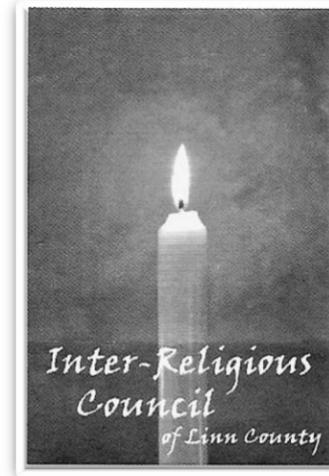


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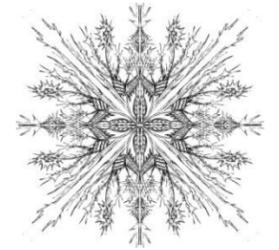
Inter-Religious Council of Linn County  
601 Second Avenue SE, Suite 5  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401



**Inter-Religious Council of Linn County**  
**Our mission:** to provide means for people of all faiths to promote understanding and respect – and to work with the community for the spiritual, moral, social, and civic welfare of Linn County.  
**Our vision:** to provide inspiration and programming in order to foster a caring community in which honesty, respect, and responsibility are celebrated.

Inter-Religious Council of Linn County  
601 Second Avenue SE, Suite 5  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401  
[www.irclc.org](http://www.irclc.org)

WINTER 2015



The University of Religion announces the 2015 course on Buddhism:  
**The Life, Teachings, & Legacy of the Buddha**

Dates and time: FEBRUARY 7, 14, 21, 28 – Saturday afternoons – 2:00 to 4:00 pm  
Cost: \$20 for all four sessions REGISTRATION FORM available at [www.irclc.org](http://www.irclc.org)  
Location: Mt. Mercy University, Flaherty Room in Basile Hall  
Instructor: Rev. Zuiko Redding (Resident Teacher, Cedar Rapids Zen Center)  
*Sponsored by the Inter-Religious Council of Linn County and Mount Mercy Mission & Ministry*

**Course description:** Buddhism has a 2,500-year history. Developing in reaction to the sacrificial excesses and spiritual aridity of Indo-Aryan religion during the sixth century BCE, Buddhism concentrated on finding a way out of *dukkha*, the basic longing and sense of imperfection that pervades human life, causing damage to both self and others. It began with very basic teachings: the Four Noble Truths, cause and effect, and the impermanence of all things.

In this four-session course we will examine the basic beliefs and practices of Buddhism. We will begin with the life and times of the Buddha and continue through the basic teachings. Then we will look at how those teachings developed into the various major traditions. We will investigate the Western encounter with Buddhism and its coming to Europe, the Americas, Australia, and Africa. Finally, we will consider encounters between Buddhism and other major world religions, learning how the Buddha and his teachings are viewed by people of other faiths today.

**Course instructor:** Rev. Zuiko Redding began studying and practicing Zen Buddhism as a university student in the early 60s. In 1992, she left a career in university teaching to receive novice ordination as a Buddhist teacher. She trained in Japan at Zuioji monastery and received certification as a teacher in the Soto tradition in 1996. She returned to the United States in 1997. Zuiko has served as resident teacher of Cedar Rapids Zen Center from its beginning in April 2000. More information about Zuiko and Cedar Rapids Zen Center can be found at [www.cedarrapidszencenter.org](http://www.cedarrapidszencenter.org).

**Holy Days**

- January**
- 1 New Year Observance (Buddhist)
  - 6 Epiphany (Christian)
  - 11 Baptism of the Lord Jesus (Christian)
  - 24 Vasant Panchami (Hindu)
- February**
- 4 Tu BiShvat (Jewish)
  - 15 Nirvana Day (Buddhist)
  - Transfiguration Sunday (Christian-Lutheran)
  - 17 Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)
  - 18 Ash Wednesday (Christian)
  - 23 Great Lent begins (Orthodox Christian)
  - 26 March 1 Intercalary Days (Baha'i)

- March**
- 2-20 Nineteen Day Fast (Baha'i)
  - 20 Ohigan (Buddhist)
  - 21 Naw Ruz (New Year) (Baha'i)
  - 28 Ramanavami (Hindu)
  - 29 Palm Sunday (Christian)
- April**
- 2 Maundy/Holy Thursday (Christian)
  - 3 Good Friday (Christian)
  - 4-11 Passover (Jewish)
  - 4 Holy Saturday (Christian)
  - 5 Easter (Christian)
  - Palm Sunday (Orthodox Christian)
  - 10 Holy Friday (Orthodox Christian)
  - 12 Easter (Orthodox Christian)
  - 16 Yom HaShoah (Jewish)
  - 21 First Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)
  - 24 Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Jewish)
  - 29 Ninth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i)

For more information on Holy Days,  
See [www.interfaithcalendar.org](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org) or  
[www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/date.shtml?month&year=2014](http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/date.shtml?month&year=2014)

## March Madness: How about Lent Madness?

By Charles R. Crawley



My church, Christ Episcopal Church, participated in a unique Lenten experience in 2014. If you are not familiar with Lent, it is the forty days between Ash Wednesday and Easter—a time of fasting, repentance, almsgiving, and soul-searching for many Christians. In 2014, it was one of fun for our Adult Education class, but we learned a lot at the same time.

You may be familiar with the NCAA Basketball Tournament, which is also known as “March Madness.” In that tournament, college basketball teams play each other in a series of brackets, with the winning team advancing and the losing team being knocked out.

A young Episcopal priest, Tim Schenck, came up with the idea in 2010 of having a similar type tournament, except “saints” would be matched up instead of college basketball teams. In the Episcopal Church, saints include not only some of the traditional saints of the Catholic and Orthodox faiths, such as St. Basil the Great, but also people who have not been formally sanctified. These would include people such as Johann Sebastian Bach, Anna Cooper, Thomas Merton, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. While not saints in the technical sense, we consider them saints in the spiritual sense, which means that they led noteworthy lives that we would do well to emulate.

The tournament starts with a Round of 32, proceeds by elimination to the Saintry 16, followed by the Elate 8, and then the Faithful 4. The winner receives the Golden Halo. Previous winners of the Golden Halo include George Herbert (2010), C. S. Lewis (2011), Mary Magdalene (2012), and Frances Perkins (2013). Now I know these are not household names, but the point of the tournament is to learn more about them, so that for us Episcopalians, they may one day be household names.

By the use of presentations, adult education class members used the tournament as an opportunity to study the lives of these saints. We then voted informally. The actual vote in Lent Madness is done online, and as many as 7,000 people across the world have voted.

In last year’s tournament, there were two finalists, Harriet Bedell and Charles Wesley. Wesley beat his more famous brother, John, who is credited with starting the Methodist movement in Christianity. Charles Wesley was a famous hymn writer; his hymn, “Jesus Christ is Risen Today,” is a staple of most Protestant Easter services.

Harriet Bedell is less well known, but she was an Episcopal missionary sister who served poor people in two extremely different environments: Alaska and Florida. We were all surprised that she did as well as she did, only being bested by Wesley in a 51 to 49% vote total.

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if one day we could have a Lenten Madness that included saints from other traditions? That is something we could hope for. I know some Christians honor and revere people from other traditions, such as Mahatma Gandhi, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Rumi, and Thich Nhat Hanh.

If you would like to know more about Lent Madness, or even participate in 2015, go to <http://www.lentmadness.org/>. It’s a great way to learn about people who loved God and served humanity.

**IRCLC Membership:** *Your membership, as a faith community or as an individual, is important to help carry out our mission of promoting understanding and respect among persons of different faiths. Thank you for your support.*  
**More information about membership found at [www.irclc.org](http://www.irclc.org).**

## ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE NEWS

Sunday mornings at 11:00 a.m. on KCRG-TV, Channel 9, Cedar Rapids

Sponsored by The Inter-Religious Council of Linn County. Features a panel of local experts who explore ethical considerations on a current issue in the news. Topics known to date are:

January 11: The Torture Dilemma

February 1: The Cost of Denying Death

January 18: What’s Big about Iowa BIG?

February 8: Are we overselling STEM?

January 25: News Reporting Standards

If you are not able to watch these discussions when aired on Sunday mornings, you may watch them on <http://www.youtube.com/user/IRCOfLC>.



The Children of Abraham group invites you to its meetings where topics of interest are discussed by leaders of the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faiths.

There are three types of programs offered:

Among the Traditions, Between the Traditions, and Within the Traditions.

At this time, the topics, dates, and locations of upcoming meetings have not been decided.

**Please check the IRC website from time to time for further information ([www.irclc.org](http://www.irclc.org)).**

*The Children of Abraham mission is to engage in conversation in order to learn about our respective faiths, leading to actions that promote community well-being and tear down walls of misunderstanding and prejudice.*

## Interfaith Community Programs

**Judaism 101: What Christians Need to Know – with Rabbi Todd Thalblum**  
Sundays in January (Noon to 1:30 p.m.) – Come for lunch and stay for the presentation.

Christ Episcopal Church, 220 40th St. SE

**RSVPs REQUIRED: Charles Crawley at [ccrawley@gmail.com](mailto:ccrawley@gmail.com) or 319.899-8716**

The schedule is as follows: January 4 – Holy Days and Festivals; January 11 – Lifecycle Moments; January 18 – God, Torah (Bible), and Israel; and January 25 – Jewish Music (with Kathe Goldstein)

**Faith Explorers Study Group – 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays each month (9:30 to 11:00 am)**

**People's Church (Unitarian Universalist) in the Ely Room, 4980 Gordon Ave. NW**

This interfaith group enjoys spirited discussion as it explores the evolution of contemporary beliefs, and the implications for personal faith and spiritual life. To gain insight into the cultural and political influences in the development of Christianity, the current study is *THE FOURTH GOSPEL: Tales of a Jewish Mystic*, by John Shelby Spong, published in 2013. Discussion on January 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> will be over Part IV and Part V. A new book will be started in February. All are welcome.

Questions: contact Carolyn Cleveland at [carolynmcleveland@gmail.com](mailto:carolynmcleveland@gmail.com) or (319) 360-4421

**Spiritual Awareness Day – Saturday, January 24 (11:00 a.m. to 4 p.m.)**

**Illuminations Healing Arts Center, 329 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Suite 115 Free-will Donation**

Eleven speakers, from a wide spectrum of spiritual paths, are scheduled to speak.

A flyer, with this schedule, can be found at [www.irclc.org](http://www.irclc.org) or [www.illuminationshealingarts.com](http://www.illuminationshealingarts.com)

**Women in Interfaith Dialogue – Saturday, January 31 (10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.)**

**Theme: “Transforming Energy” / Prairiewoods Spirituality Center / Cost: \$15 (includes lunch)**

All religious traditions have ways of working with energy to transform people and relationships. We will be looking at a variety of ways our religious ideas and practices help us become more compassionate and positively connected beyond ourselves.

REGISTER by January 26: Call Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or Barbara Schlachter at 319-351-4380

**Intersections – Dialogue & Luncheon on February 6<sup>th</sup> (11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.)**

**First Presbyterian Church, 310 Fifth St. SE, Cedar Rapids / Sponsored by the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa**

This dialogue promotes civil conversations on issues at the intersection of religion and politics.

All interested persons are welcome to attend on any first Friday of the month. Lunch is \$10, payable at the door.

Reservations are required: please call 319-364-6148 or e-mail [crintersections@interfaithallianceiowa.org](mailto:crintersections@interfaithallianceiowa.org).

For more information about topic and speaker, visit <http://interfaithallianceiowa.org/events/intersections>.