

Michael Dowd is a gifted preacher and story teller who served as a congregational minister for ten years, pastoring United Church of Christ (UCC) churches in Massachusetts, Ohio, and Michigan.

In 1995, Michael began working with interfaith partners across the country on religious and environmental issues. He is a charismatic preacher and teacher on the sacred and psychological implications of a science-based cosmology.

Michael's great joy in life is telling the 13 billion year epic of divine creativity in ways that evoke awe, gratitude, and trust in the emergent cosmic process, strengthen faith, and empower people to follow the path where their great joy and the world's great need intersect.

Connie Barlow is a correspondent for *Wild Earth* magazine and a contributing editor for *EarthLight* magazine. She is the author of several popular science books that explore the intersection of evolutionary and ecological sciences with philosophy and religion, including:

- *The Ghosts of Evolution* (2001, Basic Books)
- *Green Space, Green Time: The Way of Science* (1997, Copernicus)
- *Evolution Extended: Biological Debates on the Meaning of Life* (1994, MIT Press)

Connie's great joy in life is sharing ways in which an understanding of the evolutionary and ecological sciences can enhance our communion with the natural world and with one another.

www.thegreatstory.org

5821 Tolman Terrace
Madison, WI 53711

The Great Story

HUMANITY'S COMMON CREATION STORY

The **Great Story** is also known as the **Universe Story** or **Epic of Evolution**. It is the **13 billion year scientific epic of cosmic genesis**, from the formation of the **galaxies** and the origin of **Earth life** to the emergence of self-reflective **consciousness** and **development of human technology**. The **Great Story** is the story that **honors and embraces all other stories**. It is the **sacred epic** of an evolving **Universe** of emergent **complexity** and breathtaking **creativity**, a story that offers each of us the **opportunity** to find **meaning and purpose in our lives and our time in history**.



MICHAEL DOWD and **CONNIE BARLOW**

will reflect on the meaning of The Great Story from a host of different perspectives while in Madison. In a very diverse set of venues, they will share their passion for a spiritual sensibility grounded in a contemporary cosmological understanding of the Universe as intrinsically creative.

Michael Dowd is the author of *EarthSpirit: A Handbook for Nurturing an Ecological Christianity* – the first major work to popularize the epic of evolution for Christians and to look appreciatively at the core tenets of New Testament faith from the perspective of the new cosmology.

Connie Barlow's most recent book, *The Ghosts of Evolution*, was Amazon.com's top recommended science book for several months in 2001.

Hosting organizations include First Unitarian Society, Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ, the Southwest Association of the United Church of Christ, Madison Campus Ministry, Vermont Valley Farm (CSA), Edgewood College, St. Benedict's Center, St. Paul's Catholic Center, the MinGei Center for Creation Spirituality Center and Canterbury Books.

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE OF CHARGE

Saturday, September 7

UW Arboretum Visitor Center, 263-7888
 1:00-4:00 p.m. – *“North America Story/Becoming Native to Place”*
 Using a slide talk, Connie presents the marvelous story that begins 65 million years ago, when a meteor put an end to the Age of Dinosaurs. Time outside will be integrated in.

Sunday, September 8

The MinGei Center for Creation Spirituality
 1:00-4:00 p.m. – *“Great Story Beads/Coming Home to North America”*
 Great Story Beads are a delightful way to celebrate the all-embracing story of cosmos, Earth, life, and humanity/Learn the 70 million year story of your continent through a dramatic and participatory story-telling ritual. Call Penny Andrews at 839-4509 or pandrews@chorus.net

Monday, September 9

Canterbury Books with Connie Barlow
 315 W. Gorham
 7:00 p.m. – *Discussion of Wild Earth, a collection of essays celebrating the 10th anniversary of the magazine Wild Earth; and of The Eternal Frontier—An Ecological History of North America and its Peoples.*

Tuesday, September 10

Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ
 1501 Gilbert Road
 5:00-7:00 p.m. – *Potluck Dinner Book Discussion with Michael Dowd on his book, “EarthSpirit: A handbook for Nurturing an Ecological Christianity”*

Wednesday, September 11

St. Benedicts Center
 4299 County Tk M, Middleton, WI
 7:00-8:30 p.m. – *“Finding Hope in Challenging Times”*
 Michael interprets widely accepted scientific and historical understandings that can support each of us in creating our own hopeful visions for the future.

Friday, September 13

Canterbury Books
 315 W. Gorham
 7:00-9:00 p.m. – *Book discussion with Connie Barlow on her book, The Ghosts of Evolution/The Universe Began with a Bang by Jennifer Morgan*

Saturday, September 14

Vermont Valley Farm (CSA)
 4628 Cty. Hwy FF, Vermont Township
 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. – *“Bioregionalism/North America Story”.*
 How our North American story teaches us to celebrate and care for the continent, and how bioregionalism teaches us to do the same for our local area. Bring a picnic lunch.

Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ
 1501 Gilbert Road
 7:00 p.m. – *“Coming Home to North America”*
 (See Sept. 8 for description)

Sunday, September 15

Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ
 1501 Gilbert Road
 10:00 a.m. worship – *“Great News for a New Millennium” with Michael Dowd*
 Why is the emergence of a globally created, scientifically sound, and deeply meaningful creation story “Great News” for humanity? How can this story empower us as individuals and communities to further the Great Work of ensuring a just, healthy, beautiful and sustainably life giving world for the future?
 11:15 a.m. forum – *“The Marriage of Science and Religion” with Connie Barlow and Michael Dowd together*

Monday, September 16

St. Paul’s Catholic University Catholic Center
 723 State Street
 7:00-9:00 p.m. – *“Christianity in an Evolving Universe”*
 How can an up-to-date scientific understanding of the universe deepen own’s Christian faith? This talk is intended to provide Christian Students with the guidance they need to reconcile their science learning with their faith tradition.

Wednesday, September 18

Madison Campus Ministry
 1127 University Ave.
 7:00-8:30 p.m. – *“Finding Your Own Great Work”*
 What is the Great Work of our time and how do we each find and respond to our callings at the growing edge of evolution? Participants will be invited to reflect on the key facets of their own great joy, and to notice where their hearts are touched by Earth’s great need.

Thursday, September 19

Edgewood College, Anderson Auditorium
 1000 Edgewood College Drive
 7:00 p.m. – *“A Cosmic Creation Story” with Connie and Michael*
 Experience a science based walk through time which honors nature and spiritual meaning, and celebrates the human role in the universe story. Refreshments follow.

Saturday, September 20

James Reeb Unitarian-Universalist Congregation
 2146 E. Johnson Ave.
 7:00 p.m. – *“The Great Story Slide Show”.*
 Realistically hopeful, inspiring and empowering perspective on “the big picture”.

Saturday, September 21

UW Arboretum Visitor Center, 263-7888
 10:30-11:30 a.m. – *“Wildlands Project”*
 Connie discusses wilderness as a corresponding writer for Wild Earth magazine.
 Unity Church of Madison
 601 Tompkins Drive, Madison, WI
 1:00-3:00 p.m. – *“Science, Spirituality, and Passion for Life/America’s Great Awakening/Celebrants of the Great Story”*
 A discussion of our personal faith journeys and a vision of America playing an indispensable role in moving humanity into a glorious and life giving future.

First Unitarian Society
 900 University Bay Dr.
 4:00 p.m. *Worship – “Can the Universe Be Trusted?”*
 Ways that science reveals that the universe can be trusted. How this supports a liberal faith.
 7:00-9:00 p.m. – *“The Great Story: A Bridge for Unitarian-Universalist Diversity/Celebrants of the Great Story”*
 Celebrating deeply our spiritual diversity and the diversity of the universe through 13 billion years.

Sunday, September 22

First Unitarian Society
 900 University Bay Dr.
 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. *worship – “Can the Universe Be Trusted”*
 12:30 p.m. – *“The Great Story Slide Show/Finding Your Own Great Work”*
 (See Sept. 20 and Sept. 18 for descriptions)

Madison Campus Ministry
 1127 University Ave.
 5:30 p.m. – *Vespers and Dinner*

Monday, September 23

Edgewood College Chapel
 1000 Edgewood College Drive
Music at 7:00, celebration at 7:30 p.m.
“Songs of the Soul: an Interfaith celebration of the fall equinox with chants, meditation, and dances of universal peace”

For more information on these events, contact:
 David Creswell: 274-8938 (dcres0@hotmail.com)
 Winton Boyd: 271-7212 (winton@orucc.org)

For more information about Michael Dowd and Connie Barlow please visit their website:

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