

# *Jonathan Edwards*

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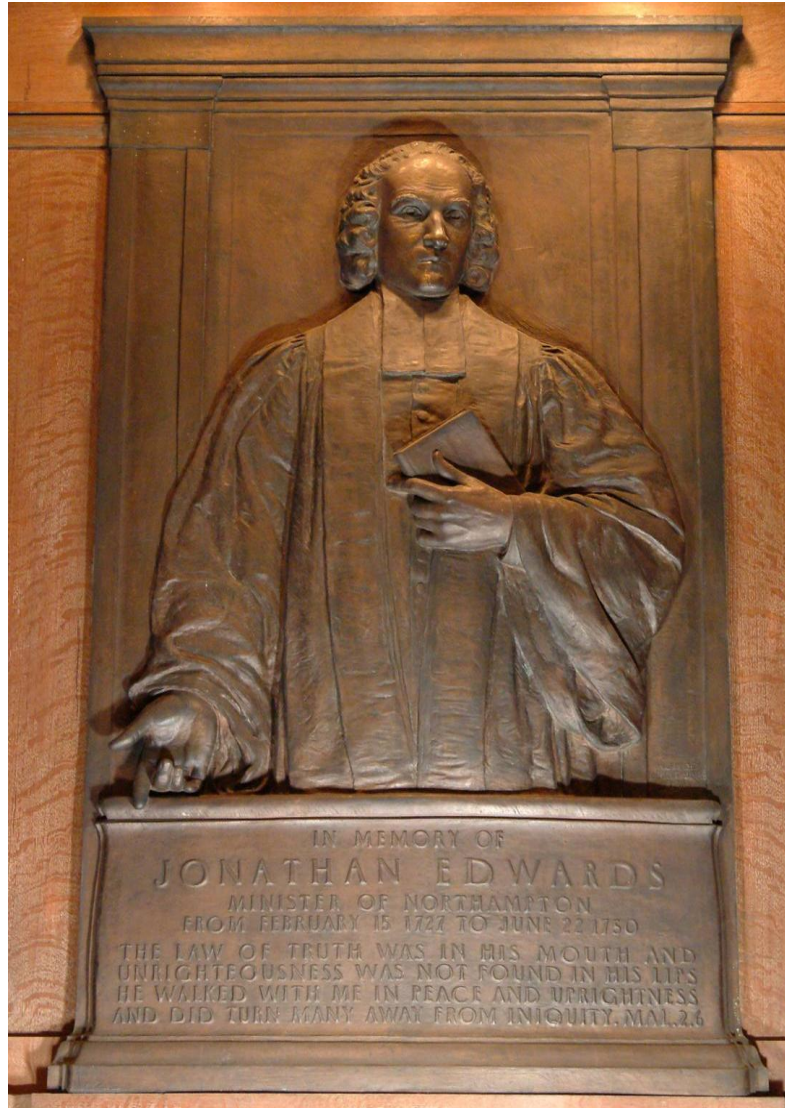
**Beauty in Art, Nature, & God**



"The Oxbow," Thomas Cole's view of the Oxbow, Northampton, Mass, from Mt. Holyoke. 1836 oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art

***A conference to consider the aesthetic dimension of Edwards' thought***

**October 3-5, 2008  
Jonathan Edwards Meetinghouse  
(the First Churches)  
129 Main Street, Northampton, MA**



Memorial Plaque of Jonathan Edwards unveiled on June 22, 1900 at The First Churches, Northampton, Massachusetts

On the very site where we are now convened, Jonathan Edwards ministered to his congregation for almost a quarter of a century. A memorial to him in the form of a bronze bas-relief sculpted by Herbert Adams is mounted on wall of the sanctuary, part of the fifth meeting house to occupy this site. It was formally unveiled on June 22, 1900 to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Edwards' dismissal. This memorial plaque, according to N. H. Gardiner who chaired the committee commissioning it, "represents more than the desire of this church to atone for the past; it represents rather a general sentiment of respect for the illustrious minister who belongs to no single church exclusively, but to the historic Church Universal."

We are convened here at The First Churches to consider Edwards' understanding of beauty as manifested in art, nature and God. Beauty is a (if not the) central category through which Jonathan Edwards understands virtue, nature, and God. His understanding of virtue as itself a kind of beauty, his interpretation of natural beauty as a type or symbol of spiritual beauty, and his conception of even God as being essentially beauty are well enough known to readers of Edwards.

All the conferees are invited to join in establishing and contributing to the work of the Jonathan Edwards Society which is dedicated to promoting ongoing research on America's Spiritual Founding Father.

### **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3<sup>rd</sup> , 2008**

1:00-1:15 p.m. CONVOCATION

- Greetings from The Rev. Peter Ives & Richard A. S. Hall

1:15-2:15 p.m.

- "Reweaving the Rainbow: Jonathan Edwards and the Recovery of Poetic Beauty in Nature"  
--*Robert Boss*

2:15-3:15 p.m.

- "The Intersection of Beauty and Ethics in Jonathan Edwards and Alfred North Whitehead"  
--*Jeffrey McPherson*

3:30-4:30 p.m.

- "Spider in a Tree"  
--*Susan Stinson*

4:30-5:30 p.m. PLENARY SESSION

- "Possible Directions in Edwards Scholarship"

8:00 p.m. PLAY

- "The Shimmering Mystery Beauty Brings": a one-character play in which Jonathan Edwards is portrayed  
--*Jack R. Van Ens*

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2008**

9:00-10:00 a.m.

- "Heaven is a World of Beauty: Jonathan Edwards on the Aesthetics of Heaven"  
--*Robert Caldwell*

10:00-11:00 a.m.

- "'The Splendour of a Constant Eternity': The Heart and Beauty in the Trinitarian Theology of Augustine of Hippo and Jonathan Edwards"  
--*Christine Dixon*

11:15-12:15

- "Beauty as Experience in Edwards, Emerson and Dewey."  
--*David E. White*

LUNCH

1:30-2:30 p.m.

- "Edwards on the Religious Affections"  
--*John Taylor*

2:30-3:30 p.m.

- "Edwards on the beauty of Christ"  
-- *Daniel Smuda*

4:00-5:00 p.m.

- “Some Mysteries Concerning the Portraits of Jonathan Edwards”\*  
--*Richard Hall*

7:30 p.m. RECEPTION (Forbes Library)\*

## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2007

10:00-11:00 a.m.

- Service of Worship  
The Rev. Peter Ives, Preacher

11:00-12:00 noon

- Coffee Hour

### LOCATION

All academic sessions of the conference will be held in The First Churches:

- Address: 129 Main Street, Northampton, MA 0160
- Phone: (413) 584-9392

\* These events will be held at the Forbes library, a co-sponsor of the conference, which is located across the street from the church.

This conference is sponsored by The Edwin Mellen Press, an international publisher of scholarly books acquired by research libraries throughout the world. The Press publishes specialized research: monographs, bibliographies, concordances, dictionaries, commentaries, translations, critical editions, methodological studies, criticism, conference proceedings, and multi-volume sets. The Press publishes approximately 425 new titles a year, over two dozen continuing series, academic journals, and the research generated by several scholarly institutes. It was established in Canada in 1974, the United States in 1978, and Great Britain in 1987.

Special thanks are due to the minister and congregation of The First Churches, and the staff of Forbes Library, for use of their facilities and provision of refreshments.