

# VOX SCHOLARIUM

NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH



**Annual Meeting of the Guild of Scholars of the  
Episcopal Church  
October 23-26, 2025 at the  
Brevard Music Center in Brevard, NC**

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**Draft Programme****Thursday 23 October**

Afternoon Arrive Brevard; snacks/coffee/tea available; short hikes in the area for those needing exercise or fresh air.

6 pm Dinner at Brevard

7 pm Lectures with wine/coffee/nibbles, followed by free discussion.

**Gregg W. Wentzell** (50 minutes plus 10 minutes of questions):

*Using Generative AI (for Teaching Development or Other Purposes): Potential, Pitfalls, and Ethical Implications*

**Stephen Ray Miller** (30 minutes plus questions): *Will They Sing-Along with Messiah at the Kennedy Center this Year?*

9 pm Compline or Evensong at Brevard

**Friday 24 October**

8 am Breakfast at Brevard

9 am Lectures (each 50 minutes plus 10 minutes of questions, spaced by 15-minute coffee/tea/discussion/fresh-air breaks.)

**Matthew Mitchell:** *The Bleeding Edge: The Royal African Company as an Innovator in the Transatlantic Slave Trade*

**Rowena McClinton:** *Moravian Missionary, Anna Rosina Gambold: The Cherokee Nation, Cherokee Planters, and Slavery*

**Alec Valentine:** *Plantations*

12:30 pm Lunch at Brevard

1:30 pm Excursion to Hendersonville and environs- Museum and art establishments.

5:00 pm Organ recital by Tate Addis, at St. James Episcopal Church, Hendersonville

6:00 pm Dinner/banquet at restaurant in Hendersonville

9:00 pm Compline or Evensong at Brevard

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**Saturday 25 October**

8 am Breakfast at Brevard

9 am Lectures (each 50 minutes plus 10 minutes of questions, spaced by 15-minute coffee/tea/discussion/fresh-air breaks)

**Elise A. Kikis:** *Microplastic Disrupts Protein Folding and May Exacerbate Age-Related Disease*

**Taylor C. Boas:** *Evangelicals and Electoral Politics in Latin America: A Kingdom of This World*

**Yale H. Ferguson:** *The Vietnam War “Fog” Extends to Its “Lessons” and “Legacy”*

12:30 pm Lunch at Brevard

1:30 pm Choice of excursion to scenic viewpoints (cars) or waterfall walks (moderate hiking).

4:30 pm **Annual General Meeting** including discussion on Guild artwork/emblem/symbols

6:00 pm Dinner at Brevard

7:00 pm Lecture (50 minutes plus 10 minutes of questions); wine/coffee/nibbles

**Marsha Dutton:** *Reading and Writing among the Trappists: E. Rozanne Elder’s Role in Building Cistercian Publications*

8:00 pm Members’ research (5 minute summaries), free discussion and/or sounding off.

9:00 pm Compline or Evensong at Brevard

**Sunday 26 October**

8 am Breakfast at Brevard

9 am Morning prayer at Brevard

9:30 am Participatory drama workshop (75 minutes); coffee and tea available.

**Debra L. Freeberg:** *The Intersection of Theatre and the Church: Incarnate Story and Theatre*

10:45am Concluding remarks

11 am Departure (packed picnic lunches available)

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**2025 Annual Meeting of the Guild of Scholars of the Episcopal Church****Abstracts and Organ Recital****Evangelicals and Electoral Politics in Latin America: A Kingdom of This World**

*Taylor C. Boas, Boston University*

Why are religious minorities well represented and politically influential in some democracies but not others? Focusing on evangelical Christians in Latin America, I argue that religious minorities seek and gain electoral representation when they face significant threats to their material interests and worldview, and when their community is not internally divided by cross-cutting cleavages. Differences in Latin American evangelicals' political ambitions emerged as a result of two critical junctures: episodes of secular reform in the early twentieth century and the rise of sexuality politics at the turn of the twenty-first. In Brazil, significant threats at both junctures prompted extensive electoral mobilization; in Chile, minimal threats meant that mobilization lagged. In Peru, where major cleavages divide both evangelicals and broader society, threats prompt less electoral mobilization than otherwise expected. The multi-method argument leverages interviews, content analysis, survey experiments, ecological analysis, and secondary case studies of Colombia, Costa Rica, and Guatemala.

*Taylor Boas is Professor of Political Science and Latin American Studies and Chair of the Department of Political Science at Boston University. Boas's research examines electoral politics, political behavior, and public opinion in Latin America and their intersection with religion, LGBTQ+ rights, and the political economy of development. He is author of Evangelicals and Electoral Politics in Latin America: A Kingdom of This World (Cambridge University Press, 2023); Presidential Campaigns in Latin America: Electoral Strategies and Success Contagion (Cambridge University Press, 2016); and Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003).*

**Reading and Writing among the Trappists: E. Rozanne Elder's Role in Building Cistercian Publications**

*Marsha Dutton, Editor, Cistercian Publications.*

E. Rozanne Elder, an Episcopalian, a long-time member of the Guild of Scholars, an active participant in Episcopal ecumenism, and a medieval historian trained at the University of Toronto, is widely recognized today for her role in the development and success of Cistercian Publications. Upon receiving her PhD in 1972, Rozanne was recruited as Editorial Director of Cistercian Publications by Dr. John R. Sommerfeldt, Director of the Institute of Cistercian Studies at Western Michigan. To that role Rozanne devoted the thirty-five years of her working life—from 1973 to 2008—while also succeeding Dr. Sommerfeldt as Director of the Institute and teaching medieval history to WMU's graduate students. During those years Rozanne edited and oversaw the publishing of about 325 books in three series (Cistercian Fathers, Cistercian Studies, and Monastic Wisdom), which included, respectively, translations from the Latin works of medieval Cistercian

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writers, monographs and translations of patristic and Eastern Christian authors, and works of spiritual guidance. The result has been a reshaping of the formation of English-speaking monks and nuns, even the newest of whom are today able to immerse themselves in the spiritual teaching of the medieval founders of their order, both men and women. This paper provides an essentially oral history of the 1968 birth of Cistercian Publications, of its finding an academic home at Western Michigan University, and of its development into an essential organ of monastic formation and academic study under the leadership of Rozanne Elder.

*Marsha Dutton received her PhD in English language and literature from the University of Michigan in 1981, with a dissertation on the two Middle English translations of a treatise by the 12<sup>th</sup>-century Cistercian abbot Aelred of Rievaulx. After teaching for 9 years at Hanover College in Indiana and 15 at Ohio University in Athens, she retired in 2015 and immediately became Executive Editor of Cistercian Publications. Her own scholarly work has focused on the works of Aelred and other Cistercian writers, having edited numerous books and published many articles. Her volume of seven essays on Aelred's spiritual works, Embracing God, is due out from Cistercian Publications this spring.*

### **The Vietnam War “Fog” Extends to Its “Lessons” and “Legacy”**

*Yale H. Ferguson, Rutgers University.*

The Vietnam War ended a half-century ago April 30, 1975. Analysts still debate why it began, evolved, and ended as it did. Is it possible to draw lessons or discern one or more legacies from the Vietnam War experience? What effects did lessons learned/unlearned have on later wars? Military strategists are not always fighting the last war, because they are aware that geopolitical contexts, alliances, weapons technology, and other factors change. How well strategists have read the changed situation is another matter. For perspective, the United States has arguably “lost” or failed to achieve key objectives in every one of its wars since WWII except the Cold War and the Gulf War (1990-91). Nor has multilateral military action in support of peacekeeping, humanitarian goals, and nation-building been all that successful. How relevant is Vietnam to current nuclear deterrence and conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East, and the South China Sea? Or has the Trump Administration already changed the fundamentals of our geopolitical world so much that we are in completely uncharted seas?

*Yale H. Ferguson, Distinguished Professor of Global and International Affairs, Emeritus, Rutgers University; Honorary Professor, University of Salzburg; previously Visiting Fellow/Scholar: University of Cambridge, Norwegian Nobel Institute, University of Padua. Author/Co-Author 12 books, including (with Richard Mansbach), Globalization: The Return of Borders to a Borderless World? Remapping Global Politics, The Web of World Politics; and (forthcoming Routledge) War Past, Present, Future: Organized Violence and Political Evolution from the Ancient Mediterranean to the Contemporary World.*

### **The Intersection of Theatre and the Church: Incarnate Story and Theatre**

Debra L. Freeberg Ph.D. (75 minutes)

“It can be a time of war or peace, of feast or famine. It can be Calvin’s Geneva or Calvin Coolidge’s

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U.S.A. No matter what's up politically, economically, religiously, artistically, people always seem to go on telling these stories," says Buechner, "many of them stories that have been around for so long that it is as impossible to be sure when they first started as it is to be sure when if ever, they will finally end." [1] Yet, we are reminded that the process of storytelling demands a listening audience. "It takes two to speak the truth—one to speak and another to hear," said Thoreau [2]. The very process of listening, remembering, and reflecting upon stories can lead hearers to recognize their own actions and place them on pathways to change.

In scripture, we see that God told the truth through incarnation, storytelling and parable, through theatrical miracles and great occasions. Twelve hundred years before Christ, stories were told about Egyptian plagues and first-born losses, burning bushes, pillars of fire, whales, and dreams. According to Old Testament narrative, in a public display, dramatically and decisively, God revealed his great displeasure with Korah and two hundred and fifty of his followers by consuming them in a great fire. Joshua, in a ragtag public parade, circled the walls of Jericho with his small flock and walls crumbled.

Jesus used events such as the feast of the loaves and fishes, the raising of Lazarus, making the lame walk, to edify, instruct, warn, love, and promise hope in things eternal. Buechner notes, "Insofar as it was the hidden and private and ultimately inexpressible that Jesus preached about, in a sense he had no recourse but to preach in the way he did, not in the incendiary rhetoric of the prophet but in the language of images and metaphor, which is finally the only language you can use if you want not just to elucidate the hidden things but to make it come alive"[3]. Gathering people together to listen, laugh, play, and understand, Jesus assessed human need and addressed it vividly and theatrically through created story.

The truth about creation is that it is embodied, incarnate. "The logos, by which and for which all things exist, had become flesh, part of human history, accessible to human knowledge," writes Newbiggin, "Because of this, it was possible to see all things in a different perspective." [4] In a powerful sermon, "Easter as Earthquake," William Willimon spoke to the need for both image and action in the church [5]: "*On the cross, the world did all it could to Jesus. At Easter, God did all God could to the world. And the earth shook. You don't explain that. You witness it. That's why the Risen Christ appeared first to his own disciples. They had heard him teach, seen him heal, watched as he loved the poor and attacked the rich, watched him be arrested by the soldiers, tried by the judge, and crucified.*"

Jesus was the Truth, and he represented the Truth; he asks us to do the same with the gifts He has given us. The need to tell stories is part of our breath and body; it is part of our created-ness. In turn, through the theatrical production process and the performance of a particular play, theatre artists and audiences co-create meaning together sharing stories. These stories become the performative event whose purpose is to affect our perceptions of reality and agents. This has been the central purpose of my work in the theatre and currently the focus of my Parable Project. The conference presentation will be to introduce the concept and then present a video excerpt of one parable script in performance. Then the group will read corporately read another parable together and discuss.

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**References**

- [1] Buechner, Frederick. *Telling the Truth: The Gospel as Tragedy, Comedy & Fairy Tale*. San Francisco: Harper, 1977. p. 61
- [2] The Columbia World of Quotations. 1996. # 58571
- [3] Buechner, *ibid.* p. 38
- [4] Newbigin, Lesslie. *Truth to Tell*. p. 38
- [5] Turner, Michael and Malambri III, William F., Eds. *A Peculiar Prophet: William H. Willimon and the Arts of Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004. p. 16
- Debra L Freeberg Ph.D. has a BA in Speech and Theatre Arts from the University of Tennessee, and an MA and Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh in Theatre Arts. She is a director, playwright, and a scholar. With over 35 years of college teaching experience, over 25 years of professional and academic theatre management, and with having directed over 55 theatre productions, Debra is, of late, happily retired and concentrating on new writing projects. Her second career focus is writing: plays, novels, and reviews.*

**Microplastic Disrupts Protein Folding and May Exacerbate Age-Related Disease**

Elise A. Kikis, Sewanee: The University of the South

Since the 1950s, humans have produced 8 billion tons of plastic. This plastic, the vast majority of which is not recycled, is in the form of plastic containers, synthetic fibers used in clothing, paints, adhesives, etc. These plastics break down with use and enter our food and water as micro- and nano-sized particles. Plastic is also added to personal care products as microspheres that do not need to break down to enter waterways. Moreover, tire wear particles account for 28% of microplastics that enter the environment. A recent retrospective study revealed that microplastic accumulation in the human brain is increasing at an alarming rate. This has been found to contribute to neuroinflammation and to promote the progression of Alzheimer's Disease symptoms. My research aims to determine whether microplastic microparticles from a synthetic soccer turf (micro-rubber) act by causing protein damage. To address this, I utilize a nearly microscopic worm that has been genetically modified to possess tiny molecular sensors of protein folding. Preliminary data suggest micro-rubber particles disrupt the cellular processes that normally ensure that proteins, the molecules that carry out the functions of life on Earth, maintain their healthy folded states. These findings may reveal at least one mechanism by which microplastic contributes to age-related neurodegenerative disease.

*Elise A. Kikis earned a B.A. in Biology from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in Plant Biology from the University of California, Berkeley. She then conducted postdoctoral research at Northwestern University where she solidified her interest in the study of protein folding. She currently serves the University of the South (Sewanee) as Professor of Biology and co-director of the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship. She enjoys fostering teamwork and collaboration in her laboratory and training undergraduates as they begin their careers. She came to the Episcopal Church as an adult, finding it a welcoming space to explore her faith and grow closer to God. She was baptized on Easter 2016 and, since then, has served as a small group leader in the catechumenate program of All Saints Chapel at Sewanee and has sponsored undergraduate students seeking adult baptism, confirmation, or renewal of baptismal vows.*

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**“Moravian Missionary, Anna Rosina Gambold: The Cherokee Nation, Cherokee Planters, and Slavery”**

Rowena McClinton, *Southern Illinois University Edwardsville*

In 1801 Cherokees, a southeastern tribe, invited Moravians, a bilingual dissident religious group from Central Europe, to establish a school to teach their offspring English, not German. Moravians, as they were called in America, predated the Protestant Reformation and had a history of persecution for objections to armed violence and the machinery of church and state. They came to America to establish missions among Indigenous peoples. During the British Empire and the Early Republic years, their mission enterprises extended along the eastern seaboard, the Pennsylvania and Ohio valleys, and to the interior as far as northern Georgia.

Beginning in 1790, George Washington’s administration encouraged Native Nations to adopt the “arts of civilization”: accept Christianity, learn English, forsake communal ownership of land and own individual plots of land, and thereby accumulate wealth. Cherokees acquiesced and sought peaceful ways to co-exist with western values, and some Cherokees amassed wealth by accepting chattel slavery to grow cotton, like their Anglo-American counterparts. The availability of African slaves led to the creation of a Cherokee slave-owning planter class. Slaves performed the agricultural labor that Cherokee females traditionally had assumed. Because slaves lacked a claim to the kinship system, they had no rights and remained outsiders. Consequently, Cherokee slavery evolved as a social phenomenon as well as an economic institution. While Cherokees excluded slaves from the kinship system, they permitted them to live reasonably mobile lives in spite of bondage. With quill in hand, Anna Rosina (Kliest) Gambold, Moravian missionary to the Cherokees from 1805 to 1821, carefully observed and recorded her experiences of enslaved peoples of African descent from nearby Cherokee cotton-growing plantations; her handwritten *Springpance Diary, Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees, 2 vols. 1805-1813 and 1814-1821* (London and Lincoln, 2007) was translated and edited by Rowena McClinton.

This presentation unearths narratives concerning multiple incidents of enslaved peoples from a neighboring Cherokee plantation, Diamond Hill, in present day Chatsworth, Georgia, at that time belonging to Cherokee James Vann, who owned 70 peoples in bondage. An example follows: Vann’s favorite enslaved male, Gander, had two wives, Jene, who was said to be mean spirited and the other, Patience, who arrived in Charleston from Guinea, had walked barefoot from Charleston to Vann plantation. She lost her feet from frostbite. (Quote) “...*she was fetched from Mrs. Vann’s weaving house, where she usually stays and pulls cotton, to visit Gander in Vann’s house. This annoyed Jene so much that she nagged Gander endlessly until finally Gander went away from her indignantly into the field to pick cotton and afterward jumped into the water and drowned in Mill Creek, a tributary of the Conasuaga River.*” Anna Rosina knew Gander and Patience as they, like other enslaved peoples, attended Moravian services. Sometimes Vann’s peoples in bondage arrived at the nearby mission to request food for their children; other times they asked for spices to add to their homemade sausage. At times Vann’s enslaved were punished due to any arbitrary reason with lashes on their bare backs. Anna Rosina went to the Vann plantation to treat these horrific wounds and nursed the wounded back to health.

In conclusion, I will quote Tiya Miles and her interviews with descendants of peoples of African descent, who accompanied their Cherokee masters on the 1838-39 forced removal of the Cherokee Nation from their homelands. Approximately 1,000 peoples in bondage were on this forced walk to Indian Territory, now the state of Oklahoma.

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Dr. Rowena McClinton is Professor Emerita of History and faculty member in the Department of History, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

### Will They Sing-Along with Messiah at the Kennedy Center this Year?

*Stephen Ray Miller, Sewanee: The University of the South. (Short talk)*

Handel's *Messiah* offers some of the world's most recognizable melodies. Beyond its status as "world-famous music" in that sense, the oratorio also constitutes one of the most durable compositions. It has been performed almost every year since its premiere (Dublin, 1742; London, 1743 ...), and audiences have heard it live on most continents as well. *Messiah* "sing-alongs" continue to draw participants, which make Handel's masterpiece figure not just as "music" but also "musicking" (see Small below). Such community music events relate *Messiah* to low-brow sing-alongs including *The Sound of Music* (and possibly the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*). One of the most prominent such sing-alongs in North America has, since 1971, been at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. This diversity of performance venues and approaches to performance practice raise in a broad way the question of "Who Owns Handel?" A more accurate summary of my interests would phrase it as "Who Legitimately Performs *Messiah*, and for What Purposes?" In this paper I summarize two case studies of *Messiah* performances and then introduce some of my own research on the sources of Handel's style in the oratorio, especially the instrumental passage sometimes known as the "Pastoral Symphony."

Each of the two cases happens to feature Black singers. The first dates from the 1960's and early '70s in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Johannesburg African Music Society, or JAMS, each year presented a massed choir *Messiah*: the voices were exclusively Blacks from the segregated townships, and the orchestra, exclusively white from Afrikaner communities (Cockburn). Naturally, during that era of apartheid, the interracial *Messiah* posed immense challenges, certainly for the musicians simply in their efforts to rehearse and perform and, in a sense, for the ruling authorities. The second arises out the African-American context of 1980's and '90s gospel music. The album *Handel's Messiah: A Soulful Celebration* features some of the greatest musicians of the era, including Stevie Wonder, Quincy Jones, Dianne Reeves, and the group Take 6. Though this production had a commercial inception and orientation, part of the popular appeal was that through the twentieth century predominantly African-American churches (much as did their white counterparts) occasionally organized *Messiah* performances. This album, with its superb recording artists, attracted attention from a wide variety of music lovers and scholars (Ramsey).

My third consideration of *Messiah* takes us back to Handel himself and the origins of his music. Much of the music did originate in his inspired 24 days of composition, but not all of it. As was true for many other works, Handel borrowed from other compositions for some of *Messiah*'s numbers. (Whether such passages count as plagiarism has been a matter of debate among scholars for decades.) For the "Pastoral Symphony" (or "Pifa") a different kind of borrowing was involved. Here Handel alludes to the Christmastide music played by mountain shepherd musicians on the streets of Rome (where he had lived during his years of Italian tutelage). Scholars have long observed that "pifa" (or "piva") may refer to the bagpipe so favored by those shepherd musicians. What I have recently discovered is that Roman composers themselves composed *sopra la piva*, and their works, including a mass by Francesco Foggia, seem likely to have been Handel's primary inspiration for the interlude in *Messiah* that introduces "There were shepherds abiding in the fields."

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This last example takes the question of “whose *Messiah*?” in a different direction. Was Handel himself guilty of cultural appropriation by lifting a musical style from the Italian, Catholic folk bagpiping culture that gave rise to his “Pastoral Symphony”?

**References**

Christopher Cockburn, “Discomposing Apartheid’s Story: Who Owns Handel?” in *Composing Apartheid: Music for and against Apartheid*, ed. by Grant Olwage (Wits University Press, 2008), pp. 55–77.

Francesco Foggia (composer), *Masses*, Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era, vol. 193, ed. by Stephen Ray Miller (Middleton, Wisconsin: A-R Editions, 2017).

Guthrie P. Ramsey, Jr., *Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip-Hop*, Music of the African Diaspora, vol. 7 (Berkeley: University of California Press and Chicago: Center for Black Music Research, 2003).

Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Hanover & London: University Press of New England, 1998).

*Stephen Ray Miller studied classical violin before discovering music history, the field in which he has lectured at the University of Chicago, the University of Rome (“La Sapienza”), and the University of the South. He began teaching at Sewanee in 1995 and has served as chair of the music department since 2012. His most influential research deals with early music—choral compositions of the Renaissance and Baroque and the way that the works of Palestrina connect those two eras, particularly in Rome and the Papal States. His work on seventeenth-century music has redefined scholars’ understanding of the stile antico and has increased awareness of the development of style consciousness during that period. He has also published a small book on the history of the Sewanee Jazz Society, a student organization that produced some of the first integrated performances in the South.*

**The Bleeding Edge: The Royal African Company as an Innovator in the Transatlantic Slave Trade**

*Matthew Mitchell, Sewanee: The University of the South.*

For a brief period in the late seventeenth century the Royal African Company of England (RAC) represented the state of the art in the competition among European traders to do business with the merchants of West Africa—including the purchasing of human beings to supply the infamous transatlantic slave trade. Despite past portrayals of the RAC as thoroughly inefficient and uncompetitive from its establishment in 1672, the company should instead be understood as occupying a place in an arc of innovation reaching back to the transatlantic traffic’s inception in the 1500s and extending to its end in the 1800s. Moreover, even after 1700 when other competitors displaced the RAC from its position of innovative leadership, factions within both the company’s leadership in London and its trading staff in West Africa continued to experiment with commercial strategy, competing with each other to impose their preferred (but ultimately chimerical) vision for a prosperous future for the company.

*Matthew David Mitchell is Associate Professor of History at Sewanee: The University of the South in Tennessee and the author of The Prince of Slavers: Humphry Morice and the Transformation of Britain’s Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1698-1732 (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).*

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**Plantations***Alec Valentine*

The idea or practice of “plantations,” starting in the eastern Mediterranean in about the 8th century C.E., worked its way gradually into the Atlantic, then the Americas. It seems always to have had strong affinity with the international marketing of a single (unhealthy) crop, international banking, conquest of land, of peoples, colonialism and imperialism, with forced labor or outright slavery, mass deaths, and with a rigid, draconian class or caste system. Most of the people involved experienced denial of education, opportunity, or freedom of movement, but knew many forms of abuse including rape. Other positives may also be seen.

*Alec Valentine has an M.A. in English from George Peabody College. He taught for six years at the junior high level and for thirty-one years at Hinds Community College in Mississippi. He has published on the Pulitzer-Prize-winning writer Eudora Welty.*

**Using Generative AI (for Teaching Development or Other Purposes): Potential, Pitfalls, and Ethical Implications***Gregg W. Wentzell, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.*

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is everywhere, from simple Google searches to applications in health care, finance, manufacturing, education, security, and much more. In this talk we’ll begin by sharing how we as a group use assistive or generative AI in our personal or professional lives. Next, we’ll explore how generative AI (ChatGPT) can be used to innovate in education through the example of a college teaching workshop featuring Nathaniel Hawthorne’s 1846 short story “Rappaccini’s Daughter.” This story provides an incredibly rich and complex reading experience as well as raises profound questions with contemporary relevance about science, technology, ambition, women’s autonomy, and who makes these decisions. Finally, we’ll return to the ways we currently use AI and reflect on how we might wish to modify these uses, along with the ethical implications (legal, social, and environmental) involved. The goal is to begin a conversation about how AI can and should be used for appropriate and responsible purposes. [For those who are interested in reading (or rereading) Hawthorne’s short story in advance, prints-outs of the text will be available at the start of the conference.]

*Gregg W. Wentzell is Assistant Director of the Miami University (Ohio) Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE). In his 40-year career in higher education that began with college teaching, specializing in 19th-century American literature, he discovered a passion for supporting faculty to do excellent teaching through scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). In addition to being the director of the Original Lilly Conference on College Teaching, a forum for 2- and 4-year college teachers to share evidence-based practices, Gregg does faculty development for the University. He is editor-in-chief of the Journal on Excellence in College Teaching, a peer-reviewed SoTL journal, and he has presented widely on teaching and learning, faculty development, and SoTL at U.S. and international venues.*

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH



**St. James Episcopal Church, Hendersonville NC**  
Views of the façade and the altar with the English style Harrison and Harrison pipe organ in the Chancel.



### Organ recital

*Tate Addis, Organist, First Baptist Church, Asheville*

The city of Hendersonville nestles in the Blue Ridge Mountains; St James's Episcopal Church was dedicated in 1863, and has been enlarged several times in an English Gothic style. It is a lofty building with seats for 400. The most recent work (1999) included a notable improvement in the acoustics, under the guidance of the consultant Scott Riedel. This re-ordering was accompanied by the installation of a new organ by Harrison and Harrison of Durham, United Kingdom. The two matching oak cases, bracketed out on either side of the chancel, were designed by Didier Grassin, echoing the nineteenth century work of the English designer, antiquarian, academic and organ builder Dr Arthur Hill. The organ has three manuals and 44 stops and is inspired primarily by English organ building of the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century; it combines classical elements (choruses of principals and flutes; mixtures and mutations on all manuals) with early romantic elements such as strings and a horizontal trumpet.

*Tate Addis is Associate Director of Music and Organist at First Baptist Church, Asheville. He collaborates with the Pastor of Music and Worship in a comprehensive music program, teaches organ and piano in the church's Academy for the Arts, directs the Handbell Ensemble, and accompanies the Asheville Youth Choir. He currently serves as Assistant Director and Accompanist for the Asheville Symphony Chorus and maintains an active career as an organ recitalist. Before coming to Asheville, he served for two years as Wilson Family Sacred Music Intern at New York City's Brick Presbyterian Church. He has also served as Organist-Choirmaster at the Yale Berkeley Divinity School in New Haven and as organist at Second Presbyterian Church in Kansas City. He holds degrees from Wichita State University, the University of Missouri – Kansas City, Yale University, and Oberlin Conservatory.*

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**Minutes of the 2024 Business Meeting  
Held at the Transfiguration Spirituality Center in Cincinnati, Ohio  
26 October 2024**

Attending this face-to-face meeting were the following Guild members (including those newly inducted): Bob Benson, Mary Ellen Bowden, Mark Brown, Don and Myra Marx Ferree, Debra Freeberg, John Gatta, Ed Hansen, Richard and Anne Hiskes, Chris and Martha Kaiser, Matthew Mitchell, William Polik, John Singleton, Warren and Anne-Marie Smith, Alec Valentine, Gregg Wentzell, and Peter Williams.

President Mark Brown called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. EDT, after which John Singleton led in prayer.

1. Upon a motion by Bob Benson, the previous Recording Secretary's Minutes of the 2023 Annual Business Meeting were voted into approval without correction.

2. Will Polik, chair of the New Member Committee, reported that five previously recommended candidates for membership were attending this meeting in person: Debra Freeberg, Anne Hiskes, Richard Hiskes, and Matthew Mitchell, and Gregg Wentzell. Upon a motion from Don Ferree, all five were enthusiastically voted into Guild membership. Ed Hansen pointed out the need to continue recruiting new members.

3. Nominations Committee Report and Election of Officers

At the close of this October meeting, Mark Brown will have concluded his term as President and Ed Hansen as Corresponding Secretary. Ed reported that Mike Krasulski has agreed to become our new Corresponding Secretary, and that Mike's digital and other qualifications bode well for his service in that role. So upon a motion from Ed, those gathered voted to approve Mike Krasulski's appointment as Corresponding Secretary.

We have not yet identified a member able and willing to assume the vacant office of President. How, then, will essential Guild operations be carried out during the next year? Ed Hansen and others have proposed a plan for this, as described under New Business.

4. Corresponding Secretary's Report

Upon a motion from Don Ferree, those gathered voted to approve Ed Hansen's report. Ed remarked on the successful winter virtual meeting of the Guild in March. We are also fortunate to have received the benefit of Bob Benson's informative, colorfully illustrated winter and summer issues of the *Vox Scholarium*.

5. Treasurer's Report

Upon a motion from Ed Hansen, those gathered approved Alec Valentine's written report. At this point forty members have paid their annual dues. Following our expenditures for this year's annual meeting, we should have something like \$8600 remaining in our holdings.

(Continued below)

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## 6. Vice-President's Report

Upon a motion from Warren Smith, those gathered voted to approve John Singleton's written report. Members also applauded John's major and varied contributions to the success of this year's meeting in Cincinnati. No site has yet been determined for next year's annual meeting. New Orleans had been mentioned previously but could be more costly than is now considered feasible. Meeting at the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas, is one promising option under consideration.

## 7. President's Report

Upon a motion from Ed Hansen, those gathered voted to approve Mark Brown's written report and oral summary.

## 8. New Business

The unusual circumstance of finding ourselves without a President during the coming year seems to call for a novel solution. Ed Hansen has outlined a provisional plan for how we might continue to perform all essential functions. Comprised in that plan are the following elements:

a. Will Polik, as chair of the New Member Committee, would assume an expanded role in ensuring that we proceed in timely fashion to recruit and review new candidates, reporting from time to time to the Executive Committee on the progress of that endeavor.

b. John Singleton, as Vice President, would not only continue to bear main responsibility for organizing the next Annual Meeting, but would also plan and chair regular meetings of the Executive Committee.

c. Members of the Executive Committee would share responsibility for all needed operations of the Guild not otherwise addressed by other persons or committees. Bob Benson, as editor of the *Vox Scholarium*, would continue to serve as a valued member of the Executive Committee; Ed Hansen and Mark Brown have also agreed to serve with that body, as they are able, in the capacity of nonvoting advisors.

Upon a motion by Don Ferree, those assembled voted to endorse the implementation of this plan.

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At the suggestion of member Charles Huttar, participating virtually, members then agreed to allow a temporary recess of the meeting before resuming deliberations at 7:37 p.m.

— continued below—

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The stated purpose of this addendum to the regular meeting was to review the Guild's original, 1940 *Statement of Its Organization, Purpose, and Activities* with an eye toward assessing the Guild's current purpose and future direction. President Mark Brown began this process by reading out salient portions of the 1940 Statement, including its affirmation that the Guild exists in part "to exhibit the relation of the secular and the religious to one another."

What followed from there was a free-flowing discussion in which diverse views were expressed. Some indication of the points raised is recorded here, without naming the speaker in each case. Everyone did acknowledge that circumstances within the Church, the academy, and society had changed a good deal since 1940, and that the Guild's role and recognition within the Episcopal Church had diminished accordingly through the intervening decades. How then should we now look to reconceive our purpose and role? No formal motions were made or contemplated, and no solid conclusions were reached about how best to chart the Guild's future.

It's possible to discern, however, two rather different visions of how best to chart the Guild's future emerging from this discussion. One vision would encourage us to take steps toward substantially heightening the Guild's impact on the Episcopal Church as well as, perhaps, academia and American society at large. We could, for example, further develop the resources of our website, using it to post position papers or videos on various topics, thereby sharing the benefits of our learning more widely with others within and beyond the Church. The Executive Committee might create a Website Committee to enlarge the site's potential influence. We might seek an alliance with other church-friendly groups. And we might confer with church leaders—including the new Presiding Bishop—to discern new ways of recovering our relevance within the Episcopal Church and advancing the welfare of higher education.

The other vision would be more inward-looking. If we adopt this view we should not, given the Guild's modest size and resources, suppose it could "change the world" or receive much notice now within the Church. But what the Guild has long been doing, and continues to do quite effectively, is to help its members "pull things together" within their own lives and vocations. From this perspective, the Guild is best understood as a home place of nurture where members are encouraged to integrate their lives of faith, imagination, teaching, and serious academic or creative inquiry.

The two visions in question may not be, in all respects, mutually exclusive. In any case, many opinions were voiced or questions raised during this phase of the meeting, not all of which could readily be categorized as either "inward" or "outward" looking for the Guild's future. But at least some of these additional points are mentioned here:

--How might we best respond to the animus against public education, or the resentment against higher education, currently evident in the public sphere? Have we a role in helping to educate citizens for democracy?

— continued below —

In highlighting the broader value of faith-inspired intellectual inquiry? In presenting a Christian alternative to the right-wing, authoritarian image of faith communities prevalent in many sectors of today's culture?

--Do we really need the multiple phases now in place for approving new members of the Guild? Should we lower the barriers to membership so as to admit promptly most anyone willing to commit to what we are and do?

--The website's current listing of Guild members needs updating to ensure that all members, including its women members, are properly identified. How might we otherwise move further beyond the "boys' club" identity that seemed to have been established from the Guild's founding. "It is time," I heard someone mutter, "for us to see a woman President"!

Upon a motion from Warren Smith, those gathered voted to adjourn at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Gatta, Recording Secretary

## ICYMI: Our New President, Myra Marx Ferree

We are delighted to that Myra Marx Ferree agreed to serve as President of the Guild of Scholars of the Episcopal Church. Myra's priority will be the recruitment of new members and re-engagement of past members who are no longer active. She is also interested in increasing the diversity of Guild membership.

*Myra is a former professor of sociology and director of the Center for German and European Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where she was also a member of the Women's Studies Program. She has written numerous articles about feminist organizations and politics in the US, Germany and internationally, as well as about gender inequality in families, the inclusion of gender in sociological theory and practice, and the intersections of gender with race and class. (From Wikipedia).*



## NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**MEMBERSHIP PROCESS FOR THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS****Passed at the Annual Meeting in New York City, October 2023****Formation of the New Member Committee**

Following the annual election of officers of the Guild of Scholars, the new president will name three-five members to the New Member Committee, identifying one as committee chair.

**Nomination Process**

Nominations to membership in the Guild are to be made by August 1 preceding that year's annual meeting. Nominators should send formal nominations to the current president of the Guild. The nomination is to include (1) the candidate's name and contact information (phone, email address, mailing address), (2) the candidate's CV with evidence of scholarly activity, (3) a statement describing the candidate's relationship to and current involvement with the Episcopal Church, and (4) the name and contact information of the nominator.

The Guild president will forward the nomination with all supporting material to the three members of the New Member Committee. Once the committee has considered the nomination, its chair will assemble comments and forward the committee's recommendation to the president, who will report the recommendation to the nominator and then, if there is no need for further information or consideration, write to the candidate inviting him or her to attend that year's upcoming meeting for the purposes of mutual consideration. Attending the meeting in person is required for consideration for election.

The president's letter of invitation will be clear in explaining that membership in the Guild presumes regular attendance at meetings, willingness to serve on committees and/or as an officer, and willingness to present occasional papers and lead discussion of such papers at an occasional meeting.

If the candidate is not able to attend the meeting in the year of his or her nomination, he or she may be automatically invited again to the next year's meeting. (The president may ask nominees who are unable to attend the meeting in the year of their nomination whether they wish to be invited again the next year.) A candidate who does not attend the meeting in the next year after being nominated may be subsequently proposed for membership, but that proposal is not guaranteed.

**Self-nominations**

Episcopalian scholars are welcome to nominate themselves for membership. They should submit their nomination—containing the first three pieces of information listed above under Nomination Process.

**Election Process**

Information about each candidate for election will be included in the issue of *Vox Scholarium* closest to the time of the annual meeting or by other means so that members may acquaint themselves with the candidates before the meeting.

- continued below -

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

At the meeting itself, the president and the nominating member should make sure that on Friday afternoon and evening the candidate has had an opportunity to meet and talk with the members who are present. Before the first session on Saturday morning, the nominating member should confer with the candidate to determine his or her interest in being elected to membership and then convey that information to the president. At the business meeting the candidates for membership will be asked to leave the meeting during consideration of their candidacy. Once they have left the room, one of the members of the New Member committee will present them for membership, allowing members present to consider the candidacy before voting to accept or—in the rare case—to reject it. After that meeting the president should take the first available opportunity to convey the information to the candidate.

**Qualifications for Membership**

Candidates are expected to understand themselves as Episcopalians, as demonstrated by familiarity with and regular participation in various aspects of the church's ecclesiastical, liturgical, and spiritual tradition. (Members of churches with which the Episcopal Church is in full communion may be understood as Episcopalians by the Guild of Scholars.)

Candidates are also expected to be demonstrably active as scholars or creative artists as defined by the context and expectations of their field. Extending their scholarly work into the larger world by publications, conference participation, seminar presentations, gallery exhibitions, and performances are usual ways of demonstrating scholarly activity; hence the value of a CV in defining the candidate's self-understanding as a scholar. Because of the expanding range of scholarly activity, however, some candidates may need to explain their scholarly focus and public contribution in ways this document has not currently identified.

**Dues and Active Membership**

With regards to dues and active membership in the Guild. Once a person is accepted into the Guild, they are a member for life. However, they are only an active member if they remain current with their annual dues payments. If they are in arrears, they become an inactive member. To return to active status, they must pay dues for the current and prior year. Only active members can attend meetings and present papers.

**Online Meetings**

Online meetings are open to anyone who is interested, including inactive members, potential new members and anyone invited by current members.



## NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**News of Members**

**Marsha Dutton** has recently published a book titled *Embracing God: Essays on the Spiritual Treatises of Aelred of Rievaulx*, from Cistercian Publications; and also gave a paper titled "Nuns as Chaplains in Women's Monasteries" at the Cistercian and Monastic Studies Conference in Kalamazoo MI which was part of the International Medieval Studies Congress.

The Miami University Chamber Singers directed by Dr. Reina Dickey in their Spring concert gave the premiere performance of **Robert Benson's** anthem "O nata lux de lumine" for SATB chorus and organ. His suite entitled "Poems of Dwelling" based on four haiku poems by the 17th-century Japanese poet Matsuo Basho and scored for treble voices and piano will be performed by the Women's Chorus of Thomas More University, directed by Sarah Cahall Tobe. The four movements are sung in both Japanese and English interwoven.

We are always happy to receive news of members! Please send your information to Bob Benson (bensonra@miamioh.edu), editor of the *Vox Scholarium*. Please include your current academic or other affiliation and the publishing house or periodical in which your work is found. If you are an exhibiting or performing artist, please indicate sites and dates of shows or concerts. Please send images in .jpeg, .gif, .pdf, or .png format.

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**Advance Notice of the Annual Fall Conference, October 2026**

The Fall conference in **2026** will take place, DV, in Los Alamos, New Mexico. We hope to hold talks and other events in historic *Fuller Lodge*, designed by the famous South-Western architect John Gaw-Meem and seen in the *Oppenheimer* film, and *Trinity on the Hill Episcopal Church* (with use of the church or chapel for services). The houses where Fermi, Oppenheimer and other luminaries lived are preserved on “Bathtub Row” and there are two excellent museums. The extraordinary Bandelier Monument (native American settlement, c. 1400) is nearby, and 17th Century Hispanic villages with their Adobe churches are handy. There are walking tours and the town is scenic (with a backdrop of mountains rising to 10,500 ft), quiet and safe. For those wishing to stay on and make a holiday of the occasion, Taos, quondam home of D.H. Lawrence, and location of the storming of Governor Bent’s residence, UFOs, the *Taos Hum* and other arcane phenomena is 90 minutes to the North. We hope to operate a shuttle for those who fly into Santa Fe (40 minutes) or Albuquerque (1 hour 30 minutes). There is an excellent (world-class) pipe organ in Santa Fe for a recital.

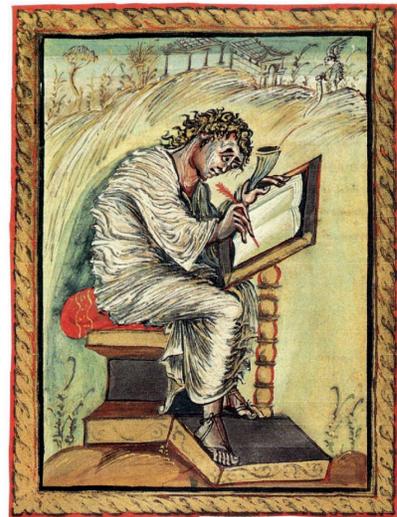
**Please note that the 2027 conference** is to be held somewhere along/around the Chicago-Detroit-Ann Arbor-Wisconsin trajectory. Advice on possible locations will be gratefully received.

*John Singleton*  
*Vice President*

**Officers of the Guild**

Myra Ferree, President (mferree@ssc.wisc.edu)  
John Singleton, Vice-President, Program Director  
(john.singleton@physics.ox.ac.uk)  
John Gatta, Recording Secretary  
(jogatta@sewanee.edu)  
Mike Krasulski, Corresponding Secretary  
(mkrasulski@gmail.com)  
Alec Valentine, Treasurer (acvalenti@yahoo.com)  
Bob Benson, editor of the *Vox Scholarium*

**Website:** [www.guildofscholars.org](http://www.guildofscholars.org)



An interpretation of a classical scholar as an evangelist in the Ebbo Gospels (816-835).