

RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION
First-Day Conference Schedule ● November 15, 2023
Metropolitan AME Church ● Washington DC

OPENING ACTIVITIES

8:00am-8:00pm Continuous Registration
*Registration and membership are processed at www.relcomm.org
Registration is required for access to conference sessions
No additional cost is required beyond membership*

8:30-9:00am Conference Opening (includes continental breakfast service)
Fellowship Hall

PANEL SESSION 1 ● 9:00 to 10:15 am

Session 1A **Religious Rhetoric Will Set You Free: The Conceit of Liberation in Contemporary Religious Discourse (Part 1) – Part 2 presented during NCA Convention**
Metropolitan AME Chair: John H. Saunders, University of Alabama, Huntsville
Douglass Hall A Co-Chair: Christopher J. Oldenburg, Illinois College
Respondent: Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne University

Men Don't Retreat: Freedom, Dominion, and Masculinity in Christian Rhetoric, Sarah J. Kornfield, Hope College; Sage Mikkelsen, Independent Scholar

(Re)conceiving Freedom: Judaism Deploys the First Amendment in Protecting Abortion Rights, Adrienne E. Hacker Daniels, Illinois College

Freedom to Save the Body (of Christ): False Wisdom, True Wisdom, and the Rhetorical Chemotherapy of Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, Gregory Brandon Knight, William Carey University

We Demand Good News for the Poor: William Barber's Liberation Theology Rhetoric Goes to (March on) Washington, James W. Vining, Governors State University

Session 1B **Religious Communication and the Church**
Metropolitan AME Chair: Wallis Baxter III, Maple Springs Bible College and Seminary
Pruitt Board Room *Emotional Investment and Social Identity in the Context of Pastoral Social Loss*, Roman Brandon, Cedarville University; Andrew Harris, Cedarville University; Eric Mishne, Cedarville University

Persuasion Strategies in Vintage Rally Day Postcards: Postal Religious Communication, Josh Compton, Dartmouth College

Space, Place and the Communicative (re)Production of Christian Practices: How Material Agents (re)Constitute Churches, Sacha Gragg, Baylor University

The Presbyterian Church of the United States of America and the Adoption of a Shifting Dialogic Method, Andrew Connolly, Duquesne University

Session 1C **Religious Communication from Religious and Political Figures**
Holiday Inn Chair: Denise Edwards-Neff, LLC International University
Mayors 1 *Freedom, Surety, and God's Onesimi: A Close Reading of H.A. Ironside's "Charge That to My Account" Sermon*, John Dunkle, Liberty University

Racial Tensions in the Rhetoric of W.A. Criswell, Pastor First Baptist Church Dallas: Leading the Southern Baptists from Segregation to Integration after Brown v. Board of Education, Cecil Kramer, Liberty University

The Iron Lady's Capitalist Christianity: Margaret Thatcher's Rhetorical Theology, Leland Spencer, Miami University, Hamilton; Timothy Forest, University of Cincinnati

Session 1D
Holiday Inn
Mayors 2

Implications of Ornament in Church Architecture: Imaging, Memorials, and Media Extensions

Chair: Joel S. Ward, Geneva College

Respondent: Elaine S. Schnabel, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Technological Texture: Contemporary Evangelical Ornamentation at the Interface of Past and Future, Megan L. Zahay, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Fix Your Gaze Upon Him: The Pastor as an IMAG Ornament, Jim Trammell, High Point University

Reinventing Sacred Spaces: The Transformative Power of Memorialization and Architecture in the St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church Historic Site, Sarah J. Constant, Pennsylvania State University

Ornament as Articulate Gestural Extension: Virtual Worship in the 21st Century, Joel S. Ward, Geneva College

PANEL SESSION 2 • 10:30 to 11:45 am

Session 2A
Metropolitan AME
Douglass Hall A

Religious Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Religious Freedoms, Resistance to Government, and Leadership in Times of Crisis

Chair: Jeffrey D. Brand University of Northern Iowa

US Muslims, COVID-19 Hesitancy, the War on Terror, and Social Media, Omar Hammad, Rutgers University

Harnessing the Power of Religion in Crisis Communication; Content Analysis of Presidential Address During the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Ghana Experience, Ernest Ansah Eshun, University of Missouri-Columbia

Rhetorics of Religious Freedom and Pandemic Persecution: Opening Grace Community Church in the Time of COVID, Jonathan J. Edwards, University of South Carolina.

Decision Making Practices of African American Pastoral Leaders During the Early Months of COVID-19 in the United States, Darius M. Benton University of Houston, Downtown; LaMont Johnson, Shaw University; James Plenty, Morris Brown College

Session 2B
Metropolitan AME
Pruitt Board Room

Becoming Human: The Rhetoric of Race and the Holy Spirit

Chair: Rodney Adam Lyde, Duquesne University

Respondent: Luke Powery, Duke Divinity School

Presenters:

William Burgess Gallaudet University

Victor Grigsby, Duquesne University

Richard Wingfield, Duquesne University

Session 2C
Holiday Inn
Mayors 1

Initializing a Systematic Approach to Scholarship at the Intersection of Communication and Religion: Epistemological and Methodological Considerations

Chair: Andrew Harris, Cederaville University

Presenters:

Adrienne E. Hacker Daniels, Illinois College

Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne University

Tiffany L. Thomson, Cedarville University
Mark Ward Sr., University of Houston-Victoria
Jonathan Pettigrew, Arizona State University
Joel S. Ward, Geneva College
Annette D. Madlock, Sister Circle Writers

Session 2D
Holiday Inn
Mayors 2

Visual Communication and the Rhetoric of Freedom

Chair: Sam M. Guajardo, University of Memphis

Napalmed Christ, Julie Grandjean, Texas Tech University

“Christian Girl Instagram”: More than a Meme, Virginia Monroe, Gonzaga University

Fear and Religious Freedom: Christian Legal Society v. Martinez, Burwell v. Hobby Lobby, and Kennedy v. Bremerton School District, Kevin Johnson, California State University, Long Beach;
Craig Smith, California State University, Long Beach

Seeing Freedom: The View of Religious Rhetoric, Mark A. E. Williams, California State University, Sacramento

BUSINESS MEETING | BOX LUNCH • 12:00 to 1:15 pm

PANEL SESSION 3 • 1:30 to 2:45 pm

Session 3A
Metropolitan AME
Douglass Hall A

Pilgrimage and Dialogic Freedom in the Thought of Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, Walker Percy, and Flannery O’Connor

Chair: Christopher J. Oldenburg, Illinois College

Dorothy Day’s Literary Pilgrimage: Dialogic Freedom and Saint Thérèse, Susan Mancino, Saint Mary’s College; Natalia E. Tapsak, Duquesne University

Pilgrimage as a Silent Surrender into the Heart: Wayfaring with Thomas Merton across Nature, Culture, and Religion, Inci Ozum Ucok-Sayrak, Duquesne University; Annette M. Holba, Plymouth State University

Walker Percy and the Tactics of Defamiliarization, Justin Bonanno, Ave Maria University

A Pilgrim of Tenacious Hope: Flannery O’Connor’s Final Freedom, Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne University

Session 3B
Metropolitan AME
Pruitt Board Room

The Freedom of Critique Exploring, Challenging, and Confronting Christian Practice

Chair: Naaman Wood, St. Paul College

Co-Chair: Sean Connable, Christopher Newport University

Presenters:

Joy E.A. Qualls, Biola University

Sarah J. Kornfield, Hope College

Annette D. Madlock, Sister Circle Writers

Annalee R. Ward, University of Dubuque

Elaine S. Schnabel University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Mark A. Steiner, Christopher Newport University

Sean Connable, Christopher Newport University

Session 3C
Holiday Inn
Mayors 1

Diversity, TicTok, and Black Prophetic Rhetoric: A Discussion About Speaking Religious Truths Inside and Outside in the Academy

Chair: Michelle E. Shaw Northwestern University

Presenters:

Kristina M. Lee, University of South Dakota

Walter Iriarte, Lander University

Lionnell "Badu" Smith, University of Memphis

Earle Fisher, Memphis Theological Seminary

Session 3D
Holiday Inn
Mayors 2

In Memory of Katie Geneva Cannon: The Role of Womanism and African Spiritual Cosmology

Chair: Annette D. Madlock, Sister Circle Writers

Presenters:

Kami Anderson, Sojourning While Black

Dianna Watkins-Dickerson, University of Memphis

Kimberly P. Johnson, Tennessee State University

Ayo Mariama Morton, University of Memphis

Natonya Listach, Middle Tennessee State University

PANEL SESSION 4 • 3:00 to 4:15 pm

Session 4A
Metropolitan AME
Douglass Hall A

An Exploration of the Boundaries of Communicative Freedom for the Practice of Religious Communication

Chair: Anthony M. Wachs, Duquesne University

Respondent: N. Benton Parish, Texas A&M University

Critique & Constraint: Beyond Emancipation, Blake Faulkner, Hillsdale College

Richard M. Weaver on Human Nature: Religion, Rhetoric, and Freedom, Eric Grabowsky, Dickinson State University

There is a Tree in that Seed: Lessons for Religious Communication, Boundaries, and Freedom in David Bentley Hart's Tradition and Apocalypse, James W. Vining, Governors State University

Biblical Text as Tether: The Freedom in the Regulative Interpretation of Holy Scriptures, Joel S. Ward, Geneva College

Session 4B
Metropolitan AME
Pruitt Board Room

The Rhetoric of Christian Liberty

Chair: Gregory Brandon Knight, William Carey University

License for Laughter: A Critical Analysis of Humor in the Preaching of B.R. Lakin, John T. Dunkle, Liberty University

Jacques Ellul's Dialectic of Freedom (Christian Liberty), Brian Mattson, Lee University

Are We Free to Worship? The State of Religious Liberty in the Response to the Asbury Revival, Hanisha Besant, Regent University

The Eleventh Commandment: "Thou Shalt Not Dance"; Cecil V. Kramer, Liberty University

The Evangelical: A Proud Past, an Unclear Future, Chris Underation, Gordon College

Session 4C
Holiday Inn
Mayors 1

Social Media, Islam, and US Muslim Counterpublics

Chair: Omar Hammad, Rutgers University

Presenters:

Sahar Khamis, University of Maryland

Rosemary Pennington, Miami University

Sangita Shresthova, University of Southern California

Omar Hammad, Rutgers University

Session 4D
Holiday Inn
Mayors 2

The Ethics of Good Speech: Religious Communication Making the Africana Communication Turn

Chair: Napoleon A. Bradford, Virginia Union Seminary

Presenters:

Freddie Haynes, Christian Theological Seminary

Moya Harris, Christian Theological Seminary

William H. Lamar, IV, Christian Theological Seminary

Jennifer Carner, Christian Theological Seminary

Michael Waters, Christian Theological Seminary

Andre E. Johnson, University of Memphis

PANEL SESSION 5 • 4:30 to 5:45 pm

Session 5A
Metropolitan AME
Douglass Hall A

RCA 2023 Scholarship Awards Panel

Chair: Annette Madlock

Book of the Year: *Becoming Human: The Holy Spirit and the Rhetoric of Race*, Luke Powery, Duke Divinity School

Article of the Year: *The Politics of Media Format: Printing Poor Sarah During the Removal Crisis in Cherokee Nation*, Sonia Hazard, Florida State University

Dissertation of the Year: *Of Identity, Spirituality, Community, and the Sacred Chronotope in Bhutan*, Dorji Wangchuk, University of Macau

Top Student Paper: *White Christian Nationalism's Rhetorical Strategies and Their Impacts on Marginalized Communities*, Erica Kolson, University of Illinois

Session 5B
Metropolitan AME
Pruitt Board Room

God and Guns: Free Speech, Religious Freedom, and the Second Amendment

Chair: Andre E. Johnson, University of Memphis

Presenters:

Freddie Haynes, Christian Theological Seminary

Andrea Terry, Sacramento State University

William H. Lamar IV, Christian Theological Seminary

Jeff Miller, University of Memphis

Earle J. Fisher, Memphis Theological Seminary

Regan Robinson, Christian Theological Seminary

Session 5C
Holiday Inn
Mayors 1

Competing Narratives of Freedom: Religious Communication in the Neoliberal Academy

Chair: James W. Wining, Governors State University

Presenters:

Theon Edward Hill, Wheaton College

Amy L. King, Charleston Southern University

Sarah J. Kornfield, Hope College

Annette D. Madlock, Sister Circle Writers

Joshua Miller, Texas State University

Christopher J. Oldenburg, Illinois College

Elaine S. Schnabel, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Mark A. Steiner, Christopher Newport University

Session 5D
Holiday Inn
Mayors 2

Religious Communication: Chaplaincy, Dating, Miracles, and Testimonies

Chair: To be announced

How Chaplains Communicate Religion Within a State Organization, Ann Strahle, University of Illinois, Springfield

Perhaps Not to Be Discussed on A First Date: Negotiating Gender Roles in Protestant Dating Couples, Mikayla Covington, Duquesne University

Unbelievers: A Grounded Theory Analysis of Miracle Skepticism, David Dockery, Texas A&M University

"My Life After I Received Christ": Evangelical Culture in Popular Guides to "Preparing Your Personal Testimony," Mark Ward Sr., University of Houston-Victoria

AWARDS BANQUET • 6:00 to 8:00 pm

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 6:00pm | Dinner Served in Fellowship Hall |
| 6:30-7:00pm | RCA Scholarship Awards Program |
| 7:00-7:30pm | RCA Scholar of the Year Keynote Address
<i>Language as Blessing: Challenging a Dominant Narrative</i> , Amardo Rodriguez, Syracuse University |
| 7:30-8:00pm | Post-Conference Mingle |