

## **Editor's Note**

### **Kenneth A. Olliff**

As my German professor from university was fond of quoting, "Es gibt nichts Neues unter der Sonne" (There is nothing new under the sun.) This Spring 2001 issue of *The Journal of Liberal Religion* takes up two concerns which have a long history in the liberal tradition, which nevertheless press upon religious liberals today with crisp urgency.

The first is that of difference and community. As diverse individuals who endeavor to form vital religious communities, we are confronted repeatedly by the magnitude of this task. In the midst of all of our differences, what holds us together? How are we to create democratic communities that respect difference and yet form us into something more? The essays published under the heading, "Difference and Liberal Religious Community" explore this theme historically and theologically as the authors struggle with how we are to be with one another in communities of faith.

Under "Reclaiming Liberal Christianity," we publish two essays that examine the ways in which contemporary religious liberals, and particularly Unitarian Universalists, relate to and appropriate our Christian heritage. As recent events within Unitarian Universalism testify, this is a charged topic within our midst which cuts to heart of what it means to be a religious liberal. And yet our relationship to liberal Christianity, how we relate to our past and what it means for us today, are concerns which demand thoughtful consideration and earnest debate. We welcome your contributions to these important conversations.

Two new features of the JLR appear in this issue. The first is the addition of PDF versions of the JLR essays which may be downloaded with [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) -- thus providing a more accessible format for reading both on and off-line and for printing out individual essays.

And secondly, we invite you to join the conversation about the future of liberal religion by [registering as a JLR reader](#). While the JLR will remain available to any interested person, as a registered JLR reader you will receive an email notice (not more than once per month) when a new issue of the journal is published and when new material is added to the current issue. Through this we hope to further the JLR's mission of promoting dialogue around significant topics in liberal religion by endeavoring to create a community of those who care about the intellectual vitality of this tradition.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this issue of the JLR to Muriel Sternglanz Hayward, who died earlier this week. The wife of nearly sixty years of my dear friend and mentor Jack Hayward, Muriel was a lovely and kind person who blessed guests to her home with true hospitality. She will be dearly missed by her family, her many friends, and those who have known her.

We commend this Spring 2001 issue of *The Journal of Liberal Religion* to you and invite you to add your voice to the conversation.