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# THURSDAY, April 11

## 9-11:30am

### Registration

Prince Conference Center, Fireside Room

## 9:50-10:10am

### Chapel Service—Sacred Self Care

Dr. Chanequa Walker-Barnes

Festivalgoers are invited to join the Calvin community at this chapel service.

Chapel

## 9am-5pm

### Exhibit Hall open

Prince Conference Center, Great Hall



## 9-11am

### COFFEE SERVICE

Prince Conference Center,  
Fireside Room

## 12pm

### Opening Celebration

Mitali Perkins

Rebecca Sheir & Eric Shimelonis

with Gregory Elzinga, Interim President,  
Calvin University

Calvin Gospel Choir

Van Noord Arena

## 1:30pm

### BOOK SIGNINGS

Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby

Adam Day

Diane Mehta

Mitali Perkins

Rebecca Sheir



# 1:45pm

## Neurodivergence & Storytelling

**Daniel Bowman, Jr.**

Bowman draws from his career, the work of contemporary autistic writers, recent scholarship, and artists from the past who would likely be considered autistic today. He explores how neurodivergence can shape literature in unique ways, what we can learn from autistic artists, and why it matters.

Introduced by David Urban, English Department, Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

## The Knife Between God's Teeth: Anya Silver's Iconography of Faith

**Andrew Silver & Lauren K. Watel**

Silver and Watel, co-editors of Anya Krugovoy Silver's final volume of poetry, converse about Silver's turbulent relationship with God, her comfort in the world of the departed, and her sacramental approach to the present moment. Joining Silver and Watel are guests who explore what Jill Peláez Baumgaertner calls the "stunning evidence of witness and lament" in Silver's poems.

Introduced by Rose Postma, Academic Enrichment Center, Dordt University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

## Mentioned but Not Heard: Writing the Marginalized Voice

**Diane Glancy**

What historical character have you wanted to hear from? What Biblical characters could you bring to life? Glancy finds similarities in Native American voices and the voices of Biblical women, finding ways to highlight erased accounts and to explore what they could have said. Here, she gives a perusal of the tools needed to give voice to those who did not have a chance to speak.

Introduced by Carol Bremer-Bennett, World Renew

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

## Taste and See—Becoming a Writer Who Lasts

**Margaret Feinberg**

Writers, some say, are lucky to have one book inside them. But Feinberg explores how writers can shape their lives around practices that produce rich, fresh content year after year, decade after decade—that is, how to taste and see the goodness of God and translate that to your readers for a lifetime.

Introduced by Barbara Bjelland, Porter Hills Village

*Chapel*

## Opening the Floodgates: Retelling Ancient Stories

**Sarah Blake, Kent H. Dixon, Kevin Dixon**

Dixon, Dixon, and Blake converse about the challenges of retelling canonical texts from new and sometimes unexpected angles.

Moderated and Introduced by Karen Saupe, English Department Emerita, Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

## Finding Our Voice in the Psalms

**Leslie Leyland Fields**

The psalmists penned intimate soul-deep prayers with God. But their prayers needn't replace our own stories, prayers, and conversations; rather, they can inspire and guide us in writing our own. In this session, Fields explores writing into/out of a psalm, discovering our own voices, and entering into holy dialogue with the living God.

Introduced by Kathleen Merz, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

### 2:45pm

**BOOK SIGNINGS**

*Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

**Sarah Blake**

**Daniel Bowman, Jr.**

**Kent H. & Kevin Dixon**

**Margaret Feinberg**

**Leslie Leyland Fields**



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# THURSDAY

## 3pm

### A Conversation between Ruth Graham & Sarah Hurwitz

A speechwriter/author and a journalist from different faith backgrounds converse about the craft of writing in someone else's voice, in one's own voice, and in journalistic contexts. This session also explores the ongoing rise in antisemitism as a case study from both journalistic and personal perspectives. Moderated by Daniel Silliman, *Christianity Today*  
 Introduced by Kevin den Dulk, Associate Provost, Calvin University  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

### Literary Magic in the Writings of C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and J.K. Rowling

**Matthew Dickerson**

*Underwritten by the Mellema Program in Western American Studies in honor of Dickerson's book, Voices of Rivers*

In this look at the varying portrayals of magic in Middle-earth, Narnia, and Hogwarts, Dickerson explores the broader topic of enchantment, helping readers understand why fantasy is such a rich genre for Christian readers. Introduced by Doug Sonheim, English Department, Calvin University  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

### A Conversation between Amy Julia Becker & Hilary Yancey

Becker and Yancey converse about the stories we tell, for good or ill, about people who have disabilities and those that care for them. Moderated by Kevin Timpe, Philosophy Department, Calvin University  
 Introduced by Lisa Kooy, Center for Student Success, Calvin University  
*Chapel*



## 2:30-4:30pm

### COFFEE SERVICE

*Covenant Fine Arts Center,  
 Lower West Lobby  
 Prince Conference Center,  
 Fireside Room*

### How to be Half, Mixed, Everything, Both, Sort Of

**Ayşe Papatya Bucak**

We've all probably felt the benefit of boundaries and definitions at times. Constraint can yield originality. But, as writers, it can be equally fruitful to abandon overly prescriptive notions of who we are and what we write. This session will highlight how uncertainty, hybridity, and an open-borders-imagination can liberate and deepen your writing. Introduced by Natalie Rowland  
*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

### A Conversation between Jessica Jacobs & Aviya Kushner

**Jessica Jacobs & Aviya Kushner**

Jacobs and Kushner converse about the inspiration they find in the book of Genesis, focusing on how attention to the particularities of language can help us to be faithful to a text while also making it sound and feel fresh. Moderated and Introduced by Clair Mesick, Religion Department, Calvin University  
*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

### Black Women Writing the Path to Healing

**Dr. Chanequa Walker-Barnes**

For Black women, writing is an act of defiance in a world that prefers their silence. Walker-Barnes explores how Black women's writings on race and gender offer wisdom for all of us about systems of injustice and strategies for survival, resistance, and resilience. Introduced by Kieychia Likely, Center for Intercultural Student Development, Calvin University  
*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

## 4pm

### BOOK SIGNINGS

*Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

- Ayşe Papatya Bucak
- Matthew Dickerson
- Diane Glancy
- Aviya Kushner
- Chanequa Walker-Barnes
- Hilary Yancey

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## 4:15pm

### A Conversation between Jennifer De Leon & Mitali Perkins

In this session, De Leon and Perkins converse about how and why—as readers and writers—we should fearlessly create and curate a beautiful and broad collection of contemporary and classic books for young people.

Moderated by Debbie Visser, Faculty Fellow, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

Introduced by Madeline Witvliet, Hudson-Townsend Student Fellow, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

### Truth's Table Book: Writing with Purpose and Power

#### Truth's Table

In this session, Uwan and Edmondson, who collaborate as Truth's Table, delve into the principles that guided their powerful and prophetic prose in their book, *Truth's Table: Black Women's Musings on Life, Love, and Liberation*. How did they find the courage to share vulnerable yet powerful stories saturated in the gospel? Learn about the surprising obstacles they encountered and how they persevered and triumphed over them all.

Introduced by Marcus Holmes, Marketing & Communications, Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

### Move Slow and Fix Things

#### Rabbi Elan Babchuck

*Underwritten by the Calvin University School of Business*

Thousands of years after the Egyptian Empire fell, today's hierarchical leadership models continue to be shaped by the pyramids that it left behind. Building on years of research, writing, and practice, as well as his own faith, Babchuck argues that there is a better way to lead than with charisma and coercion, and it's much less complicated than we think.

Introduced by Jim Ludema, Dean, School of Business, Calvin University

*Chapel*

### Poetry Reading

#### Adam Day & Diane Mehta

In this reading, Day and Mehta share a selection of their poems.

Introduced by Otto Selles, Department of World Languages (French), Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

### Talking To Strangers: How to Get the Eager, the Reluctant, and Even the Haters to Tell You Something Useful

#### Dean Nelson

Interviewing is one of the most important ways writers (and social workers and doctors and lawyers and pastors and human resource staff, and, really, all of us) get good information. Yet to many, a good interview feels more like luck than skill. In this session, Nelson, who has been doing this for more than 40 years, and who literally wrote the book on it, will show you how to do it right every time.

Introduced by Rick Treur

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

### Writing Through a Fog of Fear: Finding Life-Giving Words in an Alarming Time

#### Marilyn McEntyre

In a year of partisan conflict, when global challenges seem overwhelming, finding life-giving words is difficult. Many contend with deep fears, and speaking out can be costly. It's a time to be "wise as serpents." In this session, McEntyre explores how to write into the moment with clarity and hope.

Introduced by Paul Willis, English Department, Westmont College

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

## 5:30pm

### An Evening with Tracy K. Smith

#### *The Baron Lecture*

Introduced by Noah Toly, Provost, Calvin University

*Van Noord Arena*

## 6:30pm

### BOOK SIGNING

*Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

Tracy K. Smith



## 8:30am

**Truth's Table LIVE—Behind the Book: Sacred Self-Care****Truth's Table with Dr. Chanequa Walker-Barnes**

Pull up a chair and have a seat at the table with Uwan and Edmondson as they sit down with Walker-Barnes to learn the key to sacred self-care, why it matters, and how we honor our bodies. How can we cultivate a “sacred self-care” lifestyle and guard it with all that is within us?

Introduced by Nygil Likely, Chief Diversity Officer, Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

**Curating an Online Literary Community****Anne Bogel**

In this session, Bogel explores the whys and hows of building literary community and championing the work of other artists and creators in what can feel like a crowded marketplace—as well as offering insights about how to invite your audience to do the same.

Introduced by Amanda Matthyse, Hekman Library, Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

**A Jewish Journey in the White House—and Beyond****Sarah Hurwitz**

After years as a political speechwriter for President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama, Hurwitz wrote a book—about Judaism... and no one was more surprised than she was. In this session, she explores her journey of rediscovering her religious tradition as an adult and reflects on how it's shaped her life and career.

Interviewed by David Malone, Hekman Library, Calvin University

Introduced by Joel Westra, Politics & Economics Department, Calvin University

*Chapel*

**Writing Our Way Home from the In-Between of a Cross-Cultural Life****Rachel Pieh Jones**

Jones has been writing about cross-cultural life for twenty years and strongly believes that seeking, telling, and creating stories helps us understand the unfamiliar and find meaning in the familiar. In this session, she explores how writing cultivates the humility, curiosity, and delight necessary for a sense of home when nowhere, or everywhere, feels like home.

Introduced by Mindy Beetham, SIM Global Education

*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

**Stories as Healing****Mary DeMuth**

When we write our honest stories, we often worry about other people: What will our parents think? Our grandparents? Coworkers? Friends? People from our pasts? In this session, DeMuth explores ways for those who are writing scared to move toward authentic truth-telling, offering practical help and hope for anyone navigating the intersection between honesty and trepidation.

Introduced by Amanda Benckhuysen, Safe Church Ministry (CRCNA)

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

**9:30am****BOOK SIGNINGS***Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

Anne Bogel

Mary DeMuth

Sarah Hurwitz

Rachel Pieh Jones

Truth's Table

**9am-5pm****Exhibit Hall open***Prince Conference Center, Great Hall*

# 9:45 am

## The Ecological Imagination: Why Stories Matter

**Fred Bahnson & Matthew Dickerson**

Bahnson and Dickerson converse about why good stories matter, and especially why stories (and art) help shape our embodied lives in a physical world. They discuss how they shape our ecological imaginations, which in turn shape our actions as image bearers of a creative God who has charged us with caring for creation.

Moderated and Introduced by Debra Rienstra, Faculty Fellow, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing  
*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

## What Can Spiritual Poetry Teach Us About Living?

**Kaveh Akbar**

The search for the divine, for faith, for cosmic orientation, has been the great obsession of writers since *Gilgamesh* and the *Mahabharata*. Even today, when irony is the default posture of the public intellectual, many language artists remain relentlessly sincere in their explorations of spiritual yearning (and spiritual doubt). In this session, Akbar will track the ways poets and others navigate faith in their work, beginning in ancient Mesopotamia and moving all the way into contemporary verse by writers like Wisława Szymborska and Lucille Clifton, pondering, from a craft standpoint, how writers are able to wrap language around the great unknowables—doubt, the divine, and the wide, mysterious gulf in between.

Introduced by Susanna Childress Banner, English Department, Hope College  
*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

## A Talkback with Tracy K. Smith

In this session, Smith engages a selection of questions from Festivalgoers.

Moderated by Scott Hoezee, Calvin Seminary & Center for Excellence in Preaching

Introduced by Lisa Hoogeboom, Calvin Theological Seminary

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

## A Conversation between Rabbi Elan Babchuck & Dr. Natasha Sistrunk Robinson

*Underwritten by the Calvin University School of Business*

In this session, Babchuck and Robinson converse about the ways in which language, storytelling, and sacred texts inform the character and development of those who lead.

Moderated and Introduced by Craig Mattson, Faculty Fellow, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

## A Conversation between Katherine Jacobs & Charlotte Jones Voiklis

Jacobs and Voiklis converse about their experiences of curating and cultivating other people's work, sharing the best practices and most helpful perspectives they have acquired through their work as, respectively, an editor and a literary executor.

Moderated and Introduced by Don Hettinga, English Department, Calvin University  
*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

### 10:45am

#### BOOK SIGNINGS

*Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

Kaveh Akbar

Elan Babchuck

Fred Bahnson

Kenneth Kraegel

Dean Nelson



### 8am–1pm

#### COFFEE SERVICE

*Sponsored by Slant Books  
Covenant Fine Arts Center,  
Lower West Lobby  
Prince Conference Center,  
Fireside Room*

11 am

**An Interview with M.T. Anderson**

Interviewed by Joshua Mosey,  
Kent District Library

Introduced by Debbie Visser, Faculty Fellow,  
Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

**A Conversation between  
Ayşe Papatya Bucak &  
Sonya Bilocerkowycz**

Bilocerkowycz and Bucak converse about writing narratives set in places with which many readers from the States are unfamiliar, addressing the ways they seek to widen the readers' perspectives, understandings, and sympathies.

Moderated and Introduced by Cynthia Slagter, Off-Campus Programs/World Languages, Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

**Dante and Virgil:  
The Intensest Rendezvous**

**Diane Mehta**

Mehta reflects on the centrality of the poetic friendship between Dante and Virgil—and the ways that the love it models has strengthened and deepened her own artistic friendships as well as her art.

Introduced by Jennifer Holberg,  
Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

**Isaiah and Power**

**Aviya Kushner**

As a writer who often thinks about Isaiah's incredible ability to convey both anger and comfort, Kushner delves into the roots of her interest in the prophet while also detailing other poets' Isaiah obsessions. In this talk and reading, she explores how her fascination with the poetry of prophecy shaped her debut collection of poems.

Introduced by Susan Felch, English Department Emerita, Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

**Raising up Sons and Daughters  
of Issachar in Complicated Times:  
One Small-Town Bookstore  
Owner's Journey Through  
40 Years of Bookselling**

**Byron Borger**

In this session, Borger—who, with his wife, owns and runs the bookstore Hearts & Minds—explores his life's work: nurturing culturally-aware and mostly Christian readers' habits. He reflects on shifts in culture and publishing trends and on what he's learned over years of trying to put meaningful (and sometimes challenging) books in the right hands.

Introduced by Kendra McNeil,  
We Are LIT Bookstore

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

**11:45am-1:45pm****Lunch Break**

See page 10 for lunch options.

# 1:45pm

## Chumming the Epic: Bringing the Ancient Epic of Gilgamesh into Modern Sensibility

**Kent H. Dixon & Kevin Dixon**

The Dixons converse about the trials and delights of translating the ancient *Epic of Gilgamesh* into a graphic novel intended to resemble the story the ancient Akkadians experienced more than earlier scholarly translations have. In doing so, they explore the range and sophistication of Sin-leqi-unninni's narrative as well as the question of human mortality.

Introduced by Karen Saupe, English Department Emerita, Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

## Once Upon a Story: How Folktales Entertain, Inspire, and Unite Us in a Noisy New World

**Rebecca Sheir**

Full of magical beings, tricky animals, humble heroes and cunning villains, folktales have captivated humanity since time immemorial. As a modern-day storyteller drawing on age-old folklore, Sheir explores why these classic tales still resonate in today's modern, noisy, high-tech world, and act as a bridge between cultures and communities.

Introduced by Lauren Cooper, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

## Writing as Mourning, Writing as Hope: A Conversation about Grief, Lament, and Honesty

**Bryan Bliss & James K. A. Smith**

How do we write for the sorrows of today? What does the world need from writers right now? How can we be attuned to the moment in which we find ourselves, and perhaps especially to what young people endure in this world we've bequeathed them? How can writers bear witness to heartbreak with hope? In this session, Bliss and Smith explore how writers can respond to the sorrows of modernity with both intelligence and compassion.

Moderated and Introduced by Josh Samarco, Admissions, Calvin University

*Chapel*

## An Interview with Suzanne Stabile

Interviewed by Sam Gutierrez, Eugene Peterson Center for Christian Imagination

Introduced by Kelli Scholten, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

## Poetry Reading

**Jessica Jacobs & Lauren K. Watel**

In this reading, Jacobs and Watel share a selection of their poems.

Introduced by Gail Heffner, Emerita Professor, Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

## Little Fire: Family, Blood and Chosen

**Silas House**

House will explore the way his own experiences of being loved by and abandoned by blood kin have shaped his definition of family—and the ways these relationships have emboldened both his doubt and his faith. The novelist will share excerpts from his own work and stories from his travels to shed light on all the ways family can hurt us more deeply than anyone else, on why we need family, and on how our faith can be strengthened by family, both blood and chosen.

Introduced by Craig Hanson, Visual and Performing Arts/Honors Program, Calvin University

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

## 2:45pm

### BOOK SIGNINGS

*Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

Bryan Bliss

Peter Ho Davies

Silas House

Jessica Jacobs

Suzanne Stabile





3pm

**Panel Discussion:  
Imaginative History****Curtis Sittenfeld, Martin Dotterweich,  
Kristine Johnson**

Sittenfeld explores the risks, thrills, and careful calculus of writing fiction about public figures in conversation with a professor of history and a professor of rhetoric and composition.

Introduced by Marlys Admiraal, English Department Emerita, Calvin University  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

**The Politics of Vulnerability:  
How Faith Inspires Us To Be  
"Black Sheep"****Asma T. Uddin**

Uddin, a lawyer specializing in religious liberty, has 15 years experience navigating the national conversation about what religion is, who is protected by religious liberty, and what types of beliefs are worth protecting. In this session, she will discuss how her faith guides her involvement—and helps her overcome obstacles—as she partakes in some of America's most contentious debates.

Introduced by Andrew Mead, Church of the Servant  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

**The Power of Storytelling****Jennifer De Leon**

In this session, editor, author, and professor of creative writing De Leon will draw from her award-winning books to share some of the ways in which "story" can provide crucial insight into the complex intersection of race, class, and educational issues, dispelling myths and showcasing the diversity of our shared community's experiences.

Introduced by Linda Naranjo-Huebl, English Department, Calvin University  
*Chapel*

**2:30-4:30pm****COFFEE SERVICE**

*Sponsored by Slant Books  
Covenant Fine Arts Center,  
Lower West Lobby  
Prince Conference Center,  
Fireside Room*

**Telling Tales Out of Church****S. J. (Jim) Dahlman**

The intersection where journalism and faith meet is a fascinating and often edgy place, not just because of what subjects are covered but how they are covered. In this session, Dahlman explores the challenges of holding to the tenets of journalism while keeping sight of the sacred.

Introduced by Gayle Brown, artist  
*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

**An Interview with  
Randy Michael Testa**

In this interview, Testa explores the current state of film writing, film adaptations of literary texts, and why cross-media engagement is important to education.

Interviewed by Roy Anker, English Department Emeritus, Calvin University  
*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

**Panel Discussion:  
The Publishing Industry****Bryan R. Dyer, Katherine Jacobs,  
Kathy Pories**

Dyer, Jacobs, and Pories converse about contemporary challenges, both practical and philosophical, facing the publishing industry.

Moderated and Introduced by Bob Hudson, author and editor

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

**4pm****BOOK SIGNINGS***Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

Sonya Bilocerkowycz

S. J. (Jim) Dahlman

Jennifer De Leon

Curtis Sittenfeld

Asma T. Uddin

# 4:15pm

## Imagination: It's Not Just Hobbits and Hobby Horses

**Karen Swallow Prior**

Drawing from her book, *The Evangelical Imagination: How Stories, Images, and Metaphors Created a Culture in Crisis*, Prior explores the role social imaginaries play in a culture, including the ways in which art and language shape our perceptions and form our assumptions. In particular, she ponders how, by examining the artifacts of the past, creators can consider the way their work can build a different future.

Introduced by Micah Watson, Politics & Economics Department/Henry Institute, Calvin University  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

## Reporting on Politics and Mystery in American Religion

**Ruth Graham**

Graham reflects on her work as a *New York Times* correspondent reporting on the intersection of faith and culture. She explores the challenges of documenting the influence of religion on national politics, while also making room for stories about personal spirituality, belief in miracles, and the many other ways people experience and pursue faith across the country.

Introduced by Liana Hirner, Hudson-Townsend Student Fellow, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

## An Interview with Dr. Jemar Tisby

Interviewed by Craig Mattson, Faculty Fellow, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing/Communication Department, Calvin University

*Chapel*

## Hope in Worldbuilding

**Sarah Blake**

How can fiction both acknowledge and challenge hopelessness in the face of climate catastrophe? In this session, Blake explores her favorite parts of writing science fiction: taking narrative revenge on those who have failed us, provoking the reader to action, and creating worlds where healing can occur.

Introduced by Caitlin Finch, Center for Student Success, Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

## Reading with Pictures

**Kenneth Kraegel**

Picture books are a marriage of images and words, each part influencing our perception of the other. In this session, Kraegel explores how illustrations can extend and steer the meaning of words and how, at times, they are able to convey meaning more gracefully than words.

Introduced by Katherine Swart, Hekman Library, Calvin University

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

## Revision... in art and in life

**Peter Ho Davies**

The author of five books of fiction, and most recently *The Art of Revision: The Last Word*, Davies explores both how we revise our stories and how they in turn revise us.

Introduced by Kristina Faust Kaminskis, writer

*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*



5:30pm

**An Evening with Yaa Gyasi***The Wiersma Lecture*

Interviewed by Jane Zwart,  
Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

Introduced by Sarah Visser, Executive  
Vice President for Student Experience  
& Strategy, Calvin University

International Justice Mission presentation  
hosted by Anu George Canjanathoppil,  
Chief Executive Officer, IJM Canada

**Van Noord Arena**

6:30pm

**BOOK SIGNING***Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby***Yaa Gyasi****Little Women presented by Calvin Theater Company**

Calvin Theater Company invites you to their production of Little Women by Kate Hamill, adapted from the novel by Louisa May Alcott. Tickets for Festival attendees are \$14 using code **FOFW24**, and can be purchased through the Calvin University Box Office: [calvin.universitytickets.com](http://calvin.universitytickets.com).

Performances are **Friday and Saturday at 7:30pm** in the Gezon Auditorium.



## 8:30am

### Can AI Pray? Storytelling and Human Faith

Laleh Khadivi

Khadivi has written extensively about human migration, states of exile and belonging, and the movements of belief in a tribal, global, and post-national world. Now she wonders: could a machine do all that? In this session, she explores her thoughts on AI, craft, and the role of faith in the artistic process—and how, at a time when our imaginations are often broadcast back to us by machines, the artist can find new ways to serve as a spiritual guide.

Introduced by Sam Smartt, Communication Department, Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

### Rejection, Revision, Repetition: Lessons Learned from an Unpublished Novel by Madeleine L'Engle

Charlotte Jones Voiklis

In this session, Voiklis explores the decade of rejection her grandmother experienced and how it shaped what would become her most famous novel, *A Wrinkle in Time*. Sharing insights and excerpts from an unpublished novel L'Engle wrote during that period (the 1950s), biographical information and incidents that illuminate how the novelist negotiated rejection and the fear of failure, Voiklis also discusses her perspective on her own creative inheritance.

Introduced by Sarah Arthur, author

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

### A Conversation between Meghan O'Gieblyn & Sarah Smarsh

Drawing from their experiences in writing the stories of often-overlooked communities, O'Gieblyn and Smarsh converse about how they convince readers to pay attention to narratives from the margins and from excluded middles.

Moderated by S. J. (Jim) Dahlman, Communications & Journalism, Milligan University

Introduced by Chad Engbers, English Department, Calvin University

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

### An Interview with Curtis Sittenfeld

Interviewed and Introduced by Deb VanDuinen, English Department, Hope College & NEA Big Read Lakeshore

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

### The Art of Faith, the Faith of Art

*The Lionel Basney Memorial Session*

Christian Wiman

Wiman, whom *Poetry* once called “the greatest living devotional poet in the United States,” has written numerous works about the ways in which literature can be “equipment for living,” as well as the relationship between the language we use for faith and the kinds of experience that language enables or precludes.

In this session, he discusses modern poems—his own and others’—and how they can help us “live toward God.”

Introduced by Jacob Schepers, Writing Program, Notre Dame University

*Chapel*

## 9am-5pm

Exhibit Hall open

*Prince Conference Center, Great Hall*

## 9:30am

### BOOK SIGNINGS

*Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

Amy Julia Becker

Danielle Chapman

Laleh Khadivi

Karen Swallow Prior

Christian Wiman



9:45 am

**A Talkback with Yaa Gyasi**

In this session, Gyasi engages a selection of questions from Festivalgoers.

Moderated and Introduced by Jane Zwart,  
Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

**“Picturing the Invisible:”  
Faith, Education—and the  
Power of Film with Both**

**Randy Michael Testa**

Flannery O’Connor wrote: “It is what is invisible that God sees and that the Christian must look for.” In this session, Testa explores the implications of O’Connor’s exhortation for education (especially faith education), focusing on the ways in which using novels with their film adaptations helps us to better “picture the invisible.”

Introduced by Ken Heffner, Student Activities  
Office (retired), Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

**Around the Table:  
Remaking the World through  
the Creative Writing Workshop**

**Paul Lisicky**

While a writing workshop’s central project is to think about craft, it can also be a room in which we’re building something together as a group: cultivating openness, reaching collectively for what we can’t yet put into language. In this session, Lisicky explores the unforeseen glimmers of light in the charged space of the writing workshop and what they might mean for how we live.

Introduced by Emily Bosscher, Center for  
Student Success, Calvin University

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

**The Old People: Poems About  
Ancestors and History in Place**  
**Maurice Manning**

In this session, Manning reads poems from several of his books that tell handed-down tales and reflect on ancestors, the notion of birthright, and the unvarnished history of his family as early settlers of Kentucky.

Introduced by Dave Warners, Biology  
Department, Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

**The Heads of Gods and the  
Bones of Saints: Stolen Art  
and the Sacred**

**M.T. Anderson**

In this session, Anderson relates what he has learned in traveling around the world with repatriation teams working to return stolen sacred objects to their home countries and their own shrines—the inspiration for his forthcoming book, which recounts the strange but true story of the theft of the corpse of St. Nicholas (Santa Claus) from its tomb in Turkey. In doing so, he explores what these crimes might suggest about human belief and its role in the West.

Introduced by Sarah Turnage,  
Advancement, Calvin University

*Chapel*

**Peregrination: Writing the  
Inner and Outer Journey**

**Fred Bahnson**

Inspired by the *peregrini*, sixth-century Irish monks whose spiritual hunger took them far from home, Bahnson relates his recent journeys among modern-day monastics—from Mali and Ethiopia as well as the remote corners of the American West. He explores pilgrimage as the experience not of consuming but of being consumed in order to discover the porous borders between our inner and outer lives.

Introduced by Debra Rienstra, Faculty  
Fellow, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

**10:45am****BOOK SIGNINGS**

*Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

M.T. Anderson

Paul Lisicky

Maurice Manning

Meghan O’Gieblyn

Charlotte Jones Voiklis



**8am–1pm****COFFEE SERVICE***Sponsored by InterVarsity Press**Covenant Fine Arts Center,  
Lower West Lobby**Prince Conference Center,  
Fireside Room***11 am****After The Book Study:  
What Comes Next in the  
Struggle for Racial Justice****Jemar Tisby, PhD**

You've read the books. You've done the book study. Now what? What's next in your journey of racial justice? Tisby helps you figure out what comes after the book study by walking through the ARC of Racial Justice—a framework that includes Awareness, Relationships, and Commitment—to help you find your unique place in the fight against racism. Come prepared to be challenged, inspired, and equipped!

Introduced by Kristin Kobes Du Mez,  
History Department, Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

**Panel Discussion:  
Southern Writers***The W. Dale Brown Memorial Session***Danielle Chapman, S. J. (Jim) Dahlman,  
Silas House**

In this session, Chapman, Dahlman, and House converse about contesting stereotypes—both of and within the American South—and about how to cultivate new narratives that honor the complexity of this region of the United States.

Moderated and Introduced by  
Mary McCampbell, author

*Chapel*

**Fiction as Public Theology****Bryan Bliss**

The role of fiction as a public theology has a long track record in literature (even for authors who have no expressed theological agenda). In this session, Bliss explores the worlds of public ministry and publishing in order to help participants seek out prophetic voices in fiction.

Introduced by Jason VanHorn, Geology  
Department, Calvin University

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

**Magnified Humanity: Why  
Disability in Literature Matters****Amy Julia Becker**

How does the presence of disabled characters in literature magnify the human condition? When is the humanity of characters with disabilities diminished? In this session, Becker explores the disruptive and illuminating presence of intellectual disability in literature and why this presence matters for anyone wrestling with what it means to be human.

Introduced by Becky Toly, World Languages  
(Spanish)/Education, Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

**Pain as Portal: Discovering  
What Our Bodies Know****Nishta J. Mehra**

Born into a Hindu family and educated by Episcopalians, Mehra has an abiding love for poetry, ritual, and contradiction. In this session, she explores her personal experiences with chronic pain and grief, focusing on the spiritual relationship between pain and creation.

Introduced by Sara Leo, School of  
Education, Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

**An Interview with  
Peter Ho Davies**

Interviewed and Introduced by Sabrina Lee,  
English Department, Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

# S SATURDAY

## 11:45am-1:45pm

### Lunch Break

See page 10 for lunch options.



## 1:45pm

### Panel Discussion: Why Books Matter

**Anne Bogel, Byron Borger,  
Karen Swallow Prior**

Bogel, Borger, and Prior converse about the need for people of faith to understand the power of writing to shape us, both positively and negatively.

Moderated and Introduced by Jennifer Holberg, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

### On Crafting Narratives and Storytelling: The Truth Will Set Us Free

**Dr. Natasha Sistrunk Robinson**

In this session, Robinson explores writing as a means of resistance against those who don't want us to talk about slavery or genocide or rape or violence against black and brown bodies. She points to writers' obligation to read and know history, to insist upon revealing the truth.

Introduced by Deborah Bayard, Grand Rapids African American Museum & Archives  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

### A Conversation between Rachel Pieh Jones and Asma T. Uddin

Jones and Uddin converse about the relationship between Islam and Christianity, focusing on how to engage in interfaith dialogue without erasing differences of experience or belief.

Moderated by Niraj Warikoo, Detroit Free Press  
Introduced by Jane Bruin, Center for Intercultural Student Development, Calvin University  
*Chapel*



## 2:30-4:30pm

### COFFEE SERVICE

Sponsored by InterVarsity Press  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center,  
Lower West Lobby  
Prince Conference Center,  
Fireside Room*

### A Nation of Outliers

**John Wray**

In this session, Wray explores what stories about extreme beliefs or fanatical loyalties—whether related to religion, mental illness, or even heavy metal—can tell us about our own stories: the way each of us, both as individuals and in a society, experience our ideologies and convictions.

Introduced by Caitlin Horrocks, Department of Writing, Grand Valley State University  
*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

### Whose Manuscripts Burn? On the Role(s) of the Writer During Wartime

**Sonya Bilocerkowycz**

In this session presented in memory of Ukrainian writer Victoria Amelina, Bilocerkowycz explores the importance of artistic practice in the face of mass atrocities—and the responsibilities that come with it.

Introduced by James Vanden Bosch, English Department Emeritus, Calvin University  
*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

## 2:45pm

### BOOK SIGNINGS

*Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

**Nishta J. Mehra**

**Natasha Sistrunk Robinson**

**Jemar Tisby**

**John Wray**



## 3pm

### Reckoning, Discernment, Hope: How Narrative Helps Us Faithfully Inhabit Time

**James K.A. Smith**

We face two different temptations today: nostalgia and despair. Both are forms of narrative failure. Nostalgia is a form of edited history that fails to tell the truth about our past. Despair tells a story about the future that can't imagine resurrection and restoration. In this session, Smith explores how to tell stories that reckon with history and revel in hope.

Introduced by David Smith, School of Education/The Kuyers Institute for Christian Teaching & Learning, Calvin University  
*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

### An Interview with Maurice Manning

Interviewed by Lew Klatt, English Department, Calvin University

Introduced by Ben Plantinga, Hudson-Townsend Student Fellow, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

### An Interview with Marilyn McEntyre

Interviewed by Irene Kraegel, Center for Counseling & Wellness, Calvin University

Introduced by Esther Yff-Prins, Spiritual Director

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

### When to Holler and When to Sing: Memory in Nonfiction vs. Poetry

**Danielle Chapman**

In this session, Chapman pairs excerpts from her memoir, *Holler: A Poet Among Patriots*, and individual poems from her forthcoming book, *Boxed Juice*. In doing so, she explores the distinct lenses of poetry and nonfiction, as well as the particular demands of a poet's memoir.

Introduced by John Poch, English Department, Grace College

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

### Bringing the News to Light

**Sarah Smarsh**

As a journalist who, for more than 20 years, has written about socioeconomic divides, Smarsh has often called out her own industry's blind spots. In this session, she explores why traditional news reporting is obsessed with disaster and binary conflict, the healing potential of creative journalistic forms that convey nuance and meaning alongside facts, and our shared civic and spiritual imperative to protect and evolve the free press.

Introduced by Jesse Holcomb, English/Communication Departments, Calvin University

*Chapel*

## 4pm

### BOOK SIGNINGS

*Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

Marilyn McEntyre

Sarah Smarsh

James K. A. Smith





## 4:15pm

**A Conversation between Mary DeMuth & Leslie Leyland Fields**

DeMuth and Fields converse about why speaking the truth about the past, while difficult, is also crucial to memoir: ethically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Moderated by Shannon Jamal-Hollemaans, First Congregational UCC of Lowell

Introduced by Stacia Hoeksema, Social Work Department, Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Auditorium*

**A Conversation between Paul Lisicky & Nishta J. Mehra**

Lisicky and Mehra converse about the challenges and gifts of chronicling personal stories with vulnerability for writers who belong to already vulnerable communities.

Moderated and Introduced by Jodi VanWingerden, Student Life, Calvin University

*Covenant Fine Arts Center, Recital Hall*

**A Conversation between Kaveh Akbar & Christian Wiman**

Drawing from their work as both writers and editors, Akbar and Wiman converse about the vision that shapes not only their poetry and prose but also their work in curating and championing others' words.

Moderated and Introduced by Jane Zwart, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Chapel*

**The Invisible Life of An Editor in the 21st Century**

**Kathy Pories**

We've come a long way from Maxwell Perkins, often described as the greatest American editor. Many things have stayed the same, but so much has changed in the publishing world and in the daily life of an editor. In this session, Pories explores what happens behind the scenes before a manuscript becomes a published book.

Introduced by Sarah Kolk, Hekman Library, Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Board Room*

**It All Counts: Writing in the Margins of Life**

*Underwritten by the William H. Jellema Chair in Christian Philosophy*

**Hilary Yancey**

Yancey has been writing in the margins—jotting notes in the carpool lines, setting aside twenty minutes during a lunch break, taking a breath between making book recommendations—for almost as long as she has been a writer. In this session, she explores how those moments of being “pressed” between and among responsibilities are not the hindrances to a writing life, but the stuff of it.

Introduced by Benita Wolters-Fredlund, Dean of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, Calvin University

*Prince Conference Center, Willow Room*

**A Conversation between Laleh Khadivi & John Wray**

Drawing from their experiences telling stories about religious radicalization, Khadivi and Wray converse about the challenge of writing fully-formed, complex characters who have nevertheless embraced reductive ideologies.

Moderated by Andrew Zwart, Interdisciplinary Studies, Kuyper College

Introduced by Chloe Hoekstra, Hudson-Townsend Student Fellow, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Calvin Seminary, Auditorium*

## 5:30pm

**An Evening with Anthony Doerr**

Introduced by Debra Rienstra, Faculty Fellow, Calvin Center for Faith & Writing

*Van Noord Arena*

**6:30pm**

**BOOK SIGNING**

*Spoelhof Fieldhouse Lobby*

**Anthony Doerr**

