



MANCHESTER
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RESEARCH
CENTRE



Methodist Studies Seminar

Friday 12 May 2023

Manchester Wesley Research Centre and Online

Organised by Cliff College and the Manchester Wesley Research Centre

The Methodist Studies Seminars were established in 2012 by the Manchester Wesley Research Centre and Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Oxford Brookes University as a biannual seminar series. This collaboration has extended to include the Wesley Study Centre, St John's College, Durham University; Wesley House, Cambridge; Cliff College; and The Queen's Foundation, Birmingham. The seminars provide an opportunity for established and emerging scholars of Methodist Studies to present the findings of their research. We conceive of Methodist Studies broadly and aim to provide opportunities for students of history, theology, literature, art, material culture and other fields related to Methodism.

9.30am Arrivals, Tea & Coffee

9.55am Welcome (Drs George Bailey and Geordan Hammond)

10.00am *There Faith Prevails: Isaac Watts and the Evangelical Enlightenment*
Daniel Johnson, University of Leicester (Chair: Dr Stephen Wright)

10.40am Tea & Coffee

11.10am *Pedagogy and Preaching in Edwardian Oxford: Ernest and Margaret Genner*
Dr Martin Wellings, Superintendent of the Barnet & Queensbury Circuit, Methodist Church in Britain (Chair: Dr Julie Lunn)

11:50am *A Wesleyan Environmental Theology for Global Mission*
Dr Andrew Dye, Methodist Church in Britain (Chair: Dr George Bailey)

12.30pm Lunch

1.30pm *A Daughter of the Dawn: American Methodist Women's Dramas during the Barbara Heck Bicentennial*
Alex Gunter Parrish, Curator of the Methodist Collection, Drew University (Chair: Dr Judith Rossall)

2.10pm *Methodism as a Missional Movement: Beyond Mission and Evangelism*
Dr Philip Wingeier-Rayo, Professor of World Christianity, Missiology, and Methodist Studies, Wesley Theological Seminary (Chair: Dr Tim Macquiban)

2.50pm *Migrant Methodism: The Pastors of Harbin, Manchuria, and Memories of a Russian Methodist Movement*
Dr Dana L. Robert, William Fairfield Warren Distinguished Professor and Director of the Center for Global Christianity and Mission, Boston University School of Theology (Chair: Prof William Gibson)

3.45pm Closing Announcements

3.50pm Tea & Coffee, Tour of the MWRC (optional), and Departures

Registration:

There is no cost for attending the seminar or for the lunch that will be provided; however, registration is required [here](#). Questions can be addressed to Geordan Hammond at: ghammond@nazarene.ac.uk. To receive information about future seminars, you can sign up for the seminars mailing list [here](#).

Venue:

Maclagan Chapel
Nazarene Theological College
Dene Road, Didsbury
Manchester M20 2GU

Directions: <http://www.mwrc.ac.uk/location/>.

Livestreaming:

The presentations will be livestreamed on Zoom. All who register will be sent the Zoom link. Recordings of the presentations will later appear on the [MWRC YouTube Channel](#).

**The second 2023 seminar will be at the Wesley Study Centre, St John's College, Durham University on Saturday 9 December.*

Abstracts of Papers and Author Biographies

Daniel Johnson, *There Faith Prevails: Isaac Watts and the Evangelical Enlightenment*

Isaac Watts (1674-1748) was a leading London dissenting minister; his works included hymns and poems, as well as texts on logic, Christology, education, soteriology, and the affections. This paper will concentrate on the intellectual context of Watts, locating him as a proponent of the intersection of Enlightenment and Evangelicalism. Scholarly discourse struggles to define both movements; the Enlightenment is still often associated with a rise in secularism, and Evangelicalism carries connotations of revivalist enthusiasm. Watts was an heir of the Puritan tradition, and repeatedly expressed his desire to see a renewal in religious devotion and vitality. Alongside this, he was deeply indebted to and appreciative of Descartes, Newton, and Locke and their commitment to natural theology and reasonable epistemology. By combining these two, Watts went on to be one of the leading intellectuals of the Evangelical movement. His *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1707) was a transatlantic phenomenon, published over 20 times before the end of the century, and his 1725 *Logick* was adopted by Oxford and Cambridge universities by the 1740s. Watts also fuelled the Methodist revivals of 1738 by publishing Jonathan Edwards' *Faithful Narrative of Surprising Events*, which was read by the Wesleys and Whitefield. Although Watts had his reservations about some aspects of the revivals, he was broadly supportive. This paper serves two functions; to contextualise Watts intellectually, and to demonstrate how his context served to shape the Evangelical movement which emerged near the end of his life.

Daniel Johnson is a PhD student in the school of History at the University of Leicester. His research concentrates on Isaac Watts, and his intellectual and theological context in early eighteenth-century Dissent. Alongside his studies, Daniel is an Academic Developer for Buckinghamshire New University.

Martin Wellings, *Pedagogy and Preaching in Edwardian Oxford: Ernest and Margaret Genner*

Ernest Ely Genner (1877-1930) was one of the first Wesleyan Methodists to achieve academic distinction at Oxford, winning a double First and serving as Fellow and Tutor at three colleges. His wife Margaret (1871-1933), née Fryer, also had a distinguished academic record, with a London University BA and teaching career at Southlands. This presentation will explore the Genners in their setting in Edwardian Oxford – in the university, in the Wesleyan and Free Church world, in civic and political life, and in the intersections of those spheres of activity.

Dr Martin Wellings is Superintendent of the Barnet and Queensbury Circuit, in North London. His edition of Oxford Wesleyan Local Preachers' minutes, *Methodism in Victorian Oxford*, is due to be published by Boydell & Brewer this summer.

Andrew Dye, *A Wesleyan Environmental Theology for Global Mission*

Global Mission requires interaction with the physical environment. This paper seeks to outline a Wesleyan theology of the environment and set this alongside the interplay of theology and practice for global mission in the Wesleyan tradition. In doing so, different global contexts provide important theological insight; the connected and conferring Methodist community provides a basis of ecological and missiological integrity. The discussion notes the importance of approaches to spirituality, evangelism and discipleship that are consistent with Wesleyan environmental theology. Areas of varied critique are highlighted for a Wesleyan approach in environment and global mission particularly in areas of justice issues. Migration and women's movements are examined as important areas of global Wesleyan activity. The short-term mission movement is critiqued in relation to its environmental impact and collusion with neo-colonial patterns. It is concluded that the Wesleyan call in an environmental theology for global mission is to practically respond to the prevenient grace of God and live in grounded discipleship realised in both local and global connection and conversation. This paper is prepared out of MA work at Cliff College and with thanks to the Methodist Church in Britain for financial support.

Dr Andrew Dye is Deputy Director and Programme Team Leader for Global Relationships in the Connexional team of the Methodist Church in Britain. His career has journeyed from PhD and post-doctoral research in environmental science, through short-term aid and mission worker, to science teaching and youth work in Cornwall, and in Grenada as a mission partner.

Alex Gunter Parrish, *A Daughter of the Dawn: American Methodist Women's Dramas during the Barbara Heck Bicentennial*

This paper examines two plays produced in celebration of the bicentennial of Barbara Heck's birth (1734) in the early and mid-1930s. The first play, *A Daughter of the Dawn: A Drama of Early American Methodism* (1933), by Madeleine Sweeny Miller, is a dramatic rendering of the life and legacy of Barbara Heck. The play presents Heck as a paragon of women's piety. The second play, *Golden Hill* (1935), by Louisa Collier Culver, is a seriocomedy featuring a fictional dramatic scene of Heck after a midweek prayer service between two comedic acts depicting a contemporary Ladies' Aid Society meeting. The play presents a more down-to-earth Heck, the ideal Ladies' Aid Society leader and an example for the everyday woman. The contrasting presentation of Heck in the plays offers an intriguing look into how the memory of Heck was used to spur women's faith and piety.

Alex Gunter Parrish (ABD, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary) is the Curator of the Methodist Collection at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, USA. He has published and presented on women in the American home missions movement and is writing his dissertation on the intellectual history of American home missions.

Philip Wingeier-Rayo, *Methodism as a Missional Movement: Beyond Mission and Evangelism*

Early Methodism was a missionary movement that spread throughout the British Isles and around the world. Since then, the theory and practice of mission and evangelism has become highly specialized. The emergence of the missional church movement in the late 20th century offers a more holistic and localized understanding of mission that is more in line with Wesley's thought and practice. This paper explores Wesley's struggles with a compartmentalized conception of mission and evangelism and offers a more integrated Wesleyan missiology.

Dr Philip Wingeier-Rayo is Professor of World Christianity, Missiology and Methodist Studies at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington DC. His research interests are at the intersection of missiology, Methodist studies, and Latin American liberation theology. His academic work is informed by fifteen years of missionary service where he served in Nicaragua, Cuba, Mexico, and the Rio Grande Valley in south Texas. He has published four books, including *Where are the Poor? A Comparison of the Ecclesial Base Communities and Pentecostalism—A Case Study in Cuernavaca, Mexico* (Pickwick Publications). He is currently writing a book on the history and theology of mission work in the Wesleyan tradition.

Dana L. Robert, *Migrant Methodism: The Pastors of Harbin, Manchuria, and Memories of a Russian Methodist Movement*

During the early twentieth century until the Japanese invasion of 1931, Harbin, Manchuria, was a crossroads for migrants, including Koreans, mixed-race North Asian populations, and Russians fleeing the Russian Revolution. In that challenging context, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, opened missions to the different refugee populations in Harbin. In 1927 the mission to Russian refugees closed. Russians fled the area, desperately migrating to whatever country would take them in. In this paper, I reconstruct the memories of the Russian Methodist pastors of 1920s Harbin, in dialogue with my own search since the 1970s to uncover their history. This case study raises questions and provides insights into the nature of Methodism as a transnational migrant movement, the struggle to maintain identities in diaspora, and the role of historical reconstruction in the forming of Russian Methodism.

Dr Dana L. Robert is the William Fairfield Warren Distinguished Professor at Boston University. Author of *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion*, she directs the Center for Global Christianity and Mission at the Boston University School of Theology. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.