

their literary works, yet they differ sharply regarding the legitimacy of fixed liturgical forms of prayer. Do written forms of prayer facilitate or suppress the prayer of the heart? Can those who differ on the form of prayer be united in the spirit of prayer?

Selected Reading

John Bunyan, *I Will Pray With the Spirit*, ed. Richard L. Greaves, in *The Miscellaneous Works of John Bunyan*, vol. II, 1975, pp. 227–86.

Lori Branch, *Rituals of Spontaneity: Sentiment and Secularism from Free Prayer to Wordsworth*, 2006.

A.D. Nuttall, *Overheard by God: Fiction and Prayer in Herbert, Milton, Dante and St John*, 1980.

Dr David Parry is a Lecturer in English at the University of Exeter. He is writing a book provisionally entitled *Puritanism and Persuasion: The Rhetoric of Conversion and the Conversion of Rhetoric*, and has published chapters and articles primarily on sixteenth and seventeenth century topics. He is also a member of the committee of the CLSG and Associate Editor of *The Glass*.

Elizabeth Ludlow writes: How are the central motifs of call and conversion that run through St. Augustine's *Confessions* applicable to the spiritual journeys of female subjects in fiction and poetry? This paper draws on recent reassessments of the Church Fathers in order to stress their centrality for nineteenth-century women writers, including Christina Rossetti, Adelaide Procter, Lucy Larcom and Harriet Beecher Stowe, who re-appropriate the trajectory of *Confessions* for the purpose of a renewed female self-conception, and offer a re-visioning of the place of grace in relationships.

Selected Reading

Hannah Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, eds. Joanna Vecchiarelli Scott and Judith Chelius Stark, 1995

Sarah Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay 'on the Trinity'*, 2013.

Elizabeth Ludlow is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at Anglia Ruskin University. She is the author of *Christina Rossetti and the Bible: Waiting with the Saints*, 2014.

Anna Walczuk (Associate Professor at the Jagiellonian University, Krakow) writes: Jennings' view of poetry is influenced by her deep-seated conviction about a special power and unique status of the poetic word which through its mystical link with Logos – the Word of God, can reach out towards transcendence. She sees God as the permanent frame of reference and the silent ever-present recipient of poetic words. These factors contribute to Jennings' vision of a poem as the merger of an imaginative expression and a prayerful disposition which, taken in conjunction, account for formal and rhetorical aspects of her poetry. Prof. Walczuk's *Elizabeth Jennings and the Sacramental Nature of Poetry* was published in 2017.

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Christian Literary
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DAY CONFERENCE

The Rhetoric of Prayer

Saturday 3 November 2018

The Seminar Room
Corpus Christi College
Merton Street
Oxford
OX1 4JF
Tel. (lodge) 01865 276700



Programme

- 10.00 Arrivals and coffee
 10.30 Introductions
- 10.45 **David Jasper**
Poetry and the Language of Prayer and Worship
- 11.30 **Paul Cavill**
Prayer in Anglo-Saxon England
- 12.15 **Alicia Smith**
Poetry and prayer in medieval reclusive experience: the Wooing Group and the audience of Ancrene Wisse
- 1.00 Lunch
- 14.00 **David Parry**
The Form of Prayer and the Spirit of Prayer: George Herbert and John Bunyan in Conversation
- 14.45 **Elizabeth Ludlow**
Intercession leading to transformation: The presence of St. Monica in nineteenth-century women's writing
- 15.30 **Anna Walczuk**
Elizabeth Jennings and the Praying Words of Poetry
- 16.15 Tea
 Work in progress
 Plans
 Prayer
- 16.30 Close

Prof David Jasper writes: Contemporary liturgical revision in Anglicanism since the Alternative Service Book of 1980 has emphasised a language of worship that should be clear, simple and everyday. This is a mistake. Liturgical language must carry the burden of mystery and embrace a poetics of beauty and holiness. Rooted in scripture and tradition such

language should draw upon all the resources of rhetoric to carry us beyond any simple accessibility, beginning and ending in praise and doxology.

Selected Reading

David Jasper, *The Language of Liturgy: A Ritual Poetics*, 2018
 Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically: Philosophical Reflections on Religious Practice*, 2018

David Jasper is Emeritus Professor in the University of Glasgow, and formerly Professor of Literature and Theology. He has been an Anglican Priest for more than 40 years and is Canon Theologian of St. Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow.

Paul Cavill writes: Prayer, in church and monastery, was a major formal component in Anglo-Saxon Christianity; it inherited the wealth of the Latin church (and language) in this area and added much of its own. But do the records ever present us with a personal rather than a formal rhetoric of prayer? This paper will suggest that Old English verse may offer the best evidence for prayer that departs from Latinate rhetoric and embraces a more vernacular style and personal content.

Selected Reading

Donald G. Bzdyl, 'Prayer in Old English Narratives', *Medium Ævum* 51 (1982), 135–151
 Stephanie Clark, *Compelling God: Theories of Prayer in Anglo-Saxon England*, 2017.

Dr Paul Cavill is Lecturer in Early English in the School of English, University of Nottingham. His interests lie in Old English literature and Christianity, and he has written widely in this area, including *Anglo-Saxon Christianity*, 1999 and (ed.) *The Christian Tradition in Anglo-Saxon England*, 2004. He is a committee member of CLSG.

Alicia Smith writes: 'Jesu, sweet Jesu – my dearest, my darling... my honey drop, my healing balm. Sweeter is the memory of you than nectar in the mouth.' Prayer, or poetry? The flowering of affective English devotional literature in the later Middle Ages perhaps begins here, in the anonymous 'Wooing of Our Lord'. The meditative naming of Christ, the absorption of him as honey-sweet spiritual food, enlists contemporary poetic practices to the loving practice of contemplation.

Selected Reading

Anne Savage and Nicholas Watson eds., *Anchoritic spirituality: Ancrene Wisse and associated works*, 1991
 Susannah Mary Chewning ed., *The Milieu and Context of the Wooing Group*, 2009
 Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion*, 2010.

Alicia Smith is working towards a DPhil at the Queen's College, Oxford, focusing on the prayer practices of anchorites and how they reflect on historiographical praxis and time.

David Parry writes: My paper probes the presentation of prayer by two seventeenth century religious writers, the Anglican priest-poet George Herbert and the Dissenting tinker-preacher John Bunyan, author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Both celebrate heartfelt prayer in

Booking Form

CLSG Conference 3 November 2018

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