



Spring 2018 The Transcendentalist movement that *exploded* around Emerson was the most luminous American contribution to religious and spiritual thought.

But the story isn't over.

In the nineteenth century, the Transcendentalist movement exploded around a Unitarian minister named Ralph Waldo Emerson, and shook the religious world. It proposed an evolutionary spiritual vision where the ground beneath us is always moving and higher human possibilities transcend the barbarisms of the past. By its very nature, it produced heroic leaders in the struggle against slavery, the brutality against "Indian" tribes, and the subjugation of women.

A vision and a passion we need now—and it's the gift of our own Unitarian Universalist story, but few UUs know it. Come and meet the Transcendentalists, who remind us that the future is in our hands!

Religion will serve either as a powerful lock on the archaic past, or as a powerful engine for the evolution of consciousness.

PARTICIPANTS SAY:

"You gave new life and meaning to the great visionary leaders that shaped Unitarianism and this country. And the leap to our need for evolutionary enlightenment is brilliant. This message — and these workshops — need to be shared by all UU congregations: it really is the way to increase our growth in the right evolutionary practice."

"I found your series not only intellectually stimulating and personally meaningful, but also, at my life's present point, especially relevant. I also find you immensely likable. In addition, at this juncture in my life's journey, your manner of presentation suited me well."

"Had been struggling with why cultivate a spiritual practice — this is very useful."

"Very timely and enlightening: conducive to soul growth."

"Wonderful! This is fascinating and inspiring stuff!"

"The bringing together of the Transcendentalists with the contemporary material is very forceful — ties together two important passions."

"I would definitely recommend this course to other UU congregations and persons. Abundantly relevant, informative, and inspiring. Extremely engaging and exciting for me. I hope Jay gets to do a national tour with this! His presentation engaged and stimulated me and clearly did so for others. The seminars expanded my knowledge of both Transcendentalist and UU history (and their relationship) and brilliantly traced these to present-day figures. Also, all this pointed to clear social action implications. I'm deeply grateful."

See the **SCHEDULE** 

Five spring Tuesdays in April and May
UU SOCIETY OF GREATER SPRINGFIELD
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More at: JAYDEACON.NET

2018
Series

PART ONE: THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS

SESSION I TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 7-9 PM

UNITARIANISM BEFORE EMERSON

You might be surprised! What was “Supernatural Rationalism”? So Unitarians were avant garde — but compared to what?

The appearance of spiritual revolutionaries: Channing, who saw the threshold beyond the old thought to new horizons, and Emerson, who crossed it.

SESSION II TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 7-9 PM

“THE NEWNESS”: HARBINGERS OF THE REVOLUTION

It’s an amazing story with an astonishing cast of characters, and even UUs know little of it.

When Unitarians were the “establishment” and allergic to controversy. Who were the “Jerusalem Wildcats” and why did they so disturb the Unitarian denomination?

SESSION III TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 7-9 PM

THE CUTTING EDGE: SYSTEMS SHAKE

The Transcendentalists as heroic leaders of the anti-slavery movement; Emerson, Theodore Parker, T.W. Higginson, and Senator Sumner. They *had* to be. Why?

SESSION IV TUESDAY, MAY 1, 7-9 PM

STORIES FROM THE FRONT LINES/LEGACY

Henry Thoreau, Brook Farm, Walt Whitman, later Transcendentalists and the enduring legacy.

PART TWO: EVOLUTIONARY SPIRITUALITY

SESSION V TUESDAY, MAY 8, 7-9 PM

A CONTEMPORARY ENLIGHTENMENT

Think the story ended somewhere in the 19th century? Wrong! How the Transcendentalists’ work is extended in the work of other pioneers who pursue the evolutionary dimension of spirituality. And — what an evolutionary spirituality means for us today!

To register:



Call UUSGS office: 413-736-2324

or email at UUSGS@UUSpringfield.org

ABOUT JAY DEACON

Dr. Deacon is minister a longtime Unitarian Universalist minister. He has served congregations in Northampton MA; Newport RI; Manchester NH; Bangor; Orlando; and in the United Kingdom, in London and Aberdeen. He led the creation of Unity Temple Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Oak Park, Illinois by consolidating two UU congregations, leading UTUUC from 1993 to 2002.



As Director of the UUA Office of GLBT Concerns in the 1980s, Jay led the development of the Welcoming Congregation Program. Previously he founded the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford and served Good Shepherd Parish MCC in Chicago.

He is a longtime student of the Transcendentalist movement and is a member of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society. He’s author of *Magnificent Journey: Religion as Lock on the Past or Engine of Evolution*. He lives in Springfield.