

**FRIDAY, 3:00 p.m. Library of Congress, A Calligraphy as Spiritual Practice.@**

We have an unusual opportunity planned for our experiential session this year. A *St. John=s Bible* and Calligraphy as Spiritual Practice@ is our topic. The *St. John=s Bible* is the first major commissioned hand-written Bible to be made in almost 500 years. Join us for a tour to see pages from the Bible; then try your hand at the practice of fine writing. Participants will learn to make simple calligraphic strokes and explore spiritual dimensions of the art of the scribe. Materials will be supplied. There is no admission charge. Following the view of the Bible Christopher Calderhead will lead the experiential session with a brief introduction, around 3:30 or so, followed by the hands-on practice. He is the author of *Illuminating the Word: The Making of the Saint John=s Bible* (2005). An experienced scribe and Episcopal priest, he is a Fellow of the London-based Society of Scribes and Illuminators and was recently appointed Editor of *Letter Arts Review*. Visit his website at <http://calderhead.org> Thanks to our SSCS member, Paula Barker at Seabury-Western Seminary, for planning this engaging session.

**FRIDAY, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Teaching The Beginning Course in Christian Spirituality** Organized by Arthur Holder and Joe Driskill. (Place to be added when available from the AAR)

A panel of SSCS members who have taught beginning courses in Christian spirituality will lead a discussion on how to go about preparing and delivering this introductory course. Attention will be paid to pedagogy, syllabi, and bibliography. Please bring your own ideas to contribute to the discussion.

**SATURDAY, 9:00 a.m. Presidential Address and Business Meeting**  
(Place to be added when available from the AAR)

Presidential Address: David B. Perrin A *The Uneasy Relationship Between Christian Spirituality and the Human Sciences: Psychology as a Test Case.@*

Prior to the Presidential Address the Society will be honoring Dr. Sandra Schneiders, on the occasion of her retirement, to recognize her incredible contributions B in the academy and elsewhere B in the area of Christian spirituality.

Our SSCS Business meeting completes the morning session at which Stephanie Paulsell presides as the new SSCS President.

*Place and rooms, where applicable, will appear in the Program made available by the American Academy of Religion. Once meeting rooms and times are known they will be added as information to this website.*

## **SPIRITUAL FORMATION FOR SOCIAL COMMITMENT**

**Presider: Michael Battle, Virginia Theological Seminary**

**1. Presenter: Joseph W. Caldwell, Fuller Seminary**

***The Bells of Nagasaki Still Echo in My Ears: Exploring the Christian Social Spirituality in the Writings and Edited Works of Takashi Nagai***

In the opening chapter of *We of Nagasaki*, Takashi Nagai, a survivor of the atomic bomb drop on Nagasaki, asks the question: "What would the world be like in an atomic war of extended duration?" He answers his question not with a physical account of death and dying but with a nod toward the destruction of the soul. With the collapse of the Soviet threat and the seeming amnesia society has developed about the possibilities of nuclear war, Nagai as a topic may seem somewhat dated. But Nagai's accounts, actions and his own spiritualization of his circumstances reach beyond mere political consideration about nuclear proliferation. Nagai contextually develops a program of social action that draws directly from his own lay Catholic spirituality and that transcends his own historical situation. This presentation will examine Nagai's contribution to an understanding of survival spirituality.

**2. Presenter: Janet W. Parachin, Phillips Theological Seminary**

***Nonviolence as a Christian Spiritual Path: Factors that Shape and Sustain Nonviolent Commitment***

When considering that some Christians have chosen nonviolence as their way of life and spiritual path, certain questions arise: What factors shape one's decision to choose nonviolence as a way of life? In light of the lack of widespread support for nonviolent perspective, what factors help one maintain this perspective once it has been chosen? Those persons and institutions who provide spiritual formation for social commitment may also ask, what educational models and methods may be useful in fostering commitment to nonviolence? These questions are explored using a narrative methodology to engage the perspectives and practices of three groups of nonviolent social activists—black civil rights activists of the 1960s, Roman Catholic peace activists of the twentieth century, and nonviolent social activists in a local community in the early twenty-first century.

**3. Presenter: Rebecca Gordon, Graduate Theological Union**

***The Tortured Body: a Liturgy of the Eucharist***

How ought Christians in this country who follow sacramental traditions respond to our nation's use of torture in a post-9/11 world? This essay is a meditation on the Eucharist, arranged in the order of that great liturgy itself. In it I make the claim that, as William Cavanaugh suggests in "Torture and Eucharist", the church's practice of Eucharist cannot rightly be separated from the state's practice of torture. In Eucharist we regularly remember and retell the story of One who was tortured to death for political reasons. Throughout this meditation I argue that the practice of torture is precisely the anti-Eucharist, the unmaking of individual human bodies and thereby of social bodies. In Eucharist, we seek by feeding individual bodies to re-member and remake that community we call the Body of Christ. Many Christians will therefore find their -- deeply practical -- response to torture in the practice of Eucharist.

**4. Presenter: John Nelson, Bethel Seminary**

***Transfiguration Spirituality: Encountering God's Presence in the Margins***

The relationship between beauty and social justice has often been tenuous within Christian spirituality. While beauty's evocative and excessive characteristics may draw us toward God, they may also result in idolatry, elitism, and oppression. Through creative first person accounts, this paper seeks to demonstrate that the Mystical and Prophetic streams of Christian spirituality are united in an encounter with God's presence in the margins. These encounters are both iconoclastic, shattering our images of humanity and God, and iconic, mediating the divine presence. I propose this Transfiguration spirituality does not result in idolatry, oppression, or escape, but rather calls us to perceive and participate within the Spirit of God's redemptive, beautifying, and reconciling action in the margins—the place where a desire for beauty and concern for social justice are joined.

**PANEL: SPIRITUALITY: ITS USES AND MISUSES**

Participants will reflect on how spirituality, as a discourse and a method, is evolving in current scholarly work in the field of religion. In what ways is the study of spirituality contributing to the broader study of religion, through its distinctive methods, approaches, and questions? In what ways does the language of spirituality (perhaps through careless use of the terminology or because of assumptions implicit in the discourse of spirituality) obscure or hinder work in the study of religion? Do notions of spirituality abroad in the culture intersect with the academic study of spirituality, and, if so, to what effect?

**Presider: Douglas Burton-Christie, Loyola Marymount University**

**Panelists:**

Philip F. Sheldrake, University of Durham

Stephanie Paulsell, Harvard University

Kwok Pui Lan, Episcopal Divinity School

Leigh E. Schmidt, Princeton University

Mary Frohlich, Catholic Theological Union

**CO-SPONSORED SESSION WITH WESLEYAN STUDIES GROUP  
COMMUNAL SPIRITUAL PRACTICES IN WESLEYAN TRADITIONS****Presider: Kenneth J. Collins, Asbury Theological Seminary****1. Presenter: Jonathan Cooney, Boston University*****The Shout Heard 'Round the World: Similarities and Differences Between American and English Camp Meetings***

Originating in America around the turn of the nineteenth century, camp meetings were embraced by the Primitive Methodists in England after the Wesleyan Connexion refused to sanction them. Although the American and English versions were similar, there were also marked differences, including length of the meetings and whether the primary emphasis was on prayer or preaching. The critical element was the support granted or withheld by the mainline Methodist leadership. In America, Francis Asbury wholeheartedly endorsed camp meetings. In Britain, Wesleyan leaders--including Jabez Bunting--denounced them. Clearly this distinction had much to do with socio-political tensions existing in both countries. The camp meeting was an example of the extensions and limitations of trans-Atlantic Methodism as it faced the necessity of reacting to and adapting to the specific contexts in which it found itself.

**2. Presenter: Rhonda Hartweg, London School of Theology*****The Contributions of Sarah Anderson Jones (1753-1794) to Three Communal Spiritual Practices of Early American Methodism***

Communal spiritual practices were the lifelines that kept the spiritual family connected and moving forward in the spiritual race for perfection, a central theme in the Wesleyan tradition. The published and unpublished writings of Sarah Anderson Jones (1753-1794), a vital and respected leader in eighteenth century American Methodism, provide a rare insight into the thriving spiritual communities of the early Methodists and the significant role and influence of women, who were prohibited from holding any official office. Through three communal practices (hymnody, sharing of spiritual letters, and prayer meetings) Sarah Jones strengthened the very close-knit and disciplined spiritual kinship that was at the heart of early Methodism. For these early Methodists, their spiritual families were in many ways more important and more intimate than their biological ones.

This study will describe and contextualize these spiritual practices as well as interpret their spiritual and theological significance.

**3. Presenter: Robin Knowles Wallace, Methodist Theological School in Ohio**  
*A Jesus, United by Thy Grace@: A Preliminary Investigation of Wesleyan Hymn Singing as a Communal Spiritual Practice*

The character of the Wesleyan movement was vibrantly formed in the way of salvation@ by the spiritual practice of singing together in community and through the contributions by Charles Wesley which shaped Methodism as a lyrical religion.@ A lyrical religion@ refers to the joining of theology and poetry, as Charles took the theology of the Wesleyan movement and set it to poetry to be sung. The practice of singing together uses both sides of the brain and thus provides for an embodied, holistic spiritual practice. This presentation will build on the work of Carlton R. Young, Sondra Higgins Matthei, and Frank Baker, and give a new focus through multidimensional (rhetorical, linguistic, biblical, theological, and liturgical) readings of Wesley texts describing and proscribing Christian community.

**4. Presenter: Philip Wingeier-Rayo, Pfeiffer University**  
*Recovering the Love-Feast: Moravian Contributions to Wesleyan Bands, Classes and Societies*

John Wesley's early contact with the Moravians greatly influenced his thought and practice. After a disagreement over antinomianism Wesley abruptly separated with the Moravians and began his own societies. Nevertheless the Moravian heritage left a distinct mark upon Wesley: especially his faith of assurance acquired at Aldersgate and the practice of the love-feast within bands, classes and societies. Attempting to recover Moravian contributions, this paper discusses the historical meaning and evolution of love-feasts beginning with the primitive church, John Huss and the Moravians at Herrnhut and explores their impact on early Wesleyan small group spirituality.