

Women's Theological Center



Quarterly Newsletter

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FEE: Free to our members
Libraries: \$35/year

LEADERSHIP FOR THESE TIMES

by Donna Bivens and Meck Groot, Co-Directors



WTC partners gathered at a two-day retreat in August.
L to R: Marjorie Dove, Judy Tso, Curdina Hill, Gladys Wheaton.

The US elections are over. We write this a few blocks from Kerry's home in Massachusetts, one of the so-called "Blue states." Though the state went to Kerry, we know that at least one out of every three Massachusetts voters chose George W. Bush. In reality, Massachusetts, like every other state in the nation, is a shade of purple.

The 2004 election reveals just how divided Americans are – about everything from the “war on terror-

ism” to gay marriage to fiscal policies to homeland security to whether and how we take care of each other. Differences of opinion are everywhere. So are value judgments about people on the "other side" of the issues. A friend asked Meck the other day, "Who are those people in Redland?" Well, undoubtedly, the people in Redland are wondering the same

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LEADING FROM SPIRIT
...because you can't delegate transformation

**UPCOMING
LEADING FROM SPIRIT TRAININGS**

November 12 and 13, 2004
November 20 and 21, 2004
December 10 and 11, 2004

**SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY RATE
OF \$150 FOR MEMBERS**

Times, costs, and
further details at
thewtc.org

More trainings
to be offered
in the new year!

Check web site
for details.

**LEADING FROM
SPIRIT**
can also be delivered
directly to your
organization.

**Call 617-585-5655
to book.**

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about us in Blueland.

According to Rabbi Michael Lerner, many of the people who voted for Bush "have found a 'politics of meaning' in the political Right. In the Right wing churches and synagogues these voters are presented a coherent worldview that speaks to their 'meaning needs.'" He suggests that the Left does not understand this need. He asks us to "[i]magine a Democratic Party that could talk about the strength that comes from love and generosity and applies that to foreign policy and homeland security...that could talk of a New Bottom Line [in which institutions get judged by the extent to which] they maximize people's capacities to be loving and caring, ethically and ecologically sensitive, and capable of responding to the universe with awe and wonder...that could call for schools to teach gratitude, generosity, caring for others and celebration of the wonders that daily surround us!..."

Whether or not the Democratic Party is able to rise to Rabbi Lerner's challenge, we all must grapple with this "politics of meaning." For us as WTC community, that's where spiritual leadership comes in. While it is



WTC Partners Renae Gray, Carol Lee and Marlies Zammuto

easy to feel powerless and inept in the face of the challenges before us as a human family, it is an illusion that we do not have the power and skill to facilitate transformation.

As a community strongly grounded in the spiritual and social movements that have labored to hold us all to our deepest values, WTC has wealth to share. That wealth comes out of our rich Study/Action history as well as from current cutting-edge and traditional wisdom on personal and collective transformation. A process of discernment and strategic assessment involving all stakeholder groups has affirmed the power and relevance of WTC's purpose and gifts. Articulation of a strategic framework and curriculum is making it possible to replicate programs. Partnering with some 25 WTC members trained to deliver resources in spiritual leadership development will exponentially increase WTC's capacity to make an impact.

BUILDING CAPACITY

In August, 25 WTC members and supporters agreed to work with WTC staff to increase WTC's capacity to create, develop and deliver resources in Spiritual Leadership development. This group is becoming a "Study/Action" community that we hope will become a model for the larger WTC community to form additional groups to study, act and reflect together.

The partners group is diverse in terms of race, class, ethnicity, religion,

age, and sexuality and includes educators, organizers, organizational development consultants, religious leaders, healers, artists, etc. Everyone shares a passionate commitment to creating social transformation through the development of Spiritual Leadership within individuals, groups, organizations, communities, and fields. Like the WTC community at large, partners bring a wide variety of skills, networks, experience and wisdom.

The partnering process began with a two-day retreat in which 18 partners were more fully oriented to WTC's vision for partnering. They also helped staff pilot the newly designed LEADING FROM SPIRIT training and gave invaluable feedback to make the training richer and more effective.

Since the retreat, partners have been working with staff to refine the curriculum, to spread the word about the program, to consider other venues for Spiritual Leadership development, to deliver consulting services, and to lay the groundwork needed to establish themselves as a Study/Action community. They've also agreed to help complete the four additional modules of the LEADING FROM SPIRIT curriculum.

LEADING FROM SPIRIT

Beginning in November, WTC is offering the first of its trainings in spiritual leadership development. LEAD-



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ING FROM SPIRIT is a nine hour training for educators, organizers, activists, advocates, parents, religious leaders, healers, artists and consultants — anyone committed to facilitating transformation within themselves, their relationships, their organizations and cultures.

The training gives participants opportunities to explore together their own experiences of transformation and to articulate the elements that inspire and support such transformation within four dimensions — the internal, the interpersonal, the institutional, and the cultural. Using various tools, participants are invited to consider where they and their organizations are within the dynamic and ongoing process of growth and transformation. More specifically, the training offers participants opportunities and resources for

- thinking in terms of their purpose in the world
- building awareness that helps them stay intentional and purposeful
- nurturing their connection to s/Spirit as they define it
- connecting to something larger than themselves by drawing on diverse spiritual traditions and practices
- understanding transformation in the service of justice within four dimensions — internal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural

- being in community that links spirituality and justice

Four additional trainings are being developed by WTC staff and partners that will explore each of the four dimensions of spiritual leadership – the internal, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural – in more detail.

CREATING IMPACT

As already mentioned, training participants will be invited to continue developing their spiritual leadership through participation in Study/Action communities. Study/Action communities are groups in which participants are able to learn together more about a particular issue or field, to take action individually and/or collectively to impact that issue or field, and to reflect together on their experience of taking action which can inform the next stage of learning and action.

TRAINING & CONSULTING

WTC's consulting services are also changing to more deeply reflect WTC's focus of spiritual leadership development. Many of the organizations that come to WTC looking to address systemic issues such as racism are finding it helpful to ground the work by focusing first of all on mission, vision and values. When stakeholders are clear about what they are working together for, they are more able to identify and address the barriers that get in their way. Instead of focusing on barriers as

problems that need to be solved, organizations become open to making the institutional and cultural transformation needed to support their collective mission, vision, and values. ∞

Become a Part of LEADING FROM SPIRIT

Leading from Spirit could not have been created without WTC members and it cannot be sustained without your participation and support. Please consider becoming actively involved with WTC's spiritual leadership development work in one or more of the following ways:

- attend a *Leading from Spirit* training
- convene a *Leading from Spirit* Study/Action Circle
- explore partnering or collaborating with WTC
- sponsor a *Leading from Spirit* training in your area
- hold a *Leading From Spirit* training at your organization
- provide a scholarship for someone else to attend (use form on last page) *Leading from Spirit*
- spread the word about *Leading from Spirit*
- invite WTC staff or partners to speak in your community about leading from spirit.

REMEMBERING TWO BELOVED WTC SISTERS



**Marrow Johns, WTC member
1929 to 2004**

Marrow Johns became involved with WTC through mutual connection to Malidoma Somé and Sobonfu Somé. Drawn to their work through the power of their teachings about ritual, community and healing, Marrow respectfully brought them and their work to her community in Pennsylvania. Her connection to WTC deepened as she became involved in WTC's racial justice work, particularly through exploring the participation and impact of racism on white people. She brought this work home as well. Deeply rooted in Spirit, she offered her gifts of healing with love, reverence, straightforwardness and perseverance.



**Marina Kukuliyeva, WTC member
1956 to 2004**

Marina Kukuliyeva was a joyful, passionate and daring spirit who became part of WTC through her involvement in the Process Work community. Her capacity to hold the complexities of human life on a distressed planet seemed infinite even as she also expressed her anguish over the level of pain and suffering we cause one another. She could always be relied on to get to the heart of the matter either through bold challenge or mischievous playfulness. She believed deeply in the power of what WTC has to offer. During the self-assessment process, she pushed WTC to move past self-doubt in order to embrace our mission fully and joyfully.

CO-DIRECTOR AND WTC MEMBERS TO RECEIVE DRYLONGSO AWARDS



Meck Groot, Co-Director

years, she believes that when people work together for anti-racist systemic change, action occurs which can benefit all people and their communities.

Attieno Davis began her activism by working within the Black community against the war in Vietnam. In the years following, she has worked on many issues, including third world women's rights, Southern Africa solidarity, access to affordable and appropriate health care, and economic justice.

WTC member, partner, and former co-chair of the board, **Curdina Hill's** passion is the recognition and development of the leadership of women of color — a powerful and largely untapped source for healing and social transformation. She has tirelessly given her time and energy working with organizations and individuals concerned with addressing issues of power and systemic oppression make transformative change.

We are grateful to each of these sisters for their passion for justice, their faithfulness to Spirit, and their deep love for their communities. Congratulations! ∞

For many years, Community Change has recognized the efforts of "ordinary people doing extra-ordinary things" to make racial justice a reality. With a particular focus on systemic racism, Community Change is committed to serving as a center for action and collaboration among individuals and multiracial grassroots groups in the fight to achieve racial justice and equity.

This year, among the recipients of the "DryLongSo" awards are WTC's Co-Director **Meck Groot** and three WTC members: **Tess Browne, SCN**; **Attieno Davis**, and **Curdina Hill**.

Meck Groot has committed much of her energy and focus to building authentic community among white people

who work for racial justice. She believes that though white people gain many privileges and benefits through racist systems and practices, these systems and practices come at a high price even to white people. In partnership with people of color and white people, Meck works in community to facilitate the transformation of white racist culture into a culture of inclusivity, equality, equity, gratitude, spirit and connection.

As a Sister of Charity of Nazareth, **Tess Browne's** work is in solidarity with oppressed groups — especially the economically poor and women. A community organizer, trainer and facilitator for over 30

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION / REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

- I/We would like to become members. Our membership fee of \$25 per individual is enclosed.
- I/We are enclosing our donation of \$_____.
- I/We would like to pledge \$_____ every
 - month quarter for a total of \$_____
 - by ____/____/_____.
- I/We want to register for the upcoming **LEADING FROM SPIRIT** training indicated below. We are enclosing \$_____

toward the training fee (minimum deposit of \$50 required).

- November 12 and 13, 2004
- November 20 and 21, 2004
- December 10 and 11, 2004

- I/We are donating \$_____ toward scholarships for **LEADING FROM SPIRIT**

- I/We would like to pay using credit card — please circle one



Card No. _____

Expiration date: ____/____/____

Signature: _____

Return form to: WTC, P.O. Box 1200, Boston, MA 02117-1200
or complete on the web at www.thewtc.org

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