

**2016 Annual Conference of  
Modern Church**

**Performing the Faith:  
Shakespeare in the World**

Shakespeare, the Theatre  
and Theology Today

**11<sup>th</sup> July** (arrive from midday, lunch 1.00)

**to 13<sup>th</sup> July** (end with tea at 3.45)

at High Leigh Conference Centre

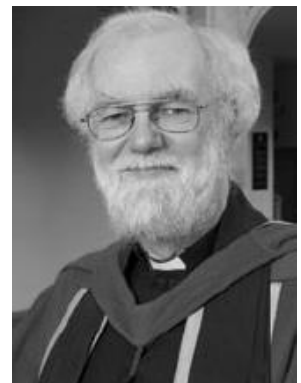
Hoddesdon, Herts

[www.cct.org.uk](http://www.cct.org.uk)

**Keynote speaker:**  
**The Most Revd and Rt Hon**  
**Lord Rowan Williams of Oystermouth**

**Conference Chair:**  
**Revd Dr Alison Milbank**

**Conference Chaplain:**  
**Revd Dr Paul Edmondson**



**Programme**  
**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July**

12.00 onwards	Arrival
13.00	Lunch
14.30	<b>Chair's Introduction</b> <i>Dr Alison Milbank</i>
14.45	<b><i>Measure for Measure</i> and the mystery plays</b> <i>Dr Beatrice Groves</i>
16.00	Tea
16.30	Parallel sessions
	1. Papers by younger scholars
	<b>Mannerly Devotion: touches of grace in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i></b> <i>Christian Coppa</i>
	<b>'Speak again': life, love and language in <i>King Lear</i></b> <i>Vittorio Montemaggi</i>
	2. <b>Words of Power: Shakespeare and the Bible</b> <i>Jem Bloomfield</i>
17.45	Reception
18.30	Dinner
20.00	<b><i>King Lear</i> – perception and the price of silence</b> <i>Prof Ronnie Mulryne</i>
21.15	Night Prayers

## Tuesday 12 July

- 08.00 Morning Prayers
- 08.30 Breakfast
- 09.30 **The Gospel according to Shakespeare**  
*Dr Alycia Smith-Howard*
- 10.45 Coffee
- 11.15 **Keynote Address**  
*Dr Rowan Williams*
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.15 **Modern Church AGM**  
(all welcome)
- 15.45 Tea
- 17.00 **Conference Eucharist**  
A Poetry Mass led by Paul Edmondson
- 18.30 Dinner
- 20.00 **In Conversation**  
*Dr Paul Edmondson*  
*and Phillip Breen*

## Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July

08.00	Morning Prayers
08.30	Breakfast
09.30	<b><i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i></b> <i>Dr Graham Ward</i>
10.45	Coffee
11.15	<b>Panel discussion</b> <i>All available speakers</i>
13.00	Lunch
14.00	<b>Summing up</b> <i>Alison Milbank and</i> <i>Paul Edmondson</i>

## Speakers

**Alison Milbank** is Associate Professor in the Department of Theology at the University of Nottingham. She studied Theology and English Literature at Cambridge, and then took her doctorate at Lancaster. She was John Rylands Research Institute Fellow at Manchester, working on its extensive Dante archives and, after a temporary lectureship and extensive college teaching at Cambridge, taught in the English Department at the University of Virginia for five years.

Her research and teaching focuses on the relation of religion to culture in the post-Enlightenment period, with particular interest in non-realist literary and artistic expression, such as the Gothic, the fantastic, horror and fantasy. Her interest in medievalism led to a book on Dante and Victorian theology, history and art, followed by a study of G K Chesterton and J R R Tolkien as theologians. More recently she co-wrote (with Andrew Davison) *For The Parish*, a study of contemporary Anglican ecclesiology. She also contributed a paper on *Apocalyptic Readings: The Bible and the Novel* to the Modern Church Annual Conference in 2011. She is currently working on an historical study of Gothic fiction from the Reformation to the end of the nineteenth century, aligning its rise and narrative tropes to Anglican theology and historiography.

**Beatrice Groves** is a Research Lecturer in Renaissance English, Trinity College, Oxford; and author of a number of articles on Shakespeare and religion, as well as a book on this topic (*Texts and Traditions: Religion in Shakespeare, 1592-1604* (Oxford University Press, 2007) and another book on the topic of religion and early modern literature: *The Destruction of Jerusalem in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 2015)

**Christian Coppa** is a doctoral candidate at Cambridge in the Faculty of Divinity; his dissertation is on touch and the mediation of grace in Shakespeare's romances.

**Vittorio Montemaggi** is Assistant Professor of Religion and Literature, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures and Department of Theology, University of Notre Dame, USA. He has BA, MPhil and PhD degrees from the University of Cambridge. His interests include the relationship between literary and theological reflection, the relationship between language, truth and love, and the interconnections between the question of the relationship between theism and atheism and that of the relationship between tragedy and comedy. To date, his published work has focused primarily on Dante's *Commedia*, while his current research also comparatively explores, alongside the work of Dante, that of Primo Levi, Roberto Benigni, Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, Augustine, Gregory the Great and Aquinas. His recent publications include: *Dante's Commedia: Theology as Poetry* (co-edited with Matthew Treherne, University of Notre Dame Press, 2010) and *Reading Dante's Commedia as Theology: Divinity Realized in Human Encounter* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

**Jem Bloomfield** currently teaches at the University of Nottingham. He has published scholarly work on Shakespeare and the Bible as well as writing in more popular publications on culture, religion and literature. His work has been cited in major media outlets including *The Guardian*, *Salon* and *The New Statesman*. His latest publication (May 2016) is *Words of Power: Shakespeare and the Bible*, an exploration of some of the ways Shakespeare and the Bible are revered and understood in British and American culture, drawing on academic scholarship and history to elucidate the particular roles they play in our societies, and focusing less on the meaning of the texts and more on the ways those meanings are contested, reinterpreted and played out in the world.

**Ronnie Mulryne** is Professor Emeritus of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Warwick. His special area of interest is Shakespeare and Renaissance drama, especially drama in performance. He has produced and contributed to a very large number of publications, and led significant international conferences, in this area. He is also a Trustee, and former Chair of Governors, at King Edward VI School, Stratford-upon-Avon ('Shakespeare's school'), where he has been instrumental in restoring the former Big School and Guildhall, where Shakespeare would have studied, as a visitor attraction. In addition, he is a regular contributor to the leading of worship at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon, a former Churchwarden, and currently Chair of the Friends of Shakespeare's Church.

**Alycia Smith-Howard** PhD is a Shakespeare scholar, columnist, theatre director, performance historian and speaker who has written and taught, much on both performative and cultural dimensions of Shakespeare, including most recently a contribution to the Bloxham Festival of Faith and Literature on Shakespeare and food! She has held a number of academic posts including Associate Scholar, The Royal Collection Trust (Windsor Castle); Senior Lecturer in Shakespeare & Theatre (CAPA International Education, London); Assistant Professor of Shakespeare Studies (New York University, USA); Fellow, Folger Shakespeare Library; and Assistant Professor of Directing and Dramaturgy (Mount Holyoke College, USA). She is the author of *Studio Shakespeare: The Royal Shakespeare Company at The Other Place* and co-author of *The Food of Love: A Taste of Shakespeare in Four Seasons*. Currently, she is an Ordinand in the Diocese of Coventry, training at Ripon College, Cuddesdon. She is also Education and Visitor Development Officer for The Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick. As part of this role she served as Curator for "Shakespeare 400: History, Heritage & Faith" a major exhibition of the Shakespeare First Folio (1623) and the King James Bible (1611), with associated events and activities at St Mary's Church. In this capacity she had the rare pleasure of reciting lines from *Hamlet* with Dame Judi Dench.

**Rowan Williams** is the former Archbishop of Canterbury and currently Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge. He has written and spoken much on the relationship between Shakespeare (and other drama and literature) and the Christian faith, and recently led a symposium at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor, on *The Winter's Tale*. He is himself a published poet and has been working on a dramatic re-enactment of a possible meeting between Shakespeare and the Jesuit martyr Edmund Campion.

**Paul Edmondson** is Head of Research at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon, and an internationally noted Shakespeare scholar who has served for some years as a Minister in Secular Employment. He has produced, often in collaboration with others, significant writings on Shakespeare and his context, including scholarly editions of some plays and the Sonnets. His latest publication is *Shakespeare: Ideas in Profile*. He was a principal speaker at the most recent Bloxham Festival on Faith and Literature.

**Phillip Breen** is a freelance theatre director who has directed more than 40 professional productions, all over the UK: at the Citizens', the Royal Shakespeare Company, Clwyd Theatr Cymru (where he was director of new writing 2006-08), and also at Theatre Cocoon, Tokyo, as well as off-Broadway and in the West End. He has contributed extended essays to two books on Shakespeare, and recently completed his own monograph on *The Merry Wives of Windsor, Walking in A Windsor Wonderland: Some Ramshackle Reflections on Directing Shakespeare's Greatest Comedy*. In 2016 he is directing the York Mysteries in York Minster with a community cast of hundreds.

**Graham Ward** is the Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Oxford and Extraordinary Professor of Systematic Theology and Ecclesiology at the University of Stellenbosch. Among his books are *Cities of God* (Routledge), *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice* (CUP), *True Religion* (Blackwell), *Christ and Culture* (Blackwell), *The Politics of Discipleship* (Baker Academic) and *Unbelievable* (I B Tauris). Along with Michael Hoelzl, he is also the translator of two of Carl Schmitt's works: *Political Theology II* (Polity) and *Dictatorship* (Polity). He edits three book series: *Christian Theologians in Context* (OUP), *Illuminations* (Blackwell) and *Studies in Theology and Political Culture* (Continuum). Currently he is engaged in a three volume work entitled *Ethical Life* to be published by Oxford University Press. The first volume *How The Light Gets In* was published early in 2016.

## Recommended reading

- Paul Edmondson, *Shakespeare: ideas in Profile* (Profile Books, 2015).
- James Shapiro, *1606: Shakespeare and The Year of Lear* (Faber, 2015).
- John F. Danby, *Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature: A Study of King Lear* (Faber, 1961).
- John Hughes, 'The Politics of Forgiveness: A Theological Exploration of *King Lear*', *Modern Theology* 17:3 (2001), 261-87.
- Piero Boitani, *The Gospel According to Shakespeare*. Translated by Rachel Jacoff and Vittorio Montemaggi. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013.
- Alison Shell, *Shakespeare and Religion* (Arden, 2010)
- *Measure for Measure* and other plays covered in the programme (either Arden, Oxford or Cambridge editions)
- Helen Cooper, *Shakespeare and the Medieval World* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2010)
- Hannibal Hamlin, *The Bible in Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)
- Beatrice Groves, *Texts and Traditions: Religion in Shakespeare 1592-1604* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)
- Daniel Swift, *Shakespeare's Common Prayers: The Book of Common Prayer and the Elizabethan Age* (2012)
- Jem Bloomfield, *Words of Power* (Lutterworth 2016).