

Context and Community

ANZATS Conference, Adelaide

30 June – 3 July 2024



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Acting President Welcome

Welcome to the 2024 ANZATS Conference. There is much to look forward to in this year's conference as we gather together under the theme of context and community. We look forward to hearing from Rev Dr Aunty Denise Champion, the Earth Bible Panel, and one another, as we share our research and learning together.

The Australian and (Aotearoa) New Zealand Association of Theological Studies Ltd was formed in 1968, and a significant part of our work each year is supporting this conference as a meeting ground for contemporary theological inquiry and shared learning. ANZATS is an organisation that values collaboration, the development of theological scholars, and high-level theology that engages in our world's contextual concerns.

A key objective for ANZATS is supporting graduate research students and early career researchers in their work and providing this space for them to network. When I was a doctoral student, I attended and presented at an ANZATS conference. At that conference, I met scholars and made connections that led to my first position as a theological educator – right here at Uniting College in Adelaide. I have made friends with scholars from across Australia and New Zealand and been able to develop valuable research relationships and friendships. I encourage all of us to use this time to meet and connect. To learn from one another's work and to engage with a spirit of curiosity and generosity.

The ANZATS conferences are only possible due to the diligent work of local members and colleges in host cities. I am grateful for the hard work of the 2024 Conference Committee here in Adelaide, who have made this gathering possible:

Michelle Eastwood (Chair)
Rosemary Dewerse (UCLT)
Anna Nuernberger (ALC)
Chris Seglenieks (Bible College of South Australia)
Michael Bartholomaeus (Tabor)
Damien Szepessy (St Barnabas)

ANZATS Committee 2023-2024

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ANZATS Executive Officer: Michelle Eastwood

Interim Colloquium Editor: Michelle Eastwood

For more information about ANZATS or to get in touch, please visit our website: www.anzats.edu.au.

Rev Dr Aunty Denise Champion

Reimagining God and the church in Australia through an Adnyamathanha lens

God did not come to this land on the *Endeavour*, because God was already here. For my peoples – the Adnyamathanha of the Flinders Ranges - our spirituality goes way back beyond Western archaeology's 48,000 year proof of our existence and the discovery of the 550 million year old Ediacaran fossils on our lands, to the beginning of creation. From the beginning we have been connected to Creator and living in community with all created things – seen and unseen – shaped over millennia by lessons woven into the fabric of our yarta (land) passed down by our Elders. In our language, 'yarta wandatha' – the land is speaking, the people are speaking.

The legacy and trauma of colonisation has impacted our knowing of God and our ability to live as communities of people made in the image of God. Because the church has been an integral part of that horrendous history it is hard to see how Jesus Christ is good news. Questions about identity, understanding of God and what it is to be Christian loom large.

In my keynote sessions, approaching interpretation through my storytelling lens, I want to explore the possibilities for theology and church when ancient wisdom sourced in Ngalakanha Muda – the 'big history' of all things – rather than being judged through the much younger lens of Christianity and dismissed, is instead the starting point.

Rev Dr Aunty Denise Champion is an Adnyamathanha elder from the Flinders Rangers. She is currently Theologian in Residence at Uniting College for Leadership and Theology in South Australia. An ordained minister in the Uniting Church in Australia she has worked for many years in reconciliation and in teaching Adnyamathanha wisdom to her people and beyond. She has spoken at many events and been recorded on video, locally and nationally. Aunty Denise has published two books: *Yarta Wandatha* (2014) and *Anaditj* (2021).

Earth Bible Panel Project

This panel presentation gives a critical overview of this international project from its origins in 1997/8, setting out its aims, principles and methods. Some of the key critiques are presented and explored, and current and future trajectories are introduced. How has the project shaped the field of ecological hermeneutics?

Vicky Balabanski

Reverend Professor Vicky Balabanski is a New Testament scholar at the University of Divinity and the EO/Principal of Uniting College for Leadership and Theology in Adelaide. Vicky is an ordained Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church. Her expertise is in the Synoptic Gospels, John's Gospel, Colossians, Receptive Ecumenism and Ecological Hermeneutics. She is the General Editor of the Earth Bible series, collaborating with Professor Gerald West in South Africa; the series emphasizes interpreting Scripture in harmony with the Earth, the interconnected web of life. Her Earth Bible commentary, "Colossians: An Eco-Stoic reading" (Bloomsbury T & T Clark 2020), draws on Stoic philosophy to enrich ecological interpretations. Prof. Balabanski was elected into membership of the international Society of Biblical Studies (SNTS) in 2017. Her international keynotes include World Diakonia conferences, the UCA President's Conference in Fiji, 2019, and the Christian Conference of Asia, Kerala (2023).

Norm Habel

Norman Habel is a Professorial Fellow at Flinders University in Adelaide. He has long been involved in issues of biblical interpretation, including reading the Bible from a decolonising perspective. His extensive research into the Book of Job and related Wisdom Literature, has led him to retrieve the essential ideas of the ancient Wisdom School of thought, many of which are in conflict with traditional Israelite covenant

theology. About 25 years ago, he was privileged to work with a group of Adelaide scholars to develop an ecological hermeneutic that led to the publication of the Earth Bible series.

Anne Elvey

Anne Elvey lives on unceded Bunurong Country in Seaford, Victoria. Her recent publications include *Reading with Earth: Contributions of the New Materialism to an Ecological Feminist Hermeneutics* (Bloomsbury T&T Clark 2022), awarded the inaugural ANZATS Book Prize for an Established Scholar; *Reading the Magnificat in Australia: Unsettling Engagements* (Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2020); *Cloud Climbers: Declarations through Images and Words for a Just and Ecologically Sustainable Peace* (ed. Anne Elvey, with artwork by William Kelly and Benjamin McKeown; Palaver, 2021); and in poetry, *Leaf* (Liquid Amber Press, 2022), shortlisted in the 2023 ASLE-UKI Book Prize for the best work of creative writing with an ecological theme. She has research interests in ecological poetics, ecological feminist hermeneutics, the new materialism, biblical literature (esp. Gospel of Luke) and its afterlives, and unsettling whiteness. Anne is an honorary research fellow at Pilgrim Theological College and a member of the RASP Network, University of Divinity.

Emily Colgan

Dr Emily Colgan is Academic Director and Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies at Trinity Theological College in Aotearoa New Zealand. Her research focuses on the relationship between the Bible and contemporary social imaginaries, exploring the ways in which ideologies contained within biblical texts continue to inform communities in the present. Emily is particularly interested in ecological representations in the Bible, as well as depictions of gender and violence.

Peter Trudinger

Timetable

| Time | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday |
|-------|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| 8.30 | | Registration | | |
| 9.00 | | Worship/Devotion | Worship/Devotion | Worship/Devotion |
| 9.30 | | Welcome Keynote 1: Aunty Denise | Keynote 2: Earth Bible Panel | Keynote 3: Aunty Denise |
| 11.00 | | Morning Tea | | |
| 11.30 | | Parallel Papers 1 | Parallel Papers 3 | Parallel Papers 5 |
| 12.30 | | Kaurua Walking on Country Cultural Experience with Sean Weetra | Lunch Song writing workshop (Mon only) | |
| 14.00 | Parallel Papers 2 | | Parallel Papers 4 | Parallel Papers 6 |
| 15.30 | Afternoon Tea | | | |
| 15.45 | Resourcing Session | | AGM | Wrap-up Conversation |
| 16.00 | Welcome to Country & Opening Worship | | | |
| 17.00 | Opening Reception | End of Day | | |
| 19.00 | | | Conference Dinner at Glenelg SLSC | |

Parallel Papers

| | Room 1.2 | Room 2.1 | Room 2.3 | Room 2.4 | Room 1.3 | | | | |
|------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|----------------------------------|-------------|----|----|-----|-------|
| <i>Monday</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.30 | R Matheson | S Gilbert | A Cotterill | T Hutagalong | | | | | |
| 12.00 | R Krohn | M Naidoo | J Lo | A Nuernberger | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.00 | M Phillips | R Dewerse | E Coglan | M James Gray | | | | | |
| 2.30 | M Pope | E Maggang | V Balabanski | K Handasyde | | | | | |
| 3.00 | E Austin | X Yang | S Lawson | Oslington, Powell, and Hall | | | | | |
| <i>Tuesday</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.30 | M Scott | M Whitaker | S Lawson | C Burton-Wood | S Ogden | | | | |
| 12.00 | L Stargel | E Lee | K Davison | E Gray | G Liston | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.00 | C Seglenieks | M Pope | A Elvey | T Hender | L Upton | | | | |
| 2.30 | B Bruehler | M Anslow | M Eastwood | M Awad | G Reudinger | | | | |
| 3.00 | G Powis | D Costache | N Wolfe | Starling and Gosbell | S Beaumont | | | | |
| <i>Wednesday</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.30 | D Ray | T Harris | N H-Creegan | Hallahan, Riches and Richards | D Tombs | | | | |
| 12.00 | A Gardner | | G Bezzett | C McKirland | A Picard | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.00 | T Harris | C Olsen | C Kung | M Bartholomaeus | | | | | |
| 2.30 | J Riley | S Hey | D Turnbull | P Oslington | | | | | |
| 3.00 | D Brown | A Cettolin | P Goh | A Shepherd | | | | | |
| Stream Key: | | | | | | | | | |
| BS | CH | FS | FT | IPTME | ST | TA | TE | WCM | Other |

Monday 1st July

| | |
|-------|---|
| 8.30 | Registration |
| 9.00 | Worship/Devotion |
| 9.30 | <p>Welcome</p> <p>Keynote 1: Rev Dr Aunty Denise Champion</p> <p><i>Reimagining God and the church in Australia through an Adnyamathanha lens</i></p> <p>God did not come to this land on the Endeavour, because God was already here. For my peoples – the Adnyamathanha of the Flinders Ranges - our spirituality goes way back beyond Western archaeology’s 48,000 year proof of our existence and the discovery of the 550 million year old Ediacaran fossils on our lands, to the beginning of creation. From the beginning we have been connected to Creator and living in community with all created things – seen and unseen – shaped over millennia by lessons woven into the fabric of our yarta (land) passed down by our Elders. In our language, ‘yarta wandatha’ – the land is speaking, the people are speaking. The legacy and trauma of colonisation has impacted our knowing of God and our ability to live as communities of people made in the image of God. Because the church has been an integral part of that horrendous history it is hard to see how Jesus Christ is good news. Questions about identity, understanding of God and what it is to be Christian loom large. In my keynote sessions, approaching interpretation through my storytelling lens, I want to explore the possibilities for theology and church when ancient wisdom sourced in Ngalakanha Muda – the ‘big history’ of all things – rather than being judged through the much younger lens of Christianity and dismissed, is instead the starting point.</p> |
| 11.00 | Morning Tea |
| 11.30 | <p>Parallel Papers 1</p> <p>Biblical Studies Room: 1.2 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Matt 18: Guidance for Christian Community</i> - Ruth Mathieson • <i>Fulfilling Th(es)e Prophets: The Canonical Significance of Moses, Elijah, and Jesus in Luke's Transfiguration</i> - Rachel Krohn <p>Issues in Practical Theology, Ministry and Education Room: 2.1 Convenor: Lousie Gosbell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>‘Learning to Sing in a Strange Land’ Practicing a Pedagogy of Relinquishment</i> - Sean Gilbert • <i>Leaning into the Unspeakable: Creating connection in diversity through inter-cultural education</i> - Marilyn Naidoo <p>Systematic Theology Room: 2.3 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tomáš Halík: A Theology for the Post-Secular</i> - Aden Cotterill • <i>Wisdom for the Postmodern World: Retrieving Bonaventure's Hermeneutical Method and Criteria for the Everyday Practice of Reading</i> - Jonathan Lo |

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| | <p>Theological Anthropology Room: 2.4 Convenor: Christy Capper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Decolonizing Ecotheology: An Asian Contrapuntal Reading of Ecological and Economic Justice</i> - Toar Hutagalung • <i>Psychologization of interpersonal biblical conflict stories in Philo of Alexandria's Allegorical Commentary</i> - Anna Nuernberger |
| 12.30 | <p>Lunch</p> <p>Includes Song Writing Presentation</p> |
| 14.00 | <p>Parallel Papers 2</p> |
| | <p>Biblical Studies Room: 1.2 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Connected through Beauty in Genesis 1:1-2:3</i> - Maren Phillips. • <i>Seeing through button eyes: Neil Gaiman's Coraline as theodicy and wisdom literature</i> - Mick Pope • <i>In His Shoes: Abram's Memorable Journey To and From the Land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1–10)</i> - Emma Austin |
| | <p>Church History Room: 2.4 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Mysterious Identity of the Baptists' "Mr. K"</i> - Matthew James Gray • <i>Missionary heroes and how we tell the story</i> - Kerrie Handasyde <i>Macquarie Christian Studies Institute and Christian Higher Education in Australia</i> - Paul Oslington, Luke Powell, and Craig Hall |
| | <p>World Christianity and Mission Room: 2.1 Convenor: Sue Holdsworth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When 'mission' is a dirty word, where to from here?</i> - Rosemary Dewerse • <i>Through-flowing Church: An Archipelagic Ecclesiology for Our Planet's Wellbeing</i> - Elia Maggang • <i>Allurement, Attention and Action: Towards a Poetic Ecomissiology</i> - Xiaoli Yang |
| | <p>Other Room: 2.3 Convenor: Michelle Eastwood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assemble all the Wild Animals: An Eco-Rhetorical Reading of Jer 12:7-12</i> - Emily Coglan • <i>Christian Scripture and Ecotheology: Bringing Earth into clearer focus in Biblical Studies</i> - Vicky Balabanski • ἀρσενολοιτης: A New Lexical Analysis - Sarah Lawson |
| 15.30 | <p>Afternoon Tea</p> |

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| 15.45 | <p>Resourcing Sessions</p> <p>Facilitators: John Griffiths, Michael Bartholomaeus</p> <p>These sessions are designed as round-table discussions about issues facing theological education and studies. Panellists will present ideas in order to kick-start the discussion before a time of conversation and engagement.</p> <p>Online Education and Supervision, and Building Relationships</p> <p>Join us for a vital session tailored for theological educators seeking to navigate the challenges of online education while cultivating holistic formation in learners within virtual environments. Educators face the complexities of maintaining academic rigor and fostering spiritual, emotional, and social growth online. Join the conversation about how to blend theological education with digital tools, ensuring that students receive a comprehensive and enriching learning experience. Let’s talk about the difficulties head-on and reflect on the practical solutions to support students' holistic development in the ever-evolving landscape of virtual education.</p> <p>The session begins with an overview of the unique challenges and opportunities presented by online education, acknowledging the importance of adapting traditional formation methods to suit digital contexts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the traditional ways of teaching and supervising face to face be adapted to suit the digital medium? • How do we utilise online accessibility to better equip Christians and the wider Church? <p>Researching, Spirituality, and Mental Health</p> <p>Join us for a deeply enriching session designed for scholars grappling with the challenges of maintaining good mental health amid the pressures of research output requirements and the sting of scholarly rejection. In this session, we will discuss the concept of research as a spiritual practice, offering a perspective that integrates academic rigor with spiritual well-being. Let’s brainstorm strategies to cultivate resilience, find balance, and transform research endeavours into a source of personal and spiritual growth. Gain practical tools and insights to navigate the demands of academia while nurturing your mental health and sustaining your vocation with purpose and passion.</p> <p>This session aims to reflection upon the role of a researcher in our modern context,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we manage the stress of research outputs with all other academic duties? • What strategies can we develop for handling rejection and maintaining healthy mental health? |
| 17.00 | End of Day |

Tuesday 2nd July

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| 9.00 | Worship/Devotion |
| 9.30 | <p>Keynote 2: The Earth Bible Project: highlights, challenges and trajectories. This panel presentation gives a critical overview of this international project from its origins in 1997/8, setting out its aims, principles, and methods. Some of the key critiques are presented and explored, and current and future trajectories are introduced. How has the project shaped the field of ecological hermeneutics?</p> <p><i>Panel members:</i> Vicky Balabanski (& Norm Habel), Peter Trudinger, Anne Elvey, Emily Colgan</p> |
| 11.00 | Morning Tea |
| 11.30 | <p>Parallel Papers 3</p> <p>Biblical Studies <i>Room: 1.2</i> <i>Convenor:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bakhtinian Voices heard in Job and his Friends: Double Voicing and a Third Voice in Job 3-31</i> - Marshall Scott • <i>The Hiddenness of God: The potential of Community as a Means of Grace in the Book of Job</i> - Linda Stargel <p>Issues in Practical Theology, Ministry and Education <i>Room: 2.1</i> <i>Convenor:</i> Louise Gosbell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"I felt like I was being pushed into a box I have escaped": The Rule of Life and neurodivergence in education for spiritual formation</i> - Maja Whitaker • <i>Practicing Ecclesial Theology Contemplatively to Engage with Impasse</i> - Elizabeth Lee <p>Systematic Theology <i>Room: 1.3</i> <i>Convenor:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>After theism: The principle of anarchy and the practice of faith</i> - Steven Ogden • <i>Analysing and Critiquing Yong's Theology of Interreligious Dialogue</i> - Greg Liston <p>Theological Anthropology <i>Room: 2.4</i> <i>Convenor:</i> Christy Capper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How on earth do we talk about spirituality? Putting an Old Testament theology of humanity in conversation with an enactive model of the human mind</i> - Cassandra Burton-Wood • <i>Judgement and hope in response to Pierre Bourdieu's economic logic of practice</i> - Emma Gray <p>Other <i>Room: 2.3</i> <i>Convenor:</i> Michelle Eastwood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bluey: The Religious Imagination of Australia's Favourite Cartoon Dog</i> - Sarah Lawson • <i>Sacramental Sausages: Freeing the Lord's supper for mission</i> - Karyl Davison |
| 12.30 | Lunch |

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| 14.00 | Parallel Papers 4 |
| | <p>Biblical Studies Room: 1.2 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reading the Johannine Community in the Epistles: A Method</i> - Christopher Seglenieks • <i>Lumping vs. Splitting: A Reframing of Johannine Dualism</i> - Bart Bruehler • <i>A prayer for the community</i> - Gillian Powis |
| | <p>Christian History Room: 2.4 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Theology in Community – establishing an inclusive theological model for an early-1900’s Anglo-Catholic parish</i> – Timothy Hender • <i>The Establishment of the Coptic Catholic Patriarchate in Egypt</i> - Magdi Awad • <i>Eugenics, disability policy and evangelicals in Australia: The South Australian WCTU and the “Sterilisation of Defectives” proposal of 1911</i> - Nicole Starling and Lousie Gosbell |
| | <p>Faith and Science Room: 2.1 Convenor: Gareth Bezett</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Evolutionary iconography and the Priestly imagination</i> - Mick Pope • <i>New Heaven and New Earth: A Critique of New Earth Eschatologies</i> - Matthew Anslow • <i>Communicating Theologically Interpreted Scientific Information to Christian Congregations: Patristic and Neopatristic Lessons</i> - Doru Costache |
| | <p>Feminist Theologies Room: 2.3 Convenor: Elizabeth Lee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To hold unwished for knowledge</i> - Anne Elvey • <i>Complaint! An Exercise in Reflective Practice</i> - Michelle Eastwood • <i>What Now?</i> - Naomi Wolfe |
| | <p>Other Room: 1.3 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“What is your name?” Kurna Aboriginal people and Lutheran missionaries from Dresden, Germany — a story of self-agency</i> - Gerhard Reudiger • <i>Mandated Professional Supervision for Clergy - The Narratives and Experiences of Clergy Adopting Mandated Supervision in response to the Royal Commission change</i> - Stephen Beaumont |
| 15.30 | Afternoon Tea |
| 15.45 | <p>AGM</p> <p>Meeting papers for the AGM will be distributed to ANZATS members via email prior to the conference. Everyone is welcome to attend. Voting is restricted to members only.</p> <p>Appointed representatives of institutional members are encouraged to nominate for a position on the council. For more information or to become a member, contact ANZATS Executive Officer Michelle Eastwood, via the ANZATS website: anzats.edu.au/contact-us/</p> <p>https://divinity.zoom.us/j/81417424507?pwd=ZHJ3VWV0L0tlaGgrQ04vaEpTL3h2dz09</p> <p>Meeting ID: 814 1742 4507 Passcode: 811674</p> |
| | End of Day |

Wednesday 3rd July

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| 9.00 | Worship/Devotion |
| 9.30 | Keynote 3: Rev Dr Aunty Denise Champion <i>Reimagining God and the church in Australia through an Adnyamathanha lens</i> |
| 11.00 | Morning Tea |
| 11.30 | Parallel Papers 5 |
| | <p>Biblical Studies Room: 1.2 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“For he causes his sun to rise on wicked and good and sends rain on righteous and unrighteous” (Mt 5:45): reflections on the concept of nation in the Asaph Psalms and its implications for reimagining community – David Ray</i> • <i>The Implications for Connectivity and Community: the refusal of 'pat-bag' in Daniel 1 and its acceptance by some in Daniel 11 - Anne Gardner</i> |
| | <p>Faith and Science Room: 2.3 Convenor: Mick Pope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Science and Theology: Putting Alasdair MacIntyre into dialogue with Mātauranga Māori and whakapapa – Nicola Hoggard Creegan</i> • <i>Sanctification, virtue, and emotional regulation - Gareth Bezett</i> |
| | <p>Issues in Practical Theology, Ministry and Education Room: Convenor: Louise Gosbell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On becoming the righteousness of God: the (potential) missional advantages of smaller churches – Tim Harris</i> |
| | <p>Systematic Theology Room: 2.4 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sacrifice Zones: Their Theological Making and Unmaking - Lorna Hallahan, Tanya Riches, and Jenny Richards</i> • <i>Power, Authority, and Human Vocation - Christa L. McKirland</i> |
| | <p>Theological Ethics Room: 1.3 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New Zealand’s Royal Commission into Abuse in Care - David Tombs</i> • <i>The Ethics of Religious Allyship: Tensions in Pākehā Religious Allyship and Indigenous Self-Determination - Andrew Picard</i> |
| 12.30 | Lunch |

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| 14.00 | Parallel Papers 6 |
| | <p>Biblical Studies Room: 1.2 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The 'homonoia' motif and Paul's rhetorical strategy in Philippians</i> - Tim Harris • <i>The Hymn, the Valley, and Assimilating Christ-Believers</i> - Joan Riley • <i>Vulnerable and alone: Conceptual blending, Paul's paternal authority, and familial metaphors in 1 Thessalonians 2</i> - David Brown |
| | <p>Issues in Practical Theology, Ministry and Education Room: 2.1 Convenor: Louise Gosbell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Performing the Unspeakable – "Queer" Christianity as a modern prophetic mode</i> - Caitlin Olsen • <i>Narrative therapy insights for applying bible passages to life's challenges</i> - Sam Hey • <i>Christ-enlivened practices: An investigation of shared meals in a higher education classroom</i> - Angelo Cettolin |
| | <p>Theological Ethics Room: 2.4 Convenor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There's A Lordless Power in My House: Television and Christian Discipleship</i> - Michael Bartholomaeus • <i>Academic Lemons</i> - Paul Oslington • <i>Attentiveness, Moral Formation, and a Community of Care</i> - Andrew Shepherd |
| | <p>World Christianity and Mission Room: 2.3 Convenor: Xiaoli Yang</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Toward a Second Generation Asian Australian Theology: Challenges and Explorations from within the Asian Diaspora</i> - Cyrus Kung • <i>'Going Deeper than English.' Generations and Third Culture Space Spiritual Formation in Christian Diaspora Communities</i> - David Turnbull • <i>Building an Intercultural Community Connection through Sharing Food</i> - Paul Dongwon Goh |
| 15.30 | Afternoon Tea |
| 15.45 | Wrap Up Conversation |
| 17.00 | End of Day |

Abstracts

Biblical Studies

The Implications for Connectivity and Community: the refusal of 'pat-bag' in Daniel 1 and its acceptance by some in Daniel 11.

Anne Gardner, Yarra Theological Union

This paper considers the expression 'pat-bag' that appears in Dan 1: 5, 8, 13, 15; 11:26. In Daniel 1 the expression has attracted a variety of translations and several different theories about its import. The Persian derivation of "bag" though and an exploration of why Daniel perceived partaking of a portion ('pat') of it to be defiling, explains his refusal of this aspect of being connected to Nebuchadnezzar's regime. It also highlights his belonging to a very different community. The understanding of 'pat-bag' and its defiling nature correlates well with the perfidy of those in the Hellenistic era who partake of the king of the south's 'pat-bag' in 11:26. The message of the refusal and acceptance of the 'pat-bag' is not confined to the ancient world but has implications also for our day in terms of the produce of the earth and world community as well as the earth and its produce in the book of Daniel.

Lumping vs. Splitting: A Reframing of Johannine Dualism

Bart B. Bruehler, Uniting College for Leadership and Theology

Early explorations of Johannine dualism quested for its historical and ideological roots. Later, focus shifted to the world of the writings of John themselves, seeking to understand John's dualistic elements from within rather than from without. Throughout both phases of research, John's dualism(s) have been framed primarily in terms of a series of differences, oppositions: light vs. darkness, truth vs. lies, God vs. the devil, below vs. above, hate vs. love. However, comparisons with contemporaneous dualistic formulations (particularly Qumran and Gnostic) and an examination of the Johannine writings themselves reveal that, while there is one grand divide—between Good and Evil generally—John's writings are even more interested in the connections and deep similarities that occur on either side of that divide. Drawing on a modern formulation, John is more interested in lumping than splitting. To illustrate—Jesus is the Christ (John 20:21), the Christ is the Son of the Father (2 John 1:3), the Son is the one who is true, and the one who is true is God (1 John 5:20), and the Son is the true light (John 3:21; 1 John 2:8), and again the Son and the Father are one (John 10:30), and indeed the Father and Son are one with all those who believe (John 17:20-21). This paper will demonstrate the splitting tendencies of comparative works in contrast to John's emphasis on lumping and connections on either side of the single divide rather than drawing careful distinctions between them.

Reading the Johannine Community in the Epistles: A Method

Christopher Seglenieks, Bible College of South Australia

Communities feature in biblical interpretation where the reconstruction of a group behind a text can provide a vivid hook for our imagination. Nowhere is this more evident than in the construct of a Johannine Community, an idea that has haunted Johannine interpretation for half a century, following the work of Brown and Martyn. More recently, the idea of a Johannine Community has been challenged, both on the basis of the Gospel's wide intended audience and by drawing attention to rhetorical functions of the text that complicate any attempt to see the Gospel as a window into a community. Yet this does not mean that we must abandon any idea of a Johannine Community, as we also have the Johannine Epistles to work with. By beginning with the Epistles, we can take a more methodologically sound approach to identifying the community in which the Gospel originated. The features of that context which are evident in Epistle include the contested nature of the community, along with the role of Christology and ethics as boundary markers.

This reconstruction may lack the detail and imaginative potential of earlier models but has the advantage of following the evidence that we have.

Vulnerable and alone: Conceptual blending, Paul's paternal authority, and familial metaphors in 1 Thessalonians 2.

David Brown, Bible College of South Australia

In the text of 1 Thessalonians 2, Paul describes his ministry amongst the fledgling Thessalonian community as the work of a father towards his children. This metaphorical image of Pauline fatherhood has become the dominant pattern for understanding the relationship between the apostle and the communities that he founded. When read alongside the Roman ideas of *patria potestas* and the *paterfamilias*, the “father” image has informed authoritative paradigms of leadership within the church. However, within the same chapter of 1 Thessalonians, Paul also describes himself as a child, a nursing mother and an orphan. These three metaphors describe persons in social positions of great vulnerability and risk within Greco-Roman culture. This paper argues that the four metaphors should not be interpreted independently of one another, but rather be allowed to interact and inform the reading of the text collectively. We will draw on the field of Cognitive Linguistics, specifically Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Conceptual Blending, to argue that Paul's familial metaphors interact to intentionally temper his immediate authority to the community. The findings show that by deliberately blending familial metaphors, Paul creates a mental space that incorporates his childlike lack of guile, his desire to nurture and nourish the fledgling community in its spiritual growth, and his fear and social isolation at their separation. The result is that Paul's conception of fatherhood in 1 Thessalonians is less concerned with authority than currently assumed, and is rather endowed with a robust pattern of self-giving and relationality.

“For he causes his sun to rise on wicked and good and sends rain on righteous and unrighteous” (Mt 5:45): reflections on the concept of nation in the Asaph Psalms and its implications for reimagining community

David Ray, Ridley College

Benedict Anderson (1983) opined in his seminal work that the “nation” is “an imagined political community” with finite yet fluid boundaries and a fictional sense of communion. This paper explores the idea that historic Israel and its representatives in the Psalter framed themselves as an “imagined community” based on its nation-God and its nation-Enemy through the Asaph tradition(s). The key question centres on the framing of the concept of the nation Israel as the southern kingdom in an arguably pre-exilic context (Ps 78:68–72) and the reframing of “your nation” and “your chosen ones” (Ps 106:4–5) in two sets of so-called historic Psalms. First, the lament-infused Asaph Psalms extend the idea that shifting concepts of “nation”, imagined in the context of divine absence and enemy presence after the fall of the northern kingdom, are dispensed with by prophetic oracle that all fail to follow God's ways (Ps 81:9–13), causing further reference to “our enemies” to die out from the vantage point of exile. Second, in so-called deuterio-Asaph (Pss 96, 105–106), crafted in the context of praise (cf. 1 Chr 16:8–36), old enmities reemerge through the extensive recount of biblical histories with a distinctive Deuteronomistic theology. Taking a religious-historical perspective of the “two” Asaph “collections”, it is argued that the nationalising tendency to imagine community is on the one hand “largely incurable” (cf. Anderson) but on the other hand able to be discerned with a critical eye and reappropriated. The implication for encouraging connection and community is to challenge the tendency to “enclose” oneself among the like-minded on the understanding that one is on the “right side of history” and reimagine community based on adopting an identity based on God's universal benevolence.

In His Shoes: Abram's Memorable Journey To and From the Land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1–10)

Emma Austin, Alphacrucis University College

In Gen. 12:1–10, Abram responds to the call of Yhwh by moving from Mesopotamia to Shechem in the land of Canaan, where God promises to give the land to Abram's descendants (v. 7). Yet, three verses later (v. 10), he departs for Egypt when Canaan is not able to sustain his extensive household during a famine. This passage is considered by some to be one of the most important passages in the Pentateuch/Torah, and, indeed, the whole Old Testament/Hebrew Bible (OT/HB). It lays the foundation for the tripartite relationship between Yhwh, the descendants of Abram, and the land of Canaan. In this paper, I apply mnemonature to analyse Abram's transition from Mesopotamia through Canaan to Egypt to probe the effect of narrative journeying on spatiotemporal memory. I propose that this significant passage is particularly memorable through the journey Abram undertakes, particularly for those who have lived experience and shared knowledge of ancient travel in biblical lands.

A prayer for the community

Gillian Powis, Uniting College For Leadership and Theology

John chapter 17 forms the conclusion of Jesus' farewell discourse and is in the form of a prayer. It asks God for various things but also seeks to maintain and strengthen the relationship between not only Jesus and his father but also between the disciples, Jesus and God. This presentation explores the application of performance criticism techniques to develop a new poetic translation which maintains linguistic connection to the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. This translation is designed for performance along with the preceding sections of this discourse. Chapter 17 will be performed as part of this presentation.

The Hymn, the Valley, and Assimilating Christ-Believers

Joan Riley, St Barnabas College

In the Lykos Valley in Asia Minor Christ-believers gathered in groups around the figure of Christ supreme and exalted. The believers belonged to a wider movement evident in Asia Minor in the first three imperial centuries towards understanding God as one and highest, either alone or in the company of other gods. The believers came from diverse cultural and social backgrounds, including Jewish, Hellenistic, and indigenous Asian groups. The blend of members led to conflict with some practising deferent rituals and others holding to the foundational beliefs laid down by Paul's faithful colleagues. The meeting point for the believers in the Lykos Valley was expressed in the hymn placed in the first chapter of the Letter to the Colossians (1.15-20). This paper explores the cultural makeup of Christ-believers in the Lykos Valley through assimilation theory and discusses connection and community among the people. The paper concludes with proposing that assimilation theory is a useful background tool to the contemporary church for understanding and developing connections with diverse people who do not know the Christian God or the beliefs and practices of being a follower in community.

The Hiddenness of God: The potential of Community as a Means of Grace in the Book of Job

Linda Stargel, Nazarene Theological College

The central character of the Book of Job faces extreme personal loss and suffering. Concealed from Job is that he is being tested by a heavenly adversary who doubts that Job fears God "for nothing" (1.9). Job passes the tests, and God admits to being incited against Job "for nothing" (2.3). Yet, Job continues to suffer, while fiercely protesting the hiddenness of God that compounds his suffering. Who or what could mediated God's presence to Job while God is silent? The "means of grace" emphasized by John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, were unavailable to Job in his time and place. Job's community held the most potential to be a means of grace to him. Job's friends and community, however, largely fail to

mediate the presence of a hidden God to Job. This paper will explore the role of community as a perpetual means of grace. After examining the anachronistic Wesleyan formulations of the means of grace with respect to Job, several aspects of the book of Job will be highlighted as evidence of this theological principle. This includes Job's evaluation of his friends, Job's own prior embodiment of God's presence in community, God's congratulatory estimation of Job and chastising words to his friends, and the transformation of Job's community in the epilogue into a means of grace. Finally, contemporary implications of community as an abiding means of grace will be briefly examined.

Connected through Beauty in Genesis 1:1-2:3

Maren Phillips, Bible College SA

The Book of Genesis is part of the Torah, the instruction of God to his people. It is also a story, written according to the principles of Hebrew story-telling. Story-telling has been used as a means to guide and shape new generations since time immemorial. Yet within biblical studies and theology it is not uncommon that one or both of these characteristics of the stories of Genesis and the book as a whole, are forgotten or ignored in pursuit of doctrine, sources, preached points, themes, and literary techniques. This can lead interpreters to potentially overlook significant formative and rhetorical thrusts of the text, as well as dismissing its form – that is, story – as incidental. This paper explores how the concept of beauty, as an attribute of the text, provides an avenue for the reader and interpreter to engage with the stories of Genesis as instruction by allowing the reader to connect with the stories emotionally and intellectually, thereby influencing and shaping their view of God, the world, themselves, and others. In short, the beauty of the story serves a communicative purpose that is inherent to its form and indivisible from its other communicative features. This paper will focus in particular on Genesis 1:1-2:3, a text notable for its deliberate construction, persistent influence, and the reader's first encounter with the good and the beautiful in biblical story-telling.

Bakhtinian Voices heard in Job and his Friends: Double Voicing and a Third Voice in Job 3-31

Marshall Scott, Sydney Missionary and Bible College

Mikhail Bakhtin coined the term "double voicing" to describe the process of recapitulating words and ideas in the mouths of different characters to change the way that the reader thinks about their meaning. For example, Job revoices the words of Ps 139 in Job 10. On Job's lips, the psalmist's praise of God's open hand of sovereign care is reconfigured to become God's closed fist of malevolent control. Job also recapitulates the voice of Deuteronomic tradition, where the righteous are blessed and the wicked punished, to impute to God a darker purpose, thus unsettling the reader's trust in a predictable rendering of the causal link between blessing and righteousness. But then as the poetic dialogue progresses, out of the ashes of a shattered faith, a new hope emerges for Job. This can be described using Bakhtin's notion of a third voice. Through the messy process of the dialogue, God's voice emerges - almost silent at first, then gaining strength. Job and the reader must then decide whether or not to listen to that voice above the cacophony of the friends.

Seeing through button eyes: Neil Gaiman's Coraline as theodicy and wisdom literature

Mick Pope, Whitley College

Neil Gaiman's 2002 children's novella *Coraline* tells the story of a pre-adolescent teen who becomes dissatisfied and bored with her life and the people around her. In search of adventure, Caroline enters a parallel world, one which both mirrors and yet parodies her own. The creation of her 'other mother', Coraline is presented with the temptation of the illusion around her or learning to see her own world and her place in it anew. This choice of vision is symbolised by the demand to have buttons sewn onto her eyes by the other mother. This chapter analyses *Coraline* as theodicy, read intertextually with the Hebrew Bible.

In particular, the other mother is understood as *tehom/Tiamat*, the chaotic deep of Gen 1 and chaos monster of ANE myth. This chaos monster is also presented as the *nahas* or cunning serpent of Gen 3, the unexplained presence of chaos in an otherwise good and ordered creation. The enigmatic existence of the other mother represents the unexplained nature of chaos which is in combat with, but restrained by a good God, and the wise action of humans. Coraline is presented with choice between true and false wisdom; how to perceive or see the things around her. If she chooses the vision of the other mother's world, Coraline must take on its worldview and adopt button eyes.

Fulfilling Th(es)e Prophets: The Canonical Significance of Moses, Elijah, and Jesus in Luke's Transfiguration

Rachel Krohn, Trinity College Queensland

The accounts of Jesus' transfiguration have fascinated laypersons and scholars for centuries. The biblical accounts themselves do not explain the significance of the event or the characters involved, providing fertile ground for interpretation. This paper argues that one of the underappreciated through lines of these three characters' stories is each of their attitudes toward death. This paper reads Luke's transfiguration account from a canonical perspective, considering the ways in which Jesus "fulfils" the stories of these "prophets with a death wish" in his attitude toward –and manner of– death.

Matt 18: Guidance for Christian Community

Ruth Mathieson, St Francis College, University of Divinity

In Matthew 18, the fourth of five discourses delivered by the Matthean Jesus, there is teaching on how to be the community that gathers in the name of Jesus. Using sociorhetorical interpretation to explore the inner-texture, intertexture, socio-cultural and ideological textures of this text, it is argued that this discourse provides foundations for Christian community. The primary metaphor for God in Mather's Gospel, "the Father in heaven", is undeniably patriarchal, but the heavenly Father is to be the one and only patriarch. The community is not constructed on hierarchical lines, rather the "little ones" are placed at the centre, the lost are sought out, and the weight of responsibility for prayer, pastoral care and determining the boundary between insiders and outsiders is to be shared. Those delegated with responsibility for the household of God, have high expectations placed upon them and face stiff penalties if they fall short of caring for community and cause little ones to stumble. Members of the community are not to stand by and be silent in the face of injustice. Attention is drawn to the direction of forgiveness in the Parable of the Two Debtors being from the top down and not something that is demanded of little ones who have been wronged.

The 'homonoia' motif and Paul's rhetorical strategy in Philippians

Tim Harris, St. Barnabas Theological College

This paper argues that Paul's rhetorical strategy in writing the letter to the Philippians reflects an adaptation of the well-recognised *homonoia* motif as applied to contexts of civic rivalries and the potential benefits of shared allegiance and committed *koinonia* towards common goals. Reference will be made to similarities in context between the competing identities and loyalties evident in Philippi and socio-political challenges in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand today. Paul's rhetorical strategy is to commend an approach to life 'as living out your citizenship in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ' (1:27) in terms of an alternative cosmology (perception of ultimate reality and order) and associated value system (2:1-5). Recognition of this alternative 'cosmic reality', presented in 2:6-11, radically transforms notions of loyalty and identity into the realm of heavenly citizenship. The motif that provides greatest cohesion to Paul's discourse is a version of the *homonoia* motif ('*concordia*' is the Latin equivalent). Drawing on a selection of Dio Chrysostom's Orations relating to *homonoia* in civic contexts by way of comparison, similarities are identified not just in terms of common terminology, but more significantly in rhetorical approach and civic discourse. Paul's adaptation of this motif, as reflected in Philippians, underscores that 'onemindedness' is

not an end in itself, but the 'same mind' shaped and determined by the attitude and ultimate reality revealed in Christ, an 'oneness of worldview', especially as reflected in 2:1-11.

Christian Scripture and Ecotheology: Bringing Earth into clearer focus in Biblical Studies

Vicky Balabanski, Uniting College for Leadership and Theology

This paper gives a concise historical survey of major scholarly developments in ecological hermeneutics, giving attention to the socio-cultural contexts in which eco-theological biblical studies developed, particularly Australia, South Africa and Germany. The paper offers an analysis of influential issues in contemporary scholarly and public discussions that shape ecological hermeneutics today, including its methodological diversity, and showing how Indigenous perspectives are increasingly significant in shaping the discourse. It then proposes some future trajectories for the eco-theological approaches to Christian Scripture, setting out some key questions that are arising.

Christian History

Narratives of heroic individuals are ubiquitous in evangelical mission

Kerrie Handasyde, Pilgrim Theological College, University of Divinity

Missionary heroes and how we tell the story — literature from the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They include biographies, autobiographies, church journal reports, and adventure novels that romantically retell mission experience for a readership of armchair travellers and potential recruits. While each of these genres makes the missionary the star, they also make the missionary conform for even as they describe individual experience, these narratives shape and are shaped by communities of reception. This paper examines selected evangelical missionary literature, tracing the use of language and examining how shared narratives work with and against the individualism of 'heroes of the faith' typologies. It focuses on missionaries in Papua, including Methodists such as Julia Benjamin, Minnie Billing, and Edie Twyford. It considers their use of well-rehearsed 'scripts' around conversion and discipleship, and the complications of culturally prescribed narrative in cross-cultural mission. It examines how gender intersects with expectations around grace and gratitude, preventing women from appearing to be authors of their own stories. Finally, it explores issues of authority in individual missionary stories and the power of evangelical expectations around the representation of missionary lives.

The Mysterious Identity of the Baptists' "Mr. K"

Matthew James Gray, Tabor College

In 1683 a paper war erupted among the English Baptist community about the role of women in their congregations. The chief antagonists were John Bunyan, who represented a rather misogynist position, and one "Mr. K", identified as a Baptist pastor in London, who represented a more egalitarian ideal. By this point, Bunyan was well-known and somewhat of a Puritan celebrity, famous for works such as *The Pilgrim's Progress* and his autobiography, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. In contrast, the identity of Mr. K, who claimed to be representing the entire London Baptist community, is much harder to determine. There were in fact at least three prominent Baptist pastors in London at the time whose surname started with K: Benjamin Keach, Hanserd Knollys and William Kiffen. It could well have been any of those three, given each of them upheld a mildly egalitarian position in their own writings and ministries. It is the proposal of this paper that the ambiguity of the title was in fact deliberate, to highlight the fact that all three ministers represented this position, as did the London Baptist community more broadly. This subtle mechanism added a communal credibility to their stance on the issue, in direct contrast to the rather isolated position of the celebrity Baptist pastor that John Bunyan had become. My name is Matthew James Gray, and I'm the Head of Undergraduate Studies at Tabor, and the Church history lecturer here. I wrote my PhD on the early modern English Baptists.

Macquarie Christian Studies Institute and Christian Higher Education in Australia

Paul Oslington, Alphacrucis

This paper describes a project led by Paul Oslington and funded by the Australian Research Theology Foundation to undertake preparatory work towards a history of Macquarie Christian Studies Institute. Macquarie Christian Studies Institute (MCSI), which operated at Macquarie University from 1998 until it was wound up in 2008 for financial reasons, was a significant pioneer of integrative Christian higher education. It was inspired by the non-denominational Regent College in Vancouver as well as long-standing discussions within Australian Reformed circles to create a Christian university along the lines of Abraham Kuyper's Free University of Amsterdam, and Anglican evangelicals with an educational vision beyond training clergy for parish ministry. Some of Australia's leading Christian educators were involved in MCSI including the inaugural director, Professor Robert Banks, subsequent directors Dr Gordon Preece and Dr Greg Clarke, as well as Professor Stuart Piggin, Professor Mark Hutchinson, and Professor Edwin Judge. The experience of MCSI offers a unique opportunity for theological educators to learn from its curriculum and pedagogical innovations. As a joint venture between theological educators and a major Australian public university, the experience of MCSI illustrates the tensions between theological education and our secular universities. It also illustrates the difficulties of designing sustainable business models for integrative theological education. At an MCSI function soon after it was wound up, Robert Banks suggested that other institutions would arise in the coming years to take up its vision of integrative theological education of the Institute, and this has indeed happened with Avondale, Alphacrucis and others in Australia. This project is exploratory, collecting and organising the archival raw materials (currently approximately 20 boxes of archival material donated by Stuart Piggin which are held at Moore Theological College in Sydney) and conducting oral history interviews with key MCSI figures. We hope to secure a larger research grant or philanthropic funding to commission a full history of MCSI by a young historian not connected with the Institute. This could be a PhD project.

'You Writ this Sermon for Hetty': Reclaiming the Wesley Sisters

Glen O'Brien, Eva Burrows College

The role of women in the history of Christianity has usually been relegated to the footnotes or largely in reference to male participants. This historiographical approach is becoming increasingly untenable in a world in which gender expectations are undergoing a shift and the future is understood to belong to women. Methodism has always been a movement in which women have been in the majority. Nineteenth-century male editors and biographers of eighteenth-century Methodist women curated their diaries and memoirs in a way that suited their own patriarchal perspectives. How might the historical understanding of Methodism be shifted if the agency of women was retrieved? This paper will contribute to this end by exploring the lives of the Wesley sisters, who have not so far been critically studied in light of the burgeoning field of gender studies. It will form the first foray into a scholarly monograph on the Wesley sisters, utilising gender theory as a methodology.

The Establishment of the Coptic Catholic Patriarchate in Egypt

Magdi Awad, St Athanasius College

In the nineteenth century, Pope Leo XII of Rome (1823-1829) was falsely led to believe that Muhammad 'Ali, the governor of Egypt, wished the establishment of the Coptic Catholic patriarchate for all Copts, and the appointment of the vicar apostolic Maximos Guaid as the first patriarch of the Coptic catholic church in Egypt. Therefore, on 1 August 1824, Leo XII personally consecrated a very young Coptic alumnus of the Propaganda College in Rome called Abraham Khashur as bishop. He was supposed to return to Egypt and consecrate Maximus, the previously mentioned, as a patriarch of Alexandria, but Leo XII soon recognized that he had been deceived, and the establishment of the Patriarchate remained on paper only. Later, on 27 November 1895, Leo XIII (1878-1903), proclaimed in the apostolic letter *Christi Domini*: "We re-establish the Patriarchate of Alexandria and erect it for the Copts." In the same letter, Jerjis Maqar was appointed

apostolic administrator of the patriarchate. On 19 June 1899, Cyril Maqar was appointed patriarch of Alexandria by Leo XIII as the first Coptic Catholic Patriarch; he was to be known as CYRIL II, recognizing Cyril the Great (412-444) as CYRIL I. The Catholic patriarchs succeeded each other after that and took the title of "Patriarch of Alexandria for the Coptic Catholics". Since that time there has been in Egypt what is called the Coptic Catholic Patriarchate and the Coptic Catholic Patriarch". In this paper I discuss the sociopolitical and ecclesiastical context and impetus behind this little-studied chapter in Coptic history.

Eugenics, disability policy and evangelicals in Australia: The South Australian WCTU and the "Sterilisation of Defectives" proposal of 1911

Nicole Starling (Morling College) and Lousie Gosbell (Australian College of Theology)

1911, Congregational minister and prominent social reformer Rev. Joseph Coles Kirby, wrote a paper entitled "The State and the Sterilisation of Defectives." Basing his arguments on a combination of eugenic theory and Christian theology (viewed, in both cases, through the lens of his own understanding) he proposed a program of State sterilisation of a range of groups, including people with intellectual disabilities. His arguments within the proposal reflected the growing popularity of eugenic thought at the time. His paper received varying responses from his fellow evangelical social reformers, with some enthusiastically endorsing its sentiments and others describing them as "quite horrible." The interaction between eugenics and the disability policy is one of the lesser-known aspects of Australian history. Even less known is the way many evangelical Christians adopted elements of eugenic thought in relation to people with disabilities during the first part of the twentieth century. Yet the historical evidence does suggest that a significant number viewed eugenics as the answer to many perceived social problems (including the presence of individuals with inherited disabilities) and proposed reforms based on this new pseudo-science. At the same time, however, there is evidence that some evangelical Christians questioned the underlying assumptions of eugenic theory, appealing (among other considerations) to the espoused theological convictions of the evangelical movement. Focusing on Kirby's proposal and the response of his contemporaries as a case study, this paper will examine the interaction between eugenics and Australian evangelical thought in the pre-WW1 period. It will seek to identify which aspects of evangelical theology led some to embrace eugenics and which prompted others to question or reject this new theory. In doing so, we hope not only to bring to light an overlooked aspect of Australian history but also to raise questions about how we view disability in our own context.

Theology in Community – establishing an inclusive theological model for an early-1900's Anglo-Catholic parish

Timothy Hender, Australian Lutheran College

The historiography of many Australian religious movements is characterised by chronological and biographical reviews that tend to romanticise forebears, communities and, in many cases, European settlement. In response my thesis seeks to apply a theological rather than historical approach to Anglo-Catholicism that evaluates the sources, application and understanding of the movement's theology. To achieve this an analytical Model has been developed that seeks to interpret the intellectual approaches arising from all connections in a vibrant Anglo-Catholic parish during the movement's heyday from 1905 to 1925, whether global, local, lay or clerical. This presentation will present the Model and illustrate its application to a defined set of sources that carry a degree of doctrinal intent and represent the comprehensive and evidenced theology of a faith community as found in sources extending from shared formularies to the day-to-day practice of believers. In doing so it will demonstrate that by prompting research into the interactions between all members of theological communities the voices of every day members can be clearly heard and a focus on the centre at the exclusion of the periphery avoided. This approach enables us to understand that theology is not only a privilege of those holding power and authority within a faith community but is also held within the informal lived and enacted beliefs and practices of those on the margin of formal academic and denominational structures. The Model is not

limited to Anglo-Catholicism and will be of interest to those researching many mainline communities and institutions. My confirmation proposal and other background presentations are at <https://timothyhender.com/academic/>.

Faith and Science

Communicating Theologically Interpreted Scientific Information to Christian Congregations: Patristic and Neopatristic Lessons

Doru Costache, AIOCS

The field of faith and science—also known as science and religion or theology and science—has developed significantly in the last seventy years, dismantling the “conflict” narrative. It did so, however, within the confines of an academic discipline that has been operating in diverse settings, from historical to philosophical to religious studies. It currently flourishes in Western Europe and North America, but not Down Under. In this paper, I will not discuss the causes of its academic marginalisation in our region, being instead interested in its limited impact on a popular level. Anecdotal evidence tells us that many Christians, for example, believe that faith and science are irreconcilable or, at best, that they have nothing to tell each other and that the sciences are of no use to believers. Not even newer approaches, such as “after science and religion” and “science-engaged theology,” seem to make a dent, as they aim to contribute academically, not pastorally. In turn, I discuss a traditionally anchored method, hermeneutical in scope, for the communication of theologically interpreted scientific information to Christian congregations, beyond the academia. I propose that this pastorally grounded approach is suitable for popularising the findings of science and religion to believers, and that it contributes to deepening the faith. First, I present the academic framework as what hinders the relevant findings from reaching the people in the pews; second, I present patristic and neopatristic examples of effective communication of relevant ideas at the popular level; third, I suggest ways of replicating this approach within our circumstances, as a way of overcoming the negative effect of the “conflict” narrative.

Sanctification, virtue, and emotional regulation: Does the psychological phenomenon of emotional regulation have any explanatory value when considering the sanctification of Christian lives?

Gareth Bezett, Theology House

Thomas Aquinas’s metaphysical anthropology and virtue ethics describe the development of habitual disposition toward easily doing good and avoiding evil. Virtue in the Aristotelian and Thomist traditions is an active area of scholarship. Literature describing emotional regulation shows significant parallels with that describing virtue. The parallels are especially apparent in areas such as goal orientation, context- and individual-specific optimums, and habituation. My current research tests whether emotional regulation offers a useful analogy to temperance. Using the descriptions of emotional regulation from scholars such as James Gross, I am particularly interested to see whether the development of emotional regulation is analogous to the development of temperance in the presence of caritas. While not the totality of what we would want to say about sanctification, acquisition of temperance in the state of grace is an important dimension of Christian virtue as St Thomas understands it. This paper sets out the case for the validity of such an analogy.

New Heaven and New Earth: A Critique of New Earth Eschatologies

Matthew Anslow, United Theological College

Recent decades have seen the dramatic rise of new earth eschatologies (or perhaps “new creation eschatologies”), exemplified in the works of figures such as N.T. Wright and J. Richard Middleton. Such eschatologies have in part been a response to simplistic notions of “going to heaven when you die,” which the relevant authors often trace to Platonic or Neoplatonic philosophical influences on important Patristic

theologians. And though such authors have made pastorally crucial arguments such as those regarding the inherent goodness of creation and the importance of material life, their eschatologies raise numerous exegetical, theological, and cosmological questions. In this paper I will discuss some of these questions, particularly as they regard hermeneutics and apocalyptic literature, the interpretation of the New Testament's resurrection language and imagery, and eschatology in light of contemporary cosmology. This will yield an appreciative yet critical appraisal of new earth eschatologies.

Evolutionary iconography and the Priestly imagination

Mick Pope, Whitley College

Science, as much as religion, has its iconography. The “tree of life” or “phylogenetic tree” is according to David Baum “a diagram that depicts the lines of evolutionary descent of different species, organisms, or genes from a common ancestor.” All surviving species are located at the top. The “march of progress” icon emphasises the evolutionary path from our early ancestors to modern homo sapiens, suggesting that our appearance was inevitable. In *Wonderful Life*, Stephen Jay Gould argues that this iconography is misleading. He rejects any concept of the “chain of being.” In place of a “ladder of predictable progress” life is a “copious branching bush, continually pruned by the grim reaper of extinction.” Species at the top are the survivors of evolutionary pruning. Ultimately, “physics and astronomy relegated our world to a corner of the cosmos, and biology shifted our status from a simulacrum of God to a naked, upright ape.” Another more recent icon is the “ego” versus “eco,” which compares an anthropocentric view with (male) humans at the top of the evolutionary process with an ecocentric view where we are just another species. Are such icons a challenge to or are consistent with, Christian theology? In this paper I first ask, what does the Priestly creation story of Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 have to say about divine sovereignty and humanity. Then I consider how such a theology could be applied to humanity's place in the world, specifically in the Anthropocene.

Science and Theology: Putting Alasdair MacIntyre into dialogue with Mātauranga Māori and whakapapa

Nicola Hoggard Creegan, New Zealand Christians in Science

Last year I looked at doing science and theology in the context of Mātauranga Māori (Māori ways of knowing) in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This year, I would like to extend this project and examine instead the deep sense of whakapapa or genealogy (of people but also ideas) that frames the dialogue in Aotearoa. Te ao Māori (Māori worldview) preserves at the heart of its Mātauranga concepts that ground morality and purpose in the land/whenua and people/tangata, in spirit/wairua and mauri/life force and especially in whakapapa or lineage. As a pakeha New Zealander, one can often feel as though one has no whakapapa, especially here at the ends of the earth, trained within a European heritage but separated from the major centres of intellectual ferment, especially those around science/theology. But as Alasdair MacIntyre has argued, we are all coming from a particular framework, a series of stories or interlocking narratives and embodied practices, even if we live in a culture that claims to ascribe only to a more mechanical Enlightenment project that sits above particular cultures and historical particularities. We are all “storytelling animals”. In this paper, I put MacIntyre into dialogue with the understanding of whakapapa in Mātauranga Māori, with the help of Māori kaiārahi/guides, and examine how this dialogue can contribute to the science/theology conversation here in Aotearoa.

Feminist Theologies

To hold unwished for knowledge

Anne Elvey, Honorary, Monash University and University of Divinity

This paper builds on work presented at the Trauma, Abuse and the Church Conference at The Cooperative in Brisbane in November 2023, where I presented poetry (my own and others) as a response to the

individual and communal trauma arising from child sexual abuse, and failed institutional responses to child sexual abuse, in particular in relation to the Roman Catholic church, the tradition in which I was brought up. In response to the conference itself, I began to ponder what it means to hold unwished for knowledge. While the proximate reason for this consideration was the knowledge of abuse of children and the terrible institutional failures to acknowledge and respond appropriately to such abuse, to hold unwished for knowledge is a challenge in many areas of public and ecclesial life, especially in relation to ecological damage, the abuse of lands, seas and skies. While I am not conflating one with the other, my inquiry here is into how unwished for knowledge in areas of justice can be held in ways that are not paralysing. This paper offers an ecological theological rather than a psychological inquiry. My proposal is that such knowledge can be held in the context of our deep interconnectedness with Earth where, open to the material sacred in our habitats, we may be empowered both to remain vulnerable and to protect ourselves in the face of unwished for knowledge. I draw on ecological feminist and new materialist theory in conjunction with poetry to address this matter of proper holding.

Complaint! An Exercise in Reflective Practice

Michelle Eastwood, Australian Lutheran College

In this paper, I will reflect on incidences and events that I have experienced that have led to me making a complaint. The similarities, differences, and power dynamics for each situation will be discussed, as well as the way my conceptualisation of the events is informed by my feminist theology. My feminist theological practice includes the values of prioritising marginalised voices, an understanding of intersectionality, truth, integrity, and the importance of respectful relationships. I will engage with the ideas contained in Sara Ahmed's work *Complaint*, as well as notions of culturally respectful practices, masculinist forms of knowledge, and internalised misogyny. This paper will also consider how a feminist theological lens may differentiate various aspects of the whole complaint process (including transgression or violation, making the complaint, and outcomes) from complaints that are bought within secular organisations.

What now?

Naomi Wolfe, NAIITS

In the days and weeks after the October 2023 Referendum many Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians were left wondering 'what now?' For many the process and the final outcome of the national vote brought forward many questions. This wondering includes questions about the future of how Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians could relate to each other were asked and continue to be asked. What might these questions be for church communities and theological institutions? How might feminist theologies contribute to these questions? This paper is part discussion and part workshop to start a new conversation with possibilities to develop pedagogies and andragogies that create space for transform theological opportunities.

Issues in Practical Theology, Ministry and Education

Christ-enlivened practices: An investigation of shared meals in a higher education classroom

Angelo Cettolin, Eastern College Australia

Christian practices, embodied participation, pedagogy, sacred meal, hospitality, justice The Christian practice of a shared meal including shared hospitality, sacred meal, testimony and prayer, stimulate students' engagement to act on issues of justice in relation to classmates and the wider community. Integration between the teacher's personal faith and the pedagogical approach by redesigning teaching practices, reimagines the class beyond rejigging techniques. Seriously considering each student as a creative human being made in the image of God and embodied participation in communal activities that

reshapes pedagogy is instructive as we move into a post- Covid era revealing a need for deeper relational approaches to education.

Performing the Unspeakable – “Queer” Christianity as a modern prophetic mode

Caitlin Olsen, Christian Heritage College

The contemporary church has historically problematised and therefore marginalised people within gender and sexual minorities by restricting their participation in ministry, publicly condemning their “lifestyles”, or refusing to discuss contemporary discourse around gender and sexuality. While this marginalisation is based on a biblical interpretation of boundaries for gender and sexuality, in practice this leaves many queer people without access to the Gospel, the Christian community, or the Missio Dei. While “queerness” may be unspeakable in many modern church contexts, as a means of social performance outside of the norm, queerness can describe the performative actions of many Old Testament prophets, even some of the actions of Jesus. By performing in ways that are “unspeakable”, the prophets represented YHWH’s will before Israel’s institutional power, to promote restorative justice and reveal exploitation and abuse. By enacting this performative mode consistently with scripture and sound biblical interpretation, queer people can not only experience meaningful inclusion beyond simply the margins of the church but also address the root causes of religious trauma that have plagued the church’s public perception in the #MeToo era. By empowering queer people to perform acts of justice grounded in the love of Jesus, churches can truly embody Good News to everyone in a time of increasing economic, social, and spiritual inequity. na

Practicing Ecclesial Theology Contemplatively to Engage with Impasse.

Elizabeth Lee, University of Divinity (Pilgrim College)

Congruent with the conference theme “Connection and Community,” I will describe a contemplative participative approach to inquire into a faith community’s ecclesial practices when encountering an impasse. While our ecclesial practices are implicitly and explicitly informed and shaped by a range of assumptions, conclusions, and beliefs, including theological ones, these remain largely unexamined, particularly when we are grappling with situations where no possible solutions are evident.

The context for my doctoral research is a faith community that, like many others, is struggling with the apparent impasse resulting from the competing needs of those who have lived/living experience of trauma and the community’s desire to be ‘welcome of all’. My future research will explore what ecclesial hospitality could look like in a post-Royal Commission* era if it were informed by contemporary trauma-sensitive theology. This paper will describe the contemplative feminist participative theological approach I will pursue. The research design centres on a series of contemplative communal dialogue circles to generate the empirical data. The purpose is for participants to articulate and critique a community’s understanding of its current practice of hospitality and its theological underpinnings, and then to explore how trauma-sensitive theology could guide and transform the community’s ecclesial practice of hospitality in a post-Royal Commission Era. I also suggest such an approach is a spiritual practice, and the spiritual practice is the method open to the possibility of personal and communal transformation.

“I felt like I was being pushed into a box I have escaped”: The Rule of Life and neurodivergence in education for spiritual formation

Maja Whitaker, Laidlaw College

“I felt like I was being pushed into a box I have escaped” is not the feedback one hopes to hear from your spiritual formation class, but that was the honest reflection of one neurodivergent student in response to a core component of the course. She was not the only one to grapple with a compulsory assessment that required students to design and implement a personal Rule of Life. This ancient practice has rocketed to broad popularity in recent years. It entails commitment to a chosen set of spiritual disciplines that are outworked in a rhythm to support personal flourishing and abiding in Christ. For many the practice is experienced as life-giving, promoting an intentional pursuit of Christ, spiritual growth, and holistic

flourishing. However, the commitment to structure and pattern proves detrimental for some, particularly neurodivergent individuals and/or those with ADHD. In the case of this course, the student reported that the teaching module and assessment were not only disproportionately difficult for her, but were also experienced as shaming and detrimental. In this paper I will offer a practical theological reflection on her experience and the input of others and ask: How might a practice that has formed Christ-followers for centuries be re-imagined for neurodivergent individuals? How might classroom teaching be more hospitable when the content itself is the issue? How might assessment requirements be modified to support the flourishing of all learners, while still satisfying the requirements for consistency?

Leaning into the Unspeakable: Creating connection in diversity through intercultural education

Marilyn Naidoo, University of South Africa

How does one create Christian community in an individualistic culture? Using a case-study from the South African context, the transition from a divided past into a democracy evidenced theological training institutions as places that have not affirmed the various diversities of race, gender and ethnicities found within the institutional community. The articulation of diversity and how people experience it is often simmering with all sorts of resentments and half-understandings that are theologically complicated and contested as they are attached to religious dogma. In creating community, diversity exists as a problem and possibility. Intercultural education is an approach that can disrupt learnt behaviour. This happens within a mediated learning environment that allows for students to respond to existential questions and to reflect on learning within quality interactions, ideally found in the process of formative education. In this space students internalise their professional role through a re-examination of assumptions of their theology and worldview. This learning environment also makes antiracist pedagogies a possibility as a solution to conflict in the context. Seeing and embracing the other can serve as a model for constructive exchange, offering a liberatory vision about how people relate towards a reconciled humanity.

Narrative therapy insights for applying bible passages to life's challenges

Sam Hey, Alphacrucis University College

Narrative therapy emphasizes the importance of considering multiple perspectives and alternative stories when seeking to resolve life's challenges. When applied to biblical passages, this approach encourages individuals to explore diverse interpretations and consider different narratives within the Bible. By drawing on the insights of narrative therapists like White and Epston, the process of engaging with biblical passages becomes an opportunity for individuals to reflect, externalize, and re-author their life stories in a manner that aligns with Christian principles. This process fosters a more open-ended and collaborative discussion about the meaning of biblical texts, allowing participants to draw on a variety of perspectives to reshape their understanding of their own lives. This paper considers some of the ways in which insights from narrative therapy can be applied to biblical stories in ways that help participants reform life narratives so as to face the challenges that life presents in healthy productive ways. The author, Dr Sam Hey is a lecturer in bible, theology and practical ministry, and in education at Alphacrucis University College. He is a long standing member of ANZATS.

'Learning to Sing in a Strange Land' Practicing a Pedagogy of Relinquishment

Sean Gilbert, Uniting College, SA

Willie James Jennings' *After Whiteness: An Education in Belonging* (2020) and Cindy S. Lee's, *Our Unforming: De-Westernizing Spiritual Formation* (2022) have been landmarking literary encounters for me of late. Each in their own way have challenged working assumptions around teaching within a theological institution. Namely, an epistemological assumption about a so-called 'body' of specialised knowledge that students need to learn. Also, an assumption about the inherent superiority of western ways of processing and acting in relation to all things biblical, theological, or spiritual. Adopting a professional stance of

conscious relinquishment may sound like a contradiction in terms. However, to frame the Christian Gospel with a lively sense of congruity, admissions of unknowing or limitation, and confessions for the need of relearning, are essential to the way our teaching is conveyed —embodied. The Gospel of Mark with its latent theme of transformative movements forward will be an ideal conversation partner to this overarching theme.

On becoming the righteousness of God: the (potential) missional advantages of smaller churches

Tim Harris, St. Barnabas Theological College (Anglican Dio of Adelaide)

With particular reference to the conference themes of connection and community, this paper starts from the foundation of *missio Dei* and draws together perspectives integrating missional theology, ecclesiology and practical theology. I build on the quotation from Richard Hays and subsequent comment by Michael Gorman that ‘Rather, [Paul] says, “so that we might become the righteousness of God.” Our commission from God is that we as a community are called to embody the righteousness of God in the world—to incarnate it, if you will—in such a way that the message of reconciliation is made visible in our midst. And of course reconciliation made visible is something that can appear only in practices that show unity, love, mercy, forgiveness and a self-giving grace that the world could not even dream of apart from Christ.’ The customary church growth paradigms are predicated on the goal of numerical growth, and the assumption that larger is better. Similar dynamics are in play with Church planting expectations. The prevalence of these two paradigms often results in an apologetic and discouraged outlook by the majority of churches which number less than 100 members. The main contribution of this paper is to identify (potential) missional advantages in being a smaller, relationship-centred church community. With a focus on being church through the nature of acceptance, support and desire to see shalom permeate the culture of church as community, participation in the *missio Dei* is enhanced by the capacity to be more organic and less program driven. Practical theology is inherently relational and communal. In seeking to ‘become the righteousness of God’, missional church and theological praxis can be one and the same.

Systematic Theology

Tomáš Halík: A Theology for the Post-Secular

Aden Cotterill

My paper presents the work of Czech theologian and priest Tomáš Halík as a theology for the post-secular. The first section outlines three general post-secular themes woven throughout his corpus: the blessedness of spiritual seeking, a receptivity to the critical insights of atheism, and the affirmation of doubt and uncertainty as an integral feature of Christian faith. The second section then demonstrates what is distinctive about Halík’s contribution: his engagement with themes of both plurality and uncertainty in a single theological schema. I argue this is an apt response to the post-secular dynamics of the nova effect—as outlined by Charles Taylor and others—that is otherwise lacking in the literature to date. And I conclude that if the Australian church is to thrive in its increasingly post-secular and religiously plural communities then continued theological reflection along these lines is crucial. I will be calling in from UK time (which currently is 11 hours difference but I am not sure about in July). I am happy to get up early or stay up late if needed. But if the most suitable time possible could be found that would be very welcome!

Power, Authority, and Human Vocation

Christa L. McKirland, Lecturer in Theology,

How are humans meant to relate to power and authority, especially within the family of God? In this essay, I will connect the ideas of being made in God’s image, with Jesus as the true Image of God, and how the royal-priestly vocation is intended for all humankind. Such an anthropology is intrinsically related to power and authority while being conditioned by a Christological telos, and a Pneumatic reliance. Of course, what is

meant by power and authority will need to be clarified, as well as the points of overlap and disconnect with how Jesus's authority and power are related to our own. Ultimately, the essay will propose theological guardrails for thinking of human and non-human flourishing as it relates to power and authority. These guardrails are ecclesiologicaly oriented because, as an intended microcosm of heaven on earth, the church should be the place where human power and authority are exercised for the flourishing of all. na

Analysing and Critiquing Yong's Theology of Interreligious Dialogue

Greg Liston, Laidlaw College

The Pentecostal scholar, Amos Yong intentionally and explicitly prioritises the Spirit in developing a theology of religious pluralism, a methodological approach he labels as "pneumatological imagination." Yong has gradually developed and enhanced this understanding across two decades and he addresses this topic from a variety of perspectives within many publications. This presentation summarises Yong's breadth of work on religious pluralism into a coherent and manageable framework, and then critically interacts with it. While it is recognised that Yong's pneumatological theology of religious pluralism has many helpful features, it also argues that his conclusions may not be entirely warranted, primarily because Yong's pneumatological prioritization involves the intentional deprioritisation of Christology. The analysis and critique of Yong's resulting pneumato-religious understanding consequently illuminates several important features critical in the development of a coherent and comprehensive Third Article Theology of Missiology.

Wisdom for the Postmodern World: Retrieving Bonaventure's Hermeneutical Method and Criteria for the Everyday Practice of Reading

Jonathan Chung-Yan Lo, Monash University

In this paper, I explore 'how' and 'why' Christ is the sole criterion of interpretive validity in the hermeneutical tradition of Franciscan theologian Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (1217-1274). His sapiential method of reading Scripture begins from the reality of the scriptural subject and deduces the source, way and end of its being. The relationality of understanding manifests in an approach in which the reader participates in the truth of Christ incarnate in things. Christ incarnates a hermeneutics that is holistic rather than logocentric – a hermeneutics that is grounded in the actual rather than in epistemological structures. As such, it is not a predetermination of the way to meaning, but an unconditional openness to God's vision which is the ground of historical understanding. The methodological implication is that such reading resists objective validation, since there can be no outside perspective with which to view Christ. Christ manifests a way of reading that cannot be tied down to any particular philosophical or religious ideal. It is part and parcel of the mystery of revelation that it cannot be tied down to a specific formality; there are 'many routes within Christ'. Therefore, Christocentric interpretations can be (inter)subjectively registered but not critically evaluated.

Sacrifice Zones: Their Theological Making and Unmaking

Lorna Hallahan, Tanya Riches, and Jenny Richards, Flinders University and Eastern College Australia

Sacrifice zones are increasingly described in the contextualisation of theologies that may abandon marginalised individuals and groups. Taylor's recent historical account (2018) moves from sites such as nuclear waste dumps to examining human lives stripped of dignity and moral status. Riches (2022) advances this understanding to identify theologies casting women experiencing DFV into a sacrifice zone, especially by promoting complementarianism. This group presentation furthers the conversation to explore the theological forces in the making and unmaking of sacrifice zones for Christian women experiencing DFV. Richards' doctorate (2024) explores the dualistic ontological and epistemological roots that perpetuate divisive doctrinal positions related to forgiveness and restoration, which further alienate Christian women experiencing DFV from their legal rights as well as from free and full acceptance in their faith communities. To dismantle these sites of jeopardised humanity, justice and belonging, we embrace Riches' call for specialised theological development by women to be mainstreamed throughout churches. Richards

contributes unlocking insights from TF and JB Torrance whose connected work on forgiveness and justice provides a bridge to overcome potentially destructive dualisms (complementary roles, public/private; sacred/secular). This offers doctrinal coherence which does not privilege forgiveness. The session concludes with Hallahan's seeking possibilities for unmaking the sacrifice zones into which disabled people are driven, asking also where such work might lead the church as we seek sophisticated theologies to address compelling issues for the people of God. The session will comprise a joint presentation of 20 minutes and an open discussion of a further 10 minutes.

After theism: The principle of anarchy and the practice of faith

Steven G Ogden, St Barnabas College, University of Divinity

In this paper, I use the work of Reiner Schürmann to critique the concept of theism in order to develop a fresh approach to faith. In the West, theism has become bound to the political. In Schürmann's terms, theism is implicitly a "supreme referent" in the political apparatus. Primarily men, for example, who long to be king or president soon aspire to be treated like god. Historically, there have been many theisms. The notion of separation is inherent. This is separation between transcendent and immanent, divine and human. The doctrine of the Incarnation, and related Trinitarian theories, have emerged to address this. Such theories, however, and their speculative metaphysical systems, are premised on insoluble Christological problems. In this paper, I argue these issues are related to the human longing for a definitive origin. For Schürmann, however, the origin (arche) is inherently unstable. This is encapsulated in his ironic formula "the principle of anarchy". This is a philosophical approach to an-arche that has political implications, which this paper expounds. Above all, the use of Schürmann's work on an-arche has theological implications. First, it has the potential to generate fresh apophatic theology. Second, it can revitalise faith, fostering agency, which is more about practice than metaphysics. Schürmann's critique of metaphysics forms an important element in this discussion. In summary, faith is anarchic, in two senses, philosophical (no foundation) and political (no rule). Traces of this can be seen in theologies of resistance in early Judaism (Daniel), the Gospels, and in the crucifixion. Faith flourishes in practice, in community, in resistance.

Theological Anthropology

Psychologization of interpersonal biblical conflict stories in Philo of Alexandria's Allegorical Commentary

Anna Nuernberger, Australian Lutheran College

Philo of Alexandria was particularly interested in exploring the theme of inner conflicts and emotional coping, which were already present in Greek philosophy, through biblical figure pairs. He sought to universalize these phenomena through allegorical and psychological interpretations, thereby bridging the divide between the world of the biblical ancestors and his own. He often employed pairs of figures, such as Abraham and Lot, Jacob and Rachel or Leah, and Cain and Abel. This paper explores how Philo utilised the dichotomy of the soul, inherited from the Platonic tradition, to explain inner conflicts and the contradictions within humans with the ultimate goal of enabling deeper knowledge of and connection with God. Selected examples from his Allegorical Commentary are analysed to shed light on Philo's ambivalent view of humanity.

Through innovative theological refunctionalisation of Greek philosophical anthropology, Philo aimed to make the Pentateuch transparent as the origin of all wisdom. The Jewish exegete and philosopher found it particularly fitting to highlight antagonistic faculties and types of the soul where he quoted, commented on, or assumed familiarity with interpersonal conflict stories from the Septuagint, tapping into the exemplary potential inherent in these biblical texts. Philo expanded the concept of the inner struggle between reason and emotions, or between rational and irrational faculties of the soul, sometimes even extending it to the idea of ambivalence in cognition itself. This serves as evidence of how a new sensitivity to internal,

particularly cognitive, ambivalences in humans developed in a small educated elite community within early Judaism.

Judgement and hope in response to Pierre Bourdieu's economic logic of practice.

Emma Gray, University of Otago

Theologians have turned to Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice, as outlined in *The Logic of Practice* (1980), to consider the dynamic mechanisms that form persons and communities. Bourdieu's conception of pre-reflexive bodily knowledge that is held in practice has been especially helpful to this end. However, Bourdieu also argues that the underlying logic, or pre-reflexive driver, of all practice is the pursuit of capital, which is less often considered by theologians. ("Capital" in his theory is conceived broadly as any cultural good). In this paper I take seriously that Bourdieu has observed something true about the logic of practice: it can be motivated by the pursuit of capital, but not absolutely. I argue that insofar as this logic is operative, God does not abandon humanity to it but responds out of God's own "logic" of love. That logic includes God's judgement of the sinfulness inherent in the pursuit of capital, God's forgiveness that restores people to life in Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit by whom God's people are empowered to live out of the logic of God's love. I give particular attention to the revelatory aspect of judgment that a) reveals the teleological futility and destructiveness of Bourdieu's logic of practice and b) because God's judgment fits within the broader logic of God's love, reveals, in hope, another logic by which we might live. Attending to the logics of practice in this way offers a further generative angle to consider the formation of persons in community.

Decolonizing Ecotheology: An Asian Contrapuntal Reading of Ecological and Economic Justice

Toar Hutagalung, Uniting College for Leadership and Theology

The extraction of earth for its resources is undeniably destroys the life of the planet along with all things in it. It is not just a murdering of humanity but also animals, plants, and even the river, rocks, and the mists themselves. Human efforts to go for environmentally friendly at times did not save the life itself. Greenflation, for example, shows how saving an environment also requires certain class privileges. This then becomes a dilemma of ecological and/or economic justice. My Asian experience with its close intimacy with nature and struggle against colonialism offers an alternative approach to the dilemma. I argue that an Asian contrapuntal reading of economy and ecology becomes a way for decolonizing ecotheology that honours the dignity of all creation.

Theological Ethics

The Ethics of Religious Allyship: Tensions in Pākehā Religious Allyship and Indigenous Self-Determination

Andrew Picard, Carey Baptist College

In 1969, the World Council of Churches launched the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR). Shaped by liberation theologies, the PCR funded and supported anti-racist movements across the world, with a particular concern to combat white racism in church and society. In New Zealand, the PCR worked directly with Māori, Pasifika, and Pākehā activist groups. Charles Spivey Jnr (African American, PCR rep) visited NZ to meet with activists, study white racism in NZ, and help conscientise NZ churches and society. However, Spivey's visit caused tensions over the role of allyship and indigenous self-determination. This paper explores the ethics of religious allyship in relation to Spivey's visit to NZ. Spivey, as the PCR rep, worked closely with the NZ reps, Don Borrie (Pākehā), Paul Reeves (Māori), and A. Gnanasunderam (Sri Lankan). However, a significant conflict emerged between them over the theological and social analysis of white racism which threatened to end Spivey's visit and the work of the PCR in NZ. Existing scholarship has argued that Reeves opposed Spivey and Borrie's views because they were too radical for his conservatism.

However, this conflict was primarily about the ethics and limits of allyship for the sake of indigenous self-determination. Reeves' frustration was well-intentioned allies giving representations of Māori that best suited their ends. This paper traces Reeves' revision of Spivey's itinerary to meet with a much broader range of Māori representatives, which resulted in a richer account of racism and anti-racist strategies in Aotearoa.

Attentiveness, Moral Formation, and a Community of Care

Andrew Shepherd, University of Otago

"Attention", Iain McGilchrist states, "is a moral act." "What we attend to, and how we attend to it, changes it and changes us." The mode of our attention "has consequences."¹ Yet we now live in a world characterised by distraction. Daily, we are bombarded with information – words, images, noise – and we carry in our pockets, addiction-devices, which steal our focus.² These contemporary talismans, many contend, are at best hindrances, at worst, destructive of the goal of 'connecting' human communities. This paper offers a theological reflection upon this relationship between attentiveness and moral formation. Drawing upon a reading of the Crucifixion narratives in the Gospel of Luke, I consider what it might mean to conceive of 'sin' as a form of inattentiveness and distraction, exploring how Christocentric attentiveness – particularly attentiveness to suffering – forms Christian character, thus providing the basis for moral actions that foster human community. I intend to attend conference in-person, though this will be dependent upon securing funding.

How on earth do we talk about spirituality? Putting an Old Testament theology of humanity in conversation with an enactive model of the human mind

Cassandra Burton-Wood, Laidlaw College

If Freud, Marx and Nietzsche, the "Masters of Suspicion," were correct, then all serious talk of religion, theology, and associated concerns of human connection to transcendence should have died out in the twentieth century. However, efforts to acknowledge holistic and culturally diverse approaches to wellbeing today have put spirituality back on the table as a meaningful category for our earthly lives. Within the secular environment it has become clear that any truly operational definitions of human spirituality needs input from other worldviews. To be credible, particular accounts of spirituality also need to provide an explanation for the empirical relationship observed between measures of spirituality and psychological or social variables. This paper explores the potential of Christian theology to bring talk of spirituality down to earth by putting J. Gordon McConville's study of Old Testament spirituality in conversation with and Evan Thompson's enactive account of the human mind. McConville's theology of spirituality shares several resonances with Thompson's account of enactivism in the emphasis on sense-making as the key activity of human life, and in the emphasis on the intimate relationship between mind, body, and environment. Where these approaches diverge is in their perception of the need for and means of personal and collective transformation. The conversation between McConville and Thompson supports the plausibility of Christian theology to give an account of spirituality that is not a mere addendum to an otherwise independently functioning human materiality, but that gives direction and meaning to human flourishing in all dimensions.

New Zealand's Royal Commission into Abuse in Care

David Tombs, University of Otago

In November 2018 the New Zealand government announced the terms of reference for a Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions. The Commission's term began in January 2019, it presented an interim report in December 2020, and its final report is expected in March 2024. This presentation will: (1) review the key findings in the report, especially as these findings relate to the churches; (2) consider the how the churches in New Zealand might respond to these

challenges; (3) discuss points of similarity and difference with findings in other countries, especially with the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2013-2017).

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There's A Lordless Power in My House: Television and Christian Discipleship

Michael Bartholomaeus, Tabor

On global scale, the activity that we dedicate the most time to after sleeping and working is watching TV. As an example, in 2021, the Australian Communications and Media Authority reported that Australians are watching 26.6 hours of TV and online content every week (3.8 hours per day). A slightly older survey entitled the Australian Video Viewing Report indicated that Australians have, on average, 6.6 screens in their home on which they can consume this content.

Such a cultural trend raises the question, to what extent can TV watching be a part of the life of Christian discipleship? To answer this question, I will draw on Karl Barth's discussion of the lordless powers to set the theological context for an answer to this question. I will turn to Albert Borgmann's reflections on technology which help specify just what sort of effect our commitment to TV might be having on our lives as Christians. Borgmann is helpful because he helps us see that the real question of TV is not what we watch but that we watch at all. Finally, I will look to both Barth and Borgmann to grapple with the responsibility of Christians who live in a world saturated by television.

Academic Lemons

Paul Oslington, Alphacrucis

Research that spans multiple disciplines is commonly praised and regarded as essential to address complex contemporary problems. However, if quality monitoring is poor (perhaps because of failure to include experts from the relevant disciplines e.g economics being evaluated by theologians, or theology being evaluated by economists) then the market for such research can be swamped by poor quality work. Potential readers of research who lack expertise in one of the relevant disciplines have difficulty judging quality before reading a paper and will expect a paper randomly selected to be bad and rationally choose not to read such papers. This is a problem because the good multidisciplinary research which exists will not be read, and perhaps not even produced, when it would have benefited both readers, writers, and society. The market for multidisciplinary research thus fails in a manner similar to the asymmetric information market failure identified by Akerlof in the market for used cars.

World Christianity and Missiology

Toward a Second Generation Asian Australian Theology - Challenges and Explorations from within the Asian Diaspora

Cyrus Kung, Uniting Church in Australia

According to census data from 1954, of those who were born outside of Australia only one of the top ten countries was non-European (New Zealand). In 2016, eight of the top ten countries were non-European. Although the United Kingdom and New Zealand still top the list for overseas-born migrants this dramatic shift away from the Eurocentric migration is staggering. New voices are being grafted into the conversation about the shape and identity of Australia. Among these voices are Asian Australians that include the first, second and third generations of the Asian diaspora. Second Generation Asian Australian Theology is an often-missed/add-on in the diaspora conversation of first generation immigrants and the western fascination towards “multicultural” dialogue. A question we need to ask is; What will happen to the church/ shape of theology as the Second Generation of Asian Australian immigrants come of age and begin to develop their own leadership, theology and ministry practices? Multicultural and intercultural studies have provided us with some tools, however much of the dialogue has been dominated by first generation migrants and the dominant/majority western culture. The following essay will use an autobiographical frame work to draw upon my lived experiences as a Second Generation Asian Australian and begin to articulate ongoing challenges that face Second Generation Asian Australian theology in our inherited colonial structures. It will also articulate how leaning into first nation voices and wisdom may free us from polarised conversations between western and eastern theologies and begin to find “local” expressions of intercultural and hybrid theologies that reflect the experiences Second Generation Asian Australians, and the changing demographics of what it means to be “Australian” in the 21st century.

‘Going Deeper than English.’ Generations and Third Culture Space Spiritual Formation in Christian Diaspora Communities.

David Turnbull, Local Leaders International

Tensions exist within Christian diaspora communities between the first and following generations. Cultural differences can contribute to conflict, segregation, and loneliness, affecting the sense of unity and community belonging. The issues are often addressed by creating English language services for the following generations within diaspora churches. This can be a positive development that ensures that the generations remain in community, however more is required in developing stronger and deeper Christ-centred relationships and avoiding standardization and ethnocentrism. The responses often focus on the behavioural, but it is widely recognised that from an anthropological standpoint, the influences shaping behaviour lie in values and beliefs stemming from a worldview. Generational formation begins with theology and associated values through third culture space spiritual formation. The struggles of being caught in-between associated with the third culture space requires fostering a sense of shalom, an identity based on Christ, a level of contentment and a theology of cultural intelligence, as reflected in the decisions of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15. The outcome is healthy, Christ centred, intercultural relationships, displaying the power of God’s unity amidst diversity.

Through-flowing Church: An Archipelagic Ecclesiology for Our Planet’s Wellbeing

Elia Maggang, Lincoln Theological Institute, University of Manchester

Theologians have constructed ecclesiological concepts to explain church’s interactions with the natural world. Nevertheless, little construction has been attempted to explain the interactions of the church with the sea. Consequently, unfriendly connotations and ignorance of the sea remain unchallenged in Christianity, and the ideas the sea could contribute to ecclesiology are unexplored. This paper is, therefore, an effort to embrace the sea as a planetary subject that could help us to understand the church and its mission, with the planet’s well-being as the focus. I reflect on the Indonesian ‘Through-flow,’ a geological

feature of the Indonesian archipelago which is highly influential in the blue planet's climate. Drawing from Jane Bennett's concept of vibrant matter, Sigurd Bergmann's eco-pneumatology, and Indonesian indigenous perspectives of the sea, I construct the concept of through-flowing church. This archipelagic ecclesiology speaks of the church as a medium through which God's creative and salvific work flows continuously for the well-being of the planet while encompassing the sea and its inhabitants. Sailing further than Pete Ward's liquid church/ecclesiology, which is church oriented as it aims for the church to be adaptive to cultural dynamics, the through-flowing church is planet-oriented as expressed in its participation in the Spirit's work to preserve and renew the planet.

Building an Intercultural Community Connection through Sharing Food

Paul Dongwon Goh, Uniting Church in Australia Synod of South Australia

This paper discusses how the meal tradition in the context of a Korean Minjung Church, abridged as Rice is Heaven, can be reinterpreted in a neoliberal capitalistic, a post-colonial context, summarized as God is Bread. This paper concludes that a Korean Minjung theological understanding of the Communion and practice of the communal meal can be a resource for building an intercultural community connection in a multicultural and multifaith Australian context. In this way, the Korean Church and Korean migrant churches in Australia can contribute to a new understanding of the Communion in a world Christianity context.

When 'mission' is a dirty word, where to from here?

Rosemary Dewerse, Uniting College for Leadership and Theology, University of Divinity

For several years I have been located within the field of missiology, but the more time I spend with indigenous peoples and their histories in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, the more I learn that in their experience 'mission' is one of the dirtiest possible words in the Christian vocabulary, damaging connection and community. Derived in 1598 by the Jesuits from the notion of being 'sent', colluding theologically and practically with colonisation in our region, 'mission' has been a vehicle for abusive dehumanisation and thorough-going silencing. Today we continue to promote and enact mission in our contexts, presumptively believing it pure-hearted despite the back story (especially if *missio Dei* is what we really mean). After offering context for what has become a serious wrestling personally, I want to invite you into a conversation to help me query, 'Where to with 'mission' from here?'

Allurement, Attention and Action: Towards a Poetic Ecomissiology

Xiaoli Yang

While ecomissiology has appeared in scholarly debates in recent decades, the approaches remain cognitively and constructively driven. An embodied, embedded and empowered approach through sensibility in the affective dimension remains missing in the field. This paper attempts to expand the existing academic methodologies of ecomissiology by introducing a poetic epistemology in relation to *missio Dei* towards creation. Contemplating the author's own published bi-lingual poetry in a multi-media form and dialoguing with theologians, missiologists and mystics, this paper will demonstrate three key creative threads in communion with the creation in the Australian landscape: 1) enchanting Allurement; 2) meticulous Attention; and 3) ceaseless Action. It aims to demonstrate the holistic and cosmic nature of poetic ecomissiology that invites the immersion of ethereal beauty, ecstatic joy and eschatological hope.

Other

Assemble all the Wild Animals: An Eco-Rhetorical Reading of Jer 12:7-12

Emily Colgan

From leopards, swallows, snakes, and sheep, to lions, ostriches, eagles, and hyena, other-than-human animals pervade the book of Jeremiah. For the most part, the depiction of these animals signifies a

menacing presence associated with the impending disaster which looms out of the north – the foe that is set to destroy the people of Israel. In particular, images of the so-called ‘wild animals’ (lit. ‘beasts of the field’) are employed metaphorically to describe various characters in the text (God, foreign hostile nations, the people of Israel, even the land itself) in order to evoke a sense of terror and chaos. This paper will combine an ecological hermeneutic (derived from the Earth Bible tradition) with a rhetorical critical approach to closely read Jeremiah 12:7-12, exploring the ways in which various Jeremianic characters are aligned with these beasts of danger and destruction. Building on the analysis of Brent Strawn, Benjamin A. Foreman, Beth Berkowitz, and Ken Stone, I will argue that the polyvalent use of ‘wild animal’ imagery found in the book of Jeremiah destabilises well-established western assumptions which assert sharp ontological distinctions between animals, God, people, and land. Indeed, the blurring of these ontological boundaries points to the possibility of a continuity between animals, God, people, and land, challenging ideas of human (and divine) exceptionalism and demanding the reconsideration of anthropocentric understandings of agency, subjectivity, justice, and morality.

“What is your name?” Kurna Aboriginal people and Lutheran missionaries from Dresden, Germany — a story of self-agency

Gerhard Reudiger

Like a miracle, four German Lutheran missionaries from Dresden recorded three Aboriginal languages around Adelaide in the early 1840s (Kurna / Adelaide Plains, Ngarrindjeri / Lake Alexandrina, and Barngarla / Eyre Peninsula). These sources allowed community members and linguists to reclaim and revive the languages since the early 1990s, and teach and speak them again. Colonial and mission history writing traditionally credits such achievements to the efforts of the missionary-linguists. Language students know, however, that learning a vernacular requires dedicated native speakers teaching it. This experimental paper looks only marginally into this language acquisition process. Rather, I probe the agency of the Aboriginal community members in their interaction with the missionaries as a deliberate and intentional relationship. Obviously, we have next to no authentic direct sources from Aboriginal communities. Yet, the four Dresden missionaries were tasked to write diaries and report to their society the progress of their work. In particular Christian Gottlob Teichelmann quoted in detail, and often verbatim, what I tentatively call “mission dialogues” with members of Aboriginal communities, especially the Kurna Meyunna people. Despite the generally ambivalent role of missionary writings, these dialogues form some of the clearest, albeit rare, windows to semi-authentic statements by these indigenous people. In particular, they show them as interacting with the missionaries in their own “self-agency” (or “self-assertion”; Dietrich Bonhoeffer 1832). In fact, teaching a stranger one’s own vernacular requires intentional dedication. Still in an early stage of this research, I ask how to effectively and adequately analyse the indication of self-agency of indigenous peoples in Australia in the Missionary and other colonial writings, both past and present.

Sacramental Sausages: Freeing the Lord’s supper for mission

Karyl Davison, Uniting Church in Australia

James White, in his 1998 publication, *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith*, suggested that missional churches tended to sideline the eucharist, seeing it as “a handicap to reaching the unchurched.” I argue, however, that as a public act of worship which proclaims the gospel and through which participants may encounter the living God, the eucharist can be an effective means for preaching the gospel in the missional church. From its inception in 2011, the Eaton/Millbridge Community Project, a fresh expression of church, included the practice of serving food and drink at no cost to participants of its community events. Using Theological Action Research and modified four voices of theology, my research established that participants in the life of the Project experienced the sacred, and more specifically, the sacrament of the Lord’s supper suggesting that the practice of serving food and drink as a regular part of Project events was, although unconventional, a contextual celebration of the Lord’s supper that should be available to all, regardless of baptismal status.

Bluey: The Religious Imagination of Australia's Favourite Cartoon Dog

Sarah Lawson, Charles Sturt University

Bluey, the world's favourite cartoon Blue Heeler, has a lot more to say about religion than it appears. This essay will review literature which has engaged and justified examining children's television from a religious perspective, and then use a descriptive qualitative method to explore the various religious themes throughout the four seasons of the hit show. This exploration will be divided into five sections. First, it will examine the references to real-life organised religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism present in the show. Second, it will examine the earth-based religion which the Heeler Family appears to follow and discuss the show's apparent view of 'typical' Australian family life in this arena. Third, it will survey other spiritual beliefs present in the show, such as references to simulation theory, crystals, and faeries. Fourth, it will examine what the show explicitly teaches about religion, focusing on Season 2 episode "Flatpack." And finally, it will explore how a wider definition of religious belief (namely William James' definition "the belief that there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto") plays out in the 'Religion of Play' in Bluey's world. This essay will argue that Bluey contains a surprisingly rich fabric of religious thought which the characters move through and engage with fluidly, and that a religious reading can deepen appreciation for the show and the lessons therein, for adults and children alike.

ἀρσενokoίτης: A New Lexical Analysis

Sarah Lawson, Charles Sturt University

There are few more controversial issues among some Christian churches today, and few which provoke more instantaneous opinions and suspicion of examination, than that of same-gender orientation. This essay does not aim to argue for a complete systematised view of same-gender orientation in the whole biblical text. Rather, it merely aims to deeply examine one particular word and present the data found for consideration. This is a foundational step which many theologians and pastors have skipped over, assuming modern translations of ἀρσενokoίτης (1 Cor 6:9 and 1 Tim 1:10) as "homosexual activity," or similar, is quite correct. Obviously, I am not the first to attempt such a re-examination of this term, many have noted that difficulty this term presents to modern interpreters. However, the thorough and eclectic method used in this paper, which I developed for my doctoral research on hapax legomena (words which only appear once in the Bible), will hopefully be able to add more data to the conversation than previous less-detailed or wider-scoped analyses have been able to.

Mandated Professional Supervision for Clergy - The Narratives and Experiences of Clergy Adopting Mandated Supervision in response to the Royal Commission change

Stephen Beaumont, Christian Heritage College

My paper seeks to critique the range of Institutional responses to Recommendation 16.45 of the Royal Commission that states, "each religious institution should ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders have professional supervision with a trained professional or pastoral supervisor who has a degree of independence from the institution which the person is in ministry." The paper provides firstly, a snapshot of the state of play, presenting data on reported Institutional responses. It seeks to answer the question, "Are Australian religious institutions doing enough - is our collective response sufficient considering the damning findings of the report? Secondly, the report explores how clergy themselves have responded to the mandating of professional supervision. It seeks to answer the question, "What are the narratives and experiences of clergy who have adopted supervision?" In other words, is it working, what have we learnt, how can we do it better? The importance of this research cannot be understated. It has been six years since the Royal Commission presented its final report to the Governor-

General prompting organisational, policy and legislative reform. Whilst this report is not be able to present a global scorecard, it will contribute to keeping the issue of church sexual abuse in the public discourse, something which appears to have waned. It will also add to the emerging scholarship related to the complex nature of child sexual abuse.

Biographies

Aden Cotterill

Aden Cotterill is a PhD student in Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Cambridge, supported by a World Universities Ramsay Postgraduate Scholarship. His thesis is provisionally titled *The Nova Effect: A Theological Diptych of Charles Taylor and Tomáš Halík on Plurality and Doubt*. He has publications on this topic, as well as in the areas of ecclesiology and theological ethics. Before Cambridge, Aden completed a Bachelor of Science (Psychology) and Bachelor of Arts (Philosophy) at the Australian National University. Following these undergraduate studies, Aden worked in Canberra in pastoral ministry in an Anglican church, and as a Youth Worker in a low socioeconomic public school. Eventually, alongside this employment, he completed a Master of Arts (Theology) and Master of Theology (Research) at St Mark's National Theological Centre, before moving to Cambridge with his wife and two daughters.

Andrew Picard

Andrew Picard is the Director of Carey Graduate School, and lectures in Public Theology at Carey Baptist College.

Andrew Shepherd

Dr Andrew Shepherd is a Senior Lecturer in Theology and Public Issues within the Theology Programme, University of Otago / Mātai Whakapono Karaitiana, Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo in Aotearoa / New Zealand. Andrew's working life has included involvement in theological education and Christian leadership formation, participation in intercultural and environmental education, and leadership roles within Christian non-profit organisations (youth-work, conservation). He teaches and researches broadly in the field of theological ethics. His current research interests revolve around how contemporary phenomenon (ecological degradation/climate-change, social polarisation, militarism, and surveillance capitalism) impact upon human relationality. His publications include: *The Gift of the Other: Levinas, Derrida, and a Theology of Hospitality* (2014); and edited volumes: *Creation and Hope: Reflections on Ecological Anticipation and Action from Aotearoa New Zealand* (2018); *Taking Rational Trouble over the Mysteries: Reactions to Atheism* (2013).

Angelo Cettolin

Rev Dr Angelo Cettolin holds qualifications in the disciplines of law, theology, education, and ministry. He has postgraduate awards in organisation dynamics, higher education and a doctorate in ministry completing a research dissertation on Christian spirituality. His most recent research article is *Christ-enlivened practices: An action research investigation of shared meals in a higher education classroom*. *International Journal of Christianity & Education* 2023, Vol. 0(0) 1–17. He has experience in pastoral ministry, church planting, mission work and denominational leadership. He is dean of faculty and senior lecturer at Eastern College Australia. He also co-leads an inner-city community church in Melbourne with his wife Robbie, an ordained pastor. He is interested in helping people follow Jesus and outworking a Christ-enlivened perspective in life. He loves his grandchildren, enjoys God's creation, good films and books, daily walks with the family pet schnauzer and good coffee.

Anna Nuernberger

Anna was born and grew up in Nuremberg, Germany. She studied theology, Anglophone literature and English linguistics at the universities of Erlangen and Augsburg in Germany, and at Flinders University and the Adelaide College of Divinity in South Australia. After working as a high school teacher in Bavaria, she obtained her doctoral degree in Biblical Theology in 2017 from Augsburg University. Anna has worked as a Research Assistant and Lecturer at Hamburg University and currently serves ALC as a co-Director of Research, and an editor of the 'Lutheran Theological Journal'.

Anne Elvey

Anne Elvey lives on unceded Bunurong Country in Seaford, Victoria. Her recent publications include *Reading with Earth: Contributions of the New Materialism to an Ecological Feminist Hermeneutics* (Bloomsbury T&T Clark 2022), awarded the inaugural ANZATS Book Prize for an Established Scholar; *Reading the Magnificat in Australia: Unsettling Engagements* (Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2020); *Cloud Climbers: Declarations through Images and Words for a Just and Ecologically Sustainable Peace* (ed. Anne Elvey, with artwork by William Kelly and Benjamin McKeown; Palaver, 2021); and in poetry, *Leaf* (Liquid Amber Press, 2022), shortlisted in the 2023 ASLE-UKI Book Prize for the best work of creative writing with an ecological theme. She has research interests in ecological poetics, ecological feminist hermeneutics, the new materialism, biblical literature (esp. Gospel of Luke) and its afterlives, and unsettling whiteness. Anne is an honorary research fellow at Pilgrim Theological College and a member of the RASP Network, University of Divinity.

Anne Gardner

Anne Gardner M.A., B.D.(hons), Ph.D., Cert.Sec.Ed. is a Faculty member of YU in Melbourne. An Old Testament and Intertestamental Scholar, she was awarded the Krister Stendahl medal for Biblical Studies for excellence in her publications. She was the Old Testament Editor of the *Australian Biblical Review* for thirteen years. Her specialist areas of research are Daniel and Trito-Isaiah but she has also published on aspects of the Ancient Near East; the early monarchy; Genesis 2-3; Genesis 6:11-13; the Elijah narrative; Joel; Chronicles; Esther; Judith; 3 and 4 Maccabees; 1 Esdras; the Dead Sea Scrolls and has even ventured into the New Testament. Some of her papers relate to feminist or ecological issues.

Bart B. Bruehler

Bart B. Bruehler is currently Lecturer in Biblical Studies at the Uniting College for Leadership and Theology in Adelaide. He has recently arrived in Australia with his family from the United States where he served as Professor of New Testament at Indiana Wesleyan University. His research interests include sociorhetorical interpretation, embodied cognition in biblical texts, and the Gospel of Luke. He is the author of *A Public and Political Christ* and *Holding Hands with Pascal*.

Caitlin Olsen

Caitlin Olsen is a lecturer and researcher in the Social Science faculty at Christian Heritage College in Brisbane, teaching academic skills, Christian studies, and practical theology for social sciences. Caitlin has a Graduate Diploma of Divinity from Malyon Theological College, a Bachelor of Arts in English literature and Writing from the University of Queensland, and qualifications and experience in government school chaplaincy with Scripture Union Australia. Currently, Caitlin is completing a Masters of Theological Studies through Malyon College, with a research focus on models of LGBTQIA+ inclusion in Brisbane metropolitan churches.

Cassandra Burton-Wood

The challenge how to give “thick” account of the human person is has been a feature of both my research and work life. I completed a Masters of Psychology at Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington in 2018. While I found that experience immensely engaging, I also found the frameworks I was working within inadequate for understanding the actual life I was living. As I continued to think through what was missing I stepped into university chaplaincy ministry and began to try to speak coherently about spirituality. The institutional language given to us was very thin. Searching for better language I began studying Theology in 2021, first at Regent College in Vancouver and now at Laidlaw College having just completed a Post-Graduate Diploma in Theology. I currently work as a Chaplain at the University of Canterbury and as an adjunct lecturer in Laidlaw’s Counselling School.

Christa L. McKirland

Christa L. McKirland is a Lecturer in Systematic theology at Carey Baptist College in Tāmaki Makaurau Aotearoa. She is also the Executive Director of Logia International.

Christopher Seglenieks

Chris Seglenieks is a Johannine scholar who works at Bible College of South Australia. His work has focused on the response the Johannine texts seek to evoke in their audience, especially that of faith, including Johannine Belief and Graeco-Roman Devotion (Mohr Siebeck, 2020). Other areas of interest include the context of the Johannine writings - see *The Johannine Community in Contemporary Debate* (Fortress, forthcoming 2024), as well as the intersection between the Gospel of John and Revelation.

Cyrus Kung

Rev. Cyrus Kung is a Second Generation Hong Kong Australian and ordained Minister in the Uniting Church. He has spent the last two years working on the Act2 Project for the National Assembly of the Uniting Church. Previous to this he served in various ministry contexts that have spanned a broad diversity of theologies, ages, and ethnicities; including Church plants, aging congregations, migrant churches and para church organisations. Cyrus completed a Bachelor of Ministry in 2015 at Tabor Adelaide, and has consequently also finished a Graduate Diploma in Spiritual direction. Most recently he has completed a Master of Theology at the University of Divinity. His dissertation was titled: "Landscapes in Second Generation Asian Australian theology: challenges from within the diaspora". Cyrus is passionate about seeing people connect with the deeper parts of themselves whilst also exploring the simplicity of Christ in the complexities of life in the 21st Century. Creativity, third spaces, liminality, in-betweenness and hybridity shapes much of his approach to ministry and community life in his local context.

David Brown

David Brown is currently working towards completing a PhD at the Bible College of South Australia, with a comparative study examining parental metaphors in 1 Thessalonians alongside Seneca's *Epistulae Morales ad Lucillum* and *de Beneficiis*. David has a particular interest in how such familial metaphors are used in the formation of community, and understanding how they inform relationships within church communities. In addition to these studies, David has spent the past two decades working in the youth and young adults space within churches and parachurch organizations.

David Ray

David is an early career researcher, based in Darwin, Northern Territory. He recently joined St Francis College (Milton, Qld) as University Scholar of the University of Divinity. Over the last couple of years, David served as tutor of online courses in Hebrew Bible at Ridley College (Parkville, Vic.) and concentrated on publishing his doctoral research on *Conflict and Enmity in the Asaph Psalms (FAT II 145)* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2023). His interest area is broadly in Old Testament Prophets and Writings and draws on his studies in linguistics and German in his research. David's current research areas include the clothing of divine figures and the relationship between money and inimical figures in the Bible.

David Tombs

David Tombs is an Anglican lay theologian and the Howard Paterson Chair Professor of Theology and Public Issues at the University of Otago, Aotearoa New Zealand. His work focusses on liberation theologies, theologies of reconciliation, and the cross. He also writes on how churches can make better responses to spiritual and sexual abuses. His research has pioneered the study of crucifixion as a form of torture, an instrument of state terror, and an open opportunity for sexual harm. His publications include, *When Did We See You Naked?: Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Abuse* (co-edited with Jayme Reaves and Rocío Figueroa, SCM 2021), and *The Crucifixion of Jesus: Torture, Sexual Abuse, and the Scandal of the Cross* (Routledge, 2023). Originally from the United Kingdom, David previously lectured at the University of Roehampton, London, and the Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. Read more at www.david-tombs.com.

David Turnbull

David's extensive participation in the global church has been participating for over 30 years in activities with a range of intercultural, mission and globally focused organizations in Australia and beyond. His main

cross-cultural experience involved lecturing at Gindiri College of Theology, Nigeria, in the mid-1990s. For the past 24 years David lectured in the area of intercultural engagement in Adelaide and beyond. His PhD, completed in 2019, explored clergy and cultural intelligence in the Baptist and Uniting Church in Australia denominations in South Australia. He currently serves as the International Ministry Director for Local Leaders International managing their Local Online: A Global Strategy project. His research interests include Australian missions history, multicultural church, intercultural formation and intercultural missional engagement. He is married and has one son.

Doru Costache

The Very Rev. Dr Doru Costache is the ISCAST Research Director and an Associate Professor of Theology at the Sydney College of Theology, where he lectures for Nisibis Assyrian Theological College and St Cyril's Coptic Orthodox Theological College. Since 2020, he is a Fellow of ISCAST and of the International Society for Science and Religion. He is the current Selby Old Fellow in Religious History of the Orthodox Christian Faith at the University of Sydney Library (2023-2024). He co-edits *Christian Perspectives on Science and Technology* (since 2021). He co-chaired the Cosmology group of project "Science and Orthodoxy around the World" (Athens; 2020-2023). Author of *Humankind and the Cosmos: Early Christian Representations* (Brill, 2021) and coauthor of *Dreams, Virtue and Divine Knowledge in Early Christian Egypt* (Cambridge, 2019). His new coauthored book, *A New Copernican Turn: Contemporary Cosmology, the Self, and Orthodox Science-Engaged Theology*, is forthcoming (Routledge, 2024).

Elia Maggang

Elia Maggang, PhD (University of Manchester, UK) teaches Christian Ethics at Moriah Theological Seminary, and Theology of the Sea, Seashore and Land, and Ecotheology at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana in Indonesia. He is also an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Manchester, UK working on his project, "A Political Theology of the Sea." His research revolves around the intersections of Christian theology and indigenous cultures on issues of the sea and humans' relationship with the sea.

Elizabeth Lee

I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Divinity, Melbourne. My research explores trauma-sensitive theologies of hospitality in faith communities in a Post-Royal Commission Era. I take a contemplative, participatory, feminist approach to this theological work. I have a passion for being a listening presence among the fringes and fostering human connection through deep listening. I have been formed, informed, and transformed through offering pastoral care to those living with homelessness and working as a Prison Chaplain. I am a Spiritual Director, Retreat Facilitator, and Professional / Pastoral Supervisor with previous experience adult and high-school education and community development. Married for more than 40 years, I have two daughters, a son, and three grandchildren. I live on the land of the Bidjigal, on the northern shore of Kamay (Botany Bay), Sydney. My pronouns are she, her.

Emily Colgan

Dr Emily Colgan is Academic Director and Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies at Trinity Theological College in Aotearoa New Zealand. Her research focuses on the relationship between the Bible and contemporary social imaginaries, exploring the ways in which ideologies contained within biblical texts continue to inform communities in the present. Emily is particularly interested in ecological representations in the Bible, as well as depictions of gender and violence.

Emma Austin

Emma is a lecturer of Old Testament and Hebrew at Alphacrucis University College. Her research interests are in biblical geography, leading her to complete a Masters at Jerusalem University College, which focused on exploring the land to illuminate meaning in the text. She has recently completed her PhD, where she coined the term "mnemonature" as a lens for looking at how the biblical authors use the natural world to enhance the memorability of the Bible.

Emma Gray

Emma Gray is a PhD candidate in the Theology Programme at the University of Otago, Aotearoa, New Zealand. In her research she is considering the Eucharist as a source of Christian formation with critical engagement of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice. Emma completed her Master of Arts in Theological Studies at Regent College, Vancouver, Canada and holds a BA – Psychology degree from Macquarie University. She has also worked in various urban welfare and parachurch organisations in Sydney and Vancouver. Emma grew up in Dharug country (northwest Sydney), currently lives in Ōtepoti, Dunedin and has an abiding interest in the intersection of theology, worship and ethics.

Gareth Bezett

Gareth is the Director of Theology House in Christchurch, an education ministry associated with the Anglican Church. His research interests include theological anthropology, Thomas Aquinas, and liturgy. Gareth is undertaking doctoral studies with the University of Nottingham and lives in central Christchurch with his wife Tracey and retired greyhound Nando.

Gerhard Reudiger

As a German, Gerhard lives with Liz in the Barossa Valley. Now retired, he studied in Germany "Ministry of Deacon" (Gemeindepädagogik) and Theology and worked for Protestant churches in intercultural and Ecumenical community education, with migrants and refugees, and in international Ecumenical and mission exchange programs. He met Liz in PNG and moved to Australia in 2006. By coincidence, Gerhard got involved with the Aboriginal Kurna Language reclamation and revival program and worked for them out of the University of Adelaide as support admin. He re-established contact with partner agencies in Germany who hold in their archives parts of the history of the recording of this language through German Lutheran missionaries in the 1840s. Gerhard is an associate member of the Kurna Warra Karrpanthi (KWK) Aboriginal Corporation that coordinates the language revival today. His research interest is the self-agency of the Aboriginal people past and present in the preservation and reclamation of their language.

Gillian Powis

Gillian Powis lives in a carbon net-zero building in Adelaide with her husband, Leigh and takes advantage of all the city facilities. She is a member of the Uniting Church in Australia and has been involved with the Network of Biblical Storytellers for over 20 years. She is a graduate of the Academy for Biblical Storytelling. She has been a student at the Uniting College for Leadership and Theology for several years and recently completed a Masters in Theological Studies. This focussed on Jesus' Farewell discourse in the Gospel of John from a performance critical viewpoint.

Greg Liston

The Pentecostal scholar, Amos Yong intentionally and explicitly prioritises the Spirit in developing a theology of religious pluralism, a methodological approach he labels as "pneumatological imagination." Yong has gradually developed and enhanced this understanding across two decades and he addresses this topic from a variety of perspectives within many publications. This presentation summarises Yong's breadth of work on religious pluralism into a coherent and manageable framework, and then critically interacts with it. While it is recognised that Yong's pneumatological theology of religious pluralism has many helpful features, it also argues that his conclusions may not be entirely warranted, primarily because Yong's pneumatological prioritization involves the intentional deprioritisation of Christology. The analysis and critique of Yong's resulting pneumato-religious understanding consequently illuminates several important features critical in the development of a coherent and comprehensive Third Article Theology of Missiology.

Jenny Richards

Dr Jenny Richards is a Lecturer in Law, College of Business Government and Law at Flinders University, and former criminal lawyer. Her research centres on religious domestic and family violence, criminal law reform, human service law, and disability. She is co-author of *Integrating Human Service Law, Ethics and Practice* (Oxford, 4th ed 2016), a key social work/human service law text nationally and internationally since

its first edition in 2004. She has consulted with government bodies and NGOs here and overseas on family and criminal law reform, and authored numerous scholarly articles. She was an interviewee/contributor for *Trinitarian Conversations, Volume 2: Interviews with More Theologians* (Grace Communion International, 2022). Her PhD, 'Embodied Justice: An Integrated Faith-Law Response for Christian Women Experiencing Domestic and Family Violence in Australia' draws from the work of theologians TF and JB Torrance to help church leaders bridge law and faith responses to domestic and family violence.

Joan Riley

Joan Riley is the Principal of St Barnabas College in Adelaide, a college of the University of Divinity. She teaches in New Testament and Ancient Greek language. Joan's PhD was completed through Flinders University and investigated the cultures and the religious movements of Asia Minor in the first three centuries CE and the rise in cults of Theos Hypsistos, the Highest God. Her current research areas include inscriptional evidence of Asia Minor, especially the confession texts of south-western Phrygia, ongoing research into Theos Hypsistos, and the roles of women in Asia Minor. More recently Joan has been seeking to engage the social-scientific studies in domestic violence in the church with texts of the New Testament.

Jonathan Chung-Yan Lo

In June 2023, Jonathan Chung-Yan Lo was awarded a doctoral degree in Historical and Religious Studies by Monash University. His thesis examined the sapiential hermeneutics, in historical and literary contexts, of Bonaventure of Bagnoregio – a Franciscan scholastic, mystical theologian and ecclesiastical administrator in the thirteenth-century Latin West. Jonathan's inter-disciplinary research demonstrated Bonaventure's unique contribution to the field of medieval exegesis and its relevance for modern reading practice. Jonathan's ongoing research examines the meaning and utility of sapiential hermeneutics through close readings of selected patristic, medieval and contemporary authors, with an aim to bring historical nuance to the terms of contemporary hermeneutical debate. A recent article was published in *Religions MDPI* (2023), and a forthcoming article will be published in *Scottish Journal of Theology* (Cambridge University Press). He is currently a research affiliate at Monash University and an honorary postdoctoral research associate at Yarra Theological Union, University of Divinity.

Karyl Davison

Karyl is a pioneer minister within the Uniting Church in Australia. She is currently serving in the Kippax Uniting Church community which includes a number of worshipping congregations, a community service organization, and missional engagement in a five-suburb housing development in the adjacent suburb.

Prior to her move to Canberra Karyl was, for five years, team leader of the Eaton/Millbridge Community Project, a fresh expression of church in a new housing development in Western Australia. Her DMin thesis, "Sacramental Sausages: freeing the Lord's supper for mission" was focused on practicing the Lord's supper within the life of the Project.

Kerrie Handasyde

Kerrie Handasyde is an Associate Professor of History and Academic Dean at Pilgrim Theological College, University of Divinity, who lives and works on Wurundjeri land. She researches religious history with interests in women and Christianity, feminist theology and social gospel, intersections of secular and sacred, and the historiography of Protestant Dissent in Australia and the Pacific. Recent and forthcoming publications include *Seeing Christ in Australia since 1850* (co-edited with Sean Winter; Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming); *God in the Landscape: Studies in the Literary History of Australian Protestant Dissent* (Bloomsbury, 2021); *SCM Companion to Feminist Theologies* (co-edited with Katharine Massam and Stephen Burns; SCM Press, forthcoming 2024); and, *Contemporary Feminist Theologies: Power, Authority, Love* (co-edited with Cathryn McKinney and Rebekah Pryor; Routledge, 2021).

Linda Stargel

Rev Dr Linda M. Stargel has a MDiv from the Nazarene Theological Seminary, Master of Theology from Duke University, and a PhD from the University of Manchester (UK). She is an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene. She has over 30 years' experience in children's and youth ministry, has served in pastoral ministry in Montreal, Canada and in theological education in Quebec, Dominican Republic, and Haiti. She has been the Academic Dean and Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies and Biblical Language at the Nazarene Theological College in Brisbane since 2019. Her research interests include social identity formation in biblical texts, Wesleyan Theology, and literary art and poetic imagery in the Hebrew Bible. She loves swimming, sketching, and watching sports and live theatre.

Lousie Gosbell

Dr Louise Gosbell is currently the Research Manager at the Australian College of Theology. Louise's research is in biblical studies and focuses primarily on disability in the biblical texts as well as writing more broadly on disability and church practice. Louise's PhD on disability and the gospels was published with Mohr Siebeck. Louise is an active member of the Anglican church in Sydney and serves on the General Synod Doctrine Committee. Louise also completed a set of accessibility guidelines (entitled "Everyone Welcome: Accessible Church for All") to help churches in the Sydney Diocese become places of belonging for members with disability.

Lorna Hallahan

Associate Professor Lorna Hallahan in the College of Education, Psychology and Social Work at Flinders University hold a PhD in systematic theology, with a focus on disability theory. She has been a social worker for over four decades with a practice that takes in disability advocacy, analysis of disability policy as well as loss, grief and trauma services. Lorna was seconded to the Royal Commission on Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability as the Senior Research Advisor and produced a research report on a socio-cultural history of disability in Australia. As well as occupying leadership roles in social work education, Lorna is currently the Chair of the Academic Committee of St Barnabas' College in the University of Divinity.

Magdi Awad

Fr Gregorios attained a PhD from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece in Dogmatic Theology, and a PhD from Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany in Christian Oriental Studies. He lectures in Church History, Dogmatic and Systematic Theology, and Coptic Language. His areas of interest also include Christian-Arabic Studies and Philosophy. Ordained to the priesthood in the Coptic Orthodox Church in 2015, Fr Gregorios also lectures at the Coptic Theological Seminary in Cairo.

Maja Whitaker

Rev. Dr Maja Whitaker is the Academic Dean and lecturer in Practical Theology at Laidlaw College, based at the Ōtautahi/Christchurch campus. She is passionate about spiritual formation and helping others understand how to follow the way of Jesus in contemporary cultural contexts. Maja's research interests include the theology of the body, theological anthropology, disability theology, and eschatology. She is married to Dave and they have four daughters. She loves to spend her downtime with plants or books, baking, running, or napping

Maren Phillips

I am a PhD student at Bible College SA with the tendency of stumbling into things – like getting married, moving to other continents, and postgraduate studies. I stumbled into Genesis studies and I'm deeply grateful to be spending so much of my time contemplating how the beauty of God is reflected in the Bible.

Apart from my studies I am the mother of two small children and actively involved in our church.

Marilyn Naidoo

Marilyn Naidoo is a professor in Practical Theology at the Department of Philosophy, Systematic and Practical Theology at the University of South Africa. She has published widely on the interface of theological education, professional development of clergy and social justice issues. She is a rated scholar with the National Research Foundation, South Africa. Recent edited volumes include *Contested Issues in Training Ministers in South Africa* (Sun Media 2015) and *Making Connections: Integrative Theological Education in Africa* (Sun Press 2021). Before her academic career, she served with SIM/IFES in theological education in India and Nepal. She is a trained spiritual director and serves in the Anglican Church of South Africa.

Marshall Scott

I serve as an associate pastor at South-West Evangelical Church, Kingsgrove, Sydney. Prior to that, my wife Julie and I were missionaries with CMS in East Asia and Taiwan.

I recently completed an MTh and am now (perhaps foolishly) embarking on the journey towards a PhD. My passion is the Old Testament and more specifically Wisdom Literature. More specifically still, the book of Job. I am particularly interested in how Job came to see God with his eyes (Job 42:5) and the application of his experience to that of every believer who wrestles with the reality of apparently gratuitous suffering.

I enjoy drinking too much coffee, trying to run without expiring, and watching K-Dramas on Netflix.

Matthew Anslow

Dr Matthew Anslow is the Educator for Lay Ministry with the Uniting Church's NSW/ACT Synod and Adjunct Lecturer at United Theological College. His first book, *Fulfilling the Law and the Prophets: The Prophetic Vocation of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew* was published in 2022 (Pickwick). Matt has published numerous academic and popular articles on subjects such as biblical studies and theology, philosophy, peacemaking, direct action and civil disobedience, preaching, and agriculture. He lives with his wife, Ashlee, and their three children in Blackheath, NSW.

Matthew James Gray

Matthew James Gray is the head of undergraduate studies at Tabor College Adelaide, and has been a lecturer there for over 15 years. He has primarily lectured in Church history and theology, although he has also taught and academically presented in a variety of fields, including early Church history, public Christianity, and intercontextual theology. His primary area of research has been early English Baptist history and ecclesiology, having received his PhD in that area. This extends into Baptist approaches to gender, toleration of religious minorities, ecumenicalism, ecclesiology and spirituality.

Michael Bartholomaeus

Michael Bartholomaeus completed his doctoral work at the University of Otago where he investigated Karl Barth's doctrine of sanctification. He is currently the Head of Postgraduate Studies in the Ministry Practice faculty at Tabor College where he teaches in systematic theology and New Testament studies. His research interests include the theology of Karl Barth, theological ethics, and discipleship.

Michelle Eastwood

Michelle Eastwood is a Director of Research at Australian Lutheran College. Her research interests include gender and sexuality, Psalms and Hebrew biblical poetry, worship and liturgy and public theology. She is co-editor of the recently released *Reading the Bible in Australia*. Michelle regularly writes for the Women in Theology Blog (www.womenintheology.org) and for MediaCom L3 Lay Readers Liturgy Resources. Michelle lives on the lands of the Waddawurrung People of the Kulin Nations, where sovereignty has never been ceded.

Mick Pope

Mick Pope has a PhD in Meteorology from Monash University in tropical climate, and a M Phil in Theology from the University of Divinity. His masters looked at the Priestly tradition as a basis for an ethic for the Anthropocene. He is currently working on a PhD proposal in the area of panentheism and a theology of

mass extinction and ecocide. Mick has three published books on a Christian theology of climate change, with his masters being released later this year with Pickwick. He also has several book chapters and articles in the area of ecotheology.

Naomi Wolfe

Naomi is a trawloolway woman with Jewish German & Irish heritage. She is a proud aunty, sister and daughter along with being a kinship carer. She is a historian and theologian. She works at Australian Catholic University and NAIITS: An Indigenous Learning Community. NAIITS: An Indigenous Learning Community is an international learning community of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Elders, community, and students. Naomi worked previously for the University of Divinity as Indigenous Theologies Project Officer and more recently she was the inaugural First People's Co-ordinator of the University's newly created School of Indigenous Studies. She holds a Bachelor Arts and Bachelor of Teaching, Graduate Certificate Graduate Diploma in Divinity. She recently graduated with a Master of Theological Studies and will begin her PhD studies shortly exploring the idea of decolonizing theological education. Naomi has a commitment and interest in decolonising the disciplines of theology and history and working with people to transform church and society to better times.

Nicola Hoggard Creegan

Nicola is a theologian based in Auckland. She specialises in the interface between science, especially evolutionary biology and theology, and ecotheology. She wrote *Animal Suffering and the Problem of Evil* (OUP, 2013) and edited *Creation and Hope* (Wipf & Stock, 2018) with Andrew Saunders. Nicola is the Director of New Zealand Christians in Science/Ngā Karaitiana Kimi Matū and the Chair of the Board of A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand. She is also an Anglican.

Nicole Starling

Nicole Starling lectures in Christianity in History at Morling College, where she also serves as Academic Dean. Nicole completed her doctorate and post-doctoral fellowship through Macquarie University, focusing on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Australian religious history. Her first book, *Evangelical Belief and Enlightenment Morality in the Australian Temperance Movement: 1832-1930*, has just been published as part of the Routledge "Studies in Evangelicalism" series.

Paul Dongwon Goh.

Paul Goh is a Korean-Australian Uniting Church minister working with Mission Resourcing team of the Uniting Church South Australian Synod as Justice and CALD Multicultural and Cross-Cultural Officer. Earning a PhD in Practical Theology at Boston University School of Theology, he taught at various colleges in both undergraduate and graduate courses as a sessional lecturer and associate teacher. He is Advocate for the Uniting Church Assembly Being a Multicultural Church Circle and serves on the Australian Association for Mission Studies Executive Committee.

Paul Oslington

Paul Oslington is Professor of Economics and Theology at Alphacrucis University College, the national college of the Australian Pentecostal movement. He joined Alphacrucis in 2013 as inaugural Dean of Business and PhD Program Director, after previous appointments at Australian Catholic University and University of New South Wales. He has doctoral degrees in both economics and theology, and most of his recent research has been on their historical relationships, including *Oxford Handbook of Christianity and Economics*, *Political Economy as Natural Theology: Smith Malthus and their Followers*, and a book commissioned by Harvard University Press on the history of economic thinking in the Christian tradition.

Rachel Krohn

Rachel Krohn is Lecturer in Old Testament and Hebrew at Trinity College Queensland. Her area of expertise is the syntax of Biblical Hebrew poetry.

Rosemary Dewerse

Rosemary Dewerse is Academic Dean and Research Coordinator at Uniting College for Leadership and Theology in Adelaide and teaches on the professional doctorate of the University of Divinity, Australia. Born in Aotearoa New Zealand she has been privileged to work with Indigenous scholars for a number of years, whose stories and wisdom are significantly changing how she understands and practices faith.

Ruth Mathieson

Ruth Christa Mathieson is Principal of St Francis College, an Anglican College of the University of Divinity, located in the Brisbane Diocese. She is a lecturer in New Testament and in 2023 her doctoral work was published as *Matthew's Parable of the Royal Wedding Feast: A Sociorhetorical Interpretation* in the Emory Series of Early Christianity by SBL Press. She has been invited to write the Matthew volume in the Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity (RRA) "Exploring" commentary series, which will shape her reading, research and writing over the next few years as she explores the various textures of Matthean texts using Sociorhetorical Interpretation (SRI). Ruth does this as an Anglican priest with more than 25 years, who is now engaged in theological education and the formation of candidates for ministry.

Sam Hey

Dr Sam Hey has tutored and taught in a range of tertiary institutions, including Christian Heritage College, Alphacrucis University College, the University of Queensland, Hillsong and Tabor College. After teaching Bible and Theology for many years, he completed a PhD on the Megachurches in Australia and has more recently been teaching Education students preparing for a career in teaching. After growing up in the Anglican Church, he has worked and engaged with a range of denominational and charismatic churches, and he served as a church pastor, school chaplain and secondary school teacher. He continues to research in a range of areas from Bible, Theology, Sociology, Psychology and Religion, to Education, Practical Theology and Spirituality.

Sarah Lawson

Sarah Lawson is a PhD candidate with Charles Sturt University, having earned her Master of Divinity from the Bible College of South Australia. Her PhD work focusses on the linguistic analysis of rare lexemes in the Greek text of James, in particular developing methods for analysing hapax legomena (words which only appear once in a given text). She also teaches Christian Ministry & Theology and leads experiential learning experiences at Baptist Care SA."

Sean Gilbert

Rev. Dr Sean Gilbert is Director of Pastoral Theology and Ministry Practice at Uniting College, SA. He has been a faculty member for 12 years. Before that Sean was in congregational ministry for over twenty years as a Minister of the Word with the Uniting Church in Australia. His lived integration of pastoral ministry and pastoral theology well serves his approach to teaching, engendering a genuine sense of encouragement and care for his students.

Formative in his own educational journey was a Masters' program he completed while living in Boston, USA as well as his more recently awarded PhD in which he explored the synergistic relationship between spiritual affections and the pastoral disposition.

Stephen Beaumont

Stephen is the Dean of Social Science and Business at Christian Heritage College. He is a registered counsellor and supervisor with PACFA and ACA. His current research interests include supervision models for clergy, integration of eco-therapies into pastoral care and measuring and improving social impacts. He is married with 3 adult children and 3 grandchildren.

Steven G Ogden

Steven Ogden is a systematic theologian, with special interest in the work of Michel Foucault, Reiner Schürmann, and Judith Butler. He is a member of the North American Foucault Circle, and the Australasian

Society for Continental Philosophy. Steven teaches theology at St Barnabas College, University of Divinity. He is also the parish priest at St Mary Magdalene's Anglican Church Adelaide.

Steven is formerly the Dean of St Peter's Cathedral Adelaide, and the Principal of St Francis Theological College Brisbane. His publications include:

- Violence, Entitlement, and Politics: A Theology on Transforming the Subject. London and New York: Routledge, 2022.
- The Church, Authority and Foucault: Imagining the Church as an Open Space of Freedom. London and New York: Routledge, 2017.
- The Presence of God in the World: A Contribution to Postmodern Christology based on the Theologies of Paul Tillich and Karl Rahner. Bern: Peter Lang, 2007.

Tanya Riches

Dr Tanya Riches is Director of Eastern College Australia's Masters of Transformational Development which has campuses in Melbourne, KL, Egypt, Uganda and Zambia. Her work sits at the intersection of development studies, theology, and anthropology. Her previous research into the Australian Pentecostal megachurch Hillsong spans over a decade, from her MPhil (2010) at ACU on song and business practices to more recent work on women's complaint raising. Her co-edited *The Hillsong Movement Examined: You Call Me Out Upon the Waters* (2017) draws insider and outsider views into dialogue. Her PhD in urban Aboriginal communities at Fuller Theological Seminary resulted in an enduring relationship with Will and Sandra Dumas, ACC Indigenous Initiative leaders who support a network of Aboriginal pastors undertaking varied initiatives nationally. She has authored over fourteen articles and ten chapters in scholarly volumes, four special edition journals, a coedited book, and a monograph.

Tim Harris

Dr Tim Harris has a research background in ancient history, classical traditions of thought and Pauline theology. More recent projects have broadened to contextual, practical and missional theology, with an interest in the interplay between research and praxis. An ordained Anglican minister (bishop), he divides his time between being an active practitioner in missional ministry, teaching and research. He is Director of Research and Missional Praxis at St. Barnabas College in Adelaide in association with the University of Divinity.

A trajectory opened through doctoral studies on subversive Pauline notions of status and humility has continued to foster a special interest in the value in the kingdom-reign of God of those otherwise regarded as of low status in human social terms. A kiwi by birth, Tim identifies as a blend of Aotearoa-NZ and Australian cultures (with teaching and research experience on both sides of the ditch).

Timothy Hender

In addition to holding a BA (Hons) in History and a M.Comm.Law from the University of Melbourne, Tim Hender graduated from Charles Sturt University (St Barnabas College, Adelaide) with a Graduate Diploma of Theology with Distinction. He is completing a M.Phil at the University of Divinity (Australian Lutheran College) researching tensions between formal and informal theology in the Anglican Church of the early 1900s and is under the supervision of Drs Wendy Mayer and Peter Sherlock. He intends to commence a PhD later this year.

Professionally, Tim has worked as a political advisor and as a commercial manager in a variety of industries. Using his career experience, he currently serves the Anglican Church as a member of the Diocese of Adelaide Risk and Audit Committee and the Council of St Barnabas College in addition to consulting at a Board level to several NFP entities. He also assists ALC as reviews editor of the Lutheran Theological Journal.

Toar Hutagalung

Toar Hutagalung currently is the Director of Theology and Church History at the Uniting College for Leadership and Theology in Adelaide, South Australia. Previously, he taught at Loyola University of Chicago and United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. Toar is an alum of Jakarta Theological Seminary and had taught there as well. He received his Master of Arts from Andover Newton Theological School and his Doctorate from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, both in the US.

His major interest is in Systematic/Constructive Theology with a focus on postcolonial/decolonial studies. His previous works have appeared in *Resisting Occupation: A Global Struggle for Liberation* and in the *Indonesian Journal of Theology*. His latest work in 2024 is a newly published book titled *Toward a Decolonial Pneumatology* by Lexington Books.

Toar grew up in Presbyterian Church in Indonesia. He was also the Chair of the Association of Indonesian Theologians from 2014 to 2022.

Vicky Balabanski

Reverend Professor Vicky Balabanski is a New Testament scholar at the University of Divinity and the EO/Principal of Uniting College for Leadership and Theology in Adelaide. Vicky is an ordained Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church. Her expertise is in the Synoptic Gospels, John's Gospel, Colossians, Receptive Ecumenism and Ecological Hermeneutics. She is the General Editor of the Earth Bible series, collaborating with Professor Gerald West in South Africa; the series emphasizes interpreting Scripture in harmony with the Earth, the interconnected web of life. Her Earth Bible commentary, "Colossians: An Eco-Stoic reading" (Bloomsbury T & T Clark 2020), draws on Stoic philosophy to enrich ecological interpretations. Prof. Balabanski was elected into membership of the international Society of Biblical Studies (SNTS) in 2017. Her international keynotes include World Diakonia conferences, the UCA President's Conference in Fiji, 2019, and the Christian Conference of Asia, Kerala (2023).