

Celeste Kennel-Shank named Associated Church Press president

by [Dawn Araujo-Hawkins](#) in the [May 19, 2021](#) issue



(Century photo)

On April 8, Celeste Kennel-Shank, the *Century's* former news editor and a current contributing editor to the magazine, was named president of the Associated Church Press.

The ACP, founded in 1916 as the Editorial Council of the Religious Press, is a professional organization committed to excellence in religion journalism as a means of supporting “the life of faith and the Christian community.”

Elected alongside Kennel-Shank as ACP vice president was John Thomas III, editor of the *Christian Recorder*, the official newspaper of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

“When I started my career—with a reporting internship in 2005 with ACP member Religion News Service—we were already reckoning with the shake-up to traditional models for churches and journalism,” Kennel-Shank said in a statement to the Century. “John Thomas III and I, both in our late thirties, can be a bridge between digital natives and older generations. Our election . . . shows that our organization is not winding down but instead finding ways to support our members as they meet the challenges before them and innovate for the future.”

She added that she and Thomas hope to prioritize relationship building and resource sharing among religion journalists.

Kennel-Shank, who was awarded a pastoral study grant by the Louisville Institute in December 2020, is currently working on a book about the Community of Christ, an innovative ecumenical community in Washington, DC, that existed from 1965 to 2016.