

2023 Carolinas Regional Convivium

Call for Papers

The Inklings & the Great Conversation: Friendship through Literature

Dates: February 24-25, 2023
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Hal Poe, Charles Colson University Professor of Faith & Culture at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee
Location: Davenant House, Landrum, South Carolina

In the first quarter of each year The Davenant Institute hosts a convivium on literature. The theme for 2023 is “The Inklings and the Great Conversation: Friendship Increased through Literature.” We are pleased to have Dr. Harry Lee Poe as our keynote speaker. Dr. Poe grew up in Greenville, SC. He is a professor at Union University. His most recent book, *The Completion of C. S. Lewis (1945–1963): From War to Joy*, was published this Fall. It is the final volume in Dr. Poe’s trilogy on Lewis’s life. Among his other writings, contributions and edited works, *The Inklings of Oxford: C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Their Friends*, is of special interest for this upcoming convivium. You can become more acquainted with his endeavors on his [faculty page](#) or [books page](#).

A core motivation for The Davenant Institute is to bring the strengthening goods of Christian wisdom to all in its reach. This literature event continues to be one among many ways we benefit from wisdom treasured through written words. C.S. Lewis noted that “In great literature, I become a thousand different men but still remain myself” (*An Experiment in Criticism*). To learn to see things from another’s point of view or to linger on their contemplations of the good, true or beautiful moves us from acquaintance to friendship. In this convivium we explore ways that literature brings old friends together, helps us make new friends and continues the long friendship of minds from ancient times into the present and for the future.

One of the unique features of the Davenant way is that we mingle together as peers regardless of level of education or other status markers. Students as well as professors may submit a proposal for a paper presentation. In addition to the keynote presentations by Dr. Poe there will be other paper presentations on the conference theme. Paper proposals should reflect a serious and clear articulation of an idea related to the conference theme. If you are interested in submitting a paper proposal please note the following guidelines. A list of prompts are provided below.

Deadline for submittal: Midnight ET on January 31, 2023

Prompts (*not intended to be exhaustive*):

- How has friendship had a vital function in a particular genre?
- How has friendship had a vital function in a particular period of literature?
- What reading skills are essential for making friends with authors of the past?
- How did friendship among the Inklings improve their individual works?
- What continuing benefits are there in Aristotle's views on friendship? Plato?
- What is the Great Conversation and why does it still matter for the present?
- What is friendship in *The Lord of the Rings*?
- What is friendship in *The Chronicles of Narnia*?
- What biblical themes on loyalty continue into the writings of the patristic and/or medieval periods?
- How are friendship *and* key virtues exemplified in great literature?
- What can be learned from Lewis's thoughts in *The Four Loves* concerning friendship, loyalty and love for humanity?
- How would political engagement improve if those with opposing affiliations read the same or similar literature on friendship or altruism?
- How is conviviality among strangers used as a heuristic in literature for those characters working to resolve a major conflict or even war?
- What friendships during or after the Reformation were a catalyst for producing literature that helped to reshape their societies in a classical Protestant form?

Format and requirements:

- Please submit your proposal in either a Word doc or Google doc.
- At the top state your name, date submitted, occupation, address, email
- Schools attended after high school
- Church affiliation
- You should be registered to attend before submitting a paper proposal
- Body of paper proposal: start with a short title or thesis to your paper. Submit 200 to 300 words explaining the thesis.
- Deadline: midnight ET of January 31, 2023

To **submit** a proposal or for questions please contact the following:

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