Announcements

IRAS
The Institute on Religion in an Age of Science

Purpose—IRAS (www.iras.org) is an independent society of scientists, philosophers, religion scholars, theologians, and others who want to understand the role of religion in our dynamic scientific world.

Activities—Each year IRAS organizes a week-long conference. Topics are selected to be relevant to current scientific thinking and to fundamental religious questions. (IRAS members pay a reduced rate for conference registration.)

IRAS organizes events at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), and IRAS members help organize sessions at the American Academy of Religion (AAR). IRAS has sponsored more than two hundred fifty meetings at universities, colleges, and theological schools.

IRAS members may also join the lively online discussion group, and thus learn about new developments and publications, express their views, and become familiar with those of others.

Publications—Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science and IRAS Newsletter. IRAS members receive subscriptions to these publications free of additional charge.

Special Relationship—Affiliated Society, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

Membership Dues

Membership is very attractive for those interested in Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science. The membership fee for IRAS for individual members, including Zygon, online and print, is lower than the US rate for an individual subscription to Zygon! An even lower rate is available for those who prefer to have Zygon online only! And new members receive an additional discount in their first year of membership! There is also a discount for student members! For full details, see www.iras.org/membership.html.

Invitation to Join—You are most welcome to join IRAS, the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science. For further information and an application write to:

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Climate change is a “wicked problem” with causes and consequences in economic, ecological, ethical, and technological realms. As climate change continues to alter our planet, how can we use this monumental change as an opportunity for societal and spiritual transformation?

“Uncertainty and ambiguity emerge here as resources, because they force us to confront those things we really want—not safety in some distant and contested future, but justice and self-understanding now.” – Sheila Jananoff

What is the way forward? We must confront climate change as a planetary community. It affects every institution, society, public policy, culture, and ecosystem into the foreseeable future. Every possible course of action intertwines with issues of international and intra-societal economic and social justice. Climate change is a multigenerational, transnational “wicked problem” with no single, simple solution.

Tasks to be addressed:

- Better understand the current scientific expectations for the future of the climate and its impact on our children and on all life.
- Take stock of what we can or can’t control in terms of the consequences of human action.
- Deal with our grief, hope, and desires in the midst of great losses and shifts that will occur.
- Recognize the limits and capacities of our evolutionary heritage. Think beyond our current economic and political identities into new ways of imagining and living into the future.
- Move away from anthropocentric thinking and learn to realize our human purposes as part of a finite, planetary community.
- Use the resources of guiding wisdom from the world’s religious and philosophical traditions.
- Formulate compelling narratives of creation care to enable us as persons, groups, and cultures to see what needs to be done and have the courage to do it.
- Use new understandings of how we should live to bring about social and economic justice for all in a sustainable earth community.

Coming to terms with what the “wicked problem” of rapid climate change might do for us will take creativity, imagination, and complex interdisciplinary thinking of organizations like IRAS.

CHAPLAIN: Mary E. Westfall has been Senior Minister at Community Church, UCC, Durham, NH, since 1999, and for eleven years was the Executive Director of the United Campus Ministry and Chaplain to the University of New Hampshire. Her commitment to the environment, and her interest in religion and science, led her to pursue a PhD at the University of New Hampshire Natural Resources Program. Mary taught Ecology and Values and related courses in the Philosophy Department, and in 1996 co-edited The Greening of Faith: God, the Environment and the Good Life, republished in 2016 by the University of New England Press, with a new foreword by Bill McKibben.
CALL FOR PAPERS:

In addition to invited speakers such as those above we also invite the submission of paper or poster proposals. Proposals of no more than two hundred and fifty words should be sent by email to Paulene Candaux before February 1, 2016, pcandaux@gmail.com. Please put “IRAS Proposal—[your last name]” in the subject line of the email. Proposals will be blind reviewed by a three-person committee. There will be full and partial scholarships for the top papers.

For more information, visit the IRAS website www.iras.org.
To register, please contact Marion Griswold, Registrar, at mbgriswold@yahoo.com.
For instructions on how to register online, go to www.iras.org and click on 2017 CONFERENCE and then on REGISTER FOR IRAS CONFERENCE.