

March 24, 2023

Pastoral Reflection: Daring Greatly Together

On the wall next to my desk is a shadow box I made with the words, “Awkward, Brave and Kind.” If those words are familiar to you, you know the work of Brene Brown.

Brene’s work has been a beacon for many, especially in these tender and difficult times for us as individuals, communities of faith and for our entire country. Through her books, podcasts, speaking appearances and [website](#), she has offered her light to all of us to help navigate stressful situations and difficult conversations.



Her work has taught me to strive to be “clear and kind” in all my interactions. For someone who grew up in the Midwest being taught that we should always be kind, I learned that this meant to never say anything that might hurt a person’s feelings. The result is that I often was not very clear in stating my perspective or talking authentically about what I wanted or needed. What Brene Brown taught me is that when we are not clear with people about what we are thinking or feeling or what we are needing, we give mixed messages and that is unkind. The other danger, of course, is that we bottle our feelings and thoughts to such a degree that we end up exploding in anger in unexpected moments, causing more damage and shutting down hopes of open, honest conversations.

Brene talks about how important it is that we reclaim what it means to be vulnerable. She compares vulnerability to the concept of armoring up. When we are afraid to speak our truth or we don’t know how to speak our truth, we armor up. In her book, *Dare to Lead*, Brene says, “The greatest barrier to daring *leadership* is not fear; the greatest barrier is *armor*, or how we self-protect when we’re in fear.”

A few years ago, the Conference Council of the Northern California Nevada Conference committed to reading “Dare to Lead” as a way to develop a common vocabulary that would be foundational for having difficult and meaningful conversations. The book study invited us into a new way of being in relationship. We then followed that book study with other books that furthered our commitment to racial justice.

I believe this is a perfect opportunity for us in the Rocky Mountain Conference to explore what it means to create a culture of vulnerability and what does daring leadership mean for us in this time and space? Our Board of Directors has already committed ourselves over the next few months to a book study on *Dare to Lead*.

And, as a companion to that, I will be offering a book study on another of Brene’s books, *Daring Greatly* for anyone in the Conference who would like to join us in this important work. The book study will meet via [Zoom](#) every Tuesday, May 2, 9, 16 and 23 from 12-1 p.m. Feel free to bring your lunch with you and join us for a one-hour conversation. We will cover two chapters each week. There is no need to sign up ahead of time. If you would like to be part of this, get the book and start reading and we will see you on May 2!

Rev. Dr. Diane Weible

Search Process: What Does it Look Like Anyway?

By procuring the services of a highly qualified Bridge Conference Minister, working closely with the National Office to identify qualified interim candidates, and forming a dedicated search committee to find an Interim Conference Minister, the Conference is taking the necessary steps to ensure a smooth and successful transition.

The Interim Search Committee, which includes both laity and clergy members from the Board of Directors as directed by the Conference Bylaws, has been in close contact with the National Office to receive vetted resumes of candidates who are highly qualified to serve as an Interim Conference Minister. This ensures that the search committee has access to a pool of candidates who possess the necessary skills and experience to handle the position.

When we, as the Rocky Mountain Conference UCC, reach out to the National setting of the UCC we are deepening our covenantal ties and welcoming the wide-ranging experiences of folks whose perspectives include more than just one Association, one church or one Conference.

The process of bringing an Intentional Interim Conference Minister to the RMC is being handled swiftly due to several factors including the geographical availability of our Bridge CM and the importance of finding an Intentional Interim CM who will help assess our needs and available resources and pave the way for a smooth transition to a new settled Conference Minister.

Once the Intentional Interim CM has come on board, and following the intentional interim work we need to do together as a conference, a dedicated search committee will be formed to begin the process of generating a profile, receiving applications, and vetting candidates for the position of settled CM. This search committee will be composed of people across the entire conference and will work closely with the Board of Directors and the Interim CM to ensure that the search process is thorough and transparent.

Throughout the entire process, the Board of Directors is committed to keeping conference members fully informed of the progress of the search committee. Regular updates will be provided through the newsletter to ensure that conference members are kept up-to-date about the entire process. Input and feedback from Conference members will be important as the Conference creates a profile that not only introduces who we are to potential candidates but also describes the candidate that the Conference as a whole is looking to lead us into the next chapter of ministry for the Rocky Mountain Conference.

We welcome constructive input from all conference members throughout this process. However, as some of you may have already experienced, certain aspects of the search process, especially when search committees begin the work of interviewing candidates, must remain confidential to protect the privacy of the candidates. Therefore, we ask for a level of trust and understanding towards the work of the search committees, both for the Interim search and the final CM search committee.

David Bristow
Eleanor Downey
James Foucher
Daniel Haas
Mark Long
Wendy Kidd

From the Healthy Ministry Relationships Team

"A Position of Trust," basic boundary training for all Authorized Ministers, Transferees into the RMC, and MIDs, 9 hours on Zoom, Part I: May 10, 9 am - 1:30 pm, Part II, May 18, 9 am - 1:30 pm. Cost is \$90, paid to RMC and Registration is through [Eventbrite](#) opens for registration Feb 9, 2023. Both sessions are required, but Part II may be taken the second time it is offered on November 10, 2023. Retired ministers are welcome to take this class, but they are not required to and have their own class, check the [website](#) for details.

From La Foret



SEEING NO STRANGER
WITH VALARIE KAUR

SEPT. 29 –
OCT. 1, 2023

The future is dark. Is this the darkness of the tomb—or the darkness of the womb?" A global pioneer and visionary, Valarie Kaur reframes the present moment in history as one of transition and believes each of us has role in the labor of birthing a new future. Her message has inspired millions of people around the world and ignited a movement to reclaim love as a force for justice. In this special workshop, Valarie will draw forth our deepest wisdom to explore how Revolutionary Love can transform our lives – love for others, our opponents, and ourselves. Through her renowned storytelling, teaching, and embodied inquiry, she will show us how to build beloved community, from the inside out. "Anti-racism is the bridge; beloved community is the destination," she teaches. By the end, Valarie will place a powerful and lasting tool in our hands – the Revolutionary Love Compass – so that we return to our lives inspired, empowered, connected, and courageous.

When: Friday, September 29th at 6 PM to Sunday, October 1st at 11 AM.

Where: La Foret Conference & Retreat Center. 6145 Shoup Rd. Colorado Springs, CO 80908

Who: Anyone interested in being inspired and equipped to use Revolutionary Love to build the world of the future.

More Information: <https://www.laforet.org/events>

Cost: Tiered pricing and scholarships are available. Do not let cost be the reason you do not attend! There is an option to pay a \$50 deposit and contact us if you need more assistance than what the tiered options allow. The "Subsidized Level" (\$257) is for those who regularly experience financial hardship. The "Sustainer Level" (\$332.25) reflects the true cost of hosting one person for this event at La Foret. The "Supporter Level" (\$408) is the value of the retreat and allows us to offer tiered

pricing. Lodging is separate. If you stay offsite and commute, there is no additional fee. Staying in a yurt is \$78 for the weekend. A shared room onsite is \$136 and a private room is \$194.



JWW Lectureship Series 2023 - April 28-30, 2023

We are thrilled to welcome Diana Butler Bass to FCUCC this year!

"Christianity did not begin with a confession. It began with an invitation into friendship, into creating a new community, into forming relationships based on love and service."

For more information about this series and to obtain tickets [click here](#).



Our 2023 Everding Lecturer is Dr. Jasmin Zine. Her public lecture will be held on Tuesday, April 25 at 7 p.m. (MDT) in Shattuck Hall at Iliff School of Theology. Registrations may be made here: [Everding Lecture Dr. Jasmin Zine](#).

Dr. Zine is Professor of Sociology & Religion & Culture (Muslim Studies) at Wilfrid Laurier University, in Ontario, Canada. As an Everding Distinguished Lecturer, Dr. Zine will give a public lecture on Tuesday, April 25 at 7 p.m. (MDT) in Shattuck Hall at Iliff School of Theology. The title of her lecture is "Under Siege: Islamophobia and the 9/11 Generation". Please RSVP for the lecture here: [Everding Lecture Dr. Jasmin Zine](#)

Please contact [Carol McPherson](#) if you have any questions.

From the National Setting



This online event will take place on Saturday, April 22nd at 11 am ET. The theme is "What's Possible?: Earth Day Stories of Hope." This two and a half hour summit will feature a keynote from the Rev. Jim Antal, a panel of inspiring speakers, the presentation of the Dollie Burwell Prophetic Action Award, and a video showcasing the uplifting story of Mayflower UCC in Minneapolis. Even if you cannot make the event at its scheduled time, still sign-up, and we will send you a link to a recording of it. Register [here](#) now!

Upcoming Events and Important Links

March 29: Ecclesiastical Council for Terri Bowen [Register](#)

April 22: Earth Day

April 27: RMC Board of Directors Meeting

May 2, 9, 16 and 23 : Daring Greatly Book study Zoom link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/3296187641?pwd=MU4yRGpMb3pEQ0MwbFFrUVFzalppZz09>

June 15-17: Annual Celebration [Learn more](#). [Register](#).