

Research Day 2024



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OF DIVINITY

Welcome

The University of Divinity Research Day brings together researchers from across our Colleges, Schools and Networks to share in their recent work. Our broader community joins them for a day of papers across the Divinity disciplines, and together we look forward to delving into the Christian tradition and the diversity of academic fields, practices and current issues it engages.

St Paschal's Campus

[90 Albion Road, Box Hill, Victoria, 3128](#)

Entry: via Reception (please take care with any uneven ground if walking from your car)

Drop-off/Pick-up: via the driveway circuit from Albion Road (no parking area)

Car Parking: St Paschal's main car park and parking on Bedford Street (no restrictions/fees)

Public Transport:

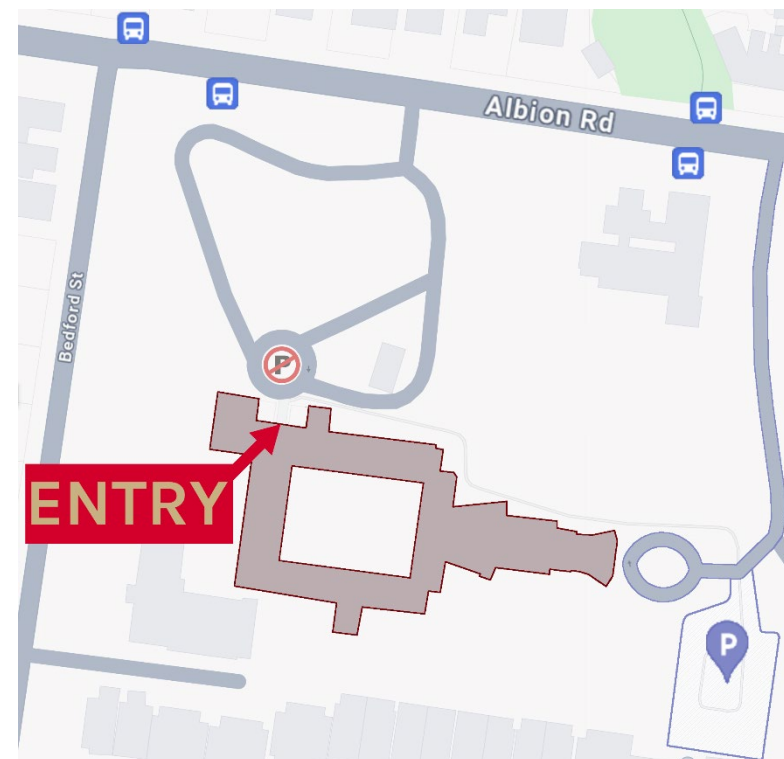
- ▶ [733 Bus](#): routes to/from Box Hill Train Station
- ▶ [Laburnum Train Station](#) and [Box Hill Train Station](#): 20 mins walk to/from St Paschal's

Online (Zoom)

A program with embedded Zoom links will be emailed to you on Monday 3 June.

Program timings are given in AEST. Slight adjustments to the timings of each paper may be made on the day to accommodate for any unforeseen delays (± 5 mins).

We encourage your participation in the sessions you attend by keeping your camera on.



Research Day Program



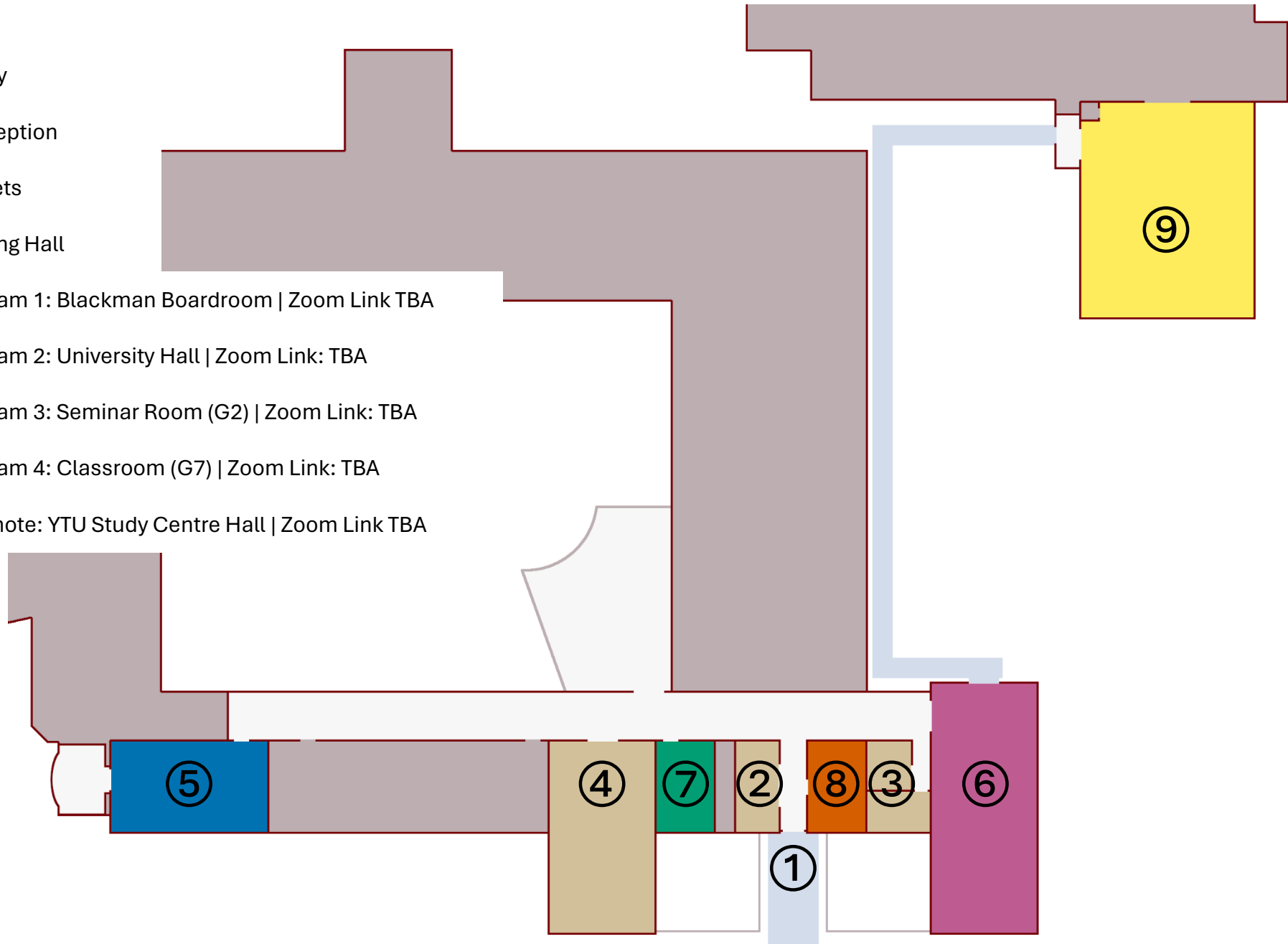
The 10 minutes for sessions to convene is programmed to make allowances for any delays with IT/PowerPoint as they arise. The chairs will start their sessions at the earliest opportunity, however, so we request your prompt arrival/connection.

Time (AEST)	Stream 1: Blackman Boardroom Zoom Link: TBA	Stream 2: University Hall Zoom Link: TBA	Stream 3: Seminar Room (G2) Zoom Link: TBA	Stream 4: Classroom (G7) Zoom Link: TBA
8:30am – 9am	Dining Hall: Tea, Coffee & Breakfast Bites			
9.00am – 9.10am <i>Sessions convene</i>	History, Sources and Method Chair: TBA	Ethics and Methods Chair: TBA	Hebrew Bible and Methods in Practice Chair: TBA	
9:10am – 9:40am	1 Deborah Guess In-Person The Place of the Desert Monks	John Bottomley In-Person What can Christians Say about Business Ethics in Australia's Finance Sector? A Case Study	Grace Smith In-Person Emasculation and Remasculation: An Alternative Perspective on the Violence in Judges 20-21	
9:40am – 10.10am	Lisa Agaiby In-Person Unveiling Hidden Treasures: An Update on the Manuscript Project at the Coptic Monastery of St Paul the Hermit, Egypt	Paul Ostington Zoom Academic Lemons: An Exploration of Incentives and Quality in Interdisciplinary Research	Anne Elvey In-Person Engaging with Garry Deverell's <i>Contemplating Country</i>	
10.10am - 10.40am	Dining Hall: Morning Tea			
10:40 – 10:50am <i>Sessions convene</i>	Philosophical Theology I Chair: TBA	Interiorities and the Gospels Chair: TBA	Practical Theology and Mission Chair: TBA	The Body and Gender Chair: TBA
10:50am – 11:20am	Christopher Knauf In-Person Rahner, Eckhart, and 'A Mysticism of Everyday Life'	Paul Creevey In-Person The Resurrection-Event in John: A Supporting Case for the Theocentricity of John's Gospel	Elizabeth Lee In-Person Practicing Ecclesial Theology Contemplatively to Engage with Impasse	Rosemary Canavan Zoom Women Hidden in Plain Sight: Feminine Imagery in 1 Thess
11:20am – 11:50am	2 Scott Kirkland In-Person On Ishmael: A Political-Theology of the Australian Border	Dorothy Lee In-Person Jesus and Emotion in the Gospel of John	Kara Siaoisi Zoom "O aoga a mea uma": Educational Value of Facebook Comments on Domestic Violence Involving Church Members in Samoa	Barbara Deutschmann In-Person Judith Butler Meets Genesis
11:50am – 12:20pm	Chloe Lampard In-Person How Priests Became Subjects: From Thomas to Modernity	Sean Winter In-Person Sent by God: The Apostolic Self-Understanding of the Historical Jesus	Samuel Deressa Zoom Unravelling the Interplay between the Church and the Mission of God: A Lutheran Perspective	Rachelle Gilmour In-Person A History of Kissing in Ancient Israel
12:20pm – 1:10pm	Dining Hall: Lunch			
1:10pm – 1:20pm <i>Sessions Convene</i>	Philosophical Theology II Chair: TBA	Social Problems and Theological Responses Chair: TBA	Modern Histories Chair: TBA	Oral Traditions and Storytelling Chair: TBA
1:20pm – 1:50pm	3 Mark Jennings Zoom Reading Scripture as a Discursive Fight to the Death: The Bible and the Battle over the Truth of Sex and Sexuality	Fergus King In-Person Towards a Safe Church: More than a Lambeth Call	Katharine Massam In-Person "Unafraid Women"? Gender and Leadership in 20th Century Catholicism	Eliza Fisher Zoom May God Bless You: The Significance of Wishes and Blessings in K Culture, and Implications for Dialogue with the Gospel
1:50pm – 2:20pm	Steven Ogden Zoom After God: The Promise of Self-Transformation?	Aaron Lane In-Person A Digital Counter-Reformation? Implications of Blockchain Technology for Church Governance	Stefan Gigacz Zoom The Cardijn Contribution to a Synodal Church Embedded in the World	Colin Battersby Zoom Storying as a Decolonising Research Methodology
2:20pm – 2:50pm	Laura Cerbus In-Person Reading the Book of Nature as an Invitation to Prayer	Gregory MacDonald In-Person Factors Affecting Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Australia	Glen O'Brien In-Person "You Writ this Sermon for Hetty": Reclaiming the Wesley Sisters	Catherine Lambert Zoom The Quaker Clearness Committee as a Model for Theological Reflection
2.50pm – 3.00pm	Break / Move to YTU Study Centre Hall			
3.00pm – 4.00pm	Keynote Presentation YTU Study Centre Hall Zoom Link: TBA Prof. Megan Cassidy-Welch FAHA FRHS, Dean of Research Strategy Spiritual Health, Crusaders to the Holy Land, and Medieval Healthcare, ca. 1100-1300CE Introduction and Moderator: Liz Boase			
4:00pm – 4.10pm	Closing Remarks from the Vice-Chancellor, James McLaren			



Locations & Links

- ① Entry
- ② Reception
- ③ Toilets
- ④ Dining Hall
- ⑤ Stream 1: Blackman Boardroom | Zoom Link TBA
- ⑥ Stream 2: University Hall | Zoom Link: TBA
- ⑦ Stream 3: Seminar Room (G2) | Zoom Link: TBA
- ⑧ Stream 4: Classroom (G7) | Zoom Link: TBA
- ⑨ Keynote: YTU Study Centre Hall | Zoom Link TBA





Stream 1: Blackman Boardroom | Zoom: TBA

History, Sources and Method

Chair: TBA

Deborah Guess

In-Person

The Place of the Desert Monks

A discussion of place in relation to the third to fifth century Christians (the Desert Monks) who settled in the Egyptian desert. The location was chosen for its remoteness from urban centres which represented what was seen as Christendom's negative and worldly advance, and these places of harshness and solitude provided a setting for symbolically recalling the former persecution and martyrdom of Christians by Rome. The desert was recognizable terrain for recalling and reliving Christianity's foundational scriptural narratives from the Exodus to Jesus' temptations. It also provided an ideal location for living out Jesus' teachings around repentance and relinquishing possessions. Further, the perception that the desert was uncanny, unruly and undesirable made it suitable for stringent ascetic practices aimed at transforming the monks' own unruly attitudes and habits.

Lisa Agaiby

In-Person

Unveiling Hidden Treasures: An Update on the Manuscript Project at the Coptic Monastery of St Paul the Hermit, Egypt

Since 2018, in cooperation with the Monastery of St Paul in Egypt, and part funded by the UD, a team from St Athanasius College has been working to digitise and document a precious collection of more than 1,000 manuscripts. This paper presents the goals and progress to date of the project.



Stream 2: University Hall | Zoom: TBA

Ethics and Method

Chair: TBA

John Bottomley

In-Person

What can Christians Say about Business Ethics in Australia's Finance Sector? A Case Study

By what standard is behaviour in a capitalist economy 'unethical'? Using data from a union survey of National Australia Bank staff on work hours and wage theft, the paper will interrogate their experience against capitalist ethics' virtues. Capitalist ethics motivates human activity to maximise profitability and happiness. Survey respondents commented that their motivating virtues are hard work, the autonomous self and tempered justice. My paper analyses how these management virtues direct staff's work behaviour. Two theological critiques, one of modernity and another of idolatry, address how capitalist ethics counterfeit virtues harm staff. I conclude that social policy framed by a Christian ethic may uncover abuses of power in business ethics. This framework suggests further empirical study may connect work-related violence to violence in the domestic sphere.

Paul Oslington

Zoom

Academic Lemons: An Exploration of Incentives and Quality in Interdisciplinary Research

Research that spans multiple disciplines is commonly praised, particularly praised in theological circles. However, if quality monitoring is poor then the market for such research can collapse as it is swamped by poor quality work. Potential readers of work 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 interdisciplinary theological research which exists will then not be read, and perhaps not even produced, even when it would have benefited both readers, writers, and society. The market for interdisciplinary research thus fails in a manner similar to the asymmetric information market failure identified by Akerlof in his Nobel Prize winning work on the market for used cars.



Stream 3: Seminar Room (G2) | Zoom: TBA

Hebrew Bible and Methods in Practice

Chair: TBA

Grace Smith

In-Person

Emasculation and Remasculature: An Alternative Perspective on the Violence in Judges 20-21

My argument in this paper is that scholarship on the violence in Judges 20-21, though much studied, has overlooked a productive yet perturbing angle of analysis. By applying a lens of hegemonic masculinity, an oscillation between masculinity and emasculation is evident in Judges 20 as Israel and Benjamin fight, lose, and gain victories. Israel twice suffers emasculation through defeat and is thus, I argue, in need of “remasculature.” Accordingly, in chapter 21, Israel's “compassion” for Benjamin's womanless plight is exposed as self-interested and sinister. Alongside this, I argue that sexual violence against and trafficking in women constitutes strategies for Israel to enhance hegemonic masculinity, as well as to further emasculate and villainise Benjamin.

Anne Elvey

In-Person

Engaging with Garry Deverell's *Contemplating Country*

This paper considers the theological understanding of Country outlined by Garry Deverell in his book *Contemplating Country*. The paper proposes a possible conversation with the eco-theological concept of deep incarnation. New materialism is a philosophical lens through which the paper explores the notion of deep incarnation in a more than human framework that may open to more than human kinship on Country. The paper concludes with a self-critical reflection on the possibilities for and challenges of a decolonising conversation that centres Country, First Nations voices and justice.



Stream 1: Blackman Boardroom | Zoom: TBA

Philosophical Theology I

Chair: TBA

Christopher Knauf

In-Person

Rahner, Eckhart, and 'A Mysticism of Everyday Life'

On the face of it, Karl Rahner and Meister Eckhart are unlikely conversation partners. For, while Rahner drew liberally on the thought of Eckhart's confrere and predecessor Thomas Aquinas, he seems to have left Eckhart entirely to his celebrated elder brother, Hugo. What makes a conversation between Eckhart and the younger Rahner interesting, however, is that each for their own times proposed an alternative to what might be seen as the 'elitist' approach to Christian mystical spirituality that had evolved within the enclosed monastic orders. Each was drawn to the possibility of what Rahner would famously call 'eine Mystik des Alltags', a mysticism of everyday life – a catchphrase the chronicler of Christian mysticism, Bernard McGinn, himself borrowed to encapsulate Eckhart's thought. This paper considers the extent to which Eckhart and Rahner were indeed talking about the same thing.

Scott Kirkland

In-Person

On Ishmael: A Political-Theology of the Australian Border

This paper, which is the conclusion of a monograph on the political theology of the remnant, explores the recent history of Australian border policing as continuous with an imperial preoccupation with the sea. In dialogue with the Epilogue of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, I seek to think the shipwreck as the site at which the spectator is given to re-shore their own position on the ship of state. Crucially, Ishmael, the narrator of *Moby Dick*, is the child abandoned, the rejected. I think this dynamic of promise and rejection through the post-9/11 moment and its continuity with a long history of the production of Christian polities through the rejection of Islam.

Chloe Lampard

In-Person

How Priests Became Subjects: From Thomas to Modernity

Giorgio Agamben draws an analogy between the office of the priest in Thomas Aquinas' *Summa* and the position of the modern subject as being defined solely by duty. This paper will argue that this analogy does not quite hold, either within the *Summa* itself or the Kantian ethical frame Agamben presents as characteristic of modernity. Instead, the notion of office finds its way to modernity in the realm of sex, as reproduction becomes a duty to the state, as will be demonstrated through an analysis of the embryological work of William Harvey.



Stream 2: University Hall | Zoom: TBA

Interiorities and the Gospels

Chair: TBA

Paul Creevey

In-Person

The Resurrection-event in John: A Supporting Case for the Theo-Centricity of John's Gospel

C.K. Barrett noted “there could hardly be a more Christocentric writer than John, yet his very Christocentricity is theocentric.” This paper proposes that the resurrection-event in John strongly supports the notion of the theocentric nature of John's Gospel. First, I consider the argument that, within the Johannine narrative, a central motif is that Jesus is God's envoy. All of Jesus' life-giving works and words are not additional to God. Second, I address the issue as to whether John sees Jesus' resurrection as an event that is theocentric or Christocentric, especially in relation to Jesus' statement: “I am the resurrection and the life”. Finally, I explore John 19:38-20:29 as pointing to the Johannine Evangelist as communicating the theocentric nature of the resurrection-event.

Dorothy Lee

In-Person

Jesus and Emotion in the Gospel of John

The Johannine Jesus is often seen as displaying serenity and calm throughout his ministry, rising above the events and turmoil of the Gospel narrative, even in his death on the cross. Yet this interpretation ignores the emotions he displays in the Fourth Gospel, whether distress, anger, frustration or love. These emotions include the passion which drives him to cleanse the temple (2:17), his distress and anger as he approaches the tomb of Lazarus (11:33, 35, 38), his anguish as he faces the cross (12:27), his radical love for 'his own' that leads him to humiliation and death (13:1), his grief at Judas' betrayal (13:21), and his death on the cross as his 'thirst' to do the Father's will (19:28). Far from compromising his exemplary role, the emotions of the Johannine Jesus reveal how it is possible to live authentically and affectively in the advent of eternal life.

Sean Winter

In-Person

Sent by God: The Apostolic Self-Understanding of the Historical Jesus

The quest for 'the christology of Jesus' has often spent considerable time examining the extent to which the historical Jesus did or did not identify with specific honorific titles or exploring Jesus' sense of identification with the activity and identity of Israel's God. This paper, which begins from the assumption that historical Jesus research seeks to “posit an actual past that best explains the existence of early Jesus-memories” (Keith), asks whether the diverse but often-found traditions relating to 'sending' (of and by Jesus) in the early Christian movement and Jesus traditions can be explained by appeal to some form of 'apostolic' self-understanding of the historical Jesus. A survey and analysis of those traditions suggests the possibility that it is this self-understanding that contributed to and generated the trajectory of much post-Easter christological reflection.



Stream 3: Seminar Room (G2) | Zoom: TBA

Practical Theology and Mission

Chair: TBA

Elizabeth Lee

In-Person

Practicing Ecclesial Theology Contemplatively to Engage with Impasse

My faith community is struggling with the impasse resulting from the competing needs of those who have lived/living experience of trauma and our desire to 'welcome of all'. The beliefs which shape ecclesial practices, including theological ones, often remain unexamined. My research brings a trauma-sensitive theological lens to a series of contemplative communal dialogue circles to generate empirical data. Participants to articulate and critique the community's understanding of its practice of hospitality and its theological underpinnings before exploring how trauma-sensitive theology could guide and transform ecclesial hospitality. I argue this approach is not just a method, but a spiritual practice that holds the potential for personal and communal transformation.

Kara Siaosi

Zoom

“O aoga a mea uma”: Educational Value of Facebook User Comments on Domestic Violence

Involving Church Members in Samoa

My PhD thesis analysis domestic violence related commentary on influential FB news and posts in Samoa, including that by Samoa Victim Support Group (20,000 followers), Samoa Observer (181,000), and Samoa Global News (76,000). This research aims to foster open discussions about DV and drive positive educational changes in church-led CE programs. Accordingly, the CCCS has an opportunity to enhance its CE program by aligning its curriculum, theological and Biblical interpretations to address issues discussed in those platforms. These platforms serve as spaces where church members, especially youth and women, engage and interact. Aligning practice with its educational philosophy of “o aoga a mea uma” (everything is educational).

Samuel Deressa

Zoom

Unravelling the Interplay between the Church and the Mission of God: A Lutheran Perspective

The church and its mission, as articulated in the Augsburg Confession, is defined as the assembly of believers who preach the Gospel and administer Holy Sacraments according to the Gospel. For Luther, this mission is ultimately the work of the triune God: *missio Dei*. My paper explores the Sacraments in Luther's theology as presenting as potent tools for maintaining faith, especially baptism and Holy Communion. Luther's perspective on the intrinsic link between baptism and mission emerges as an ushering of believers into a priesthood which actively serves others and reflects God's love. Further, Holy Communion serves to foster a fellowship that binds participants to Christ, the community of saints and their contemporaries.



Stream 4: Classroom (G7) | Zoom Link: TBA

The Body and Gender

Chair: TBA

Rosemary Canavan

Zoom

Women Hidden in Plain Sight: Feminine Imagery in 1 Thess

Debates continue about the inclusion of women in the emergent community addressed in Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians. The contention centres around the reading of the text as to whether an inclusive rendering of ἀδελφοί (1:4; 2:1, 14, 17; 3:7; 4:1, 10, 13) as brothers and sisters can be sustained in light of 4:1-8 where the section opens with ἀδελφοί yet in v.4 introduces σκεῦος κτᾶσθαι translated literally as “to acquire a vessel” but translated variously as “take a wife” or “control your member” which are both presumed to address only males. I wish to enter this conversation from a visual exegetical perspective engaging with the material context of the letter, and its feminine imagery to elucidate the women hidden in plain sight.

Barbara Deutschmann

In-Person

Judith Butler Meets Genesis

Judith Butler’s recent book *Who’s Afraid of Gender?* (Allen Lane, 2024), is an analysis of the “phantasm” of gender playing out in fevered gender debates around the world. Butler’s central assumption is that sex assignment into female and male is a powerful system through which the facts of sex are constantly re-established through gendered practices. This paper reviews Genesis creation narratives in the light of Butler’s book, weighing her arguments against the vision of humanity proposed in the P and non-P creation narratives. It will probe assumptions of the difference between sex and gender so comprehensively “queered” by Butler and read her work through the perspectives of Genesis authors.

Rachelle Gilmour

In-Person

A History of Kissing in Ancient Israel

This paper considers the hypothesis that sexual-kissing was introduced or became prevalent in ancient Israel around the eighth century BCE. Sexual kissing is not a universal practice across cultures but was present in the postexilic period demonstrated in Song 1:2–4 and Prov 7:10–17. Anthropological and sociological evidence is reviewed that suggests it was unlikely sexual kissing was present in ancient Israel and Judah in the earliest periods of composition of biblical literature, because of the kinds of social conditions associated with kissing in a culture. Ancient near Eastern evidence will demonstrate that the practice was present in surrounding empires and city states from long before the biblical period; but a diachronic review of biblical evidence on kissing will demonstrate a marked change in the distribution of the term for kissing around the eighth century.



Stream 1: Blackman Boardroom | Zoom: TBA

Philosophical Theology II

Chair: TBA

Mark Jennings

Zoom

Reading Scripture as a Discursive Fight to the Death: The Bible and the Battle over the Truth of Sex and Sexuality

Drawing upon interviews with pastors and leaders in Australian Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian churches, intractably opposed commitments to two different versions of the ‘truth’ of sex and sexuality become evident. Both parties represent their own reading of the Bible as the authoritative, ‘orthodox’ position on sex and sexuality. Yet recognising the existence of this discursive death-match reveals that there is no underlying ‘truth’, only discursively assembled duelling truths. This conflict accordingly has no possibility of resolving. Viewing this through the lens of Pierre Bourdieu’s understanding of ‘symbolic violence’ reveals, though, that the suffering caused by the contest among discursively assembled truth is real – and disproportionately borne.

Steven Ogden

Zoom

After God: The Promise of Self-Transformation?

There is almost universal suspicion about justifying belief or sustaining faith through metaphysical foundations. My paper explores a post-theistic ‘theology’ of self-transformation which eschews teleological frameworks. I begin with Foucault’s work on limits and the undoing of the subject, since self-transformation requires the transgression of limits. Foucault infers that the death of God opens possibilities for self-transformation. Without God, we face our limits. Limits entail the possibility of transgression, which is essential for self-transformation. Later, Foucault’s emphasis is on crossing-over rather than transgression. The paper concludes with a discussion on Foucault and Tillich about transformation, meaning of the self, and living “on the boundary”.

Laura Cerbus

In-Person

Reading the Book of Nature as an Invitation to Prayer

Christian theology has traditionally spoken of creation as a book: a means of revelation metaphorically read by human creatures. The Book of Nature occupies a significant place within Bonaventure’s theology, and I explore this alongside his theology of prayer. Framed by the concept of the hospitable text, creation becomes a text that invites the reader to pray in both contemplation and in petition. I propose that this invitation calls on human creatures to pray for and with creation: to plead with God as creation groans under the curse, to recognise human complicity in the cause of creation’s groaning, and to seek creation’s redemption. I conclude by considering Bonaventure’s exemplar of St. Francis as one who responded to creation’s invitation to pray.



Stream 2: University Hall | Zoom: TBA

Social Problems and Theological Responses

Chair: TBA

Fergus King

In-Person

Towards a Safe Church: More than a Lambeth Call

My paper defines terms such as ‘Safeguarding’, ‘Safe Ministry’ and ‘Safe Church’, which have come to the forefront of current theological praxis following on of the Lambeth Calls. I question why some Anglican churches or provinces may resist adopting this language, though, while offering an apologetic for Safe Church practices and a scriptural and dominical mandate for them. I identify theological and scriptural principles on which Safe Church might be grounded towards encouraging Anglican churches and provinces to develop Safe Church practices for their environment rather than abstract universal prescriptions which risk irrelevance amidst contextual particularity.

Aaron Lane

In-Person

A Digital Counter-Reformation? Implications of Blockchain Technology for Church Governance

Recent scholarship on ‘Digital Ecclesiology’ considers theological and practical issues flowing from social media and digital technologies. This paper considers a more fundamental question: how are church governance and decision-making structures shaped by innovation and technological change? Specifically, this paper explores the potential of blockchain – decentralised, transparent, and secure digital ledgers – for church governance. Blockchains enable new possibilities for collective coordination. The paper applies this conceptual framework to various church functions including financial management, canonical documentation, and administrative decision-making. The findings of this research hold implications for the development of best practices in church governance and offer an agenda for future research direction for ‘synodality’ focused on the role of digital technologies.

Gregory MacDonald

In-Person

Factors Affecting Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Australia

Interfaith dialogue has long been identified as a mechanism to promote greater inclusivity within multicultural societies. However, little is understood about the factors that help facilitate, or inhibit this type of contact. What motivates or prevents people from organising or attending such events? This presentation will discuss the results of a qualitative study, involving adherents and leaders from the Uniting Church and Sunni Muslim communities in Adelaide. The study explored participant’s beliefs, attitudes and experiences of the ‘other.’ Using a grounded theory methodology to the data collected, this research was able to identify both the negative factors and positive drivers and why the scales are tipped in favour against dialogue taking place.



Stream 3: Seminar Room (G2) | Zoom: TBA

Modern Histories

Chair: TBA

Katharine Massam

In-Person

“Unafraid Women”? Gender and Leadership in 20th Century Catholicism

This paper explores the gendered impact of formation in the ‘see-judge-act’ method of theological reflection promoted by the global network of Young Christian Worker movements founded by Joseph Cardijn. It focuses on a disproportionately large cohort of Catholic women formed by Cardijn’s method who joined vowed religious communities after the Second World War. Dubbed “unafraid women” in the context of one Melbourne parish taskforce in the 1980s, these women religious (Catholic ‘sisters’ and ‘nuns’) were uniquely placed and motivated to respond to a the “joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties” of their surrounding context, envisioned at Vatican II. The paper argues that this theological method precedes and cannot be separated from the development of innovative ministries in Melbourne and elsewhere in response to social justice needs, especially of women and families.

Stefan Gigacz

Zoom

The Cardijn Contribution to a Synodal Church Embedded in the World

Joseph Cardijn made two major contributions to Vatican II and the Church. The first was his Three Truths formation method based on a Proudhonian ideal-real dialectic – a truth of faith: 1. The eternal and temporal destiny of each person, 2. A truth of reality: the contradiction between the state of the world and this destiny, and 3. A truth of pastoral practice based on the see-judge-act and the prophet-priest-king-derived educate-serve-represent trilogies. The second was his concept of the specifically lay mission of each lay person as expressed in Lumen Gentium §31. He distinguished between responsibilities applying to all Catholics by virtue of their baptism (e.g., preaching the Gospel, serving the poor, &c.), and those responsibilities that apply especially to lay people in their lay lives. My paper aims show the relevance of these concepts in a synodal Church incarnated in the world.

Glen O'Brien

In-Person

“You Writ this Sermon for Hetty”: Reclaiming the Wesley Sisters

The role of women in the history of Christianity has usually been relegated to the footnotes or largely in reference to male participants. Yet Methodism has always been a movement in which women have been in the majority. 19th century male editors and biographers of 18th century Methodist women curated their diaries and memoirs to suit their own patriarchal perspectives. How might the historical understanding of Methodism be shifted if the agency of women was retrieved? My paper contributes to this end by exploring the lives of the sisters of John and Charles Wesley, who have not so far been critically studied in light of gender theory. It forms the first foray into a scholarly monograph on the Wesley sisters, utilising gender theory as a methodology.



Stream 4: Classroom (G7) | Zoom Link: TBA

Oral Traditions and Storytelling

Chair: TBA

Eliza Fisher

Zoom

May God Bless You: The Significance of Wishes and Blessings in K Culture, and Implications for Dialogue with the Gospel

Oral traditions embody culture: opening the door to understanding a people's values, narrating the past and educating future generations. This study of a least-reached Silk Road people group examined the significance of wishes and blessings in contemporary culture and the implications for dialogue with the gospel. My research captured a glimpse of how elders act as spiritual mediators between God and K people in their search for blessing, both material and divine. The implication from this research pertains to how intercultural workers develop a contextual Christology where Jesus is the true elder and blessing.

Colin Battersby

Zoom

Storying as a Decolonising Research Methodology

The history of the colonial church on Noongar Boodjar is shaped by a story of colonial power, built upon a rational, desacralised understanding of the natural world. This colonial story assumes ways of thinking about power that encourage and underwrite abusive and exploitative relationships with Noongar peoples and Noongar Country. 'Storying' as a research methodology can contribute to the necessary work of decolonising, which is central to my thesis concerning Noongar knowledge as a corrective to the church's destructive and possessive relationship with epistemic power. 'Storying' offers researchers new ways of exploring environmental and theological knowledge through a deep privileging of Country. Furthermore, storying invites human and non-human persons to enter into a space of shared relation and belonging, which subsequently unsettles a colonial power that is human-centred.

Catherine Lambert

Zoom

The Quaker Clearness Committee as a Model for Theological Reflection

In co-ordinating the formation program for candidates for ordained ministry in the Uniting Church in Western Australia I encourage the practice of theological reflection. Among the many forms of theological reflection, I drew on my experience as a spiritual director and adapted the format of the Quaker Clearness Committee as a method that would engage in a more contemplative style, hoping this would benefit the group and the individual presenter alike. During semester one in 2023, each candidate was invited to present their reflection to the formation community, who responded in the style of a Clearness Committee. My paper outlines the method used, how the format was received by the candidates, and the benefits for the formation community as a whole.

Keynote Presentation



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3.00-4.00pm in the YTU Study Centre Hall | Zoom Link: TBA

Prof. Megan Cassidy-Welch FAHA FRHS

Dean of Research Strategy

Spiritual Health, Crusaders to the Holy Land and Medieval Healthcare, ca. 1100-1300CE

Megan will be introduced by A/Prof. Liz Boase, Dean of the School of Graduate Research, who will also moderate questions after the presentation.

The University's new Vice-Chancellor, Prof. James McLaren, will offer his concluding remarks to close the 2024 Research Day.