

- So you,

- So I came here and eventually finished. And immediately really became soul friends with the only African-American person as well who had come. And he decided to establish his black ministries program way back then to give biblical and theological education to those who had had no access. A certificate program.

- Who was this MT?

- Thomas White, marvelous, marvelous, and we became soul friends, the only woman, the only black and here we were. And he did that and I early on then said, we gotta to do something for women. So we started with bringing in Fierenza, and Elizabeth Bettenhausen, two wild women.

- Yes to just give us sessions. You know, I think it was a weekend of talks. And they packed the house. And at the same time I started a women church component that anybody who wants to be a part of that, you know, so that lasted for about five years. But then I began to say it shouldn't be a one shot thing with Fierenza in all. Let me start this Women Were in the Church and that's where we had ten years of incredible, the best theologians, scholars, artists, theater, whatever you can do that's, you know. And when it turned out, that the year that we celebrated, was it the 500th anniversary of the country, was it 500, I forget.

- It's 200, 1976, no?

- 500 years, we're not? 76, yeah, 1996.

- Right right.

- Was it 500th? I said the year that, we came to the Native Americans America, something.

- Yes

- And I'd invited

- I'd already been doing for two or three years work with a number of different Native American women. And doing rituals and we were doing all sorts. So I invited, I think a total of about 15 from around the country. I said could you come a day early. And they came a day early, Thursday. This would be Friday, Saturday. And we met and I said okay, the weekend is yours.

- Oh.

- Well what do you want us to do? I said I don't know you tell me. It's your weekend, this is celebrating your

country that we came to, it's yours. They said, they were stunned, and some of these were public, they were published people, performers, you know. They said, we've never done this. And also in our own tribes, the women aren't, you know, they're important to the rituals, but they're not, and they got into it. Let me tell you, this was a weekend. It was awesome. And we made the front page of the Hartford Courant with a big, you know, it was dances and stuff. It was truly wonderful.

- Oh it sounds phenomenal. And so after that, and about that time, it was, I said we need, people were asking for more. One weekend a month you know, we need some continuity. And I said, and there's a lot we're learning from all that we're doing, and here I am in an educational institution and I would like to start something that would be like a program. And that's where women's, women were to the church, This is the women's leadership institute. And it's subtitle is equally important. A program in applied spirituality. So that as you go through whatever you learn, as you're coming out, it needs, you need to have a project or something you do and share and show what you've learned. What are the underlying feminist principles and why. What kind of systemic shift, you know. And so that's now into it's 20th year in the fall. We have over 530 incredible more than, graduates. Some have done some huge things. I don't know, the very first year, the prayer shawl ministry has gone around the world you know.

- Yes.

- It started here. That was the first year

- Did it really? Well two women said, let's just, you know, that followed after. The Ray of Light farm in East Haddam which is a rescue farm for, it began for Premarin mares and their fowls that are just cast off once they get the urine to make the medicine that the women need. They took, so they have, she has this wonderful rescue farm, that was another. We have some just wonder, drumming circles around the state were started by one gal who used this as her masters project. So we had, you know, it was wonderful. They could take WI, the Women's Leadership Institute it was, it was an audit program. But you could take it for graduate credit. And you can get six graduate credit. But from the get go, I negotiated with the systems here to make sure that we could find a way to get undergraduate credit for those women. Who need our, discovering they wanna go back to school. And so through Charter Oak, which is the state thing, they can get six upper level undergraduate credits at no extra cost to transfer over. That's a big incentive and not only that everyone who graduates the program, we got a bonus and they never took this away. Which I think is amazing. If you finish the program, now within a year afterwards you can audit any course in the catalog if the professor lets you in. So, but for those who are going for baccalaureate credit we got that accredited, that if you audit a course in that graduate level you'll get another three upper level, that's nine upper level baccalaureate credits, so I fought for that. And came close to almost losing it. But I said I'm putting my stake in the ground for that one because so many women gave of themselves, and now that they're ready to do something. It's a long way to the baccalaureate and you know, not like a masters so

- yes. So that's going along wonderfully. And then as we went along, there were women saying, gosh we learned all of this, what more can we do with this, don't you have? So I tried for quite a while to get another masters degree in that wasn't oriented toward ministry, ordained ministry, although we don't give that. We

do do it cooperative with other schools. But nevertheless the courses are oriented to fit into that framework.

- Right.

- And then we also have, you know, to be theologians or whatever, it's all wonderful. But there was something missing for the women. And we had a spirituality track. But the way it's evaluated it's more academically oriented and it's 48 credits which is a lot you know.

- Yeah.

- And as the costs went up and up and up it became I felt, more and more difficult. And also it just felt, we have something here this big broiling mass of humanity, you know, that's leading us into, and then what turned the corner, what was the tipping point for, in my favor, was that sociologists, and we have a very significant sociology center. You know, we've contributed to many of the things out there that, you know, studies and all, and actually facilitated a number of them. But one of the studies done by others was how do you define yourself religiously. Any form that you have to fill out, the census form, or voting form, whatever. What is, if they asked it, what is your religious affiliation, and the greater number today now, it's come to that point, is none, N O N E.

- Yes.

- And I say, what an irony that the nun needs to do a degree for the nones. (laughing) How will I sell this one? (laughing) Bar none, so anyway, I designed this, and sort of, it didn't go anywhere. In fact it got turned down a couple of times. But you don't give up at the first. And then all of a sudden, this became, that you could begin to hear the words out there, the nuns, this seminary's closing, this seminary's closing. They're no longer hiring this many people. It became, actually with the speed of light, you know. It shifted, and then this whole category of seekers. And you know, and people out there, the persons who are retiring, even, and they wanna learn more, they wanna be something. And so I shifted. I say I wanna call it exactly what it is. And it's gonna be evaluated on exactly what it is. So most of the evaluative mechanisms are what are you gonna do with this degree? Like they're trying to, they're job oriented. People are trying to sell their degrees to the institutions that if you get this you can be hired. I said this ain't no job oriented degree. (laughing) And I'm not gonna, I'm not gonna evaluate it that way. And I'm not gonna sell it that way. It's not what you're gonna do with it. Who will you be with this degree? So whatever you do, you will do not only more authentically, and more informed, but in a sense you will be able to make a difference not only in your own life, but in the lives of others. So there's two components of how to just respond to what spirit is saying, or try to even identify if spirit's saying something to me what might it be and then what might it lead to, you know. And so, we had our ten year evaluation, and I said I want to talk to the accrediting team, if I might. And God bless them. I wanted one person, the whole team showed up. And I just made this pitch, you know, and we followed up after this, and the Dean was in my corner at this point. Because they said this is really seriously an important thing, we need to do this.

- Yeah. And we got approval from the Association of Theological Schools, which is huge.

- It is wonderful.

- It's the only, it's a second 36 credit masters degree. Second one okay. Started, we started it, but it just got, it was formally approved I think a year ago or something. And the second NEASC, New England's Association of Theologicals, they approved it, fully. And my assessment, I said I worked a year on how to assess this so we can do it with integrity. But also show you can't look at it the same way as you look at something else. And so the big thing, stumbling block, is when you say spirituality, and that's the subject, people are trying to, how do we evaluate one's growth in spirituality, you can't. And it's not right to start with, and it's impossible. So I said it's not about that. This is a two fold thing. It's an applied spirituality. Your personal spirituality is your personal thing. But what you do with it, becomes public.

- Yes.

- And so we're gonna assess the outcomes. You can assess outcomes by what did it lead to. So in order to graduate, you have to do a project you have to do a project in applied spirituality, so it's very simple. You know, you lead them to say, what in you has changed? And why has it changed? There's a shifting consciousness. Say you learned, and you can do it very small. What's different about you, your thinking, your perception, whatever. The shifting consciousness. And what are you gonna about that. What is one thing you could do to apply that shift. And if you apply it in a way that might actually instigate a shift in someone else, or a group. That's the core of it. And how easily these students come in and get it. They get, I thought I'd have to teach the whole, orienting course, ten sessions. They got it in session one. So we can go deeper, oh yeah, we get this. Because that's where we are, you know. We're constantly dancing, we were always thinking differently than the status quo, now it's being honored, what are you thinking that's different, the status quo. Name it. Identify it. And then what can you do about it within the situation you are in. So it's not always we gotta tear down this thing to do that. It's like the quantum, the pain in the butt, or the disturbance within the system is heralding the future. You start there and you work wherever you're at. And so it has just been wonderful. It's been so easy to assess really. And then one thing, one of the required things, I love this, that the Association of Theological Schools, cause every degree they have has this field work thing. You know field, it's like a kind of an apprenticeship or however you wanna work it. But there's a lot of leeway. So I had to have a course like that. And then, my gosh, if we're gonna charge them money for a course it better be meaningful, you know,

- Yeah.

- And we don't have a field, where are you, how are we apprentice with, and how? And then I said, and the Dean was wonderful, I said could I just sit with this for a semester, yeah think about it, I said cause this is big. I'm in the middle of teaching this course on, transformative spirituality, and we have two theologians, one who was a quantum theologian, the other one was theoretically is. But one is forward thinkin' and the other's more like, you know, Agutaynen. And I was saying something about, now with these two individuals, this individual's field of energy is, and then I said, Oh, my God, it hit me, afterwards. We're gonna, the field

course is identify your own field of energy. What energizes you?

- Oh, wow.

- What really, it could be a bunch of things, but what's at the core of that? That becomes, and then we do some readings to deepen our understanding to say, stay faithful within that and be able to apply it. And then the evaluative things come out of that. They ran with this. The things that we're doing. It builds on who you are. That's when say stay with individual. Don't dump things in that don't fit. Then what do you need to know. And I'm telling you, it is, it's a wonderful degree idea. And this is what

- oh, yeah. Where we are doing now. And then not only did they get approved, okay, they're establishing a chair, in transformative leadership and spirituality, you know. So that will not disappear when I leave.

- Yes

- And that's why I'm still here. Theoretically I'm retired, but not. I'm rehired. You know, as a faculty associate.

- And that's gonna be the MT winter chair.

- Their, said that they're going to name it after me. And they'll probably announce it in the fall. But they're looking for sources of funding for this. It's not an easy thing you know. But we're gonna stick with it. But the implications of something like this I think are profound, because you know, you know as a woman, somehow, you train a woman, it's sort of like the mother of a family you know, and all the generations afterward come back to the great grand, I mean you're there, you're connected. You're a source of whatever you are, energy, support, love, stability. It's like this kind of degree, the individual that goes through it, affects a lot of people, you know. Just and especially, women if they take, and they will take the WLI, they've already got their start. And they've got networks, and then the networks can get networks. If you want to have a model for systemic shift and change it's something like this that gives responsibility and possibility and opportunity to individual women who are passionate already, you know. And say how can, so my whole thing is who are you, what do you wanna do, what turns you on? What excites you? Well let's see how that could work out. I can't imagine anything that couldn't work out. Do you know what I'm sayin'

- yes. Like I may not know how to do it. But I'm not doin' it, I'm just here giving you permission, validating, making sure that it has certain, meets certain, you know criteria that when you get done you're gonna feel good about this, and so are other people. So I think in many ways, it's a pioneering venture into the field of academia just like women are trying to get into certain roles, And you know in the institutional churches. Also in academia, we got in but we kept teaching the men's way.

- Yes.

- And their own thing. This is something significantly different. It's not limited to women, cause some of my

guy friends are deeply, you know, into dreams and the Kabbala, and mysticism, so they can get it. But to us it just comes naturally, you know. And so this is what, where we're at with that. So the reimagining which is actually why you're sitting here talking to me

(laughing) was part of this whole evolution of myself. And the word reimagining that you had as a conference, and I can't remember when I started using it. I know I did, and I don't know, remember when it was, probably, I don't know if it was after that conference. Because that became, not a happy, not a happy phrase afterwards which I was very sad about.

- Yes

- So maybe it was before then, I'm not sure, but I did a, you know, a program in Duke. And the biblical students and different people, and I was, I forget the details, but I was speaking on reimagining the word. Reimagining God and reimagining the word. But I did it using the canonical sources.

- Yes

- I said before we go out here you think reimagining is a wifty word outside the framework, I showed them, which was revelatory apparently. Which blew my mind to them that they hadn't seen within their own sources these possibilities, you know, within the Genesis text, and the Exodus text, and also in the Gospels. Where you could see these feminist female images, you know, I say female images of the divine and so I was, reimagining was an important word to me, it still is you know. And I love,

- What is it about that word that's important to you?

- Well because, I think the two pieces re and imagined, I mean imagine is wonderful. But, let me just put it bluntly. We talk about images of God, and I was reimagining God, okay images of God, but there isn't a single image of God that hasn't been imagined. Those are all imagined images. Where do you think they came from?

- Right.

- Hello.

- See but we don't follow that back because imagined has become, had become, it's changed, but then it goes back and forth. Something in the surreal that you've made up, or it's your own, you're not in the system. Excuse me the whole system is based on something imagined. You know, even the Genesis, all the Genesis text. You know, in the beginning God, well who was there, but who was there to record that, and say, and validate that when no one was there, when nobody was there. That's what I said, no one was there when nobody was there. So who's the evidence for that? Where's the evidence for that?

- Yeah.

- Well, God, well who's this God, you know. It's imagine in your image. So we're reimagining it, and then when we get done it's not what it is anyway, it's reimagined. The imaginations we can't hang onto. When actually feminists quickly learned and left all the images and went on to other things more out of the universe and cosmic mystery and wonderful things like that. You know, rhythm and sound. So, it's so, it's such an important breakthrough to get out of thinking. This is the legitimate and actual, the actual, but actual is not factual. It's factual on those who stated the facts and actualized it, but it's through human agency, all of this, anything we've known has come through human agency if it was revealed to and through a human, you know, then it's a humanoid construct.

- Yeah.

- And if you were taking this course in psychology or philosophy you would learn that. But if you take it in theology, you forget what you don't apply. Hello, when does that stop applying, you know? And I think that was what was underlying the whole horror of the reimagining conference. Because actually what was there, if you look back that was so horrible? But people who are clueless, were almost like is this what they're doing, (laughs)

- uh, huh.

- in their free time and we're paying their salaries. (laughing) Oh, my gosh.

- So is that how you, how do you account for the backlash? What did?

- I just feel that we were so marginalized. So as long as your marginalized you can do what you want.

- Mm hum, mm hum.

- It's sort of like the African-American whole movement here, if you are in the ghettos, you're doin' your thing, everything as well, yeah, sure you entertain us, and you make it into that, but you're in your place, you know, you're at the stage, you're in the sun, you're behind the microphone. But wait a minute, you want equity and parody. This is, this is, because then what you think and feel and say is gonna affect and shift and change. Not only my perception, but my reality, my comfort zone, that's what's happening everywhere. And that happened then, and that was just one, because one group that sponsored it was so horrified, and there was nothing to be horrified about, you know.

- Yes.

- Now you weren't at the '93 conference, but you

- I was not. But you learnt about it, or

- Oh incidentally, because I mean, because you stay, you're up to date on things like that.

- Yes.

- Yeah, and absolutely, and then immediately Barbara Brown Zikmund, who was president of the seminary, you know, the first female to become a president of a seminary, protestant seminary, well any seminary. (laughs)

- Yeah.

- She reached out and she offered her, she said look, she was fired, you know, Maryann Lundy

- Maryann Lundy. And she said listen, you have a place here. I'll make you, give you an office. And so she was two doors down from me. So and she was able to get her footing, and her balance and to figure out what to do next. And no one like disclaimed, none of those courageous women disassociated from the reality. They just accepted what they had to as a result of it.

- Yes

- And that to me is an amazing thing.

- Yeah.

- And then like anything when they really blow it, it just quietly disappears. There should be like, you know, a sense of revisiting, and a sense of redemption or you know, we're not ready for that, but there's so many things with Native Americans, and African-Americans, and women, and God knows what else, you know, that you look back, and even on our propensity to go to war, and blast people we don't understand, and just annihilate them. To ask forgiveness and to say, you know, we were in a mode of ignorance then. You know,

- Yeah. How hard is that to say? We can do this so easily.

- Yeah.

- Because we grow and we learn and we know this is what I thought then. You know, I wish I hadn't, but I did and I accept it. But I don't think that way now. But it's part of me anyway.

- Yes.

- You know, Now did you know Maryann Lundy before that?

- I did not know her before that No

- Yeah. Because she was more institutional thing and I had a, I was kind of, out there in the trenches.



- Yeah.

- The prison ministry, and you know, things that were in, and going to retreat centers, and other schools giving talks and stuff like that so that was my external things.

- But you got to know her while she was here.

- I did.

- Get to know her, a very incredible, you know, very incredible woman. Yeah,

- Yeah. I liked her a lot.

- Yeah.

- Yeah.

- And you ended up being a major presenter at the 95 reimagining, could you tell me what you remember about being asked for that. I know you don't say no, but, (laughs)

- I really thought about that.

- Did ya.

- Oh, yeah.

- Yeah.

- After what happened sure.

- Then I thought, what do I have to lose, I have nothing, I mean I have nothing to lose. You know.

- Yes, yes. This is an institution that doesn't, is not beholdin' to any denominational entity, you know.

- Right.

- And if this is what I do, and in what we believe, and now we have Barbara Brown Zikmund saying that there wasn't an issue. But my concern was, why me, and what am I going to do? You know, like, but they were asking me, and I again I have to, so much water has gone under the bridge since those years that so many things I've done, that my memory is just not, if I saw things I would, it would click back in. And I did manage to find a file that I was, from the flyer from it, that at least I remembered I was there. (laughter) Okay that's a

start. And there's one unforgettable thing that happened that I will never forget from that that just, and that was the end point. But in between, I think, okay I'm saying what I think might, but this may not be true, but in my perception, probably why I was asked not only just to pick up the pieces, but I had a safe space and a valid space in academia in this institution, you know, so in a sense I wasn't on the fringe, I didn't come from nowhere, I came from somewhere.

- Yes.

- I had expertise so to speak in the subject matter, okay. I had done all the women of the Bible, those books and these other books. And I had these women's programs so I was in it. But also, I was not one that went to certain extremes, and I don't wanna call them extremists, but, I was, I let women do things, but for myself, I'm more, you know, I'm changing, I don't now, I didn't have to do anything. I was, I just, I'm, you know, I can't put it into words, but it's a safer bet if you wanna bring someone in, and then you've got a Catholic nun, I mean, (laughing) for our connect, I mean that already a challenge. But I said well what can I do, and then you pointed out what the theme was, that already I had reimagined all these things.

- Yes.

- And I had reimagined them on the sources. Now it's coming back to me.

- Yes.

- That I had gone to the Bible and was surprised at what I found. So I could share that saying, okay I was at the stage where people who don't even know what this is were at. And take it from step one through so that in both testaments you know, and but particularly as you get back into the Genesis thing and you know, and to show that those that we hold up as core figures in our tradition as the groomers and all. They weren't even part of the tradition.

- Who were you thinking of? (grinding noises)

- Sara for example.

- Right, yes. I mean Sara was a high, there's a lot of evidence of her being a high priestess. And also Abraham had more than one wife. And I mean you lift this up and you say these things, and she wanted to be, and you reinterpret the garden story of the sacred grove, and the serpent and all of those images. And Yahushua, the Branch, you know, the flowering tree, which is a goddess. And you put that all together, and then you say, that's where Eve, and so the core to this, all our traditions, is this Eve was a woman of those traditions.

- Yes.

- But Adam all of a sudden, so there's more to this story. He's the proponent from the other side, his legitimacy coming in, you know, and it's interesting how the tree of good and evil, there's another tree, the

tree of life, you know. And in the whole question of ish, ish and isharah, ish and ishah, you can not be male and female, you can be humans, but you really him and her, male and female, and generative once you are identified as that so you took that symbolic apple, you took it and you acted, so that you could be fully human. And to be fully human, meant a whole lot of other things. Okay, and so to follow through with all of this what's going on, and then the symbolic there of the serpent being the symbol of the goddess worship and all. You know you don't have to accept that interpretation, but that's your Bible, this is our Bible, it's the same Bible and it's two different story lines and we both claim it. Now isn't that interesting?

- Yeah.

- Isn't that that could not have been the cannon of the scripture that we say is mandatory, there's room for all of us. There was room for all of us. And doesn't end there, it follows through, okay. And so, that's kind of I guess what I danced around and then brought in some music and rituals. But the closing thing was the thing that almost, I literally almost lost my bearings.

- Really.

- it's the final thing right. I had designed a ritual, and to this day I can't even remember what it is. I'm on the stage to do something, I had I think something a call and response to something, was gonna do very simple, so I didn't really have too much there.

- Yeah.

- And I think there was that one, something in the program maybe, and all of a sudden my mouth is open to start, I'm standing there, attention please comes the microphone. Breaks in just like an emergency thing.

- Oh

- There's an announcement. What's his name? The Prime Minister of Israel has been assassinated.

- Yes. (knocking sound drowns out speaker) and it's, he was assassinated.

- Yes, that's right.

- And that's the end of that announcement. Now why did they have to announce that to the whole group at that moment? My mouth open on stage.

- Yes, oh my goodness. What do you do?

- Right.

- Okay so now, I may be a wild eyed feminist, I may be there for that, I may be there for my biblical

background scholarship.

- Yes.

- But I'm also a liturgist.

- Yes.

- And you can't ignore the present moment.

- No.

- You can't pretend that didn't happen.

- Right.

- But what in God's holy name am I gonna do with that? You know,

- Yes. And something flashed, you know, the Holy Spirit, when you give yourself over, and I just say spirit take me, all these things. It flashed in my mind what my wonderful Perry Astrid, who used to do with women who were at the church. She'd come and most of the weekends, do a one woman act play, she's from England, brilliant. And she did, I remember her doing this. (double rapping sound, repeated twice) And so I just, I just started doin' that. I didn't know what was gonna follow.

- Yes.

- And then people started doin' that. And then I started to howl. And then we (drowned out by rapping sound) and then just rock, and the whole thing just rocked and did this, and ew, and moaned, and groaned, and then I just brought it to, and I just sort of, the holy one of blessing, we lift up to you with this, and then all the, and the people, and so it's just this culminating prayer. I think that's what it is, it's what's leading me to do it now, must have been what led me to do it then. And then just sort of, I think just ended it. Because what else could you do? It was,

- Yes. And it was a lesson to face the moment.

- Yes.

- and whatever you do, it's gonna have to be good enough because anything different would not have been acceptable.

- Right.

- And because we're saying, we don't feel included with those rituals going on that do not even recognize our presence, here is this horrible thing, and I'm sure there were also Jewish women, you know, among that group, so that was probably why spirit led me to be there, in the end.

- Yes. You know,

- Wow. Because and they gave me that insight. And there once again, I promptly over the years wiped all of that out of my mind. And moved on you know.

- It's been a long time.

- Well it started, the conference started rather dramatically for you, because you were so ill.

- Now that, was that the same one?

- It was, yes. You talked about that at the beginning of your, in your first comments to the group. You talked about how you,

- What year was this?

- 95, and you had arrived, and I don't know what you were ill with

- You're absolutely right. Yeah, and then Jill Jeffrien, and Beth

- What time was, when was this conference?

- November, beginning of November 1995. And you said that you were, they came at four o'clock and you were so, so sick, and you asked them to pray over you.

- Boy I don't remember that. I remember, I remember the call to action one, which was 1996.

- Yeah

- When Hans Kung opened,

- Yeah

- And I was to close.

- Yes.

- And three weeks before that, I had a mastectomy.

- Oh, my goodness.

- And I couldn't not go because, I couldn't just, there were 4,000 plus people, stiff them

- Wow. So I said I would still come. I just told only two of their leaders, that I put me in a hotel room near where I'm gonna be, and I will do this, and again, I just stood up on that stage and said Holy Spirit, and just I guess for an hour just shared spirit. And then I decided, you know, if I'm gonna be authentic, so toward the end of it I just told the story of, and I linked it to imaging, reimagining, so maybe some of this, something, like I don't know, I don't know if I can think backwards to that but I said,

- Yeah

- Here it is, I talked about liturgy of life in the camps and how, I've been redeemed, and I believe this to the core of my being. But I said it publicly that I am ordained by the spirit of the living God to celebrate the liturgy life and so I found the most authentic rituals and the refugee camps among the hungry and the children, the dispossessed, and the homeless, and I said, and discovering images of God. God the breasted one, you know, Shaddai. And I gave those images and I said it was so. And then I has this wonderful event this weekend. One of these weekends women were in the church. This woman had been doing pottery, you know, She had discovered pottery because she always wanted to do art but she couldn't and when her father died, because he wanted her to do business, so she did business. He died and her husband said why don't you follow your heart and she became a famous artist after that. But anyway, but first I said, why don't you do it, your first pieces, and sell it at my Women Were the Church. So that was her inaugural thing. Okay I'm setting that up because in telling the story I said, I came back from India, I had to go to Latin America to do a big thing, came back, and I had my annual mammogram. I said it was always fine but all of a sudden, this was aggressive, and anyway, long story short, I'm facing surgery for breast, and they said, would you believe, I finally get images of the divine that work for me, in God the breasted one. And then I lose one of those breasts. I said, that ain't gonna work for me any more. And I said I began to like, the day before I was in the mail room, with, you know, my black female colleague was with me, and we were just crying, I said, you know this really is this terrible. I said, you know, not only is this happening, I'm losing my whole spiritual basis, and you know, and she, I said but, God will be with me I know, so I'm saying, there was a box in my mailbox. And the return address was Sacred Spaces and it was this woman's address you know. I said I wonder what this is, I opened it, and she says, the card says, here is my first attempt at a bowl of God Shaddai. I was at your conference, I heard you speak, and this so spoke to me and I lifted it up. And God Shaddai had wings. I had forgotten I also teach that God Shaddai is the breasted one, and the winged one. The mother hen and the you know, (knocking drowns out speaker) and I had in my misery, self inflicted misery, of feeling sorry for myself forgot that part. And God the winged one, came from an address that said Sacred Spaces. And said to me and I will be with you as who I will be, I will be with. I told that story, I say, so I knew that this, I said what are the chances that that was not orchestrated by the Holy Spirit. So I said, I went to surgery, and I said it's not even three weeks, so forgive me I'm feeling a little dizzy, if I have not been coherent, and I literally was at one hour, cause I could hardly, I had to sit. And I think, the place went crazy.

- Oh.

- It was like, it was like I can't even imagine going up the aisle and women were jumping over people to say, I too had a mastectomy, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, for saying it out loud. Holy, you know. It was like, and so that became like a defining moment. Now what was before, I'm not quite sure. It might have been some flu or something like that.

- Yeah, I think it was something like that. Yes, yes.

- But I think it was something

- Less dramatic you know.

- I'm glad you told that story, that is a powerful story.

- It's so powerful, you couldn't even make this up.

- No.

- And I wanna tell you though, and this is just, so many, I could, if I put my, someday I need to just tell these stories again. There's so many, and they're still happening all the time now. Moments like this. But that is what this new degree is founded in. Be open to that because they're happening, but we're too busy, and too conditioned in other way to recognize, accept and affirm that, you know, and if you open the space it will be there. What you need will be given to you. It's told us, you know. And we need to trust that. You need to trust that. You know, I thought I stood on that sample, what dear God can I do this, you know.

- Yes.

- It was, TV screens, it was full, Cobo Hall in Detroit is huge. You know, 4,000 plus people, and I just, then I just tuned it out, I just was there. So sometimes you know, you have more guts than sense. (laughing) I didn't want guts in this space it's just I can't tell them that I'm not gonna come. You know

- yeah. There's a sense of responsibility for the planners and everything, you know. And I know how it is because I planned, and then you pull a key thing out, and I said, this is meant to be. If this is what it is, there's some reason why I'm going.

- Yes, and it ended up being such a blessing to other people.

- It really did.

- In the end it really did.

- Yes.

- And a blessing to me as well. Because from then on it was absolute exposure. I am not gonna hide this, I am not gonna have reconstruction. I'm not gonna buy a bra with a something in to have two breasts, I'm a one breasted woman. You know,

- Yes. And it's not changed me, and so when I was in the prison, I can't tell you how many different women came up, you only have one breast, I said yes. Oh, really. Yes, I've had cancer and I'm a survivor and I'm thrilled. You're a survivor too of other things, remember that. We can go on, you know, this doesn't define me. You know,

- Yes. It's a piece of me and so it became like a nice really transitional symbol.

- Yeah, connection.

- Connection, yeah.

- Yeah, yeah, you know, so much of this is about feminist theology, when and how did you get interested in feminist theology MT.

- I really didn't to tell you the truth. (laughing)

- I didn't get interested in anything, I just backed into it, and then it hooked me. Do you know what I'm saying.

- Tell me, tell me how you backed into it. That's fascinating.

- Well I'm syncing somewhere when I said about inviting people coming here to speak. And then women church, and then saying gee, I don't have any song, my songs, where are my songs, I've been using all this male language, and so I had to disassociate, so I said I'm gonna lock up here for the whole summer. And I said to the faculty, I said to one, I'm saying, why don't we just use for one month all the all female images, so I went to a Muslim, one of my Muslim, a very small 12, I said he's a nice guy, and he really open, you know, actually he wasn't Muslim, so sorry, he was Christian, Episcopal, but he taught in the Islamic area. I said could I

- Yes ask you, I'm wanting to do this now, will you support me, I'm gonna ask the faculty just for one, that every time it's a he you put she. And he was this dead silence. And you could see the blood just drained out of his face. And he stood there, and he said, why couldn't we just call Him it. And I said because, if you call Him it, for you and everybody else, it will always be Him.

- Yeah.



- And for me, while it'll always be Her, it ain't gonna go anywhere.

- Right.

- So we gotta get rid of the Him, and Her, and everything so it isn't gonna do it at first. But we've got to demythologize the other. So I never was able to pull that one off, but I went into seclusion, the songs of women song battled somewhere. And I said, and it wasn't easy for me either, because conditioned the other way, you know. Not using pronouns is alright. And theologically, and spiritually understanding the openesses. But singing the words was, but after a while I get so into it, you know, and then people, when that ghost, my feminist, or female things started coming out then people began responding, and then you get more into it, to legitimize. So I was led, okay, we did these rituals, woman prayer, woman song, with that, and then all of a sudden the women of the Bible. And I was so, always so, impressed with Theorenza. And when she said, you know, at one point in her first classical breakthrough book, she said, if wherever we, if we don't have any, specific things we can use, then we need to imagine. And that's what got me early on into imagining, and then to reimagining okay. So I'm saying, gee, imagining, well let me go and first of all let's see what's in the scriptures before I start imagining.

- Yeah

- So I went through all the Bible, first testament, I mean New Testament, and I said I think I'm gonna do rituals that women word, on every woman in the Bible even those who are implied, and you know. And so I did something for all of them. And then that was done. And then I saw no, I'm talkin' to the demons here. Not the demons, the other women, I said, don't you dare, don't you dare ask me to do this, the first testament, the Old Testament, I said it's too big, too long, too many, I'm too tired, too newmist, da, da, da, da, da, go away. (laughs)

- And they didn't.

- I couldn't take a no, you know, right, they didn't know

- (laughing) Yes. I couldn't take a no.

- Yes. And I started. And like, like a wild, when I did it in a relatively short time. Fortunately cause there's so little that's ever written anywhere so, I used up all the jury sources Christian I could find academically. And then I decided to do it in a way that would be prayer in ritual. And so Psalms and also I finished that collection. And then I got into, okay now that's what's there, pretty much there. But now I can start imagining. So that went to the Gospel according to Mary. What if, and you know, women had their own stories. You know they had their own traditions.

- Yes.

- You know they didn't make it into writings, so what if I imagine that. Okay, and then what about the

Exodus, Genesis and Exodus, cause those two books are filled with women, and they're always, and so I did the Chronicles of Noah and Her Sisters. And when I looked up Noah, which was brilliant first move. There are two references to Noah in the Scriptures, and one of them is female. And everybody forgets that. With those five feisty daughters, you know. That's how I got so established in the scriptural thing. And the theological, which of course has taken me away from my metaphorical which is my first love, but that's always my secret life. But the secret life went into Psalms which are public. So it's not so secret any more. But the good news is, and this is what saved everything, and where I'm working on it now with much more strength. I'm a gemini.

- Ah.

- So one side is really happy with all of that stuff, the other side is really happy with this stuff. And in my latter years now, in my dotage, I am now have the twins, not only working together, very clear this is your turn. I call on the right, the correct side for the right thing, you know,

- Yes. And don't mix it up, if I do that's when you get distressed. You know if my metaphorical side is trying to get rid of all of this detail. No, you come out later on, when you're falling asleep, when I'm waking up, and when you're in your zone, and you're in the park, you let this person do the homework, and then you got something to work with. So it's kind of a really neat learning for myself psychologically and all. And to help others to do that, you know. Take the experience, don't mess up the experience, with you're, you know, theory. Keep it separate. Then look at your theory, and say which has the more authenticity for you? Which is the power of the impact? What is it saying? Which is conditioning the other, you know, where can you unite a piece of each one? So that's part of this teaching thing. You know, to honor all these different elements and take them seriously.

- You know, I'm fascinated when you talk about going into seclusion, and singing the songs using feminine images. And you're the perfect person to ask this. I think a lot of the power and the backlash of reimagining was the fact that it was liturgy. And the fact that it was song

- Yes. And so it was worship.

- Absolutely. So could you say a little bit more about why that was powerful for you. What is it about this that makes it so powerful, and even dangerous to some people.

- Well for me for example, I was a very little girl, six, seven. Almost before school gave its influence, I was ready, pause. And I was sitting, and I grew up over my grandfather's saloon in Passaic, New Jersey, in a very small cold water flat you know. But, in the summers, that was my mother's family. My father's family had a farm in the Catskills mountains. A little bitsy thing. And so summer time I would be there and I would just be sitting out at night listening, you know, and sitting on the stone fence and looking at the stars and imagining. So I had, and so when I was home in the Passaic, New Jersey part. My grandmother's next to the bar, was a little, their house, and the only little garden in the whole area. It was all tenement flats, but they had saved this little, very posted sand garden with a tree in the middle, and little plants and I would sit on

the porch and write poems. So I could write there, and I could revel in it in Catskill. But that was a real world for me, even though, and I would, I don't know, when I discovered, read the birds and the trees. I don't know, I loved that peace of it, and at night I would lay in bed and I would be writing a poem, and I'd never finish. If I had one word that didn't fit right, it would stay until it, you know, came together. So it was, I had a parallel universe, literally. And went in and out, back and forth. That's, and I didn't share, those with anybody. They were my secret things. And even entering the community. Well when I entered the community, the one, and she just passed on, bless her heart, Jane Byrnes, Sister Gerard. She was one of the rare ones, who was an English major and loved Gerard madly, Hopkins, and all the poets, so she stoked that in me. And plus the biblical stories, and all the lyricism in the Scriptures. I learned to see that there's another stream there, not just what you get when you go to mass on Sunday. And the little bit that's carved out of context. And so, I fell in love with that kind of thing. And so I would integrate then some of those images into my poems and it was before I was writing, you know, folk songs. That I knew the power of ritual, and then because they taught it to me. We were into the Gregorian chant. We followed the ritual at the hours and everything else, as missionaries, not as monastics. So there was only Prime in the morning, and Compline at night, and Vespers on big feasts, and mass, but, we had a sense of the sacredness of the day, of the seasons, and Easter, and you know, it was outdoors and indoors. So that ritual, liturgy, was important, very important. And then when the changes came, and we were working toward these changes before they came, we were part of those movements, you know. They needed to fit the people, they needed to be accessible, they couldn't just be an ancient, not that you'd ever wanna lose those, but they belong in museums or certain occasions, or you know, how do we make it. So that's how I got into, all of a sudden. That's why I said when I found that that degree thing wasn't working, I started singing songs. Has somebody read my star chart it's really great. All my very private gifts, every one is in all the public houses. It's in all this (drowned out by sigh) wrong houses. In other words, so theoretically, I extrovert, and I got extroverted. But I'm right on the line so these things are introverted, you know. I have a world inside, and that was more dominant when I was younger for me, because I would recede into that. Now that I'm doing all this teaching, my world is really out there, wanting you and your world to open up, you know. So, and in a sense, maybe I can do this, with such conviction because that's happened to me. I opened up. But then I'm opening you up, so you can open others up. Not only, if you have to open to yourself first, but then the point is not to stay, but to go out, this is how you can help others. And so it becomes like, you know, almost something that is contagious really.

- Yes.

- So I haven't been writing in psalms in a long time now because I got so into getting this degree going and finishing all this going around. And somebody writes me from Albuquerque, when, 2011, 12, 13, 14, 15, maybe six years now. He wants to put out a collection of my songs sung by other people of note, could I do it. So I thought he was crazy. And actually had letters from him in the past. He wasn't, I thought, huh. So I didn't even answer him. So six months go by, seven months. And he was a sweet guy so he didn't follow up, you know. And so I find this letter in the pile of unanswered letters and I said, gee, I really at least should say somthin'. And so I say, well what do you mean or something, why would you do this or, well that's all he needed, he leaped on it. (laughing) This was a man who had sung my songs as a church musician and all. He had been in a religious community. He'd left. He was in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was, had a sacred art

guild then he had formed out there at the Shrine. At the National Shrine for Saint Bernadette. Super rue, he was an artist. He'd gotten lots of things published and stuff, you know. And he wanted to do this. He loved my music. He said I can do it, and he told me what it was, the Sacred Books on Prayer, and I said I think you're crazy. Nobody's gonna do this. I said, but I'm not gonna stop you. That's all I said. I don't, I'm not gonna stop, that's all I said. Well let me tell you. Okay we're working on the third one. And not working so much, as it's apart from my spirit to play on, cause we have, now Lamour's gonna do another one in New York, she's, there's a studio in New York, and I'm gonna meet with her next month and she's gonna, she's gonna go back to One by One from the Women's song, One by One, you know. I said we need a little bit of feminist energy in here. And she could toss that one. But he got people and that's what he did. And he had contacted Janis Ian,

- Yes.

- And she says to him, I'd rather talk directly with the, the nun. (laughing)

- So that's how your connection with Janis Ian started?

- Through that.

- Really. And she says, he sends her, I said if you're gonna do something with her, send her Woman's Songs, and so she writes back, and she said, what's this phrase? And she said, I am the rays of the rising sun. Well you know, and, it opens the album or something. It's a poem I've written, or it was something I've tucked into Women Prayer, Women's Song ritual. It wasn't a song, it was a text.

- Yeah.

- The poem prayer. It was God speaking, she says, this ain't in my, this isn't in my Bible. And I wrote back and says it's not in my Bible either. I said, it's a text, you know. And so I thought if you're gonna be that snippy I'm not gonna, I just, and you know I just wrote. She writes back, I can't get it out of my mind. And she said, I had this melody, can I have permission to set it to music for your thing, or whatever, you know. Set it to music, she was separate from. And I wrote back, I said, I don't let people do this because, I said, well let me think about it. I don't know. And she wrote back, she said. I'd like to share with you whatever I have and if you don't like it, it's over, we tear it up. And it goes out, and so I wrote back, okay. And it began, (mumbles) and then I have, a gazillion emails from her, we're just soul friends. We are literally soul friends.

- Yes.

- I've been to her house, five days, in Nashville, love her, she is crazy, and wonderful, and generous, and spiritual, and totally at times inappropriate, on the other times, just so, I just love her. She is a friend, she is supportive of me. She, I know she's just terrific. We did a program together. We also did a thing,

- Is this

- the New Jersey Broads?

- Yes (laughing)

- That's her title.

- Yeah (laughing) (drowned out by laughter)

- Two broads, Two Jersey Broads, and the Holy Spirit or something

- Yes.

- Yeah she did that for the NPR, was it the NPR, the rest or something. Nashville, something out there, I don't know.

- I think it was Scarlett Bennett.

- Yes it was at Scarlett Bennett, but it was, we did that, but it was televised for NPR thing out, down there in Tennessee.

- Oh, okay, yes.

- So that was separate from, but we held it at that, and then I had an event there. And so I said, you're talkin' theology, and I'm talking music. (laughing)

- But that's like she was very, she came to my house, when she was passing through, she said, do you have a washing machine? I said, yeah. She said I have some dirty, can I come and see you, I have a concert, big concert. So she comes over, with this tons of wash, and I here she's got her wash in my washing machine. And we're talkin' theology, and she says, what's the, where'd you get this, oh let me just get this, she goes online, you know, unbelievable, we're just flippin' back and forth, you know.

- Yeah. So I just love her, and then she finally, long story short, she said,

- yeah, this is great. She says, can I, I'm gonna, I'd like to pose to my publishers, I do audio books, can I do your autobiography? And so I don't know if you've seen that?

- I have yes.

- Okay,

- can you imagine, she sings all 26 songs.

- Oh yes.

- And she says, calls up, I don't know about this one, about Christ, this Jesus one, Christ one. She said what are my Jewish friends gonna say? I said well don't do it. She says, I don't care what my Jewish friends say. (laughing) You know you're a singer of songs, you know, Jewish people sing Christmas carols, right. But she had so closely identified with all of it, she had to like, you know, I gotta check out is this okay. So she took me to the Audies, you know, because we got an Audie nomination for Yes, I saw that.

- Did you?

- And so here I am with her for three days in the village you know, wondering around having the best time, you know. Oh gosh,

- what was that like MT?

- Well the event itself is ridiculous. I mean it's just not my thing, you know. I mean, well there were nice people there, and they're all lovely, and I love everybody's happy, and all this glitz. But I loved, you know, walkin' around the village and in the park, and you know with her and just, you know. And then we, there was this second hand store that they have in Manhattan, you know, the nuns, and everything's cheap. And I could see little trinkets. I liked that part, you know, (laughing) and just having nice meals together, and just, but she put me up in a beautiful place. In fact the place got comped by the owners, you know, this hotel, they said look Janice we're gonna do this for you, will give you free, give her free room. And beautiful suite, I said this is ridiculous. But it was so nice, cause they were Catholic, I'm a nun, you know.

- Yes. And Janice is Jewish so,

- To the bone.

- Yes, yeah.

- Jewish lesbian.

- Yes, yes.

- And had married to this wonderful gal, and they're just so, and then she's so good to me. When she was here, she drove over to my house. Your case need changing, so she threw the guitar into her van and drove it back to Nashville and restrung the whole thing, and fixed it. My Mark nun had it shipped back.

- Seriously.

- I mean stuff like this.

- She does it all the time, you know. You're shoes were terrible so she sends me a credit card for Fleet Feet. Buy yourself some shoes. Throw 'em out, I said we don't throw out shoes. I said it's got another ten years to go. You shouldn't wear more than these. But yeah, I mean she, I love her, she's like. She's just

- I'd love to see

- the two of you together. It must be a hoot.

- it is so funny. It truly is, we gotta do more things.

- Yes.

- And she agreed to do something here for and with me. I'm hopin' to do something related to this chair you know.

- Yes. And so we'll see what we can do. She's kinda tryin' to zone down a little bit, you know. So I'd love, if I had more, I've had more lives. And I'd love to go back to Nashville. She'd have me there in a heartbeat, you know.

- Yeah.

- There's so many things that I do wanna do.

- Yes.

- And so to awaken this part of the music again, for Dan Polis, who's name should be put in lights forever in history. What he has done, not only with Loving You, I don't know if you've seen that CD, you cannot leave it out.

- I have it now. That and Breath of the Spirit that just came out with people singin' the songs in ways that I could have never imagined them to be interpreted. Elizabeth Von Trapp, you know

- Oh has gotten one of each of the albums. She's done three.

- Wow.

- Malcolm Moore has done three already. She's gonna do another. There's just other people to, and then in like Cynthia Clawson, if you're into the movement with, more, what is this, the Gospel kind of, Southern Gospel, there's people from there. And it's just so, it's like people have different faith traditions. Choosing a song that fits so that, it is called The Sacred Folk Song project. People of different faith traditions singing these.

- What is it like to have, to hear them singing

- Well it was startling at first.

- Yeah

- you know.

- Oh, gosh, I know I've had it. He sends me, and it just tears me up, he's just working on this now, he sends me like the first mix of this, they've got 'em. It's so different, you know, it startled members of my community, the first one, some of the interpretations. And I'm sayin' look, this song is out there. It's on these CD's for the nuns singing. Get over it. (laughing)

- You know, I have to get over it, at first it was, it was now I'm just so excited to hear what someone's gonna do, you know. Or sometimes it's very different. Sometimes it isn't, but you know. It really is different. It's exciting, it's wonderful, you know. And the thing is, because we're a community of missionaries, and we're not large, and we don't have a lot of people, and so all the music is in my basement. And all the orders are filled, and everybody orders with me, and I'm the only person living there. And you can have a, an assistant. You know, I have someone who helps me with WLI eleven hours a week, on two different days, who's at my house now, so there goes Wednesday. (laughing) But, you know, it just all works out.

- Yeah.

- It just, you do, you know, that's how my recreation is, I think I'll go to my music. I think I'll go do this. I think I'd better finish this book which they're waiting in London as we speak, that I ship it.

- It sounds like they reimagined your songs.

- They did. They absolutely did.

- Yeah.

- They really did. And bout the stories, and what they did with the ones they brought to the studio in Albuquerque. This one guy who's won a lot of Grammys for his video. He filmed an interview with them with three basic questions. Why did you choose this song? Cause they choose the song they identify with.

- Oh is that right?

- They're sent several samples Yeah.

- And they tell about how this really spoke to me. This just transformed me. Or this meant so much, at least



that's what he's telling me, you know. And so the plan had been, except back in the day when he started this there were more funds available. There's not much funding around the two. And it's like dirt cheap, he's just simply the studio and so, he's now, like he's donating and selling off some of his stuff, and the studio guy, and if money comes in we, they send it. He gives it to him. So it's just bit by bit, you know.

- Yeah.

- But he's determined to do this because he loves the songs. They never made it into the Catholic tradition. And I think that's what just stoked him. To just get out there. I never went Catholic, I went New York, you know. I went through the New York studio and Ten Pan Alley thing. And so, but even so, it just was never, everything is real churchy in the church. And he, just says, these should be out there. And what's so lovely is, it's true, they're not in the confines of that. I mean my best supporters were the Mennonites and the Amish and just different peoples of, you know, the Moravian's, and the Presbyterians, and the whatever, you name it. And the Africans, and the other cultures, and so that's actually who I am, you know. So it's so perfect. It just settled itself. So these now are just a different way to listen to them. And you know, there's these three teenage girls from the Midwest, from some Iowa, somewhere in the middle of nowhere. And their father's a musician. And he trained them to sing in a madrigal style, acapella, and they've done two songs, that oh my gosh, with their intertwining pure girl voices, you know, so lovely. So you have the young and you have the old, and you have, you know, soloists, and choirs and it's kind of fun.

- This is remarkable. Oh I so look forward to hearing this.

- Yeah, you're gonna walk over with me to my house. And we're gonna go in and get those and give it to ya.

- Yeah, let me end by, just, we talked about your reimagining songs. In the end what do you think if we think about the reimagining movement, the conference. Do you have a sense about what you think the legacy of it was?

- That's interesting. Legacy is an interesting word. So I'm not sure if I can answer that. I could say impact,

- Say that, yes.

- Impact, and even that, is somehow, what we need to do, okay here's what we need to do in order to do, and what you're doing, God bless you this is wonderful. We need, we feminists need not just to leave it to the historians out there, but we need to look, and my talks now go between, okay two men and a bird. Which Rosemary Ruether's,

- Yes.

- Okay and I give her credit every time. I gotta pinpoint these comments between two men and a bird. I changed the middle, but it's John the 23rd, and now Francis, okay.

- Oh yes. And how Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the two men and a bird,

- Yes.

- And then, so for me, if we need to look at that period, a team of, whatever, and highlight what the women's contribution has been, and identify the different components. Cause we're all over the place. That's because, it's emerging.

- Yes.

- But if we wait to history to look back and put the pieces together, they may put them together in ways, they wouldn't be sort of wrong, but they're not, we see things differently. And so you can see, we can see the impact if reimagining, that would be just one event. But there are other events, that history will miss that maybe, in the big picture, and settle others, but you can say, okay at this period of time, there was, A, B, da, da, da, there was da, da, da, da. It was among the Mennonites, it was among the Methodists, it was among the, and the Lutherans. Even when you get down to all the Lutheran traditions, even the most conservative shifting. So we need to sort of do that. Like, and like rubbers, like Defecting in Place, that got that, that was a big one, that got a grant,

- That was a great book. And got people in there, but it doesn't fit any framework, it doesn't fit ritual, it doesn't fit these theologies. So you can't do it, so we've ran with the Bible theology and ritual and spirituality. Cause those are the ones, you know, and then also certainly application, injustice, works of mercy, et cetera But, I think we need to look at this whole thing. So like people are coming up to me, do you have like the thing with Ludmillas stuff, and do you have, and I've said Geez, you know, all these movements, I've had a finger in a lot of them.

- You have.

- And I don't even think that way. But when people are coming up to you, do you have this, do you have this. I said somewhere in my basement is Ludmilla. Somewhere in the second floor, is somebody, I just found some and said what is this doing here? So I'm trying to like have, I'm trying to put the piles, that relate to each other in the places, and then put them in where they need to go. So they're safe

- Yes, yes. Because they're not safe with me, you know. And it's so important. And so what you're doing is you're getting a perspective, and you're taking the time to do this, you're getting the backing to do this. And I would recommend to you that this is vitally important, you get that in place. But then you look for maybe some grant money to do the bigger picture, you know, of which I would love to be a part of. Not that I wanna get involved, because I don't have time

- I get it. I can actually hand you stuff, that are, we have like, even a conference so to speak, of some of, if we're still, those who are still alive. Like we asked, what is my name?

- Letty Russell.

- Thank you so much.

- That, yes, yes. Letty was so who was key

- yes and so close to us

- yes. And here to us, you know. We don't have a lot of time left.

- Are you talking about getting together people from reimagining?

- No, no not reimagining

- Bigger than that. Finish your reimagining

- yes, yes. I'm talking about, because the role ready. Russell played the role that, the role that, shoosh-la-fear, Rensa played, even though she's got, you know, we've got to, while they're still living, breathing, at least look at, maybe if we get them then that's okay. But then we look at people who objectively could look at those people. You know

- Yes and say, this is an important one to make sure that you get into this stream of whatever, while we have a chance to put these, resources, make these available, you know. Because now a days so much is available. And what makes it into a conversation, or whatever, are those who initiate the search.

- Yes.

- They can go anywhere, for anything, which is good and also terrifying. Because you're not evaluating what is really substantive, and what is commentary around the substantive, you know, and I think that's really, that's really something. You know,

- yes. There's a lot of this, this is a good time because the clock is ticking.

- Excellent.

- And we don't have

- too much more left.

- Right. I wanna ask one final question

- sure. And the way you've been doing this all along but i wanna ask this directly, what does reimagining

mean today? What needs to be reimagined or is being reimagined?

- Just about everything. (laughter) Just about everything. First of all we need to take seriously, we need to reimagine, we need to reimagine, so if you start too big you've lost people, so you gotta start here. But we're also, we need to take seriously not just looking at imaginary programs about outer space, about other things happening, we need to reimagine our reality that it validates these outer space, endless space, what might be out there. The puniness, the puniness and limitations of humanity. The short timeline we have, that have in fact defined and determined everything. So you know the theory of everything of what's his name, (drowned out by laughing) we need to reimagine everything. And if you reimagine it, it's safe well because you can say it's imagination. But at the heart when women reimagine is deep truth, because the imagination is the stuff you use to express and hold something that is the kernel. It's like Paul recorded, the disposable believable.

- Believable. Good your reading,

- I love that one. ` I say it all the time that there's something, that's wrapped, you wrap, there's something believable. And I don't know anymore what that is. Because I say faith and belief are very different you know, there's the beliefs you hear, person of faith, even if you don't know what you believe. It's not about believing. It's about a deep conviction where faith resides. So we need to get back to what is the disposable, what might be believable, and what can we let go of in all of this, so you apply that principle it would be to reimagine is to safely visit everything. If we could imagine, if we can use the imagination now in a looser way like we would, like a child imagines, an imaginary world. We need to reimagine an imaginary world based on actually, real facts.

- Yeah.

- To say, imagine if this might really be true. Let's imagine this might be true. And then what if it were. What would be the world we want to reimagine. Okay what would be the kind of world would we wanna live in. Then it safely allows us to do that. So in a sense I'm playing with that in my courses and in my programs. That's what we're doing, it's not specifically saying it. But you're opening my mind to saying maybe we're onto something, you know, bigger.

- Oh yes.

- Plus,

- Because now we want to, it's a safe word. And I love, you know, Einstein's, what is it, it's not facts, it's theory or facts will get you from here to here to here to there, but imagination will take you anywhere.

- Yes

- And to me,

- Yeah,

- It's sort of the anywhere reality of yeah,

- Yeah

- So.

- That's a great place to stop I think. That's wonderful, wonderful.