

# First Parish Church, UCC

Brunswick, ME

## Introduction to Eastern Religions: A Fall 2010 Adult Religious Education Program



### OPTIONS FOR SUGGESTED READING

All of these books are available, either new or used, through Amazon.com. Also, a local book store could likely order the book(s) you want. All are available in paperback.

#### Overall

- *World Religions: The Great Faiths Explored & Explained*, John Bowker (London: Dorling Kindersley Limited, 2006). Beautifully illustrated and comprehensive volume that covers ancient religions, as well as Eastern, Western, and Native religions. If you want just one book that will give you an overview of a number of traditions, including the ones that we will focus on in this program, this is it. If you get this book, you do not need to get any of the tradition-specific books listed below. However, the ones below provide more in-depth information than the Bowker volume.

#### Hinduism

- *Hinduism: A Very Short Introduction*, Kim Knott (1998) from the Oxford University Press series “Very Short Introductions”
- **OR** *Hinduism: Experiments in the Sacred*, David M. Knipe (1991), from the “Religious Traditions of the World” series by Waveland Press

#### Buddhism

- *Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*, Damien Keown (1986 or 2000) from the Oxford University Press series “Very Short Introductions”
- **OR** *Buddhism: The Path to Nirvana*, Robert C. Lester (1987), from the “Religious Traditions of the World” series by Waveland Press

#### Confucianism and Taoism

- *Simple Confucianism: A Guide to Living Virtuously*, C. Alexandra Simpkins and Annellen Simpkins (Boston: Tuttle Publishing, 2000)
- **AND** *Simple Taoism: A Guide to living in Balance*, C. Alexandra Simpkins and Annellen Simpkins (Boston: Tuttle Publishing, 1999)
- **OR**, *Religions of China: The World as a Living System*, Daniel L. Overmyer (New York: HarperRow, 1986) which covers Confucianism, Taoism, and other factors related to religion in China.

*Note:* If you have explored other religions before, chances are that Huston Smith’s classic, *The World’s Religions: Our Great Wisdom Traditions* (HarperSanFrancisco, first published in 1958), was recommended reading. His work covers religious traditions in great depth but I have found in the past that it is generally a bit too scholarly if a reader wants a simple introduction to a tradition. This is why it is not included on a suggested reading list for this program.