



Reflecting on our annual meeting  
Fall Gathering planned for November 3-4  
Propose the 2023 program theme!  
AAR REA Session postponed

## First ever online REA annual meeting a success!

For the first time in our 118 year history as an association, the Religious Education Association's annual meeting was held in a fully online space, utilizing a tool called Run The World. 159 people from four continents, 11 different countries, and a diverse array of professional and academic settings joined in a week long set of paper sessions, keynote addresses, and opportunities to network.

For those of you who are registered for this meeting — whether you were able to attend or not — you can access the recordings through Run The World. We are working on making the plenary sessions available online for everyone else, although that will take a while. The Proceedings of this meeting, which are formatted as a book, are available for [free download from our website](#).

Multiple resources were lifted up during the meeting, here are just a few of them:

- [A padlet of resources!](#)
- [Our Whole Lives](#), a lifespan sexuality curriculum developed and taught by the Unitarian Universalist Association
- [Odyssey Impact](#) videos
- [Trauma-informed pedagogies and sexuality](#)



A new work group — LGBTQ&allies — was formed, for more information contact Heesung Hwang.

I doubt that we will ever get beyond a longing to be in person! Nor should we. Yet this online space had many affordances that turned out to be of benefit. One primary element was that people from around the world could attend our meeting. Dr. Boyung Lee, the program chair, and the full committee worked hard to ensure that presentations were made within timing that worked well for the presenters' time zone. That meant, in some cases, that others of us were listening to papers in the middle of the night or early morning hours. Yet even with that challenge, the discussions were vibrant, engaged, and complex.



Run The World is quite different from Zoom in many ways, and it was interesting to see how the affordances of these different technologies played out. In a typical Zoom webinar, for instance, you cannot see any of the other participants, and often cannot even save the chat. In Run The World, by way of contrast, everyone came in as an “audience member” unless they were specifically presenting and therefore “on stage.” Yet everyone could see who was in the audience

via their names and tiny images, and people could easily comment and offer emoji responses that scrolled up the side of the “stage.”

On the other hand, it is quite easy within Zoom to create breakout rooms for smaller discussion, whereas in Run The World the “roundtable” function was harder to navigate, and few presenters ended up using it. No one can say with any certainty what these experiences of doing scholarly meetings in online formats will lead to, but it's clear that the REA will continue to do our best to make our engagements pedagogically interesting, and educationally fruitful.

## Save the Date for a fall gathering: November 3-4, 2021

Given the success of last fall's more informal REA gathering, the steering committee has agreed to organize another fall gathering. Save the dates of November 3-4 for a set of rich experiences in an online environment. If you are currently leading a work group, community of practice, or other REA small group and would like a spot on that schedule, please be in touch with our executive secretary, Lakisha Lockhart.

As before there will be no charge for this event, and we hope that it will be an opportunity for members to invite new people to catch a glimpse of REA in action.



## Significant decisions taken at REA 2021 business meeting



**ANNE WALKER**

For the first time in recent memory there were contested elections for various Board positions. It is exciting — and encouraging in this era — to see such interest expressed in our association. Elected to two year terms were the following:

- Anne Walker, vice president
- Heesung Hwang, secretary
- Garam Han, student representative
- Callid Keefe-Perry, chair of the academic institutions standing committee
- Mark Chung Hearn, member-at-large of the nominations committee



**HEESUNG HWANG**



**GARAM HAN**

The Inclusive Excellence report was presented and the REA Board recommendations following that reported were accepted, including the hiring of a person tasked and compensated with serving as a DEI coordinator. Details will be forthcoming soon as to the position description and search process for that person.



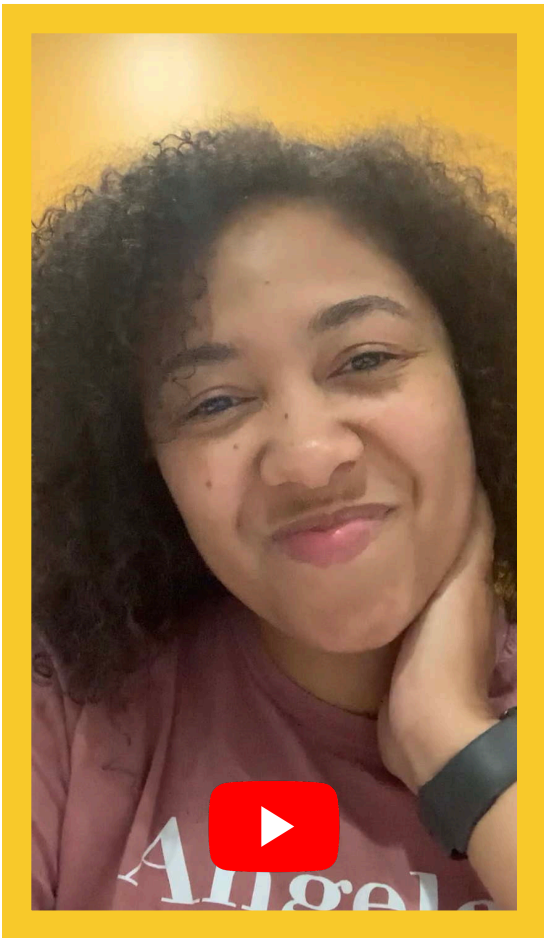
**MARK CHUNG HEARN**



**CALLID KEEFE-PERRY**

The budget was accepted, as well as multiple reports from various officers and staff. Finally, the theme and CFP for the 2022 REA annual meeting — to be held (we hope!) in person at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota from July 5-8 was presented. More details are available at the [2022 conference website](#).

## Propose an annual meeting program theme!



Watch [Lakisha's invitation](#)! Starting with the 2023 annual meeting, REA members will choose the theme for the meeting. This change emerged as a significant structural response to multiple concerns arising over transparency, REA's commitment to inclusive excellence, and a deep desire to live more fully into our mission statement. The process, which is [detailed in full on our website](#), involves putting together a proposal for the theme, along with a specific program chair, and submitting it to the Steering Committee for basic approval. This initial approval process will ensure that only proposals that demonstrate the capacity for implementation will be put before the membership. All such proposals will then be voted upon, with the program chair of the successful proposal joining the board for the year in advance of the meeting to allow for mentoring and support from REA staff.

The REA Steering committee is committed to supporting this process fully, and will be happy to offer advice on any draft proposals submitted by October 1st. The final deadline for complete proposal submissions is January 1st.

All three of these opportunities are governed by REA practices and policies, with the intention to support our members and the field as best as we can while maintaining best practices in privacy and professionalism.

## Get involved more deeply in the REA

The [last issue of e-REACH](#) offered a number of specific ideas for ways REA members can support the field individually. Here we'd like to highlight several of the ways in which REA can help you to organize collectively.

First, note the REA website exists as a resource for standing committees, communities of practice, working groups, and so on. Consider the [Peace and Justice work group](#), or the [Catholic community of practice](#), as examples of ways members are using the website to support organizing efforts within the larger REA community. If you are interested in

having a page devoted to your group, please contact our networking coordinator ([Mary Hess](#)) for details on how to make that happen.

Second, remember that REA has a professional zoom account which we make available to members who wish to hold synchronous online meetings in various ways. In the past, for instance, we have done pop-up sessions on syllabus preparation, on transformative instructional practices, and so on. Setting up a zoom meeting which requires pre-registration will also give your smaller organizing unit a list of people (with email addresses) who have chosen to participate in that effort.

Third, we have a number of REA digital media accounts ([Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#), [Mailchimp](#)) which can make it possible to communicate with people in our broader networks, or in smaller groups (depending on your goals).

## REA at AAR session postponed to July 2022 meeting



The special REA at AAR session originally scheduled for the 2021 AAR meeting in San Antonio has been postponed to the July 5-8 REA annual meeting, so that it can proceed as an experiential, in-person event.

### STEPHEN LEWIS

We are excited that Nancy Lynne Westfield (Wabash) and Stephen Lewis (FTE) will be leading that session, even while we are disappointed that the continuing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic mean that we have had to postpone this event in Texas.



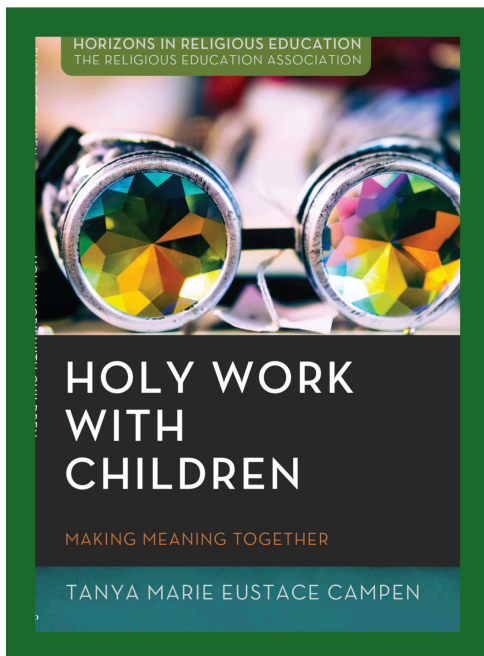
### NANCY LYNNE WESTFIELD



## New Horizons book published

We are pleased to announce the next book has been published in the REA Horizons series, entitled Holy Work with Children: Making Meaning Together. We caught up with the author, Tanya Eustace Campen, and asked her to share a few reflections:

*Give us the “elevator pitch” for your book:*



Holy Work with Children: Making Meaning Together is a theoretical, qualitative, and practical look at faithful ministry with children. This book takes a deep look at how an individual's theological framework and understanding of children's spirituality impacts their ministry with children. Holy Work with Children offers practical tools for guiding and supporting children as they do the important work of making meaning out of God's presence while finding ways to respond as they seek to make a difference in their communities and the world. Written for religious educators, and others who journey with children in religious communities, this book invites readers to consider their own theological view of children, encourages them to engage in active listening and wondering with children in their community, and provides tools for guiding children as they grow in their love of God and neighbor. In doing this work religious educators, ministry leaders, parents, and all who journey with children join God and the children in the

holy dance of making meaning that leads to transformed lives, communities, and the world.

*What surprised you about the ideas as you worked on it?*

I think the biggest surprise was the clarity in the children's theological process. My experience with children led me to a deep belief that children are theologians, capable of making meaning. My scholarship revealed developmental research and theories that supported my hypothesis. Sitting with and listening to children revealed the process in which they move through as they do this important work. Engaging, recognizing, claiming, and responding to God's presence offers a clear pedagogical framework for the child's meaning making process. It is in this theological process that we see opportunity for adults to come alongside, shepherd, and guide children as they do the important work of making meaning in response to their experiences with God and as they find ways to respond — loving God and neighbor in all they do. This surprise revelation leads me to attention to the parts of a child's story and meaning making process. It is in paying attention that I see the richness of the process and thereby the depth of their revelations and actions. This discovery now causes me to wonder: how is this reflective of how

people of all ages make meaning in response to God's presence and how does that impact their response and actions in their community and the world.

*What would you most want religious educators to draw from this?*

My hope is that religious educators will be drawn into the children's stories and that they will hear with an openness all that God is doing in and through the children in my book, and most importantly the children in their lives and ministries. My prayer is that my book will invite religious educators to intentionally consider their own theological view of children and how that view impacts their ministry with children. I dream of a day when religious educators and all religious leaders will serve out of a deep appreciation and respect for the youngest members of their community, that they will actively listen and wonder, and that they will expect God to show up in that process. As religious educators join this holy dance with God and children, I believe faith will be strengthened, understandings will be deepened, actions will become for transformative and in and through this process



**TANYA EUSTACE CAMPEN**

*What questions still remain for you?*

- Where are these children (many are now young adults) now?
- How did this very short experience impact their faith journey?
- What meanings and discoveries continue to shape and form their faith as they move into young adulthood and beyond?
- How will this theological framework and practical theological approach for ministry with children impact other children and faith communities around the world?
- How might these research findings reveal a deeper understanding of all persons of all ages engage in the important work of meaning making, joining in the Holy dance with God and neighbor?

*What's the next area of your research?*

I am currently turning my focus outside of the structure of the church to the work of family faith formation at home and in the world. I am wondering: how can people of all ages connect and respond to God in the ordinary moments of every day? What tools are available to families and intergenerational communities as they grow in their faith together? How might this impact how they do the work of loving God and loving neighbor in every moment of their lives?

## Wabash Center Impact Report

Scholars from our field have been involved with the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion from its very inception, back in 1996. Recently two of our long time members – Jack Seymour and Evelyn Parker – collaborated on an exploration of the Wabash Center’s impact. The lengthy report is both comprehensive and energizing in its reflections, and we commend it to you.

## BJRE Special Issue CFP

The British Journal of Religious Education has issued a call for papers for a special issue focused on “Genders, Sexualities and Religious Education: Theory, Policy and Practice.” The deadline to submit an abstract is December 13, 2021, with accepted abstracts announced in March of 2022, and a final deadline for all papers of July 2023.

Several of the papers presented at this summer’s REA meeting would fit well into the call for this special issue, and you can find many more details at the REA website.

## Resources

Queer Grace is an online encyclopedia of information and ideas around the life of LGBTQIA+ people and Christian faith. They offer a safe space full of resources for all those navigating their journey in the church.

Research is ongoing on the impact of COVID-19 on religious communities. See, in particular, the CONTOC project which is based in Europe, but has spawned work in the US as well. Further work in the US was just funded by Lilly and is going to be directed by Scott Thumma. There are also several e-book compilations of essays edited by Heidi Campbell that are available for free online.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has an extensive collection of materials entitled “Black on the Prairies”, which offers substantial exploration of the past, present, and future of Black prairie life through the themes of “Migration, Putting in Work, Black and Indigenous Relations, Politics and Resistance, and Black to the Future,”

The Teaching and Learning Institutes at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges have developed a “Student-generated, Annotated List of Resources on Trauma-Informed, Antiracist Pedagogy and Remote Teaching and Learning” full of useful links, and which has the added benefit of demonstrating an active student research pedagogy.



Time Magazine has published a compilation of ways in which local activists in eight countries around the world have engaged the racial reckoning catalyzed by George Floyd's murder at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer. The REA issued a public statement at the time, and as an association we continue to work on racial justice.

Teaching and Learning as Treaty Peoples is a website that offers many and diverse resources for learning about and incorporating an understanding of Canada's history with Indigenous peoples into your classroom.

The Association of Religion Data Archives provides nine separate American religion timelines that allow educators and students to explore the most significant people, places, and events in the history of religion in the United States. Sections include "Prominent Religious Events and People" which provides a thorough overview from the 1600s until today. There are also timelines focused on Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, and Presbyterian events and people. Timelines are also provided for "Social Movements and Religion," "Religious Minorities (Non-Christians)," "Race/Ethnicity and Religion," and "Women and Religion." Each entry contains a description, links to additional timelines, photographs, and sources for further reading.

## Member News

REA's executive secretary, Lakisha Lockhart, was recently called to Union Presbyterian Seminary in Virginia as the Assistant Professor of Christian Education.

Mary Hess is pleased to announce her new book, co-authored with Stephen S. Brookfield, Becoming a White Antiracism: A Practical Guide for Educators, Leaders, and Activists. Stylus Publications is offering a discount code, see the ad at the end of this e-REACH.



eREACH is a newsletter of the Religious Education Association, an Association of Professors, Practitioners, and Researchers in Religious Education.

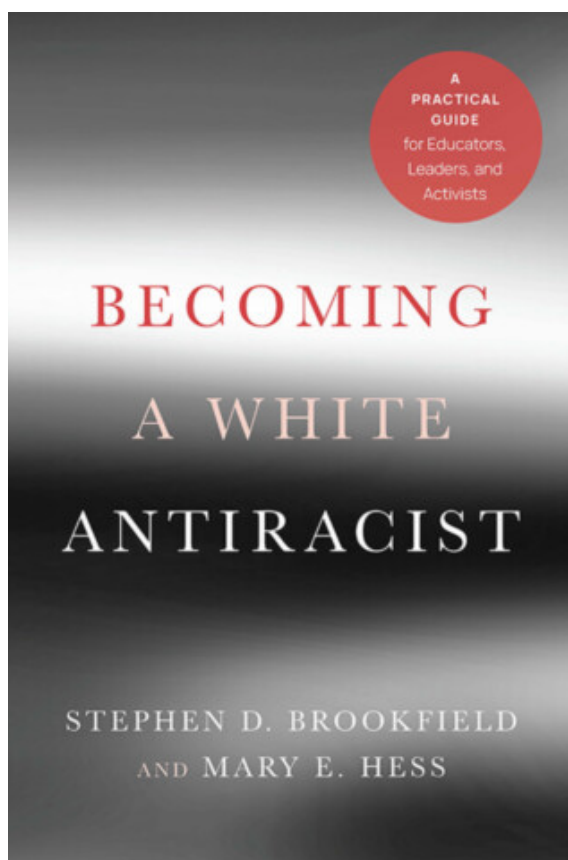
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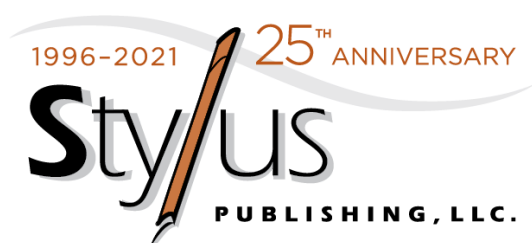
## HELPING PEOPLE DEVELOP AN ANTIRACIST IDENTITY



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### **BECOMING A WHITE ANTIRACIST**

*A Practical Guide for Educators, Leaders, and Activists*

*Stephen D. Brookfield and Mary E. Hess*

"Hess and Brookfield strike a delightfully unapologetic tone in *Becoming a White Antiracist*, calling white people to task for perpetuating anti-Black racist behaviors and attitudes. Through honest and raw engagement with challenging issues, the authors provide an accessible guide to developing a white antiracist identity, reminding readers of its foundational importance for effective diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. *Becoming a White Antiracist* is a must-read for educators and leaders desiring to become agents for positive change in our contemporary society rife with racialized turmoil."—**Lisa R. Merriweather**, Associate Professor of Adult Education, University of North Carolina - Charlotte, and Co-founder & Senior Editor, Dialogues in Social Justice: An Adult Education Journal

"Brookfield and Hess offer a range of strategies and methods for liberating white imaginations from the debilitating and life-draining legacies of white supremacy and racism in America. Through storytelling and truth-sharing dialogical methods, they provide readers with roadmaps by which individuals and groups might begin to dismantle structural racism in the United States. The book provides white readers with tools and tactics that can aid them in their efforts to engage systemic racism and dismantle white supremacy."—**Paul O. Myhre**, Senior Associate Director, Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

This book will be useful to anyone trying to create conversations around race, teach about white supremacy, arrange staff and development workshops on racism, and help colleagues explore how to create an antiracist culture or environment. This work happens in schools, colleges and universities, and we suspect many readers will be located in K-12 and higher education. But helping people develop an antiracist identity is a project that occurs in corporations, congregations, community groups, health care, state and local government, arts organizations, and the military as well. Essentially, if you have an interest in helping the white people you interact with become antiracist, then this book is written very specifically for you.

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# HOLY WORK WITH CHILDREN

MAKING MEANING TOGETHER

TANYA MARIE EUSTACE CAMPEN

Children are theologians with the ability to recognize and respond to God's presence in their lives.

Listening to the stories of children helps us to understand how children make meaning out of God's presence and reveals tools that children use as they claim their faith. With this knowledge, adults can then better promote and encourage children's spiritual growth.

Offering a theology of childhood, *Holy Work With Children* values the child's role in the Body of Christ and God's transformative work. Dr. Campen invites readers to consider:

- How does listening to children teach us about God and faith formation?
- What wisdom and insight do children offer to all of us by how they seek understanding of God and God's presence in their lives?
- How can we guide and support the children in our communities in this work?

Drawing on direct research with children as they think theologically, this book extends both theological and educational research. *Holy Work With Children* offers practical examples for how congregational leaders, parents, and those who journey with children can encourage and guide them as they make theological meaning and discover ways to respond to God's grace and love making a difference in their communities and the world.

"A must-read for ministry leaders! Campen thoughtfully weaves together both theological framework and practical tools to create space for children to experience the work of the Holy through wonder and listening."

—Kathy Pittenger, children's initiatives coordinator, Michigan Conference, United Methodist Church

"Theologian, qualitative researcher, and religious educator Tanya Campen invites readers into educational ministry that will both enliven children's awareness of God and help them to articulate those experiences. If we accept her premise that God is at work in children, then we must ask, how do we respond? Campen answers, 'Hold the space open.' Their theological insights are rich and compelling. Teachers will learn how to partner with children in holy conversations. Campen skillfully weaves theology, developmental theory, and pedagogy in among delightful holy conversation with the children who were part of her research."

—Margaret Ann Crain, Professor Emerita of Christian Education, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

"*Holy Work with Children* is a must-read for everyone who cares about children and their spiritual lives. The book is filled with Tanya's wisdom, insights, and practical ideas for accompanying children on their journey with God. On every page you will experience her love, respect, and appreciation for children and their stories, experiences, and questions. Her fourfold approach to children's meaning-making—engage with the faith tradition, recognize the presence of God, claim their own experience, and respond—provides practical direction for every faith community."

—John Roberto, president of Lifelong Faith Associates

HORIZONS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



## HOLY WORK WITH CHILDREN

MAKING MEANING TOGETHER

TANYA MARIE EUSTACE CAMPEN

TANYA MARIE EUSTACE CAMPEN is an ordained deacon in the United Methodist Church and holds a doctorate of philosophy in Christian education and congregational studies from Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary. Her research focus is children's spirituality. Tanya teaches, speaks, and writes regularly on issues concerning children, families, and intergenerational ministry. Tanya's ministry seeks to help all persons discover and live in response to God's grace and love.

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## Social Justice in Multicultural Settings

June 7-9, 2022

The conference is scheduled for June 7-9, 2022, under the auspices of the Arab Academic College in Haifa, Israel. Conference sessions will explore the relationship between social justice and multiculturalism, especially as they are related to education. Israel is home to four major religions and numerous cultural groups. Teachers, teacher educators, academic researchers and policy makers live social justice issues every day, making the Arab Academic College an ideal home for this conference.

Attendees from around the world will bring experiences from their cultural contexts. Programming will include research and practical sessions, panels, and discussion groups.

Post-conference guided tours will be available.

We hope that this timely and important meeting will generate new theoretical understanding and an enriched practical agenda.

**This is a green conference; we will make every effort to use only recyclable and reusable materials in such a way to minimize negative impacts on the environment.**

**It is our intention and desire that this be a face to face conference. But if Covid restrictions still exist that prevent people from traveling, we will enable Zoom sessions.**

### Call for Papers

We will be accepting abstract submissions until December 15, 2021

Abstracts can be submitted, and further information can be found, at the conference

website: <https://sjms2022.arabcol.net/sjms2022arabcol/>

### Keynote Speakers

- **Prof. Emeritus James Banks**, University of Washington
- **Prof. Cherry McGee Banks**, University of Washington
- **Prof. Emeritus Michael Connelly**, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto

### Scientific Committee

- **Adv. Zaki Kamal**: President of the conference
- **Prof. Randa Khair Abbas**
- **Prof. Deborah Court**
- **Prof. Mualla Selcuk**
- **Dr. Riam Abu Much**