intersection of our faiths and traditions- especially our texts and practices of text- and current events/issues. Currently the group includes Jewish Christian, & UU members. All peers are asked to make a commitment to try their hardest to make all meetings, as this is a relationship building process. The group is beginning its third year of meeting together.