

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
Douglass Hall A **Religious Rhetoric Will Set You Free: The Conceit of Liberation in Contemporary Religious Discourse (Part 1) – Part 2 presented during NCA Convention**
Chair: John H. Saunders, University of Alabama, Huntsville
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
Douglass Hall B **Religious Communication and the Church**
Chair: To be announced

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, University of British Columbia
- Session 1C
Douglass Hall C **Religious Communication from Religious and Political Figures**
Chair: To be announced

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
ABS (Downstairs)

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
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
Douglass Hall B

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
Douglass Hall C

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

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

Session 2D
ABS (Downstairs)

Visual Communication and the Rhetoric of Freedom

Chair: To be announced

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
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
Douglass Hall B

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
Douglass Hall C

Diversity, TikTok, 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
Lionell "Badu" Smith, University of Memphis
Earle Fisher, Memphis Theological Seminary

Session 3D
ABS (Downstairs)

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
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
Douglass Hall B

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
Douglass Hall C

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
ABS (Downstairs) **The Ethics of Good Speech: Religious Communication Making the Africana Communication Turn**
Chair: Andre E. Johnson, University of Memphis

Presenters:
Freddie Haynes, Christian Theological Seminary
Moya Harris, Christian Theological Seminary
William H. Lamar, IV, Christian Theological Seminary
Jennifer Carner, Christian Theological Seminary

PANEL SESSION 5 • 4:30 to 5:45 pm

Session 5A
Douglass Hall A **RCA 2023 Scholarship Awards Panel**
Chair: Annette Madlock

Book of the Year: To be announced

Article of the Year: To be announced

Dissertation of the Year: To be announced

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

Session 5B
Douglass Hall B **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

Session 5C
Douglass Hall C **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
ABS (Downstairs) **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

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| 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>To be announced</i> |
| 7:30-8:00pm | Post-Conference Mingle |