

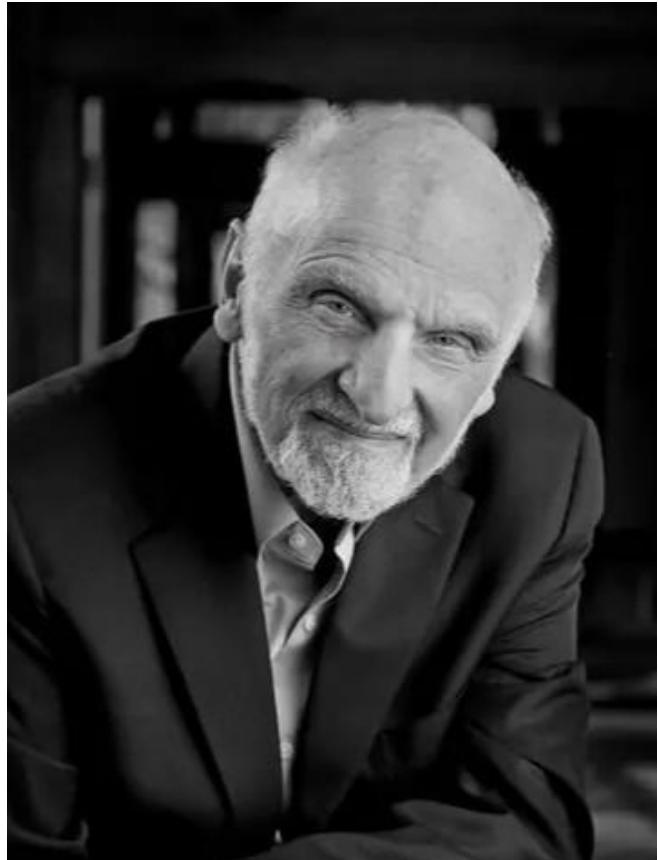


AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION

## **American Academy of Religion 2025 Memorial List**

We remember the AAR members who passed away in 2025

# Walter Brueggemann



1933 – 2025

- One of the most influential 20<sup>th</sup> Century Christian biblical scholars
- Professor at Eden Theological Seminary (1961-1986) and Columbia Theological Seminary (1986-2003)
- As a biblical scholar, his used rhetorical criticism as his primary method of engagement of the texts
- Focusing on the Hebrew prophetic tradition, his writing and lectures often focused on justice and the biblical prophets
- A prolific author, he wrote over 50 books
- President of Society of Biblical Literature in 1990
- He was an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ
- Publications include:
  - *Theology of the Old Testament*
  - *The Prophetic Imagination* (sold over 1 million copies)
  - *Message of the Psalms*

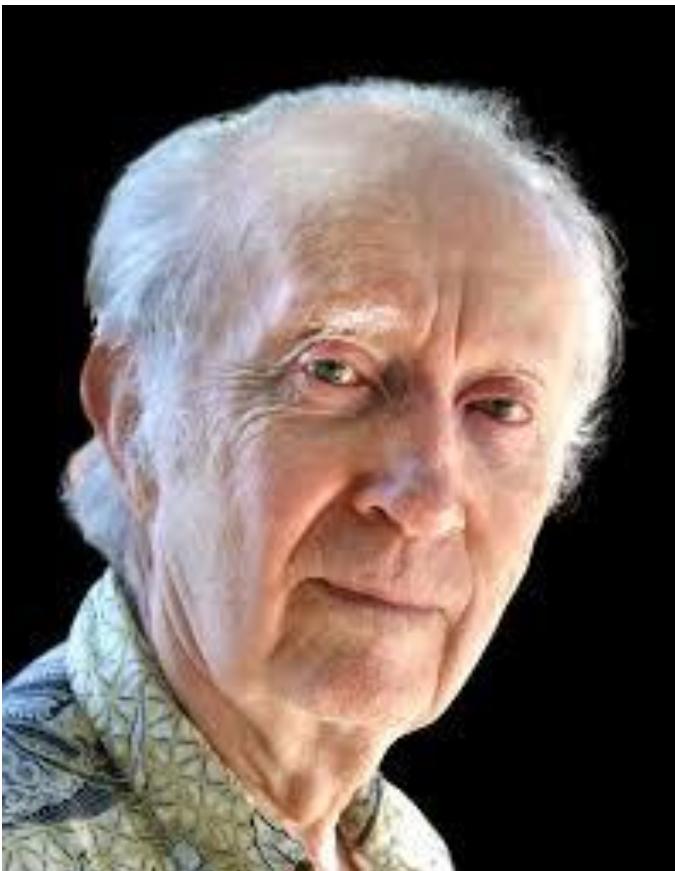
# M. Darrol Bryant



1942 – 2025

- Professor of Religion & Culture at the University of Waterloo from 1973-2005
- Authored or edited over 25 books
- Director of Renison's Center for Dialogue and Spirituality in the World Religions
- Led many international conferences on interfaith dialogue
- Frequently traveled to India and built many friendships among people of different religions including Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, and Islam
- Known for his gentle nature and as an avid conversationalist
- Publications include:
  - *Out of Galilee: Christian Thought as a Great Conversation*

# John Cobb



**1925 – 2024**

- Professor of Religion at Claremont School of Theology from 1958-1990
- Helped found the Center for Process Studies which became a gathering space for scholars and theologians who wanted to integrate science, philosophy, and religion
- Promoted an interdisciplinary approach to studying religion and spirituality
- An early advocate for environmental theology & ethics
- Promoted global peace including leading U.S.-China collaborations
- Revered mentor to many students and colleagues
- Publications include:
  - *Christ in a Pluralistic Age* (1975)
  - *Is It Too Late? A Theology of Ecology* (1971)
  - *Natural Theology* (1965)

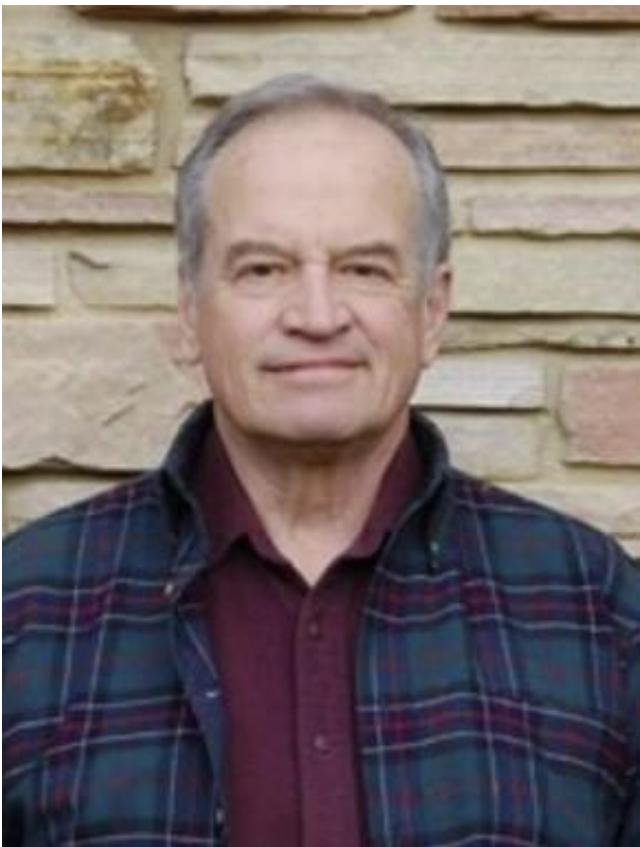
# Paul Courtright



1942 – 2024

- Professor and Department Chair (1989-1996) of the Department of Religion at Emory University
- His teaching and research focused on South Asian religions, particularly Hinduism
- Expanded and diversified the faculty of the Graduate Division of Religion
- Helped found Emory's PhD program in West and South Asian Religions
- Beyond academics, Paul's other interests included poetry, cooking, and spending time with his family
- Publications include:
  - *Ganesa: Lord of Obstacles, Lord of Beginnings*
  - *From the Margins of Hindu Marriage: Essays in Gender, Culture and Religion*

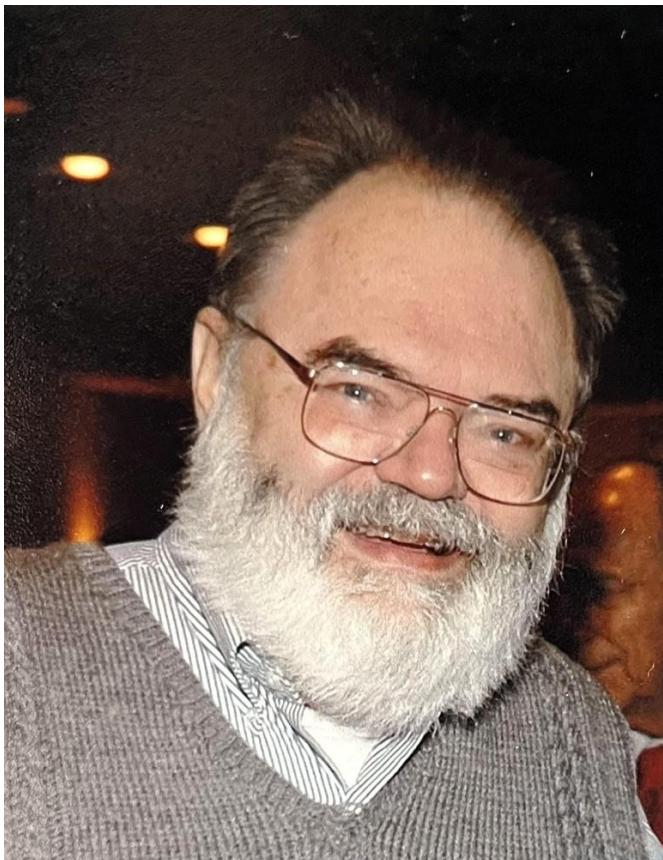
# *Fred Denny*



**1939 – 2025**

- Professor of Islamic Studies and History of Religions at the University of Colorado, Boulder (1978-2005)
- Research interests included Qur'anic recitation, comparative ritual, Islam and human rights, and religion and ecology
- Editor of scholarly book series, "Studies in Comparative Religion" which has 35 titles published
- Served on editorial boards of five scholarly journals including *Teaching Theology and Religion*
- Served on the AAR national board for eleven years
- Sang in the choir at his local church
- Publications include:
  - *An Introduction to Islam, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*
  - *Jews, Christians, Muslims: A Comparative Introduction to Monotheistic Religions*
  - *Atlas of the World's Religions, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.*

# Donald Dreisbach



1941 – 2025

- Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Northern Michigan University
- Also taught history, philosophy, and created an interdisciplinary minor in religious studies at NMU
- Research primarily evolved around theologian Paul Tillich
- Member and former president of the North American Paul Tillich Society
- Hobbies included reading, model railroads, stamp collecting, and cooking
- Publications include:
  - *Symbols and Salvation: Paul Tillich's Doctrine of Religious Symbols*

# Roger Haight, S.J.



1936 – 2025

- Towering Jesuit Catholic theologian and professor at Union Theological Seminary (2004-2023)
- Taught Jesuit theology as visiting professor in Lima, Paris, Nairobi, and in India
- His book, *Jesus Symbol of God* (1999) was barred by the Vatican, but it was the winner of the top prize in theology from the Catholic University Press
- Committed to exploring how the Divine is encountered across religious traditions
- Co-wrote *Jesus and Buddha: Friends in Conversation* with Paul Knitter
- Served as President of the Catholic Theological Society of America
- Awarded the John Courtney Murray Award in 2023
- Publications include:
  - *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*
  - *Facing Race: The Gospel in an Ignatian Key*

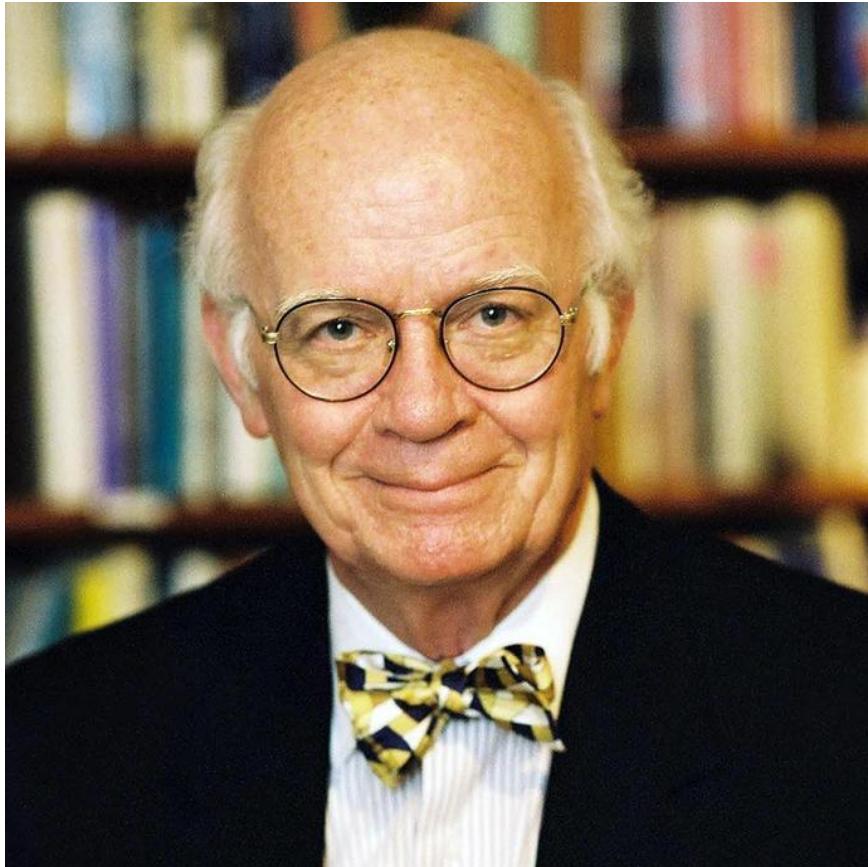
# Michael Ium



1984 – 2025

- Dr. Ium was a postdoctoral fellow in the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto
- A scholar of Tibetan Buddhism, Ium earned his MA at Maitripa College and PhD at UC Santa Barbara
- Received AAR's International Dissertation Research Grant
- Co-editor of the *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies*
- He was part of an ERC-funded project called TibSchol: The Dawn of Tibetan Buddhist Scholasticism

# Martin E. Marty



1928 – 2025

- Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Modern Christianity at University of Chicago's Divinity School
- A groundbreaking scholar, Mart served UChicago for over 35 years
- As a theologian and religious historian, he became one of the greatest interpreters of religion in the United States
- Wrote over 50 books and 5,000 articles, essays, reviews, and papers.
- Directed the six-year “Fundamentalism Project” which examined the role of conservative religious movements in societies worldwide
- He supervised or co-supervised 115 dissertations
- Publications include:
  - *Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America* (1972)
  - *Pilgrims in Their Own Land* (1984)
  - *Modern American Religion* (1986-96, 3 volumes)

# Carl Olson



1941 – 2025

- Professor of Religious Studies at Allegheny College for 36 years
- Published 23 books and 240 articles & reviews
- Lectured internationally including India, Japan, and England
- Served as Chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities (1991-1994)
- Awarded the Teacher-Scholar Professorship of the Humanities
- Specialty topics of research include the religious themes in rock music
- Publications include:
  - *The Stain of Error on the Self* (2024)
  - *The Nostalgia for Origins: Religion, Evolution, Cognition, and Memory* (2024)
  - *Religious Ways of Experiencing Life* (2016)

# Jill Raitt



1931 – 2025

- Pioneer scholar in Religious Studies
- Founding member of the UC-Riverside Department of Religious Studies
- First woman granted tenure at Duke Divinity School
- Started Duke Divinity School's Women's Center
- Founder of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Missouri
  - Stressed the equality of Western, Eastern, and Indigenous Religions
  - “3/4 of the world’s people have religions without a book.”
- 2<sup>nd</sup> woman elected President of the AAR
- In the 1980s and ‘90s, she supported numerous women being denied tenure
- Publications include:
  - *Other Worlds: An Introduction to Religion*
  - *The Colloquy of Montbéliard: Religion and Politics in the Sixteenth Century*

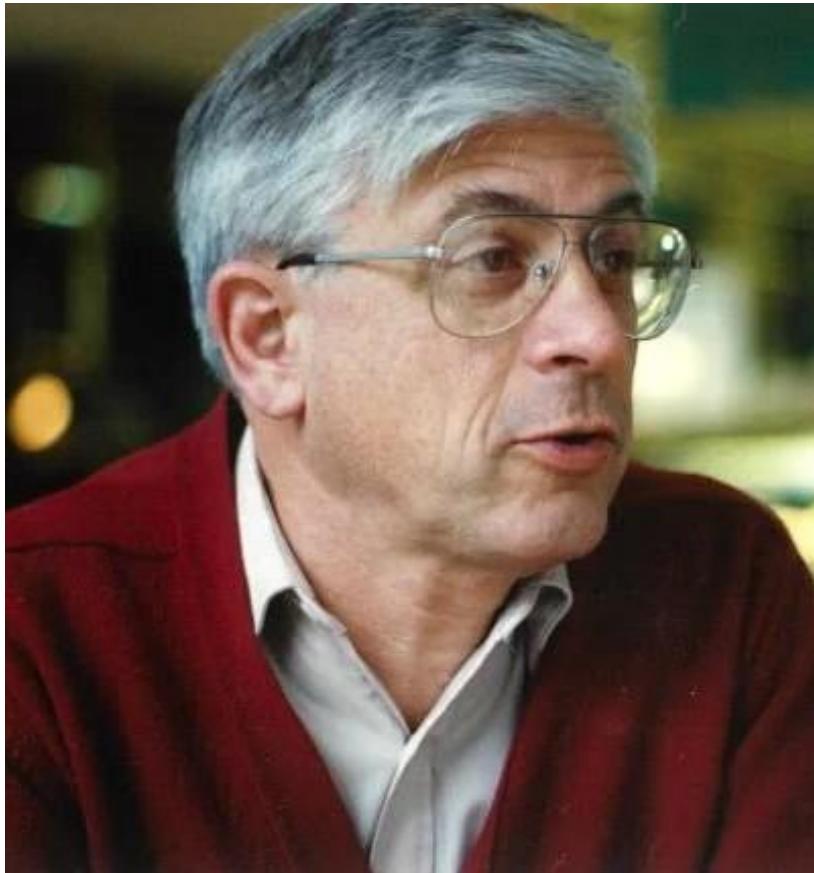
# Russel Richey



**1941 – 2025**

- Former Dean and Distinguished Professor of Church History at Candler School of Theology at Emory University (2000-2011)
- Also taught at Drew University (1969-1986) and Duke University (1986-2000)
- His scholarship was based within the Wesleyan tradition and focused on civil religion and denominationalism
- Wrote, co-authored, and edited dozens of books and journal articles
- Was the principal writer for the UMC Task Force to Study the Episcopacy
- A founding editor of *Methodist Review: A Journal of Methodist and Wesleyan Studies*
- Publications include:
  - *American Methodism: A Compact History*
  - *A Church's Broken Heart: Mason-Dixon Methodism*

# William Shepard



1933 – 2025

- Professor of Religion at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand (1978-1999) and Cornell College (1971-1978)
- Specialized in modern Islamic ideologies, especially the writings of Sayyid Qutb
- Focused on ethno-sociology methodologies in his studies and teaching
- Traveled to many countries for research including Egypt, Iran, Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, and Turkey
- Ordained Presbyterian minister (PCUSA)
- Publications include:
  - *The Faith of a Modern Muslim Intellectual*
  - *Introducing Islam* (a textbook)

# Tony Stewart



1954 – 2024

- Chair and Professor of Religious Studies and Chair in Humanities at Vanderbilt University
- Taught at North Carolina State University from 1986-2011
- Scholar in South Asian religions
- Co-founded and directed the Triangle South Asia Consortium, the South Asia Summer Language Institute at the University of Wisconsin, and the Bangla Language Institute at Independent University, Bangladesh
- Authored six monographs and major translations, and more than 50 articles
- Publications include:
  - *The Final Word: the Caitanya Caritamrta and the Grammar of Religious Tradition*
  - *Witness to Marvels: Sufism and Literary Imagination* (awarded the Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy Prize)

# *Edward Albert Yonan*



**1936 – 2025**

- Chair and Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies at Millikin University (1980-2002)
- Also taught at Dartmouth College (1966-1975) and University of Illinois (1975-1980)
- Earned his Bachelor of Divinity, MA, and PhD from the University of Chicago Divinity School
- Served as chair and president of the Theology and Philosophy of Religion section of the Midwest AAR
- Received 5 grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities
- Published several books and articles



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