# CONFERENCE ON FAITH AND HISTORY – 2026 Meeting

**Exploring the "Why" of Historical Scholarship and Teaching**
Bethel University/University of Northwestern - St. Paul

## Undergraduate Conference (September 30- October 1)

Coordinator: Alicia Jackson

## Professional Conference (October 1 – 3)

Program Chair: H. Paul Thompson, Jr.

## Thursday, October 1 (at Bethel University)

Optional Excursion – Minnesota History Center
12:45PM Bethel Pick-up -- 4:15PM Bethel drop-off
Located on the south end of Minnesota's State Capitol Complex in Saint Paul, the Minnesota History Center serves as the State's History Museum and the headquarters of the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS). The trip will feature a behind-the-scenes tour of MNHS Collections, the State Archives, and conservation labs. In addition, there will be time to visit exhibits including Minnesota's Greatest Generation, Our Home: Native Minnesota, and The Stories We Keep: 25 Objects from MNHS.

**Concurrent Session 1| 3:00 - 4:15**
**Teaching Race and Southern History in Mississippi: The Role of Religion as We Write, Teach, and Reflect on the U.S. South**
*Chair/Response*: Otis Pickett| Clemson University
B. Griffith| "The Sound We Made Was Love. A White Academic Heads to the Helm: Prophetic Truth-Telling in an African American Context"
Patrick Connelly| Mississippi College| "Heaven, Hell and Jackson: Medgar Evers and the Jackson Church Visit Campaign"
DeSean Dyson| ReStory US| "James Meredith, John Perkins, and Teaching About Race and Religion in the K-12 College, and Pilgrimage Contexts"

**Gendered Medieval and Contemporary European Voices Addressing Collective Memory, Power, and Language**
*Chair/Response:* T. Wyatt Reynolds| Columbia University
Robert A. Sorensen| The Bear Creek School| "Truth, Language, and Teaching in John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon*"
Carl Lund| Bemidji State University| "Medieval Religion and Power: Teaching with St. Birgitta"
Graciela Susana Perez (Boruszko)| Bethel University| "Why Remember? Female Voice, Political Violence, and the Reconstruction of Historical Memory in Contemporary Spain"

**Roundtable: Navigating Work as a Historian and Professor with Purpose and Joy**
*Chair:* AnnMarie Kooistra| Bethel University
Elisabeth Lefebvre| Bethel University
Mark Norris| Grace College
Robert Tracy McKenzie| Wheaton College
Lisa Diller| Southern Adventist University

**Plenary Session| 4:30-5:45**
Address by Nadya Williams| "Caesar, Christ, and Why the Doctrine of the Imago Dei Matters for Writing History"

CFH Executive Board Meeting| 6:00-8:00
Location TBD

## Friday, October 2 (at Bethel University except for banquet)

**Concurrent Session 2| 8:30-9:45**
**Evolving Norms within Adventism and the Missionary Church**
*Chair/Response*: Kevin Burton| Andrews University
Timothy Paul Erdel| Bethel University| "From Six Special Forces to Silent Subordination: Women in The Missionary Church"
Ashlee Chism| General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists| "Tensions in Seventh-Day Adventist Historiography"
Christina Cannon| University of Chicago| "Contextualizing Ellen White's Nose: Photo Manipulation in the Late 19th Century and the Importance of Studying Visual Culture in American Protestantism"

**Jonathan Edwards: Tethered Discernment, Education, and the Limits of Knowledge**
*Chair/Response:* Joseph Cochran| Purdue University Northwest
Frank L. Bartoe IV| Independent Scholar| "The 'Why' of Tethered Discernment: Edwards's Guardrailed Historiography in the Personal Narrative and History of the Work of Redemption (1739-1740)"
John Van Wyk| Independent Scholar| "Jonathan Edwareds as Educator" (virtual)
Scott Dill| Bethel University| "American Evangelicals' Problem with Knowledge: On a Complicated Legacy of Jonathan Edwards's Preaching"

**Roundtable: Religious History, Women's History in the Classroom: Successes and Challenges**
*Chair*: Tara Strauch| Centre College
Rachel Cope| Brigham Young University
Katie Heatherly| University of Notre Dame
Andrea L. Turpin| Baylor University
Pearl Young| University of Houston-Clear Lake
Thais R. S. de Sant´Ana| University of Florida

**Concurrent Session 3| 10:00-11:15**
**Gender, Race, Religion, and Higher Education**
*Chair/Response*: Andrea L. Turpin| Baylor University
Susan Trollinger and William Trollinger| University of Dayton| "Exceeding the Gender Limits of Their Fundamentalist Education: Northwestern Bible School Women as Ministers and Evangelists, 1910-1950"
Christopher Gehrz| Bethel University| "Bethel College and Seminary as an Epicenter for Evangelical Debates over Complementarianism and Egalitarianism, 1973-1995"
Leslie Garrote| Baylor University| "Revival at Tuskegee: Campus Outreach and Deep South Black Evangelicals in the 1990s"

**What is History? What is Truth?: The Challenges of Teaching History in the Post-Truth Age of AI**
*Chair/Response*: Elesha Coffman| Baylor University
Ruth Dewhurst| Fellowship Christian School| "Leopold von Ranke, *Downton Abbey*, Fort Sumter: What's 'real' history? And Why does it Matter?"
K. Scott Culpepper| Dordt University| "Nazis Bad, Empathy Good: Faith and History in the 'Post-Truth' Era Classroom"
Brendan J.J. Payne| North Greenville University| "Incarnational Education in the Age of AI: Embodied Interaction in the Christian Classroom"

**The 'Why' and 'How' of Nineteenth-Century Missions and Revivalism**
*Chair/Response:* Jonathan den Hartog| Samford University
Anna Porter Puckett| Wheaton College| "The Formation of the Women's Union Missionary Society: The Influence of Gender Roles on the Mission Field in the Mid-1800s"
Nicholas Freeman| Maranatha Mission Bible College| "The Great Hawaiian Revival: A Historical Survey of the Totality of Events of the Great Hawaiian Revival from 1836-1842"
Sean Jacobson| University of North Alabama| "Teaching Religious Narratives of Indian Removal: A Public Historical Perspective"

**Roundtable: Evangelicals and the Therapeutic Turn**
*Chair*: Daniel Hummel| Lumen Center
Katie Heatherly| University of Notre Dame
Paul Putz| Baylor University
Skylar Ray| John Brown University

**Lunch| 11:30-12:45**
*Optional Affinity Groups*
Graduate Students
High school teachers

**Plenary Session| 12:50-2:15**
Address by Karen Johnson| Wheaton College| "Wade in the Water: The Sanctifying Power of Studying the Past."

**Concurrent Session 4| 2:30-3:45**
**Purpose and Agency in Interdenominational Relationships**
*Chair/Response:* Brendan J.J. Payne| North Greenville University
Jeff McDonald| Presbyterian Scholars Conference| "Presbyterian and Missouri Synod Lutheran Collaborative Efforts to Defend the Bible in the 19th Century"
Matt Miller| University of Northwestern – St. Paul| "Paul B. Anderson and the Development of Russian Christianity in the Era of Soviet Power"

**How Did We Get "Here?": Purpose, Pedagogy, and Faith in Historical Teaching during Crisis**
*Chair/Response:* Alexis Jones| Crown College
Don Bouchard| Crown College| "Adapting and Addressing Pedagogy to the Needs of the Day: George Floyd and American Literature and American Civilization to 1877."
Student Participants: CJ Nyland, Alex Sugi, Anna Anderson Sanchez

**Perspectives on the Relationship Between Historians and their Research**
*Chair/Response*: Daniel Williams| Ashland University
Adam E. Peterson| The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary| "Pretty Fly for a White Guy: Difference, Similarity, and the Why of Black Church History"
Ansley Quiros| University of North Alabama| "Successes or Failures?: Considering New Communities and Koinonia Farm as a Christian Historian"
Luca Lima Iacomini| Universidade Federal do Paraná| "The History Work Group from the Brazilian Association of Christians in Science: Why it Exists and What has it Done so Far." (virtual)

**Roundtable: Why (and How) Christian Historians Can Benefit the Church**
Nadya Williams| Mere Orthodoxy
Chris Gehrz| Bethel University
Agnes Howard| Valparaiso University
Jason Barnhart| Ashland Theological Seminary

**Concurrent Session 5| 4:00-5:15**
**Twentieth Century Evangelicalism through the lens of J. M. Boice, J.E. Orr, and Charlie Brown**
*Chair/Response:* Elesha Coffman| Baylor University
John W. Tweeddale| Reformation Bible College| "The Neo-Barnhouse: James Montgomery Boice and the Purpose of Preaching, Media, and Reform in Late Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism"
Blake Scott Ball| University of North Alabama| "The Gospel According to Charlie Brown: *Peanuts*, Charles Schulz, and the Emergence of 1960s Pop-Religion"
Joseph T. Cochran| Purdue University Northwest| "J. Edwin Orr and Writing Evangelical History."

**Humble and Legitimate Providential History**
*Chair/Response*: Loretta Hunnicutt| Pepperdine University
*Response*: Jay Green| Covenant College
Rick Kennedy| Independent Scholar| "The Arc of History and Evidence in Southern California"
Steven Keillor| Independent Scholar| "Some Advantages of a Scholarly Providentialist History in an Age of Historiographical and Political Polarization"

**When Historians are Required to teach a Christian Worldview, as they Teach History**
*Chair/Response:* Patrick Connelly| Mississippi Christian University
Daniel R. Spanjer| Veritas Academy| "Creating Stories that are Maximally History"
Mark Draper| Lancaster Bible College| "Instructing Christian Students in a Buffered Discipline while Promoting the Porous Self"
Timothy D. Padgett| Colson Center| "Ideals have Consequences: History in the Thought of Francis Schaeffer, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and Bart Ehrman"

**Lessons from Hymnody: What Hymns can teach us about a People and their Faith**
*Chair/Response:* Jay Case| Malone University
David McFarland| Pacific Academy| "Singing a Christian Nation: Hymnody and the Limits of Mainline Vision in the United Church of Canada"
Melissa Harkrider| Wheaton College| "The Right Path, the Gospel and Cherokee Hymnody"

**Banquet| 6:00-8:00PM (at University of Northwestern - St. Paul)**
Presidential Address: Chris Gehrz

## Saturday, October 3 (at University of Northwestern – St. Paul)

**Concurrent Session 6| 8:30-9:45**
**American Christianity and Politics from the Mid-Twentieth Century to the Present**
*Chair/Response*: Ansley L. Quiros| University of North Alabama
Daniel K. Williams| Ashland University| "One Nation under God, but Two Democracies: The Differences between Evangelical and Liberal Protestant Views of American Democracy during the Early Years of the Cold War"
Daniel G. Hummel| "Promised to Whom?: Christian Critics of Christian Zionism, 1940-1990"
Jeffrey Gang| "'Consecrated Pragmatism: From the Church Growth Movement to the Church's Entanglement with Surveillance Capitalism"

**Faith in the Modern: Evangelicalism, Technology, and American Popular Culture**
*Chair/Response*: Darin Tuck| Mid-American Nazarene University
John Wigger| University of Missouri| "How America Learned to Fly"
Hunter M. Hampton| Stephen F. Austin State University| "Bent, Melted, and Reformed: Tom Landry, Popular Culture, and the Shaping of American Evangelicalism"
Jonathan Root| Augusta University| "Cordell Walker's America: Chuck Norris in the 1990s"

**Christianity and the State: Perspectives on National History, Christian Nationalism, and Liberation Theology**
*Chair/Response:*
Sudabee Lotfian-Mena| University of Dayton| "Purpose Through Power: Christian Nationalism and Liberation Theology and the Mythopoetic Imagination of the State"
Andrew Whitworth| Baylor University| "'Who can teach like the artists?': Reckoning with Visions of American History as Christian History Past and Present"
Kristina Benham| University of Northwestern – St. Paul| "The Exodus to Independence"

**Concurrent Session 7| 10:00-11:15**
**History Outside the Classroom: Community Engagement, Podcasting, and Discipleship**
*Chair/Response:* David McFarland| Pacific Academy
Analise DeVries| Samford University| "How History Matters in Local Community Engagement: A Case Study in Suburban Birmingham"
Albert Louis Zambone| Historically Thinking| "The Podcast as Public History: Scale, Intimacy Humility, Trust"
H. Paul Thompson, Jr.| Faithframed History| "Sankofa Trips and History as Discipleship"

**Two Perspectives on the Twentieth-Century Origins of Fundamentalism**
*Chair/Response:* Prisca Bird| The Bear Creek School
Jeremy Armiger| University of Dayton| "The Espionage and Sedition Acts of 1917/1918 and the Formation of American Protestant Fundamentalism"
Nathan Lentfer| Independent Scholar| "Fundamentals Bible Conferences and 'Fundamentalism'"

**The 'Why' and 'How' of Researching White Ethnic Groups: The Dutch and The Swedes**
*Chair/Response:* Robert A. Sorensen| The Bear Creek School
Leanna Swanson| University of Northwestern – St. Paul| "Letters to Hilda: 'Swede Girls,' Domestic Service, and Life as a Newcomer in Minneapolis, 1913-1914"
David Zwart| Grand Valley State University| "Meaning Making or Myth Making: Dutch-American History for the 21st Century"

**Lunch| 11:30-12:45**
*Optional Affinity Groups*
CFHers at state/secular schools
Western Regional CFH
Women of CFH

**Plenary Session | 1:00-2:15**
Address by Kent Whitworth| Minnesota Historical Society| "Deepening Understanding and Community: When the classroom, the academy, and public history come together"

**Concurrent Session 8| 2:30-3:45**
**The 'Why' of Teaching Environmental History, Ancient History, and the Jim Crow Era**
*Chair/Response:* Joseph Cochran| Purdue University Northwest
Alexis C. Jones| Crown College| "Why Do We Teach Segregation?: Purpose, Memory and Formation in the History Classroom"
Matthew Herbst| University of California, San Diego| "On the Value of Teaching Antiquity Today: Reflections from the Public University, Prison, and Parish"
Amy Poppinga| Bethel University| "History as a Hopeful Practice: Lessons from Environmental History"
Paul Yandle| North Greenville University| "'That Ended Today:' Teaching the Context of Voter Suppression in Post-Callais United States"

**Intentional History Pedagogy in Christian Contexts**
Chair/Response: Paul Thompson| Faithframed History
Nicole Gilhuis| Pepperdine University| "Skills or Christian Formation?"
Kristine Nethers| Biola University| "Why Socratic Discussions Help Students to 'Think Historically' and Discern Biblically"
Blake McKinney| Texas Baptist College| "Sneaking History into the Great Books: Pedagogical Reflections of an Assistant Professor of History and Humanities"
Mike Kugler| Northwestern College| "From the Classroom to the Page and Back: History with and without Historians as a Case Study"

**Roundtable: "Remembering and Teaching the American Revolution"**
Jonathan Den Hartog| Samford University
Kristina Benham| University of Northwestern-St. Paul
Michael Lee| Eastern University
Regina Wenger| Mennonite Heritage Center (virtual)