

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-108-49501-1 — The Cambridge Companion to Christianity and the Environment

Edited by Alexander J. B. Hampton, Douglas Hedley

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
CHRISTIANITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Christianity has understood the environment as a gift to nurture and steward, a book of divine revelation disclosing the divine mind, a wild garden in need of cultivation and betterment, and as a resource for the creation of a new Eden. This Cambridge Companion details how Christianity, one of the world's most important religions, has shaped one of the existential issues of our age, the environment. Engaging with contemporary issues, including gender, traditional knowledge, and enchantment, it brings together the work of international scholars on the subject of Christianity and the environment from a diversity of fields. Together, their work offers a comprehensive guide to the complex relationship between Christianity and the environment that moves beyond disciplinary boundaries. To do this, the volume explains the key concepts concerning Christianity and the environment, outlines the historical development of this relationship from antiquity to the present, and explores important contemporary issues.

Alexander J. B. Hampton is Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto, specialising in metaphysics, poetics, and nature. His publications include *Romanticism and the Re-Invention of Modern Religion* (Cambridge University Press, 2019) and *Christian Platonism: A History* (ed.) (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Douglas Hedley is Fellow of Clare College and Professor of the Philosophy of Religion in the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge. He is the director of *The Cambridge Centre for the Study of Platonism*, and is the editor of *The Cambridge Series in Religion and Platonism*.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-108-49501-1 — The Cambridge Companion to Christianity and the Environment

Edited by Alexander J. B. Hampton, Douglas Hedley

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS TO RELIGION

This is a series of companions to major topics and key figures in theology and religious studies. Each volume contains specially commissioned chapters by international scholars, which provide an accessible and stimulating introduction to the subject for new readers and nonspecialists.

Other Titles in the Series

THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA Edited by Young Richard Kim

APOSTOLIC FATHERS Edited by Michael F. Bird and Scott Harrower

AMERICAN CATHOLICISM Edited by Margaret M. McGuinness and
Thomas F. Rzeznik

AMERICAN ISLAM Edited by Juliane Hammer and Omid Safi

AMERICAN JUDAISM Edited by Dana Evan Kaplan

AMERICAN METHODISM Edited by Jason E. Vickers

AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM Edited by Jason E. Vickers and
Jennifer Woodruff Tait

ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN RELIGIONS Edited by Barbette Stanley Spaeth

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE Edited by Colin McAllister

AUGUSTINE'S CITY OF GOD Edited by David Vincent Meconi

AUGUSTINE'S "CONFESSIONS" Edited by Tarmo Toom

KARL BARTH Edited by John Webster

THE BIBLE, 2nd Edition Edited by Bruce Chilton

THE BIBLE AND LITERATURE Edited by Calum Carmichael

BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION Edited by John Barton

BLACK THEOLOGY Edited by Dwight N. Hopkins and Edward P. Antonio

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER Edited by John de Gruchy

JOHN CALVIN Edited by Donald K. McKim

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE Edited by Colin Gunton

CHRISTIAN ETHICS Edited by Robin Gill

CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM Edited by Amy Hollywood and Patricia Z. Beckman

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY Edited by Charles Taliaferro and
Chad V. Meister

CHRISTIAN POLITICAL THEOLOGY Edited by Craig Hovey and Elizabeth Phillips

CHRISTIANITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT Edited by Alexander J. B. Hampton and
Douglas Hedley

THE CISTERIAN ORDER Edited by Mette Birkedal Bruun

CLASSICAL ISLAMIC THEOLOGY Edited by Tim Winter

JONATHAN EDWARDS Edited by Stephen J. Stein

EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY Edited by Timothy Larsen and Daniel J. Treier

(continued after index)

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-108-49501-1 — The Cambridge Companion to Christianity and the Environment

Edited by Alexander J. B. Hampton, Douglas Hedley

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
CHRISTIANITY AND THE
ENVIRONMENT

Edited by

Alexander J. B. Hampton

University of Toronto

Douglas Hedley

University of Cambridge



Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-108-49501-1 — The Cambridge Companion to Christianity and the Environment

Edited by Alexander J. B. Hampton, Douglas Hedley

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108495011

DOI: 10.1017/9781108860666

© Cambridge University Press 2022

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NAMES: Hampton, Alexander J. B., author. | Hedley, Douglas, author.

TITLE: The Cambridge companion to Christianity and the environment / Alexander Hampton, University of Toronto, Douglas Hedley, University of Cambridge.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY, USA : Cambridge University Press, 2022. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2021059306 | ISBN 9781108495011 (hardback) | ISBN

9781108816823 (paperback) | ISBN 9781108860666 (ebook)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Ecology – Religious aspects – Christianity. | Human ecology – Religious aspects – Christianity. | Creation. | Ecotheology.

Classification: LCC BT695.5 .H3535 2022 | DDC 261.8/8–dc23/eng/20220204

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021059306>

ISBN 978-1-108-49501-1 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-81682-3 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

List of Figures page vii
List of Contributors viii
Preface xi

I Introduction I
ALEXANDER J. B. HAMPTON

Part I *Concepts*

2 Naturalism, Supernaturalism, and Our Concern
for Nature 17
FIONA ELLIS
3 From Disenchantment to Enchantment: Mind, Nature, and
the Divine Spirit 31
JÖRG LAUSTER
4 Human and Nonhuman Animals from Secular and Sacred
Perspectives 48
CHARLES TALIAFERRO
5 Anthropocentrism, Biocentrism, Stewardship and
Co-Creation 63
ROBIN ATTFIELD
6 Participation and Nature in Christian Theology 80
ANDREW DAVISON
7 The Book of Nature 96
JACOB HOLSINGER SHERMAN

Part II *Histories*

8 Environmental Perspectives in Ancient Greek Philosophy
and Religion 115
CRYSTAL ADDEY
9 Medieval Nature and the Environment 134
KELLIE ROBERTSON

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-108-49501-1 — The Cambridge Companion to Christianity and the Environment

Edited by Alexander J. B. Hampton, Douglas Hedley

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

vi *Contents*

- 10 Natural Philosophy in Early Modernity 150

NATHAN LYONS

- 11 Protestantism, Environmentalism, and Limits to
Growth 163

MARK STOLL

- 12 Romanticism, Transcendentalism, and Ecological
Thought 181

LAURA DASSOW WALLS

- 13 Contemporary Religious Ecology 197

SEAN J. McGRATH

Part III *Engagements*

- 14 The Sublime and Wonder 217

EMILY BRADY

- 15 Religious Traditions and Ecological Knowledge 231

MICHAEL S. NORTHCOTT

- 16 Venerating Earth: Three Sacramental Perspectives 247

JAME SCHAEFER

- 17 Nature and Aesthetics: Methexis, Mimēsis and Poiēsis 263

ALEXANDER J. B. HAMPTON

- 18 Sophia and the World Soul 286

DOUGLAS HEDLEY

- 19 Creation and Gender: A Theological Appraisal 303

WILLEMEN OTTEN

Index 319

Figures

- 1.1 Giovanni di Paolo di Grazia, *The Creation of the World and the Expulsion from Paradise*, 1445 page 2
- 1.2 Giovanni di Paolo di Grazia, *Paradise*, 1445 3
- 9.1 Nature with a flowering sceptre, surrounded by planets and stars, in a copy of Aristotle's *Physics*, 1275–1300, Harley MS 3487, f. 16v 143
- 17.1 Lawren Harris, *Algoma Country*, 1920–21 274
- 17.2 Lawren Harris, *Lake Superior Sketch XIII*, 1923 274
- 17.3 Lawren Harris, *Baffin Island Mountains*, 1931 275
- 17.4 Hildegard of Bingen, the melisma on divinorum in *O nobilissima viriditas*, 2017 279
- 17.5 The pinnacles of the Sagrada Família, here under construction, burst into fruit 281
- 17.6 The arboreal columns and foliate ceiling of the Sagrada Família 282
- 17.7 Sagrada Família exterior 282

Contributors

Crystal Addey is a lecturer in the Department of Classics at University College Cork. She is the author of *Divination and Theurgy in Neoplatonism: Oracles of the Gods* (Routledge, 2014) and has published on the connections between ancient philosophy and Mediterranean religious traditions, women and ancient philosophy, and ancient philosophical approaches towards the natural world and the environment.

Robin Attfield is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at Cardiff University. He has contributed to journals including *The Heythrop Journal*, *Inquiry*, *Mind*, *Philosophy*, and *Religious Studies*. His books include *God and The Secular* (University College Cardiff Press, 1976), *The Ethics of Environmental Concern* (University of Georgia Press, 1983 and 1991), *Value, Obligation and Meta-Ethics* (Brill, 1995 and 2019), *The Ethics of the Global Environment* (Edinburgh University Press, 1999 and 2015), *Wonder, Value and God* (Routledge, 2017), and the textbooks *Ethics: An Overview* (Bloomsbury, 2012) and *Environmental Ethics* (Oxford University Press, 2003 and 2014).

Emily Brady is Professor in the Department of Philosophy at Texas A&M University. Her research interests span aesthetics, environmental philosophy, and eighteenth-century philosophy. She has authored or co-edited seven books, including *Aesthetics of the Natural Environment* (Edinburgh University Press, 2003), *The Sublime in Modern Philosophy: Aesthetics, Ethics, and Nature* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), and *Between Nature and Culture: The Aesthetics of Modified Environments* (with Isis Brook and Jonathan Prior, Rowman and Littlefield, 2018).

Laura Dassow Walls is the William P. and Hazel B. White Professor of English at the University of Notre Dame, where she teaches nineteenth-century American literature, particularly American Transcendentalism and the history of ecological thought. Her books include *Henry David Thoreau: A Life* (Chicago University Press, 2017), *The Passage to Cosmos: Alexander von Humboldt and the Shaping of America* (Chicago University Press, 2009), and *Emerson's Life in Science: The Culture of Truth* (Cornell University Press, 2003).

Andrew Davison is Starbridge Senior Lecturer in Theology and Natural Science at the University of Cambridge and Fellow in Theology and Dean of Chapel at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. He works at the interface between Christian theology, philosophy, and the natural sciences. His publications include

List of Contributors ix

Participation in God: A Study in Christian Doctrine and Metaphysics (Cambridge University Press, 2019) and *Why Sacraments?* (SPCK, 2013).

Fiona Ellis is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Roehampton. Her most recent monograph is *God, Value, and Nature* (Oxford University Press, 2014), and she has published on a variety of subjects including the philosophy of love and desire, the meaning of life, and the nature of religious understanding. She is the editor of *New Models of Religious Understanding* (Oxford University Press, 2017) and is working on a monograph entitled *The End of Desire: Meaning, Nihilism, and God*.

Alexander J. B. Hampton is Assistant Professor of Religion at the University of Toronto, specialising in metaphysics, poetics, and nature. He is the author of *Romanticism and the Re-Invention of Modern Religion* (Cambridge University Press, 2019) and editor of *Pandemic, Ecology and Theology: Perspectives on COVID-19* (Routledge, 2020) and *Christian Platonism: A History* (Cambridge University Press, 2021). He is currently writing a book on the metaphysics of participation and ecology.

Douglas Hedley is Professor of the Philosophy of Religion at the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge and Fellow of Clare College, Cambridge. His publications include a trilogy on the religious imagination (*Living Forms of the Imagination*, Bloomsbury, 2008; *Sacrifice Imagined*, Bloomsbury, 2011; *The Iconic Imagination*, Bloomsbury, 2016), and a monograph entitled *Coleridge, Philosophy and Religion: Aids to Reflection and the Mirror of the Spirit* (Cambridge University Press, 2000). *The History of Religious Imagination in Christian Platonism: Exploring the Philosophy of Douglas Hedley*, edited by Christian Hengstmann, was published in 2021.

Jörg Lauster is Professor for Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion at Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. From 1999 to 2005 he was Assistant Professor in Mainz and from 2006 to 2015 he was Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion in Marburg. His publications include: *Die Erlösungslehre Marsilio Ficinos* (De Gruyter, 1998), *Gott und das Glück* (Gütersloher, 2005), and *Die Verzauberung der Welt: Eine Kulturgeschichte des Christentums* (C. H. Beck, 2014, 2020).

Nathan Lyons is Lecturer in Philosophy in the School of Philosophy and Theology at the University of Notre Dame Australia. His research focuses on the philosophy of nature and the history of philosophy. His recent monograph, *Signs in the Dust: A Theory of Natural Culture and Cultural Nature* (Oxford University Press, 2019), retrieves medieval semiotic theories to develop a continuist account of nature and culture.

Sean J. McGrath is Professor of Philosophy and Theology at Memorial University of Newfoundland. He is the author of many works in the philosophy of religion, including *The Philosophical Foundations of the Late Schelling: The Turn to the Positive* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021), *Thinking Nature: An Essay in Negative Ecology* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021), and *The Dark Ground of Spirit: Schelling and the Unconscious* (Routledge, 2012).

x *List of Contributors*

Michael S. Northcott lectures at the Indonesian Consortium of Religious Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada, and is Emeritus Professor of Ethics at the University of Edinburgh. He has authored *The Environment and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), *An Angel Directs the Storm: Apocalyptic Religion and American Empire* (I.B. Tauris, 2004), *A Moral Climate: The Ethics of Global Warming* (Orbis Books, 2007), *A Political Theology of Climate Change* (SPCK, 2014), and *Place, Ecology and the Sacred* (Bloomsbury, 2015).

Willemien Otten is the Dorothy Grant Maclear Professor of History of Christianity and Theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where she also directs the Martin Marty Center for the Public Understanding of Religion. She has published in the area of early and medieval Christianity with a focus on the themes of anthropology and cosmology. Her latest book is *Thinking Nature and the Nature of Thinking: From Eriugena to Emerson* (Stanford University Press, 2020).

Kellie Robertson is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Maryland. She is the author of *Nature Speaks: Medieval Literature and Aristotelian Philosophy* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), among other books. Her current research project, entitled *Yesterday's Weather: The Prehistory of Climate Change*, examines how medieval and early modern societies depicted the shock of the natural disaster and how such representations continue to influence the stories we tell ourselves about climate today.

Jame Schaefer is Professor of Systematic Theology and Ethics at Marquette University in Milwaukee, where she focuses on constructively relating theology, the natural sciences, and technologies to yield ethical principles for living responsibly in the world today. She enjoys team teaching with scientists to demonstrate how our different disciplines can contribute to a comprehensive and meaningful understanding of issues at their boundaries – the origin and nature of the universe, life, and human consciousness.

Jacob Holsinger Sherman is Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the California Institute of Integral Studies. He has taught previously at King's College London and the University of Cambridge, and his publications include *Partakers of the Divine: Contemplation and the Practice of Philosophy* (Fortress Press, 2014).

Mark Stoll is a professor in the Department of History at Texas Tech University. His work has examined the influence of religious traditions on attitudes towards nature and the environment. His most recent book is *Inherit the Holy Mountain: Religion and the Rise of American Environmentalism* (Oxford University Press, 2015). He is currently writing an environmental history of capitalism.

Charles Taliaferro is a professor of philosophy at St. Olaf College where he holds the Oscar and Gertrude Boe Distinguished Chair. His publications include contributions to philosophy of religion, philosophy of mind, aesthetics, environmental ethics, and the history of ideas. He is currently co-editing a four-volume *Encyclopedia of Philosophy of Religion* with Stewart Goetz (Wiley-Blackwell, 2021) involving 350 scholars from around the world.

Preface

A range of developments – including the growth of the environmental humanities, recent critiques of secularism and the development of the notion of post-secularity, and the so-called ontological turn in cultural history and anthropology – have all renewed interest in the way that religions, and particularly Christianity, have shaped our collective relationship with, and understanding of, the natural environment. This Cambridge Companion addresses this renewed interest in an interdisciplinary manner. It brings together contributors from the disciplines of Classics, English, environmental ethics, literary studies, history, the history and philosophy of science, philosophy, religious studies, and theology. The chapters that make up this volume offer original contributions to this fascinating and important topic that are accessible to university-level students and readers.

This volume enters a complex and often challenging field. Its intent is to offer a focused engagement concentrating upon the concepts, history, and capacities of Western Christianity, precisely because this legacy stands at the centre of our present environmental challenge. In doing so, this volume aims to add depth, nuance, and complexity concerning the multifaceted legacy of Western Christianity and its inheritance to the much broader global discussion concerning the environmental crisis, a conversation that requires the participation of a great diversity of traditions and voices.

The authors of this volume met for two workshops during its composition. At these meetings they all offered their enthusiasm, collegiality, and concern, helping to create an energising and truly collective contribution concerning a topic about which they all care greatly. This volume would not have been possible without their efforts. These meetings were supported by a grant from the Social Sciences and Research Council of Canada.

At Cambridge University Press, Beatrice Rehl has been a kind supporter of the project and an invaluable guide. The volume would not

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-108-49501-1 — The Cambridge Companion to Christianity and the Environment

Edited by Alexander J. B. Hampton, Douglas Hedley

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

xii Preface

have come to fruition without the dedicated and essential contributions of Annalea Thiessen, to whom all of the contributors, and especially the editor, owe a great debt. Thank you to Nicole Percifield for her kindness and support throughout, and to Richard and Leanne Percifield for offering a peaceful, birdsong-filled haven away from the din of the city for the completion of this volume. This book is for Elspeth.