Carol Howard Merritt addresses the church’s polarized image—as both a safe space and a dangerous place. She provides a way to restore personal faith and connection to God for those who have been hurt or betrayed by established institutions of faith. Merritt maps a plan for moving from pain to spiritual rebirth, from recovering theological and emotional shards to recovering communal wholeness.

Travel to Holyoke:
- **Automobile:** we’re located near the intersection of routes I-90 and I-91.
- **Air:** we are 40 minutes north of Connecticut’s Bradley International Airport on highway I-91.
- **Bus:** Peter Pan/Greyhound Bus Lines come to the Holyoke Transportation Center, just three blocks from the church on Maple Street.
- **Train:** the north/south “Amtrak Vermonter” stops in Holyoke a half-mile from the church. The newly renovated rail station in Springfield, MA, has additional trains.

**Lodging** will be available at a special conference rate in a comfortable Suites Hotel with free breakfast.

**Meals** are included in the conference registration fee — yet to be determined.

**Registration:** $395 (includes all meals)  
[www.uccholyoke.org](http://www.uccholyoke.org)
Pathfinding in an Age of Polarization

Bart Erhman will search the foundational stories of faith and early church history to show how ancient communities found new pathways in polarizing times.

Deena Elana Grant will draw us into the life of the Torah to hear God’s role in shaping the paths of ancient Israel.

Chung Hyun Kyung will invite us into the beautiful borderland between East and West, offering old wisdom for today’s pathfinders.

Peter Rollins will stretch our traditions past the old boundaries and let them speak to this age of polarization.

Carol Howard Merritt will look at places where polarization has allowed them to be places of hurt, and suggest paths toward wholeness.

Deena Elana Grant is Associate Professor of Jewish Studies at Hartford Seminary, Hartford, CT. She finds her path between Judaism’s Orthodox position (that the Torah was presented to Moses on Sinai), and the realization that “an academic perspective presupposes human authorship.” She is at home in interfaith settings, and has been the lone Jewish scholar in a Catholic University. Her academic interest includes a focus on both human and divine anger in Biblical literature.

Chung Hyun Kyung is Associate Professor of Ecumenical Studies, Union Theological Seminary, NYC. She interprets the Gospel as a Korean woman. Her research includes feminist theologies and spiritualities from Asia, Africa and Latin America, Christian-Buddhist dialogue, and revolutionary social change. She is an historian of various Asian Christian theologies searching for what it means to struggle for wholeness and interpreting her people’s historical fight for freedom.

Peter Rollins overturns traditional notions of religion and challenges the idea that faith concerns questions relating to belief. His incendiary and irreligious reading of Christianity attacks the distinction between the sacred and the secular. It blurs the lines between theism and atheism and it sets aside questions regarding life after death to explore the possibility of life before death. Peter is a native of Belfast, Northern Ireland, and lives in Los Angeles.

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