

DR. HOLLY ORDWAY

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EDUCATION

Ph.D., English. University of Massachusetts Amherst. 2001.

M.A., English. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. 1997.

B.A., English. University of Massachusetts Amherst. 1995.

Research and teaching interests: J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Gerard Manley Hopkins, modern fantasy and science fiction, writing pedagogy

EMPLOYMENT

Cardinal Francis George Professor of Faith and Culture, Word on Fire Institute. 2020-present.

Visiting Professor of Apologetics, Houston Christian University. 2020-present.

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

Professor of English, Houston Christian University, Houston, TX. 2012-2020.

Professor of Letters, MiraCosta College. Oceanside, CA. 2005-2012

BOOKS

Tolkien's Faith: A Spiritual Biography. Word on Fire Academic, 2023.

As Kingfishers Catch Fire: Selected and Annotated Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins. Word on Fire Institute, 2023.

Tolkien's Modern Reading: Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages. Word on Fire Academic, 2021.
Received the 2022 Mythopoeic Society Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies.

Apologetics and the Christian Imagination: An Integrated Approach to Defending the Faith. St. Paul Institute, 2017.

OTHER WRITING

Chapters:

- “Tolkien in His Contemporary Context: Among the Oratorians and the Jesuits.” In *Tolkien Among the Theologians*. Ed. Austin Freeman. Walking Tree Press, forthcoming 2025.
- “Arthur in Edgestow.” In *Life on the Silent Planet: Essays on Christian Living from C.S. Lewis’s Ransom Trilogy*. Ed. Rhys Laverty. Davenant Institute, 2024.
- “The Feminine Intellect and Academia.” In *With All Her Mind: A Call to the Intellectual Life*, ed. Rachel Bulman. Word on Fire, 2022.
- Preface to *Philosophy of Religion and Art*, ed. Gregory E. Trickett and John R. Gilhooly. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021.
- “Recovering a Vision of the Cosmos: Tolkien’s Creation Narrative in *The Silmarillion*.” In *The Story of the Cosmos: How the Heavens Declare the Glory of God*, ed. Daniel Ray and Paul M. Gould. Harvest House, 2019.
- “Medieval Arthurian Sources for the Inklings: An Overview.” In *The Inklings and King Arthur: J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, C.S. Lewis, and Owen Barfield on the Matter of Britain*. Ed. Sørina Higgins. Apocryphile Press, 2018.
- “Looking ‘Along’ the Problem of Evil: Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*.” In *Evil and a Selection of its Theological Problems*. Ed. Benjamin Arbour and John R. Gilhooly. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017.
- “Stonecrop: Lewis Takes His Place in Poets’ Corner.” In *C.S. Lewis at Poets’ Corner*. Ed. Michael Ward and Peter S. Williams. Cascade, 2016.
- “C.S. Lewis on Love and Sex.” In *C.S. Lewis and Women*. Ed. Carolyn Curtis and Mary Key. Lion Hudson, 2015.
- “Williams, *Descent into Hell*.” In *C.S. Lewis’s List: The Ten Books that Influenced Him Most*. Ed. David Werther. Bloomsbury Academic, 2015.
- “Guy Gavriel Kay.” *Dictionary of Literary Biography Vol. 251: Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Authors*. 2002.

Articles:

- “The Mystical Face of Fairy-stories: Tolkien and the Use of Allegory in Fantasy.” *Journal of Inklings Studies* Special Supplement 3, September 2023.

“Hobbits and Empire: Geography and the Life of Nations in Tolkien’s Writings.” *Mere Orthodoxy*, May 2022.

“Tolkien on Death and the Desire for Deathlessness.” *Evangelization & Culture*. Spring 2022.

“Brilliant Smash and Glitter: Tolkien’s Reading of Chesterton.” *Gilbert! The Magazine of the American Chesterton Society*. Vol. 24, Number 4: March/April 2021.

“Memento Mori: A Meditation on *The Ruin*.” *An Unexpected Journal*, Autumn 2020.

“Charles Williams and Fantastic Fiction.” *Sewanee Theological Review*, Summer 2014.

“Further Up and Further In: Representations of Heaven in Tolkien and Lewis.” *Journal of Inklings Studies*, Vol. 3 no. 1, April 2013.

“Teaching Process, Not Product: Two Techniques.” *inside english: Journal of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges*. 2006.

“Guy Gavriel Kay.” *Dictionary of Literary Biography Vol. 251: Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Authors*. Ed. Douglas Ivison. Detroit: Bruccoli Clark Layman, 2002.

Book reviews:

The Blackwell Companion to J.R.R. Tolkien, ed. Stuart Lee. *Journal of Inklings Studies*, April 2024

Fantasies of Time and Death: Dunsany, Eddison, Tolkien, Anna Vaninskaya. *Journal of Inklings Studies*, Volume 10, issue 2, Winter 2020.

Charles Williams: The Third Inkling, Grevel Lindop. Lead review in symposium. *The Journal of Inklings Studies*, Spring 2016.

The Intellectual World of C.S. Lewis by Alister McGrath. *Religion & Literature* (University of Notre Dame). Vol. 47.1, Spring 2016.

C.S. Lewis and His Circle, ed. Roger White, Judith Wolfe, and Brendan N. Wolfe *Catholic World Report*, August 29, 2015.

The Fellowship: The Literary Lives of the Inklings, Philip Zaleski and Carol Zaleski. *Catholic World Report*, July 22, 2015.

The Ideal of Kingship in the Writings of Charles Williams, C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien by Christopher Scarf. *Sehnsucht: The C.S. Lewis Journal*. Vol. 7, 2014.

C.S. Lewis's Perelandra: Reshaping the Image of the Cosmos. Ed. Judith Wolfe and Brendan Wolfe. *Mythlore: The Journal of the Mythopoeic Society* 124, Spring/Summer 2014.

J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Fall of Arthur*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. *The Englewood Review of Books*. Featured Reviews Volume 6, November 2013.

Plain to the Inward Eye: Selected Essays on C.S. Lewis by Don W. King. *Mythlore: The Journal of the Mythopoeic Society*. Fall 2013.

Imaginative Apologetics, ed. Andrew Davison. *Themelios: An International Journal for Students of Theological and Religious Studies*. Spring 2013.

C.S. Lewis and the Middle Ages by Robert Boenig. *Mythlore: The Journal of the Mythopoeic Society*. Spring/Summer 2013.

The Loss and the Silence: Aspects of Modernism in the Works of C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams by Margaret Hiley. *Mythlore: The Journal of the Mythopoeic Society*. 119/120, Fall/Winter 2012.

Mythopoeic Narnia: Memory, Metaphor, and Metamorphosis in The Chronicles of Narnia by Salwa Khoddam. *Mythlore: The Journal of the Mythopoeic Society*. 117/118, Spring/Summer 2012.

Arda Reconstructed: The Creation of the Published Silmarillion by Douglas Charles Kane. *Mythprint*, the monthly bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society. Volume 48:11, no. 352. November 2011.

LECTURES AND ADDRESSES (SELECTED)

“Tolkien as Interpreter and Transformer of Culture: The Making of *The Lord of the Rings* as a Modern Book.” Oxford University Tolkien Seminar series, Oxford, UK. October 17, 2024.

“What Did Tolkien Really Think About Narnia?” *Undiscovered CS Lewis Conference*, George Fox University, Oregon, September 7, 2024.

“Faith, Friendship, and Fantasy: J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis’s Mutual Influence.” Providence College, RI, March 22, 2024.

“To What Extent is *The Lord of the Rings* a Christian Story?” Taunton Talk lecture series, Grandpont House, Oxford, UK, Feb. 24, 2024.

Evensong address, Hertford College, Oxford University, Oxford, UK. Feb. 18, 2024.

“‘He could recapture the glamour of the Word’: Tolkien’s Engagement with the Bible.” Address to the Oxford University C.S. Lewis Society, Pusey House, Oxford, UK. Feb. 13, 2024.

“‘Fundamentally religious and Catholic’? Authorial Intent and the Intentional Fallacy.” Oxford University Tolkien Seminar, Oxford University, Oxford, UK. Feb. 9, 2024.

“A Home in the Highest: Tolkien’s Faith and the Oratory of St Philip Neri.” The Washington Oratory, Washington, DC. October 4, 2023.

“Tolkien and Chesterton.” Keynote (recorded) for Tolkien-Chesterton conference, Croatian Chesterton Society, Sept. 30, 2023.

Keith Cassidy Annual Lecture for Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College, Ontario, Canada, Sept. 28, 2023.

“A Hard-Won Faith: Tolkien’s Spiritual Journey.” The Marion E. Wade Center, Wheaton College, IL, Sept. 25, 2023.

“Tolkien’s Modern Reading: Past Perspectives, Current Insights, Future Study.” Plenary address for Oxford University *Tolkien’s Words and Worlds* 50th Anniversary conference. Corpus Christi College, Oxford, UK, Sept. 2, 2023.

“A Home in the Highest: Tolkien’s Faith and the Birmingham Oratory.” The Birmingham Oratory, Birmingham, UK, Sept. 1, 2023.

The C.S. Lewis Annual Lecture, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. March 21, 2023.

“Lewis or Tolkien? A Balloon Debate”: debate with Michael Ward at the Oxford University C.S. Lewis Society, Oxford, UK. Feb. 21, 2023.

“Iron Sharpening Iron: Tolkien and Lewis’s Ecumenical Friendship and Mutual Influence.” Address to the Oxford C.S. Lewis Society, Pusey House, Oxford, UK, Feb. 14, 2023.

“Tolkien’s Faith and the Foundations of Middle-earth.” Marquette University *JRR Tolkien: Art of the Manuscript* exhibition lecture series. October 13, 2022.

“Tolkien among the Oratorians.” Keynote for *Tolkien Among the Theologians* conference, Houston Christian University, October 2022.

“Tolkien on Marriage and the Relation Between the Sexes,” Grandpont House, Oxford. March, 2022.

“St. Philip Neri and Middle-earth: The Oratorian Influence on Tolkien’s Life and Work.” Oxford University C.S. Lewis Society, Oxford, UK, March 1, 2022.

“Tolkien and the Christian Imagination.” Plenary lecture, *The Inklings* conference, Hillsdale Conference, Center for Constructive Alternatives. Feb. 1, 2022.

Plenary lecture, C.S. Lewis Foundation Retreat, Camp Allen, TX, Dec. 4, 2021.

“The Mystical Face of Fairy-stories: Tolkien, George MacDonald, and the Use of Allegory in Fantasy.” *Tree of Tales* conference, Rimini, Italy. August, 2021.

“Tolkien’s Modern Reading.” Institute for Theology, Imagination, and the Arts (ITIA), University of St Andrews, Scotland. Feb. 7, 2020.

“Lewis v. Tolkien: Battle of the Literary Masters” – Joint event with Michael Ward – Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Humanities Center, Cuyahoga Community College, Highland Hills, OH. October 10, 2019.

C.S. Lewis and Friends Lectures, Memphis Theological Seminary, Memphis, TN. March 19-20, 2019.

“Inside Tolkien.” The Sheen Center co-hosted with the *Tolkien: Maker of Middle-earth* exhibit, Morgan Library and Museum, New York City, NY. February 12, 2019.

“Tolkien’s Modern Sources: Dunsany, Shorthouse, and a Mythology for England.” Oxford University C.S. Lewis Society, Pusey House, Oxford, England. January 29, 2019.

Francis A. Schaeffer Institute Special Lectures, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO. Sept. 21-22, 2018.

“Tolkien and the Function of Fantasy.” C.S. Lewis Institute of Northeast Ohio & Youngstown State University, Youngstown, OH. April 13, 2018.

“Hidden in Plain Sight: Tolkien’s Influences from Children’s Literature and Popular Fiction.” Oxford University C.S. Lewis Society, Pusey House, Oxford, England. January 16, 2018.

“Tolkien’s Modern Sources: Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages”. Plenary lecture, *Influences on the Work of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien* conference, the C.S. Lewis Society and the Tolkien Society of Madison, WI, and the Bradshaw-Knight Foundation. Madison, WI. Sept. 23, 2017.

“The Effects of Friendship: The Influence of the Inklings on J.R.R. Tolkien.” Plenary lecture, *Canadian Round Table*, Cambridge, England. Sept. 16, 2017.

The Strauss Lectures. Lincoln Christian University, Lincoln, IL. Oct. 4-5, 2016.

“Modern Medievalists: William Morris and J.R.R. Tolkien.” Second Spring Centre for Faith and Culture, Summer School programme on “The Quality of Mercy: English Catholic Culture from Reformation to Revival.” Oxford, England. Aug. 9, 2016

“The Life and Work of Charles Williams.” *The Inklings Fellowship*, Union University, Oxford, England. July 21, 2016.

“Tolkien and the Function of Fantasy”. Auburn University in Oxford, England. July 18, 2016.

“Tolkien’s Modern Sources: Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages.” Address to the Oxford University C.S. Lewis Society, Pusey House, Oxford, England. Jan. 19, 2016.

“Tolkien and Modern Fantasy.” Regent University, Oxford, England, June 22, 2015.

“Charles Williams and Fantastic Fiction.” Plenary lecture, *The Inklings Fellowship*. Oxford, England, August 2013.

“C.S. Lewis’s ‘Mere Christianity’ as a Strategy for Evangelical-Catholic Dialogue.” Plenary lecture, Christianity in the Academy Conference, Union University, TN. March 2013.

“The Influence of Charles Williams’ *Descent into Hell* on C.S. Lewis.” Plenary lecture, *The Ten Books that Most Influenced C.S. Lewis* conference, sponsored by the C.S.Lewis Society of Madison, WI and the Bradshaw-Knight Foundation, Madison, WI, Oct. 18-20, 2012.

Media Engagement (selected)

Recent highlights:

Filmed interview at Lambeth Palace, London, for Justin Brierley’s “Re-enchantment”, March 8, 2023.

Reddit *Ask Me Anything* for r/tolkienfans, Oct. 19, 2023.

Featured expert for ““A Short History of JRR Tolkien,” Noiser Podcasts, BBC Radio, September 2023.

Interviewed on BBC Radio 4 in-studio, Oxford, UK: “The Spiritual Life of J.R.R. Tolkien.” August 27, 2023.

Regular guest on podcasts and radio, including:

- Mars Hill Audio
- National Review Great Books
- The C.S. Lewis Podcast with Alister McGrath and Ruth Jackson, Premier Christian Radio, London, UK
- Marion E. Wade Center podcast, Wheaton College, IL
- The Davenant Institute
- Uncommon Sense (podcast of the American Chesterton Society)

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Charles Williams Subject Editor, *The Journal of Inklings Studies*. 2014-present.

Associate member, Inklings Institute of Canada. 2016-present.