



# Global *Jonathan Edwards* Congress 2020

AUGUST 24-28, 2020

*INVITATION*

## RATIONALITY AND SPIRITUALITY:

### *Retrieving Jonathan Edwards for Understanding Religion and Spirituality in Human Experience Today*

The Global Jonathan Edwards 2020 Congress seeks to create academic space for a multidisciplinary discussion that retrieves and leverages the robust nature of Edwards's insights into a religious experience that is both rational and spiritual for the benefit of the humanities, church, and society.

[WWW.JEDCON2020.BE](http://WWW.JEDCON2020.BE)

#### **The revival of interest in spirituality**

Since spirituality reflects underlying beliefs about human existence and experience, there is a need for global theological reflection on the nexus between spirituality and rationality. However, although rationalism after the Enlightenment bears a specious character and prejudice against spirituality, such that even Christians are overly self-conscious of this burden, even "disenchanted" with medieval and early modern Christian spirituality, with postmodernity there arose a new interest in spirituality. Some of the finest and most penetrating analysis of the rational and spiritual nature of religious experience is found in the writings of Jonathan Edwards, "America's Augustine." See, for instance, Strobel, Neele, and Minkema, *Jonathan Edwards: Spiritual Writings, The Classics of Western Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 2019). The congress aims to retrieve Edwards's thought and tradition in order to

further the discussion of what the fundamental nature of religious experience is, and the value of the rationality and spirituality of the human imago Dei for the humanities, church and society.

#### **Faith seeking understanding**

Worldwide there are chairs for the study of spirituality in relation to healthcare, ethics, diversity, ecology and economics. This congress focuses on how Edwards's appropriation of the classical Christian tradition of "faith seeking understanding" can be fruitful in dialogue with other academic disciplines and cultural trends in the current postmodern context. In *Reason and the Heart*, William J. Wainwright retrieves Edwards's insight into the human need for transcendent grace in order to have a well-disposed heart and sanctified reason to see the beauty and force of true religion. Edwards's holistic understanding of a rational and spiritual worldview offers resources for transcending current perspectives and integrating modern and postmodern approaches to our theme.

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### Congress

The Jonathan Edwards Center Benelux, headquartered at the Evangelische Theologische Faculteit (ETF), Leuven, Belgium, in cooperation with the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, affiliated with the Jonathan Edwards Center, Yale University, will host the next Jonathan Edwards Congress from August 24 – 28, 2020, with as theme “Rationality and Spirituality: Retrieving Jonathan Edwards for understanding religion and spirituality in human experience today.” We invite academic submissions from different disciplines regarding this topic.

### Scientific Committee

- Prof. Dr. Andreas J. Beck, Co-Director JEC Benelux
- Prof. Dr. Wim van Vlastuin, Co-Director JEC Benelux
- Dr. Philip J. Fisk, Congress Director

### Date & Location

The congress will be hosted by the Jonathan Edwards Center Benelux, from August 24 - 28, 2020, in the Leuven Center of Christian Studies, part of the Evangelische Theologische Faculteit, Leuven. The address is: Sint-Jansbergsesteenweg 97, 3001 Leuven, Belgium.

### Registration

You can register for the Global Jonathan Edwards Congress 2020 through the website: [www.jedcon2020.be](http://www.jedcon2020.be).



Yale University



### Keynote Speakers



**ANDREAS J. BECK**  
*ETF Leuven, BE*



**WILLEM VAN VLASTUIN**  
*VU University Amsterdam, NL*



**CRAWFORD GRIBBEN**  
*Queen's University, Belfast, UK*



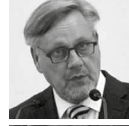
**MICHAEL MCCLENAHAN**  
*Union Theological College, Belfast, UK*



**AMANDA PORTERFIELD**  
*Florida State University Tallahassee, FL, US*



**LISANNE WINSLOW**  
*University of Northwestern, St. Paul, MN, US*



**ADRIAAN NEELE**  
*Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI, US*



**KENNETH P. MINKEMA**  
*Yale University, New Haven, CT, US*



**HARRY S. STOUT**  
*Yale University, New Haven, CT, US*



**TIBOR FABINY**  
*Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, HU*