

PREACHING WORKSHOP



Gustave Dore, 1866

8:30 AM
Monday,
March 7th
at
The Craddock
Center

**I Will Make a New Covenant:
*Jeremiah and Survival***

Dr. Kathleen M. O'Connor

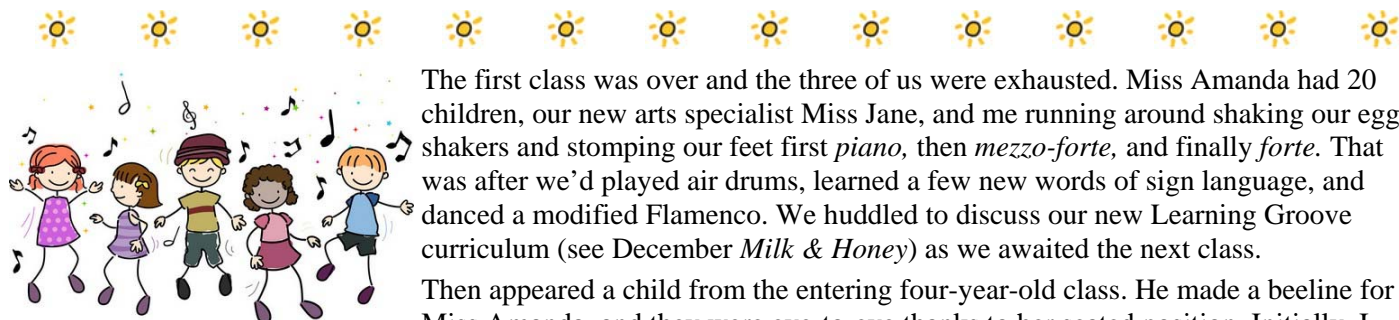
The book of the prophet Jeremiah mixes tenderness with blame, tears with harsh accusation, and hope with chaotic destruction. Using contemporary trauma and disaster theories, Kathleen O'Connor will show how the very difficulties of this prophetic book turn it into an instrument of survival for Judah after the nation's destruction by Babylon. Discussion will explore what victims of traumatic violence and disaster require to survive as well as how the God who tears down and uproots also can be the God who builds and plants. Selected poetic and prose passages will also be incorporated into the workshop.

Kathleen M. O'Connor is William Marcellus McPheeters Professor of Old Testament, Emerita, at Columbia Theological Seminary. She holds a Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. She has taught in local churches, community groups, and given courses worldwide.

Among others, O'Connor's publications include *Job* (Liturgical Press, 2012), *Jeremiah: Pain and Promise* (Fortress, 2011), and *Lamentations and the Tears of the World*, (Orbis Press, 2002), which received first prize in scripture from the Catholic Press Association in 2003.

In 2015, Columbia Theological Seminary established the **Kathleen O'Connor Lectures** to honor the many contributions she has made to biblical scholarship.

As always, preaching workshops are free to participants. Seating is limited and registration is required so that we might prepare for meals. Visit craddockcenter.eventbrite.com to register. The Craddock Center especially asks that long-time participants share the story of our work by bringing a colleague.



The first class was over and the three of us were exhausted. Miss Amanda had 20 children, our new arts specialist Miss Jane, and me running around shaking our egg shakers and stomping our feet first *piano*, then *mezzo-forte*, and finally *forte*. That was after we'd played air drums, learned a few new words of sign language, and danced a modified Flamenco. We huddled to discuss our new Learning Groove curriculum (see December *Milk & Honey*) as we awaited the next class.

Then appeared a child from the entering four-year-old class. He made a beeline for Miss Amanda, and they were eye-to-eye thanks to her seated position. Initially, I wasn't sure if the child was a boy or a girl. Longish hair was sticking out from all sides of what looked like a giant rubber band (I now know it was a soft band to hold Mateo's "test" hearing aid). Then, in well enunciated English, he said, "I hear you, Miss Amanda. Today, I hear the music." I was astonished. Amanda was astonished. We both had tears in our eyes as she said it was the first time he'd ever spoken to her.

I learned from the Head Start parent liaisons that Mateo was born without an ear on his right side. Due to medical system reimbursement complications, it had taken over a year for him to receive a hearing aid following a prerequisite jaw surgery. He had arrived to school with his hearing aid for the first time that very day and was ecstatic. Before, he had spoken, but reportedly always somewhat gutturally, and his teachers could not understand him.

Amanda said as a three-year-old in her class last year, he had been inattentive at best. But Mateo had been listening. He knew Miss Amanda and her name, and he was joyful in reporting that for the first time, he heard the music. —JJJ

AS YOU MIGHT IMAGINE, most of my exposure to Appalachian life has been through the life of the church; it's sometimes serious and sobering and sad, sometimes full of pathos, sometimes funny and even ridiculous. In the area where I started a ministry as a boy, single, stupid, in Eastern Tennessee in Rome county, there were two little churches about less than a mile, a half mile apart from each other. [They] never got along and much of their disputing was over which one had the better minister. There were years of silence on both sides because neither had much. They were—because they were small and because they were poor—frequently resorting to students. And so it was that I was at one of those churches for awhile.

The one at White's Creek suffered a great setback when one night on Sunday evening, getting ready for the evening service, one of the men had come a little early, perhaps to check the heat, I don't know, but when he flipped on the light, the minister was kissing one of the women of the church. I'm not making this up; he actually did this. Well there he was, standing in the aisle they were standing there near the front, close to the altar as all things like that should take place...near the altar.

Well, it spread. They would not let him preach that evening because he had a trial coming up: not a civil trial, not a criminal trial, but a church trial. And not an official church trial: a local church trial. In fact, just a bunch of mad adults got together, and Wednesday evening, instead of prayer meeting, they had his trial. Now I have to explain something to you about the trial. There are grades of misdemeanor in the area of his fault, and they asked him to respond to the questions in the order of the misdemeanor. They asked him if he was "struck on" her. It's a variation of the word "smitten." *Are you struck on her?* Now you must understand that's the lowest point. That's just the beginning. It doesn't mean anything, like if you see somebody attractive you might be "struck on" her, but there's nothing more. "Are you struck on her?" And he said, "No." Then they went to the next level. They said, "Are you sweet on her?" Now being "sweet on" means that "struck on" is tarrying a little bit here. "Are you sweet on her?" And he said, "No." Well, they moved to the next level: "Are you sparking her?" Now let me explain that that it is exactly what it means. *Are you sparking her?* It's getting to where he is taking some initiative, paying attention, and maybe a little contact there. "Are you sparking her?" He said, "No." Well, they went to the highest level, the serious one, publicly recognized in the community: "Are you courting her?" If you have sons, daughters, or grandchildren, you need to know these and know these in order because the punishment is different according to the level. "Are you courting her?" And he didn't know how to respond to that. He didn't want to hurt her feelings. I mean, he had kissed her in the sanctuary near the altar. And so he thought about it for quite awhile. And his defense was not acceptable. He had only one sentence in defense.

He said "I had the hankering, but I didn't have the leaning." Well, he was not allowed to preach anymore there. I hate to use a lot of technical language but these [events] are supposed to be educational. —FBC, as recounted at *Winged for the Heart*, 2003. **[Tune in next month to learn what happened at the church up the way...]**

BY the Numbers
 SONGS & STORIES
In Honor of Helen Lewis

187 attendees
\$844 donations
16 books/CDS sold
 Facebook Views of Helen @ Q&A **138**

We ♥ our readers, and you, our readers, ♥ our work. This Valentine's Day, ♥ someone new! Share the *Milk & Honey* with a friend who isn't yet familiar with The Craddock Center. They'll enjoy learning about something you ♥; they'll read Part I of a great story; and maybe they'll begin to ♥ us, too! **THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR THIS GIFT! —JJJ**

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SAVE THE DATE!

The Craddock Mysteries
 April 15-16, 2016