



Marion E. Wade Center Friends of the Wade

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Lewis Library Receives Conservation Treatment

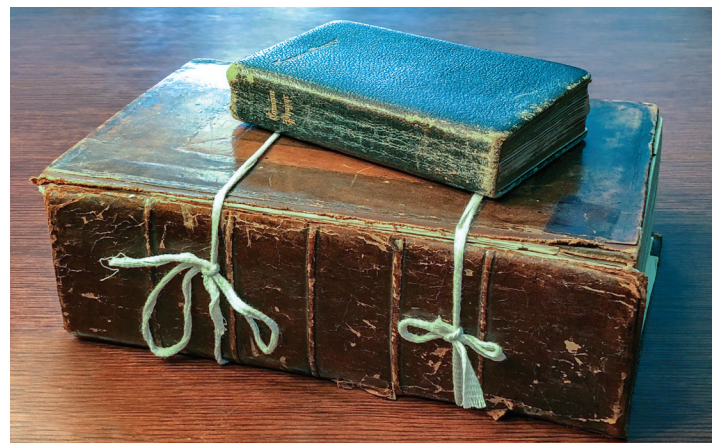
Did you know that the Wade Center holds 2,490 books that were formerly owned by C.S. Lewis in his personal library? About one third of these titles includes some type of underlining or annotation by Lewis, which has proved particularly valuable to those interested in studying his reading habits, his thoughts on a particular author or subject, or simply to gain further insight into his diverse interests and singular personality.

Some volumes, however, are clearly worse for the wear and almost too fragile to handle. Now thanks to the generosity of Friends of the Wade Larry and Anita Maxwell, 389 of these irreplaceable books are being professionally treated at The Conservation Center in Chicago to increase their functionality and durability.

The bulk of the Wade Center's collection of books from Lewis's library was acquired in 1986 from Wroxton College in Oxfordshire, England, during the tenure of Wade Center Director Dr. Lyle Dorsett. The volumes had been originally purchased after Lewis's death in 1963 by Wroxton to be used by their undergraduates.

It is understandable that in the fifty-six years since his death, Lewis's books have received considerable handling by interested researchers and readers because of the notations he often made in them. They also sustained wear-and-tear during Lewis's own lifetime. The fragile nature of these volumes is underscored by the fact that the oldest book in Lewis's library dates back to 1665.

In an effort to care for these unique books so



that they will be available for future generations, Wade staff pursued and received a Preservation Assistance Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to underwrite the costs of assessing the conservation needs on selected books from Lewis's library.

This assessment was carried out by a professional conservator from The Conservation Center in spring 2018, when she spent a week examining 420 volumes and making detailed professional recommendations on what was required to refurbish each one. The books deemed to need restoration were delivered to The Conservation Center in May 2019 and will be retrieved in batches once they are treated.

We are deeply grateful to the Maxwells, who kindly committed to providing the funds needed to fulfill the entire conservation project. Their generosity benefits both current and future researchers and casual readers who will be able to continue interacting with this rich collection, learning about the myriad stories that still linger among the pages of these treasured volumes. **W**

Left: Archivist Laura Schmidt examines a damaged book, The Foundations of Belief by A. Balfour (1895); Above: C.S. Lewis's family Bible (1839) and his Book of Common Prayer (1901)





DIRECT FROM THE DIRECTORS

Crystal and David C. Downing

Inauguration! This word captures our experience as the newly-appointed co-directors of the Wade Center in numerous ways:

- Our first year of living in Chicagoland... and shivering through a polar vortex.
- Crystal's inaugural lecture on March 4 as Co-Holder of the Marion E. Wade Chair of Christian Thought, explaining how unpublished papers at the Wade reveal the contribution cinema made to Sayers's Christian thought. (David's inaugural lecture as Chair Co-Holder will be Thursday, November 14, 2019.)
- David's inaugural experience of teaching a semester-long Christian Fantasy course to enthusiastic Wheaton undergraduate students.
- Inaugurating the Wade Center Podcast. (We are delighted to report that since mid-December, Wade podcasts have been downloaded over 5,000 times by people in over 47 countries.)
- A revised purpose statement for the Wade that highlights cultural engagement and spiritual formation, and a new Wade motto—both of which are displayed on the newly revamped Wade Center website.

Our most emotionally satisfying inauguration, however, has been in regards to budding friendships with Wade staff, board members, researchers, and donors.

You, the **Friends of the Wade**, have played a significant role in making all this possible. Thank you for joining us on a journey that looks with hope toward that final inauguration at the throne of Christ, the author and finisher of our faith.

Updating and Enhancing

When the Wade Center was founded over fifty years ago, the priority was to collect and preserve both published and unpublished writings by our authors before they were lost to history. As the Collection grew over the decades, the priority in recent years has shifted from acquiring materials to that of emphasizing the desire that Dr. Clyde Kilby had from the onset: using the Wade resources to impact individuals spiritually.

The purpose statement on our website, however, continued to stress the collecting and preserving of resources. A more engaging and active statement was needed to capture why the Wade is relevant today, and to invite potential visitors, researchers, and donors to visit and invest in our work.

After consulting with Wade staff and Board members, a new purpose statement was written along with a short motto drawn from a statement Barbara Reynolds, late goddaughter and scholar of Dorothy L. Sayers, offered at the Wade building's dedication in 2001.

“A living literary center of scholarly, artistic, and ongoing spiritual renewal”

PURPOSE

The Marion E. Wade Center promotes cultural engagement and spiritual formation by offering a collection of resources available nowhere else in the world. We emphasize the ongoing relevance of seven British Christian authors who provide a distinctive blend of intellect, imagination, and faith: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Dorothy L. Sayers, George MacDonald, G.K. Chesterton, Owen Barfield, and Charles Williams. The Wade Center implements these goals by

- Assisting scholars in their study of unique materials by and about these seven authors in order to generate new understandings;
- Sharing insights with a broader audience through our numerous programs and publications;
- Supporting artistic works inspired by our authors;
- Welcoming visitors to our museum.

MOTTO

A living literary center of scholarly, artistic, and ongoing spiritual renewal **W**

Engaging the Next Generation



C.S. Lewis once remarked, “When I became a man I put away childish things, including the fear of childishness and the desire to be very grown up.” In that spirit and with the desire to introduce the next generation to our authors, the Wade Center offers programming geared towards children every spring over the local school district’s Spring Break. This year during the last week of March, 650 visitors—children and their families—enjoyed a story time reading of George MacDonald’s *The Light Princess* and a dramatic adaptation of *Prince Caspian* by C.S. Lewis.

The Light Princess is a book-length fairy tale by MacDonald first published in 1893. A 30-minute abridgment was read aloud to over 75 children and their caregivers by Wade Office Assistant Hope Grant. One grandmother wrote in our visitor book afterwards, “Brought 13 grandkids & 3 moms to Story Time....great!” And from a child, “We love how Ms. Hope Grant changed her voice for different characters!”

Prince Caspian marked the sixth annual drama adapted and performed by the Wheaton College Tolkien Society (WCTS) in collaboration with the Wade Center. Twenty-one students from the WCTS, overseen by Wade Archivist and WCTS Staff Adviser Laura Schmidt, participated in writing the script, preparing the scenery and sound effects, and performing the 45-minute play in Bakke Auditorium on three different days to over 570 guests. Comments in our guest book included, “We have always loved coming to the society’s plays,” and, “The play was really good! And funny!”

In making these timeless tales from our authors available to the community through performances and readings, the Wade Center hopes to inspire the hearts and minds of the next generation, while also encouraging families to read together at home. In these ways and others, the Wade Center invites all ages to participate in the transformative power of story. **W**



Upper left: Hope Grant reads *The Light Princess* to captivated children; Above: Wheaton College Tolkien Society performs *Prince Caspian*

WE HEARD YOU!

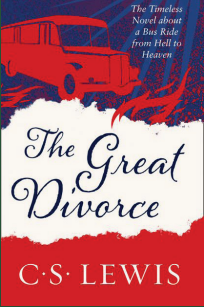
We had an overwhelming response to our donor survey that was sent out last fall: a 56% return rate! If you took the time to respond, **thank you**.

We had been wondering if, in this day of electronic communication, this print newsletter was being read. Over 95% of the responses indicated that it was indeed being read cover-to-cover, or at least skimmed, every time. The responses also indicated that, overall, the

newsletter’s length, layout, content, and images are ‘excellent’ or ‘good.’ And over half of the respondents prefer to read Wade news via this print newsletter.

The survey results provided many insights but two that stood out to us are that we need to continue with the print newsletter, and we do not need to change the newsletter too much.

So what you see today is a newsletter that hopefully feels familiar but just a little fresher. **W**



book talk

C.S. Lewis
The Great Divorce

What if the inhabitants of

hell were offered the chance to spend a day in heaven, with an option to stay? Don't you think most all of them would jump at the opportunity? Not necessarily, says C.S. Lewis. In his classic fantasy *The Great Divorce*, Lewis surmises that many visitors might find reasons to prefer the rule of Self over the chance of salvation.

In his book, Lewis makes it clear at the outset that he does not intend to paint an actual picture of the afterlife, either heaven or hell. Rather, he wants to dramatize all the detours and obstacles that people create for themselves in their spiritual journey, decisions and habits of mind and soul that move them either closer to or further from their Maker. As Lewis puts it, "There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, in the end, 'Thy will be done.'"

Dancing to *The Great Divorce*

Early last fall, the Wade received news of a ballet inspired by C. S. Lewis's *The Great Divorce*. Because such an event harmonized with the **Muriel Fuller Endowment for**

the Imagination and the Arts,

inaugurated by the Wade in 2018, Crystal Downing and Marjorie Lamp Mead asked to see a rehearsal of the production. They and two colleagues familiar with ballet were stunned not only by the power of the performance, but also by the



troupe's Christian vision. Inspired by Romans 5:8, "God proves his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," the dancers call themselves Ballet 5:8.

The Wade is delighted to announce that as part of its Muriel Fuller Endowment and in partnership with the Wheaton College Artist Series, Ballet 5:8

will be performing their Lewis-inspired ballet, *The Space in Between*, in Edman Chapel on **Friday, November 1, 2019.**

The ballet will be preceded with a talk on *The Great Divorce* by David C. Downing in Bakke Auditorium at 4:00 p.m. After the performance, the Wade will host a

reception for dancers and audience members, hoping to spread word about the Wade's mission to people who are interested in the arts. We hope you can join us! **W**

NOTE THIS!

Dr. Matt Milliner, Associate Professor of Art History, will serve as lecturer for the 2019-20 **Ken and Jean Hansen Lectureship**. In his 3-part series, titled *Tour of Turtle Island*, he will use insights from G.K. Chesterton as a guide to understanding the broad sweep of Native American art.

Lecture dates are October 3, February 6, and March 29 at 7:00 p.m. in the Bakke Auditorium. Please visit our website for more information. **W**

