

## The Civil War to WWI

	<p>Good morning. Welcome (or welcome back) to UU History told through the stories of people who lived it. This morning we'll be discussing the aftermath of the Civil War, the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the Social Gospel movement. As we usually do, let's start with our chalice lighting, invoking the spirits of the church mothers and fathers who have come before us.</p>
	<p>Chalice lighting</p>
	<p>If you have missed some of the sessions of this history class and would like to fill in the holes, you can find all of the texts archived on the Emerson Website. First go to Religious Education/Adult, then to Curriculum. About the middle of the page you will find the links.</p>
	<p>Our spiritual ancestors go way back to the first century common era when a presbyter in Alexandria named Arius fought with the pope and the emperor that there was only one God: Jesus was not divine. After Martin Luther began the Protestant Reformation, theologians in France, Poland, Transylvania and England took up the cause of one God.</p>
	<p>In the United States, the Unitarian movement started in the Congregational Churches in New England, and only later was influenced by the theologians from the continent. By and large the Unitarians clung to traditional Christian values, practices and beliefs, including baptism, communion, the belief in heaven or hell, and only differed from their Congregational brothers in their belief that Jesus was not "of the same substance" as God, but was higher than all mortals. The Unitarian ministers and their congregations were for the most part Harvard educated, financially well off, theologically liberal, but politically and socially conservative.</p>
	<p>The Universalists, however, developed in rural areas such as Pennsylvania and Vermont, and by Unitarian standards, their preachers were from the wrong side of the tracks and their congregations served a lower social class. The issue that truly separated the two groups, however, was the question of universal salvation. The Unitarians believed in heaven and hell as much as anything for the good of the social order. The Universalists believed that a good God would not make any man just to condemn him to everlasting torment. This position had consequences: in some communities Universalists couldn't hold office because they obviously weren't afraid of going to hell after death and would therefore do all matter of evil deeds while in office. Hosea Ballou insisted that God was not a wrathful deity but a loving deity; His "Treatise on Atonement" spelled out his reasoning that God is unlimited, so God's love is also unbound. He argued forcefully against the Trinity, saying that a rational God would not present an irrational revelation. This Treatise came a decade and a half <b>before</b> the</p>

	<p>Unitarians embraced that name as an appropriate reflection of their theological position. Within 10 years of the publication of <i>The Treatise</i> – about 1815 --, the Universalists had become Unitarian in their theology.</p>
	<p>How many of you heard Mark’s sermon last Sunday about the Universalist’s message of hope? He talked about the time period that we’re interested in today. The Civil War had a profound effect on the country. First and foremost, men had killed their fellow countrymen. The seemingly randomness of death wrecked peacetime faith in a good and just God. In fact, where was God on the battlefield? Never again in the history of our country would evangelical Christianity so dominate public life.</p>
	<p>The Civil War gave us a new sense of identity. One sage mused that before the War one referred to the country as “The United States of America, they”. After the War, the pronoun was “ it.” The period after the war became a time to create new structures based on this new understanding. 1870 was the centennial year for John Murray’s arrival in Gloucester and the Universalists decided to hold a huge celebration. The women raised \$35,000 to fund the Convention – and when the men offered to manage it for them, they politely declined. The Universalists created a new structure for their denomination that ended up with three tiers structure with most of the power at the state level. More than 12,000 attended the Conference. The tension between the conservative and liberal wings remained, however, exemplified by the adoption of the Winchester Profession of Faith without its “liberty clause, and a heresy trial of a Minnesota minister for preaching the views of Emerson and Parker</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Winchester Profession had first been adopted in 1807, and its liberty clause that said congregations could add whatever they wanted to it as long as the new material did not contradict the original. The profession contained three major clauses</li> <li>• <i>Holy Bible contains revelations of God</i></li> <li>• <i>One God, one Lord Jesus Christ, one Holy Spirit</i></li> <li>• <i>Believers maintain order and do good works</i></li> </ul> <p>Well, that made things ambiguous enough for the liberals to be comfortable. After 1870, however, the fit got more and more uncomfortable.</p>

	<p>As Mark said Sunday, at one time Universalism with its message of universalism salvation was the 5<sup>th</sup> largest denomination of Christianity in the country. Even though the struggle over a creed was blazing, the young people formed the first ever national church youth organization. Missionaries were sent to Japan. Although not much of a force in Japan, the mission had a decided effect on Universalism here to redefine Universalism here in relation to Christian thought and world religion</p> <p>Missionaries were sent to the south as well. In 1891 Quillen Hamilton Shinn traveled extensively, establishing churches wherever possible. Since ministers were scarce, he set the pattern for Fellowships that survives today. The Universalists were also the first denomination to organize a national youth movement.</p>
	<p>The Unitarians responded with the new sense of nationhood after the Civil War by forming the National Conference of Unitarian Churches at a meeting attended by over 200 churches. The meeting was not all sweetness and light. The conservative wing which wanted to cling to its close Christian ties and the liberal wing which wanted to be an inclusive church agreed to the constitution only with the proviso that it was not binding on anyone. The delegates did approve \$100,000 for denominational affairs and a like amount to support Antioch College. In 1867, after months of informal discussion, the liberals met in Boston to establish the Free Religion Association, which never established churches but did publish significant materials and functioned as the voice of radical religion and a force on Unitarianism. The Free Religion Association finally disbanded when main stream Unitarianism moved further liberal.</p>
	<p>The Western Conference of the Unitarian Church was way ahead of the main body. It was formed in 1852 to serve the needs of the congregations in the Mississippi basin, and by 1875, were decidedly more radical than the National Conference. In 1886, in fact, after a long and acrimonious debate, they adopted “the Western Unitarian Conference conditions its fellowship on no dogmatic tests, but welcomes all who wish to join it to help establish Truth, Righteousness and Love in the World.” Inevitably the conservatives withdrew and formed their own conference.</p>
	<p>Organism may divide to grow, but when churches start dividing, they usually shrink. That and events in the country may account for the decline in Unitarian churches in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Great Chicago fire wiped out a major church and a fire in Boston devastated the denominations finances, followed by a series of economic panics and depressions. In 1884, the churches reorganized into the American Unitarian Association and became a denominational structure rather than an organization of individuals. By 1900 it was twice the size as it</p>

	<p>had been in 1865 and it was ready to join the Social Gospel movement.</p>
	<p>Last week we talked some about churches' involvement in social action movements. How does that differ from the Social Gospel? <b>Social Gospel</b> was a movement led by a group of liberal Protestant progressives in response to the social problems raised by the rapid industrialization, urbanization, and increasing immigration of the <a href="#">Gilded Age</a>. The social gospel differentiated itself from earlier Christian reform movements by prioritizing social salvation over individual salvation. The views of the Social Gospel movement were given formal expression in 1908 when the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America adopted what was later called "the social creed of the churches." Advocated in the creed were the abolition of child labor, better working conditions for women, one day off during the week, and the right of every worker to a living wage. With the rise of the organized labor movement in the early 20th cent. the Social Gospel movement lost much of its appeal as an independent force. However, many of its ideals were later embodied in the New Deal legislation of the 1930s.</p>
	<p>Many credit or blame Darwin for the Gilded Age and the events that led up to Social Gospel movement. Actually, social Darwinism, formulator by Herbert Spence, predated the publication of "Origin of the Species." It was Spence who coined the phrase "survival of the fittest." Whereas before the churches had told people to improve themselves for the glory of God, Social Darwinism allowed them to pursue self-improvement for the good of the species. And you know where that led: to the Gilded Age. The name, created by Mark Twain, refers to the process of <a href="#">gilding</a> or covering base metal or wood with glittering material and is meant to ridicule ostentatious display. Although the Gilded Age ushered in our modern industrial economy, the price to those not in the business tycoon status was sometimes high.</p>
	<p>The 20<sup>th</sup> century was to have been the Christian century when moral and ethical thought would be made manifest in human relations and social institutions. Universalists, like others, felt compelled to examine the social and moral implications of the faith they had professed in light of the Gilded Age. Clarence R Skinner was the most influential Universalist in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.</p> <p>He was born into a Universalist family, trained at a Universalist seminary, married a Universalist classmate and fellow Phi Beta Kappa, was ordained, and called to Universalist churches in Mt. Vernon, NY and Lowell, MA where he had very successful pastorates. In 1914 he was appointed to the faculty of the Crane Theology School at Tufts.</p>

	<p>A year later Skinner published <i>The Social Implications of Universalism</i>, an interpretation of the Social Gospel that went well beyond the scope of Protestant Christianity. In it, he offered an optimistic, socialistic vision of the "kingdom of heaven" to be established on earth. This was the first comprehensive theological treatment of Universalism to appear in many years, inspired a new interpretation of the church's mission, and established Skinner as a major spokesperson for the denomination.</p> <p>After the U. S. entry into the First World War, Skinner was widely attacked for his pacifist views but was staunchly defended by the school's dean.</p>
	<p>Skinner drafted a declaration of social principles that was adopted by the Convention in 1917.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Order: equal share in common gifts of God and in addition all that he earns</li> <li>• Social Order: equal rights for all; help for weak until they become strong</li> <li>• Moral Order: human law and action mirrors moral order of universe</li> <li>• Spiritual Order: build out of growing lives of men the growing temple of the living God</li> </ul> <p>After the armistice, Skinner was again widely attacked, this time for his advocacy of a socialist new world order. The Medford Hillside Universalist Church terminated his part-time ministry, and the Boston district attorney called for an investigation.</p> <p>By 1920 when the Universalist denomination was declining at an alarming rate and the Social Gospel was all but dead. Skinner left the Universalist Church and founded the Community Church of Boston, which was all-inclusive in its membership, and had no denominational ties.</p>
	<p>Last week we talked about whether churches should be in the social justice business. I thought it might be instructive to see just what causes some organizations have as their emphasis on social justice. When I googled “social justice” a couple of weeks ago this web site was the first mentioned!</p>
	<p>The second one on the list was the UUA, and here are our official priorities:</p>
	<p>Here’s another that doesn’t have anything good to say about social justice.</p>
	<p>This is a Catholic site</p>
	<p>And a women’s group</p>
	<p>Do you remember some of the statistics Mark gave last Sunday about what Emerson does in the way of social justice issues? Let’s list them.</p>

	<p>The Board's long range plan as I understand it does not now include any social action imperatives. What I'd like for you to do now is to group yourselves in 3's and discuss what you feel to be the major problems around Houston that we can have a significant impact in solving. Include these or any that you feel strongly about. Rank them and come up with your group's 3 top choices. You'll have ??? minutes and then we'll come back and compare lists.</p>
	<p>Who would like to speak first?</p>
	<p>Next month, May, will be our last session on UU History and will cover the Humanist movement, WWII and the coming together of the Unitarians and the Universalists.</p>