

Jon Meacham named National Cathedral's first canon historian

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(Photo by Heidi Ross)

Washington National Cathedral announced on March 10 that it has chosen Jon Meacham as its first canon historian, a role that is part of a cathedral initiative that will turn part of a long-vacant building into its new College of Faith and Culture.

Meacham, an Episcopalian, is a former *Newsweek* editor in chief and a Pulitzer Prize-winning nonfiction writer, best known for his biographies of American presidents and other historical figures, such as civil rights icon John Lewis.

“To say I am honored by the Cathedral’s invitation to play this role is an understatement,” Meacham said in a statement. “I owe the Episcopal Church in particular and the Anglican tradition more broadly enormous debts, and I am at once humbled and excited by the gracious opportunity to offer whatever I can to the unfolding work of the Cathedral and of the whole Church in this hour.”

Meacham will continue in several roles at Vanderbilt University, where he has been teaching political science since 2013. At the cathedral, Meacham will devote his time to preaching and leading discussions with clergy and thought leaders. During the pandemic, events led by Meacham will be offered to the public through the cathedral’s YouTube channel.

The College of Faith and Culture, scheduled to open in 2022, is currently under construction in a 27,000-square-foot building that once housed the College of Preachers. The building, adjacent to the cathedral on the northeast side, has been vacant since 2008. The cathedral is renovating it as the Virginia Mae Center, with help from two gifts totaling \$22 million.

When it is up and running, the cathedral intends the College of Faith and Culture to be a hub of faith programming and spiritual formation, including conferences, forums, retreats, and pilgrimages. —Episcopal News Service