We at WATER are deeply concerned by the direction the current U.S. administration is moving. We are especially chilled by the unjust treatment of immigrants and refugees, among many other egregious policies. It is now our practice to affirm that all of WATER’s efforts are focused on changing the cultural and intellectual assumptions that ground discrimination, exclusion, and destruction. We gather in service of a very different vision—inclusion, equality, and justice. We welcome all. Join us!

Want to Be an Intern or Visiting Scholar/Minister at WATER?

WATER welcomes students and visiting scholars/ministers from seminaries, universities, congregations, and colleges worldwide to apply for a summer or year-long internship. The program includes event planning, writing and editing projects, non-profit fundraising, community outreach, and website/social media maintenance. Summer internships typically begin in May and end in July, with flexibility; a minimum of six weeks is required. The application deadline is April 1, 2017. Year-long internships typically begin in September and end in July. Visiting scholars/ministers work on their own projects and schedule. Apply: www.waterwomensalliance.org or 301.589.2509.

Who We Are

WATER is a global network, an educational and spiritual space, a center for dialogue on feminism, faith, and justice. We connect activists, religious leaders, students, scholars, and allies who are using feminist religious values to create social change. Founded in 1983 by Mary E. Hunt and Diann L. Neu, we have been empowering people to address structural violence for over thirty years — making WATER one of the oldest feminist religious non-profit organizations in the world. The WATER community needs you to work toward inclusive theologies and rituals, to push for social change, and to collaborate across many differences. Join us! To learn more about what we do, visit us at www.waterwomensalliance.org.

Mary E. Hunt  Diann L. Neu  |  Co-directors
Hannah Dorfman  Mallory Naake  |  Staff Associates
Joe Scinto  |  Volunteer
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Feminist Spiritual Practice—On the March

By Mary E. Hunt

The soaring success of the Women’s March on Washington and the many related marches around the world signal a new spiritual vibrancy that supports action for social justice. Huge numbers of diverse folks; overwhelming good will in sometimes crowded conditions; creative, constructive manifestations of progressive opinions; a deep sense of not being the only one who opposes the policies and practices of American hegemony; and new resolve to bring about justice made it happen. The role of feminist religion and spirituality in this is telling.

The WATER Spirit

Elizabeth Hardt, 2015-16 WATER Staff Associate and Loretto Volunteer works with refugee resettlement in the US makes you feel unsafe or upset. Open conversation, compassionate neighbors, and safe homes are what we all want, refugees included.”

Thank you Elizabeth, for embodying WATER values and carrying on the WATER spirit!
Former WATER Intern Wins $51 Million Lawsuit!

On January 26, 2017, former WATER Staff Associate now Attorney Emily Derstine Friesan helped win an age discrimination case in the U.S. District Court in Camden, N.J. The 66-year-old plaintiff was awarded $52,000 in losses, plus $50 million in punitive damages from Lockheed Martin. This makes the case one of the largest age discrimination awards an individual has ever received. It puts Lockheed Martin and other companies on notice that discrimination for whatever reason is unacceptable.

Emily was an intern with WATER in 2008 through the Washington Community Scholars Program of Eastern Mennonite University. One of the joys of hosting so many interns (more than 70 to date) is to see how their lives unfold. That they are doing justice work, like Emily, is a boon to everyone.

As Emily wrote in response to our congratulations, “It is wonderful to have the constant support and affirmation from WATER and the WATER network. We are rocking the world and ending injustice one individual at a time.” Congratulations, Emily, and keep on!

Progressive religious groups were out in force as banners and signs revealed. But the reality is more generalized spiritual sense of the marches that reflects a more diffuse, but no less effective, source of motivation.

Some of it is reactive—against the threats to Obamacare, in opposition to discrimination against immigrants, and more. But most of the spiritually rooted values are affirmative—wanting health care, quality schools, safe drinking water, equal opportunity in housing and employment—for everyone without exception. There is a groundswell against war and torture. Climate change is taken seriously and racism is abhorred.

The intentionally broad agenda that attracted millions to march meant that no one was completely satisfied but that everyone was willing to give a little. As the great musician and cultural worker Bernice Johnson Reagon put it years ago, “If you are in a coalition, you’re comfortable, you know it is not broad enough.” There was discomfort at the marches.

Racism remains a signal problem and one issue that organizers had to address and end. At the marches, comfort was reached but there was discomfort at the marches. People marched to embody a world we want to bequeath to those who follow. Quite simply, no one issue determines the future, but all condition what it will look like and who will survive to live it.

... On the March (from page 1)

Woman’s March on the National Mall and on the state and local levels.

… and its aftermath.

Winter 2017 Programs

Join us at WATER or by phone. Register for upcoming events on our website or email waterstaff@shers.com

For our first WATERtalk of the 2017 season, the WATER community spoke with Heather White on her work Reforming Sodom: Protestants and the Rise of Gay Rights. She outlined a history that is often invisible: the role of religion in the shaping of early gay rights movements.

In February, we spoke with Rabbi Mychal Copeland on LGBTQ Issues in Religion: Their Roots in Feminist Religious Studies. She showcased how LGBTQ gender issues are inextricably linked within American religious traditions.

Upcoming: Wednesdays, 1-2pm ET
March 8 with Catlin Breedlove
April 5 with Ayesha Chaudhry
May 3 with Judith Freeman
June 14 with Ami Zornenfeld

WATERmeditations

In January, Mary E. Hunt offered In Praise of Salt Water, inspired by her recent trip to a salt bath in Bad Zurzach, Switzerland. We contemplated what Mary terms the “salt water dynamic,” in which “sometimes something very, very small makes a huge amount of difference.”

Malory Naake led our February meditation, A Prayer for the World. Using a tree image, we reflected on our strong roots that ground us to resist injustices and break the status-quo.

Upcoming: Mondays, 7:30pm ET
March 6 with Cheryl Nichols
April 3 with Janet Bohren
May 8 with Hannah Dorfman
June 12 with Phoebe Kropf

WATERrituals

with Diann L. Neu, Malory Naake, and Hannah Dorfman

In January, many WATER friends from around North America joined for Women Marching in Solidarity: On Washington and around the Globe. A powerful sense of purpose and hope strengthened the group to march with three million justice-seekers the following Saturday.

It is hard to be a feminist of faith in these uncertain times. In February, the WATER community gathered for Feminist Faith for Forty Days, a preparation for the upcoming Lenten season that integrated spirituality and justice.

Upcoming: Tuesdays, 7:30pm ET
March 21 Spring Equinox
April 25 Honoring Catherine of Siena
May 16 Mother’s Day Ritual

Find audio of all Programs at www.waterwomensalliance.org