

2020 ANNUAL MEETING: BUDDHIST-CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES ON CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES AND RELIGIOUS BELONGING

The Society typically meets concurrently with the American Academy of Religion, in the same city as the AAR. The round of meetings begins with a Board meeting, followed by two sessions with papers and discussion and a general business meeting at which Board recommendations are voted on. The Society's vice president is charged with organizing the annual program. The Society does not engage in a general Call for Papers. Due to the extraordinary global health crisis, this year's meeting will take place in collaboration with Georgetown University's Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs.

The Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies (SBCS) is a coordinating body supporting activities related to the comparative study of, and the practical interaction between, Buddhism and Christianity. The society welcomes scholars and practitioners who are grounded in different expressions of Buddhism and Christianity, and it encourages those who report on Buddhist-Christian dialogue and comparative study, both as historical research and contemporary practice, to employ analytical and theoretical tools and set their discussion within the framework of broader human history. As part of its annual conference, the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies will host two public panels over two days: "Contemplative Practices and Religious Experiences: Buddhist-Christian Perspectives" and "Natal and Convert Christians and Buddhists."

Contemplative practices and religious experiences are at the core of much of religious life in both Buddhist and Christian religious life. Yet, they are often overlooked in the academic study of these religions and in religious studies generally. In the December 1 session, four panelists will present papers that examine these overlooked dimensions of contemplative practices such as Buddhist meditation and Christian contemplation within a dialogical and comparative framework of religious experience in interreligious perspective. The December 2 panel will engage in a roundtable discussion about diverse patterns

of religious life in terms of religious ideals, praxes, and social organization in Buddhist-Christian dialogical context to gain new insights into the strengths and weaknesses of natal versus convert religious belonging, as well as the interaction between these demographics.

This event was co-sponsored by Georgetown University's Department of Theology and Religious Studies and its Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1

4:00 – 6:00 p.m. EST | Contemplative Practices and Religious Experiences: Buddhist-Christian Perspectives

Paula Arai, *Louisiana State University*

Peter Feldmeier, *University of Toledo*

Kevin Hunt, *St. Joseph's Abbey*

Kristin Johnston Largen, *United Lutheran Seminary*

Ruben L. F. Habito, *Southern Methodist University* (moderator)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2

10:00 – 11:30 a.m. EST | Natal and Convert Christians and Buddhists

Karen Enriquez, *Loyola Marymount University* (introduction)

André van der Braak, *Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam*

Carolyn Medine, *University of Georgia*

Natalie Fisk Quli, *Institute of Buddhist Studies*

Mark T. Unno, *University of Oregon* (moderator/panelist)

11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EST | Annual Business Meeting of SBCS

Leo Lefebure, *Georgetown University* (chair)