



Welcome to Illative House Press! We began in 2018 as a personal publishing outreach of Dr. T. J. Gentry (more about T. J. below) but beginning in 2023 Illative House Press (IHP) is expanding our ministry reach! Before we tell you about our hopes and plans, here's a bit more about who we are.

Our Commitment: IHP is committed to publishing books and resources that are faithful to the historic evangelical Christian "faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

Our Mission: IHP has a two-fold mission: 1) to provide an array of affordable and professionally produced Christian resources through books and other media to help the Church "make disciples of the nations" (Matt 28:18); and 2) to make publishing opportunities available to first-time authors and veteran writers so they may fulfill their God-given calling.

Though we have pursued our commitment and mission since 2018, we are still in the early stages of what we believe is a growing opportunity to share Christian truth with a world increasingly looking for answers that only the Gospel provides.

Why Illative House? Illative (pronounced il-uh-tiv) is from the Latin *illativus*, which means to conclude or infer. Regarding matters of Christian faith, all people have an *illative sense* that relates to how beliefs form when the mind and heart align through the prevenient grace that God shows to each person. Such whole-person alignment makes possible a willing acceptance of the claims of the Gospel and a personal trust in its Savior, Jesus Christ, as one realizes that biblical truth is entirely reasonable. We hold that it truly makes sense and is humanity's highest good to believe what God reveals in nature and Scripture. Thus, the *Illative* in IHP identifies us as a publishing ministry committed to providing books and other media to help Christians and seekers grow into a fully formed faith involving both the mind and the heart.

The *House* in IHP describes the different imprints and expressions of our publishing ministry. Just as a house has rooms for different purposes, IHP includes the following imprints, and all works are either published under one of these imprints or under the general name of Illative House Press:

- *Academia* (works promoting theses, dissertations, and other scholarly works)
- *Influentia* (works focused on biblical leadership and counseling)
- *Imaginari* (works using fiction as a platform to communicate the Christian worldview)
- *Practica* (works dedicated to practical Christian living)
- *Testamentum* (works of biblical commentary)
- *Nexus* (works demonstrating the practical integration of apologetics and ministry)

Our Team's Story: Now that you know a bit more about what we do, here is the story of what led up to Illative House's launch. Our founder and president is Dr. T. J. Gentry. He became a Christian and was called to ministry in the summer of 1978 and began preaching in 1984. Soon after T. J. began preaching and working in various ministry roles in the local church, he developed a growing interest in writing.

At first, T. J. wrote short devotions and Bible study guides for the youth groups he served and the churches he pastored, but the scope of his writing grew to include booklets, position papers, and even fiction short stories. As he wrote, T. J. continued learning, and as he learned, he continued writing. All this was well before the advent of online publishing and then, as now, opportunities with longstanding traditional publishing houses were difficult to secure. However, T. J. was undeterred as he realized he was not only interested in writing—he also had a calling to write. The initial works he produced were created on his desktop computer and printed on the church office copier, to include stapling the center binding and running sufficient copies to hand out to his students and friends. Nothing fancy but it was effective.

As his journey continued, T. J. began formal theological and ministry training and, at the same time, started a family and served in the Army National Guard Chaplain Corps while pastoring. The one constant during all these experiences was his writing as he learned and his learning as he wrote. Though he still valued the devotions and Bible study guides he developed, T. J. set the task of writing his first book in 2006. By then, online publishing platforms were increasing, and he found his way to the self-publishing platform, Lulu, and published his first book, *Thinking of Worship: A Liturgical Miscellany*. His next book, *God Help Us: Reflections on Evangelism*, released a few years later through Amazon's CreateSpace self-publishing platform. *God Help Us* has since been revised and published as *You Shall Be My Witnesses* as the first book produced under the IHP banner (2018), with the second book being a revised edition of *Thinking of Worship* (also in 2018). In addition to writing these works and his three master's theses and five doctoral dissertations published through academic libraries, T. J. has two books published with Wipf and Stock Publishers in Eugene, Oregon: *Absent from the Body, Present with the Lord: A Critique of Purgatory* (2018) and *Pulpit Apologist: The Essential Relationship between Preaching and Apologetics* (2019). T. J.'s additional published works include numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals of theology, biblical studies, apologetics, and ministry. He holds the following degrees: BA in Political Science (Southern Illinois University); MAR in Church Ministries, MDiv in Chaplaincy, ThM in Theology, PhD in Theology and Apologetics (Liberty University); MA in Philosophy (Holy Apostles College and Seminary); MA in Apologetics (Luther Rice College and Seminary); DMin in Pastoral Counseling, PhD in Leadership, PhD in Biblical Studies (Carolina University); and PhD in Theology (North-West University). T. J. is married with five children, has one grandson and a granddaughter on the way. He is the senior minister at First Christian Church of West Frankfort, Illinois, and superintendent of New Covenant Christian School, also in West Frankfort.

T. J. is joined in the ministry of IHP by his oldest daughter, Ireland Dillard, who serves as IHP's Vice-President. Raised as a preacher's kid, Ireland developed an interest in writing in her early teenage years. From prose to poetry and everything in between, Ireland's calling as a writer has emerged and flourished with a mix of intensity for the craft and a growing capability with words. Before beginning her now ongoing PhD studies in Russian Literature at the University of Johannesburg, Ireland earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in English Literature and Creative Writing from Southern New Hampshire University. In addition to her award-winning master's thesis, Ireland has published short stories, completed a novel, and authored *The Feminist Fallacy* (Wipf and Stock, 2023). Ireland is married with a daughter on the way and enjoys two interesting and very different cats. She currently teaches English Literature at John A. Logan Community College.



T. J. and Ireland