



Saint Louis University
Department of Theological Studies
3800 Lindell Boulevard
Saint Louis, MO 63108

www.religioninplace.org • livedreligion@slu.edu • [@livedreligion](https://twitter.com/livedreligion)

Directors

Dr. Rachel McBride
Lindsey, PhD
*Assistant Professor of
American Religion and
Culture*

Dr. Pauline Lee, PhD
*Associate Professor of
Chinese Languages and
Cultures*

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Dr. Samantha Arten, PhD
Project Administrator

Call for academic blog posts for “Religion Sheltered in Place”

The relationship between religious life and digital presence has perhaps never been stronger than in this time of social distancing. Religious institutions, religious leaders, community activists, artists, and individuals have come up with creative ways to upkeep their traditions and maintain their communities. “Religion Sheltered in Place” is a forum in the Digital Stories initiative of Lived Religion in the Digital Age that solicits reflections on the upheavals, rapid and dramatic changes, and creativity that have resulted from the COVID-19 crisis. We seek contributions that reflect primarily on three areas of focus: religious and spiritual practice; (re)configurations of sacred space; and entanglements of lived religion and digital platforms, cultures, and networks.

Some questions we hope authors will consider include: How have social distancing measures affected religious practice? What are specific rituals and customs that have been affected during the pandemic? What new practices, formations, spaces, and teachings have emerged? What does sheltering in place do to our understandings of space and place (sacred, spiritual, religious, or otherwise)? What legal and/or policy disputes around religion have surfaced in the context of this public health emergency? How has religion entered into conversations around healthcare, medicine, nursing, and other health professions during the pandemic? How are digital resources and technologies providing ways for religion—however defined—continue even when groups cannot gather? How has this pandemic transformed our objects of study? How has it affected analytical paradigms of place, body, belief, power, practice, and presence? Other takes on these broad themes are also welcomed and encouraged.

Lived Religion in the Digital Age fosters public understandings of religion in the modern world through scholarly and community-based activities. In keeping with our overall mission, Religion Sheltered in Place invites academics, religious leaders, museum professionals, journalists, and others to submit short posts or multimediated collections for online publication. These entries can take a variety of forms, including “hot takes,” photographic essays, audio or visual collections, short reflections, or longer analytical essays. All submissions of an investigative or analytical nature will be considered, though we are especially interested in posts that consider specificity of place. Our hosting platform enables the inclusion of multiple forms of media, including photographs, videos, audio recordings, and web links.

You can read more about the Lived Religion in the Digital Age project at our website, www.religioninplace.org. The Digital Stories forum can be found at <https://religioninplace.org/blog/digital-stories>. Please submit your questions/inquiries, comments, or Digital Story pitch to Project Administrator Samantha Arten at livedreligion@slu.edu. We look forward to hearing from you!