

N E X U S

the ACT Research & Scholarship Magazine



The Bookshelf

Recent Books on Place

Grounded yet

Wandering

Elizabeth Culhane

Precarious Workplace

Kara Martin

Doors in the Bible

Paul Moon

ACT, Purpose & Place

Geoff Treloar

Chappo's Childhood

Baden Stace

And the usuals

Events, ACT People Online,
Conferrals, Publications and
News

NOVEMBER 2022





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*from
the
editor*

The end-of-year NEXUS has the theme of place. It has been a fertile theme. Elizabeth Culhane ventures inside the physical space of churches, while Kara Martin goes to the workplace, two spaces with which we are all familiar. Geoff Treloar gives us a fascinating glimpse of his forthcoming work on the history of the ACT, by looking at purpose, place and the ACT. While Paul Moon opens the doors of the Bible. And the extract from Baden Stace's recent ACT Monograph Series book on John Chapman transports us to the childhood home of Chappo, as he was called.

I've tried to map out the concept of place broadly in the NEXUS bookshelf. It includes books about borderlands and fantasy worlds, the whole world and the home of God. The ACT also had news that gives us a different sense of place: we have become a University College. You can read more about that in this issue. And then, all the usual territory is covered—events, ACT People Online, Conferrals, Publications and News. Hope you enjoy the tour!

Megan Powell du Toit

Editor, NEXUS
ACT Publishing Manager
Editor, *Colloquium* journal



THE NEXUS BOOKSHELF

This issue we look at recent and upcoming books about place. Blurbs adapted from publisher descriptions.

OUT NOW

April 2022

[T. Desmond Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*, 4th Ed., Baker Academic, 2022.](#)

As the foundation for the Old Testament, the first five books of the Bible are of critical importance. However, most modern studies focus on origin, neglecting actual content. *From Paradise to the Promised Land* offers a unique alternative by identifying the major themes and offering an overview of the contents of the Pentateuch. Unlike some academic studies, this book focuses on how the books from Genesis to Deuteronomy form a continuous story that provides an important foundation for understanding the whole Bible. This accessible textbook has been a popular introduction to the Pentateuch for over twenty-five years. The new edition has been substantially updated throughout to reflect the author's refined judgments and to address the future of pentateuchal studies.

[Jione Havea, ed., *Bordered Bodies, Bothered Voices: Native and Migrant Theologies*, Pickwick 2022.](#)

Theologies are constructed in and from lived contexts, and contexts are shaped by borders. While borders are barriers, they are also steppingstones for crossing over and invitations for moving further. This book offers theological and cultural reflections from the intersections of borders, bodies and voices. With and in the interests of natives and migrants, the authors of this book embrace bordered bodies and stir bothered voices. The essays are divided into four overlapping clusters that express the shared drives between the authors--Noble borders: some

borders are not experienced as constricting because they are seen as noble; Negotiating bodies: bodies constantly negotiate and relocate borders; Troubling voices: bothered voices cannot be muted or silenced; Riotous bodies: embracing the wisdom in and of rejected and wounded bodies is a riot that this book invites. The authors engage their subjects out of their experiences as migrants and natives.

July 2022

[Erich Geldbach, ed. *Baptists Worldwide: Origins, Expansions, Emerging Realities*, Cascade, 2022.](#)

The diverse Baptist movement goes back to the separatist wing of English puritanism. The book first describes the history and missionary expansion of this movement. It then lays out its teachings on baptism, eucharist, and ministry, its commitment to religious liberty and human rights, its socio-political involvement as well as the role of women in the church. Finally, exemplary details of Baptist existence in the local congregations and Unions/Conventions from around the world provide insight into the colourful life, work, order, and faith of a global people, held loosely together by its World Alliance. All thirty essays are written by experts in their fields from all continents. Authors include ACT's own Erin Sessions and former ACT Dean, Martin Sutherland.



September 2022

[F.A. Roth, J.M. Smith, K. Oh, A. Yafeh-Deigh & K. Higuera Smith, *Reading the Bible Around the World: A Student's Guide to Global Hermeneutics*, IVP Academic, 2022.](#)

In this book a crosscultural team of scholars describes and workshops global readings in biblical interpretation, focusing on passages in both the Old and New Testaments. By presenting a range of readings from different regions and people groups, with particular attention to marginalised groups, the authors demonstrate the importance of contextually sensitive approaches. They help us build up key values for reading Scripture in the twenty-first century: self-awareness, other-awareness, and true dialogue. Who we are shapes how we read. Guided by these expert teachers, readers will gain a deeper understanding of the influence of their own social location and how to keep growing in biblical wisdom by reading alongside the global Christian community.

[Miroslav Volf & Ryan McAnnally-Linz, *The Home of God: A Brief Story of Everything \(Theology for the Life of the World\)*, Brazos, 2022.](#)

We live in the midst of a crisis of home. It is evident in the massive uprooting and migration of millions across the globe, in the anxious nationalism awaiting immigrants in their destinations, in the unhoused populations in wealthy cities, in the fractured households of families, and in the worldwide destruction of habitats and international struggles for dominance. It is evident in the aching sense that there is nowhere we truly belong. We need a better witness to the God who created, loves, and reconciles this world, who comes to dwell among us. In this book, Volf and McAnnally-Linz tell the “story of everything” in which God creates the world to be the home for humans and God. They render the story of redemption and consummation through the lens of God’s homemaking work and cast a vision that can inspire faithful and creative Christian living in our various homes today.

October 2022

[Alexia Salvatierra, Brandon Wrencher, *Buried Seeds: Learning from the Vibrant Resilience of Marginalized Christian Communities*, Baker Academic, 2022.](#)

“They tried to bury us. They didn’t know we were seeds.” In this book, Salvatierra and Wrencher explore two grassroots faith movements whose witness has been buried within the histories of the institutional church and secular justice movements: the base ecclesial communities of the Global South in the late twentieth century and the hush harbours of the US antebellum South. *Buried Seeds* demonstrates how these two overlooked ministry models offer proven wisdom and strategies for the twenty-first-century church and contemporary social movements. The authors show how these ministry models are treasure troves of insight into the creation and sustenance of vital Christian community, particularly for those seeking indigenous, culturally rooted models.

COMING SOON

November 2022

[Daniel D. Lee, *Doing Asian American Theology: A Contextual Framework for Faith and Practice*, IVP Academic, forthcoming.](#)

In *Doing Asian American Theology*, Daniel D. Lee focuses on Asian American identity and its relationship to faith and theology, providing a vocabulary and grammar, and laying out a methodology for Asian American theologies in their ethnic, generational, and regional differences. Lee’s framework for Asian American theological contextuality proposes an Asian American quadrilateral of the intersection of Asian heritage, migration experience, American culture, and racialisation. This methodology incorporates the need for personal integration and communal journey, especially in the work of Asian American ministry. With interdisciplinary insights from interpersonal neurobiology and trauma theory, he offers a process of integration and reconciliation for Asian American theologies in service of Asian American communities of every kind.

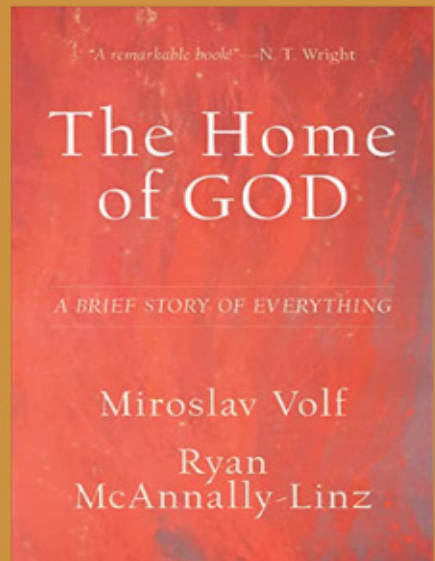
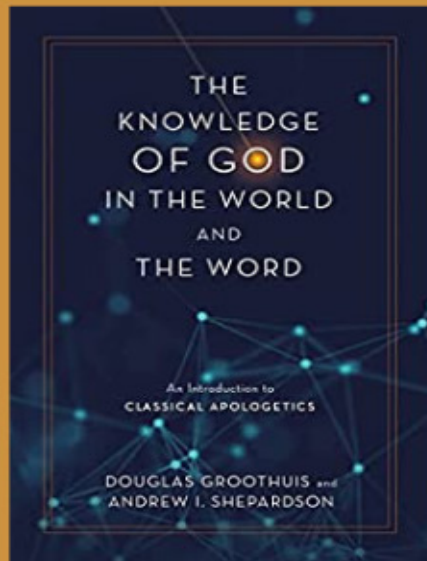
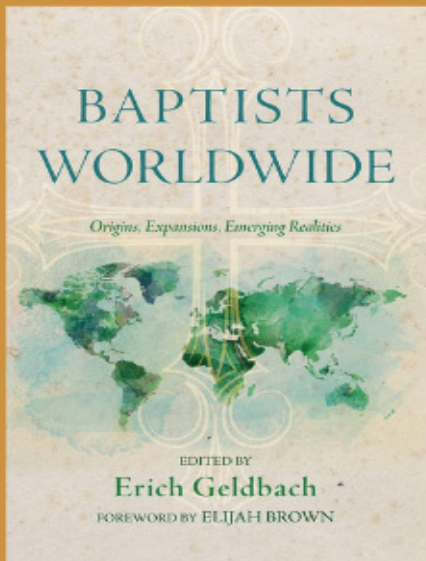
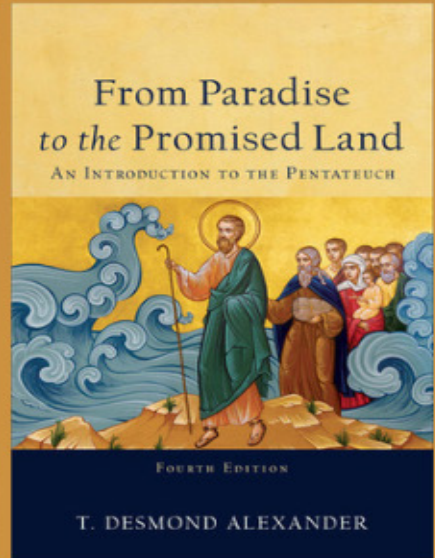
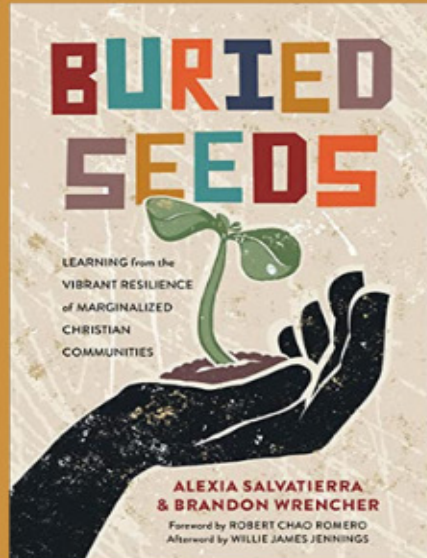
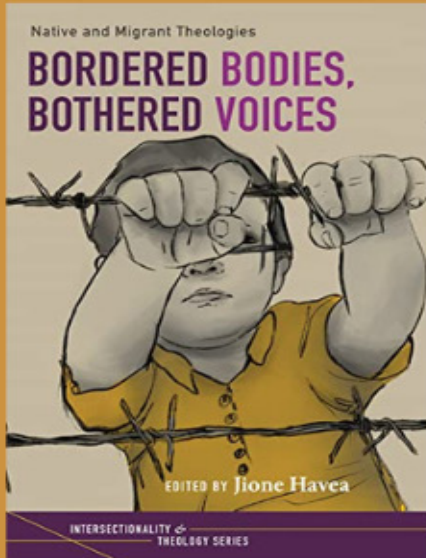
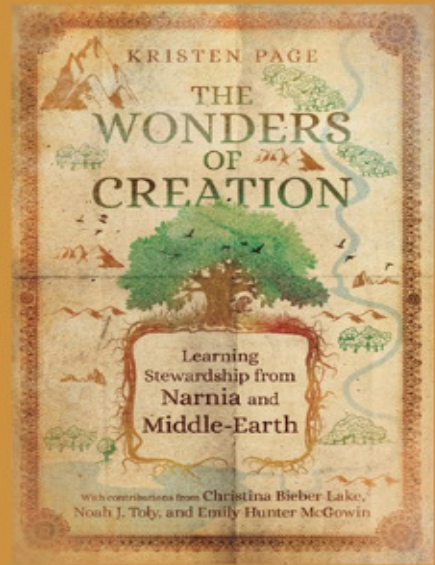
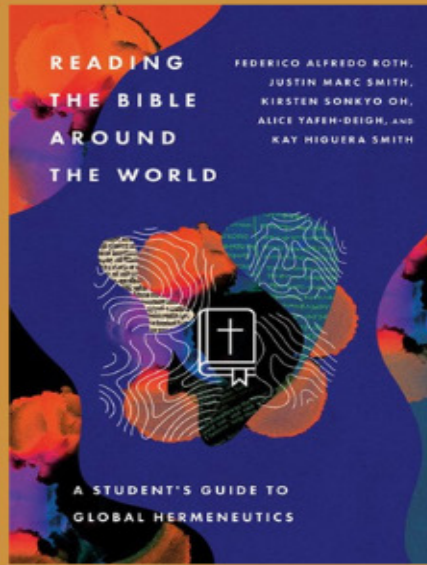
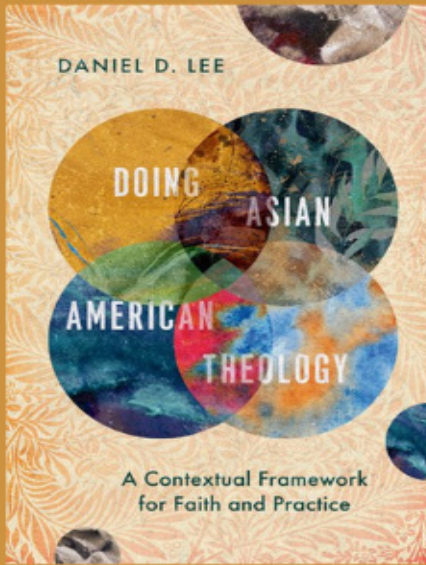
[Kristen Page, *The Wonders of Creation: Learning Stewardship from Narnia and Middle-Earth* IVP Academic, forthcoming.](#)

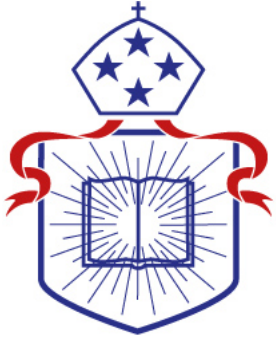
Many readers have found themselves, like the Pevensie children, transported by C. S. Lewis into Narnia, and they have traveled from Lantern Waste to Cair Paravel and the edge of the sea. Thanks to J. R. R. Tolkien, readers have also journeyed with Bilbo, Frodo, and their companions across Middle-earth from the Shire to the Lonely Mountain, the forest of Mirkwood, the mines of Moria, and the very fires of Mount Doom. But as often as we enter these fictional worlds as readers, we eventually return to our world refreshed with sharpened insight. In *The Wonders of Creation*, biologist Kristen Page explores the beloved fictional landscapes of Narnia and Middle-earth in order to discover what we might learn about real-life landscapes and how to become better stewards of God’s good creation.

December 2022

[Douglas Groothuis & Andrew I. Shepardson, *The Knowledge of God in the World and the Word: An Introduction to Classical Apologetics*, Zondervan Academic, forthcoming.](#)

Amid the crisis of authority in our modern and post-modern era, Christians need to be able to point to God’s revelation in the natural world in addition to defending God’s unique revelation in the Bible and in the person of Jesus Christ. In *Knowledge of God in the World and the Word*, authors Douglas Groothuis and Andrew Shepardson provide a simple introduction to classical apologetics that also addresses the most common objections to natural theology. Readers will discover in the book an easy point of entry into understanding why Christian beliefs about Jesus are true and rational. Further, the authors apply the power of classical apologetics to Christian ministry.





Australian College of Theology

An Australian University College

On the 7th October 2022, it was announced that the ACT has been registered as a University College by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). TEQSA has stated that registration as a University College is granted only to institutions that deliver superior-quality higher education. In a letter to the ACT in 2021, TEQSA noted several of the college's strengths including its strong Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching survey results and strong engagement with the community, employers, and industry across its Affiliated Colleges.

What is a University College?

A University College is a category of Australian higher education providers formally recognised as mature and high-quality institutions. This is a level above the basic category of Institute of Higher Education but below the category of Australian University. New requirements for these provider categories were introduced in the revised *Higher Education Standards Framework* (2021).

Why become a University College?

This category is a higher level than what we were previously, and a necessary stepping-stone to university status. It also puts us at the same level as the other theological providers who have also been granted this status, Moore Theological College and Alphacrucis University College.

Does this mean the ACT is changing its name?

At this point, the name remains the same but

with the words "An Australian University College" added below the name where appropriate. The legal name remains the same (Australian College of Theology Limited, ABN 88 869 962 393).

What are the benefits for students?

The main benefit arises from the higher standing of the awards that students receive—these are now granted by a University College rather than an Institute of Higher Education.

As a University College, are ACT students now exempt from the FEE-HELP loan fee?

No, the 20% FEE-HELP loan fee for undergraduate students remains for ACT students.

Are there any new costs or changes to operations for Affiliated Colleges due to the new status?

No.

Is there additional work for Affiliated Colleges arising from ACT gaining University College?

There is no additional administrative work for Affiliated Colleges. For academic work, TEQSA required ACT to commit to several activities that were already part of our planning for reaccreditation in mid-2024 and/or that are typical requirements in the sector today.

Is the ACT hoping to become a University?

Yes, we are in the process of an appeal with the AAT. If we were to become a University, not

only would we have higher status, but there would be financial benefits. University students do not pay the FEE-HELP loan fee, and Australian Universities have access to government Research Block Grant funding.

What is most important in all this?

Above all we are called to give glory to God, who saves us by the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The ACT Office, Board and its Committees are servants to Affiliated Colleges as they are servants to the men and women training to serve God in churches and in the world. The provider category of the ACT is much less important than our calling to serve. Please pray that whatever category the ACT has, that it would help us to serve and glorify our God.

OFFICE NEWS

For the seventh year in a row the **ACT has come first for quality of entire educational experience** for undergraduate students in the [2021 Student Experience Survey](#) for institutions with over 1,000 students. The ACT's score of 92.7 was higher than every university and exceeded the university average (73.0) by almost 20 points.

HIGHER ED NEWS

Times HE: [Carbon emissions from an entire online conference equivalent to only one hour long car journey.](#)

Campus Review: [Critique of a report suggesting schools and universities should stay open in future pandemics](#)

The Conversation: [Deep sense of purpose and gratitude related to better academic outcomes.](#)



QILT

Quality Indicators for
Learning and Teaching



SES

Student Experience Survey

GROUNDED YET WANDERING: The Church, Space, and Place¹

Elizabeth Culhane

“You’ll never believe it!” my friend whispers. “I think I’ve met God. I entered a church, and the sheer beauty of it all—soaring arches, light bent through windowpanes and galloping across the floors—well, it just moved something in me. Suddenly, I was overcome by a sense that God was here.”

The physical circumstances surrounding my friend’s sudden conversion, it seemed to me, were inconsequential. With friend number two, a coincidence. With friends three and four, a pattern. A paradox was raised: how could these and other conversions be accounted for, given the enduring uneasiness of western protestant discourse to ascribe spiritual significance to church meeting places? At best, some recent discourse acknowledges that church buildings may have a functional value in attracting newcomers and extending hospitality.¹ Other voices warn that

¹ This is a modified excerpt from Elizabeth C. Culhane, “Grounded Yet Wandering: Church Architecture, Space, and Place,” in *Grounded in the Body, in Time and Place, in Scripture*, ed. Jill Firth and Denise Cooper-Clarke, Australian College of Theology Monograph Series (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2021), 235–49.

See Premkumar D. Williams, “Shaping Sacred Space: Toward an Evangelical Theology of Church Architecture” (Ph.D. Thesis, Illinois, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2005), 5–6, 65; Trestae M. Jones, “Christian Church Architecture across the United States: How the

church buildings, while necessary, are often distractions in time and money from the real work of disciple-making.²

Following passages such as 1 Peter 2, the church can be understood as God’s homeless people, a community that lacks material and visible contours as it wanders toward its true eschatological home. This is akin to what the French philosopher Michel de Certeau terms “space” (*espace*)—that which is produced when its various elements converge.³ Space is produced by actions, and never in the same way due to fluxes in people, contexts, and time. In the theologian Graham Ward’s rendering, “practicing belief” generates the space of the church.⁴ This vision of the church is likely familiar to many contemporary anglophone protestants.

In what follows, I will suggest that the church can be also considered as a part of a long trajectory of God realising God’s objectives by gathering together a people and grounding them in a place, namely, a bounded site in the order

Rhetoric of the Building and Its Appointments Speak to the Doctrine and Practices of a Church” (M.A. Thesis, California, California State University, Long Beach, 2011), esp., 14.

² E.g., “When the church is fundamentally a gathering of committed people, the place where the church gathers hardly matters”; David Platt, *Radical Together: Unleashing the People of God for the Purpose of God* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2011), 61.

³ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California, 1984), 117.

⁴ The church is “the space for communal living”; Graham Ward, “Michel de Certeau’s ‘Spiritual Spaces,’” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 100, no. 2 (2001): 514.



of creation. Here God’s “objectives” refer to the Trinity’s plan to be present in and work through creation and for creation to acknowledge and respond to this presence of God.⁵ I have grouped my analysis into two categories: first, a gathered community grounded in a place, and second, a community enveloped in Christ and wandering in the world. It is this two-fold reality to which the church’s material meeting place can witness.

Gathered and grounded

In the Genesis creation narratives, we glimpse God realising these objectives by creating distinctive places and a people. Gathering is central to both. We read that God “gathers” *yiq-qā-wū* the waters in one place and thereby marks out the land (Gen 1:9).⁶ God further distinguishes the land from the waters by distinct “vegetation” (Gen 1:11–13). Next, God brings together the first human community and grounds them in a place, a garden in Eden (Gen 1:26–30, 2:7–25). The river running through the garden generates four additional “places,” distinguished by their physical features (Gen 2:10–14).

Despite the sin of the first human beings, God continues to realise God’s objectives

⁵ William A. Dyrness, *Poetic Theology: God and the Poetics of Everyday Life* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 21–24.

⁶ Root: *qwh* “to assemble.” All scriptural quotations are from the NRSV.

(to be present in creation and for creation to recognise this) in people and places. In Noah’s ark, God gathers together the beginnings of a new human community and grounds them in a place, albeit a moving one. With Abram, God starts to gather together God’s special people at Ur and Haran. Eventually, God gathers God’s people around a tabernacle and a temple. The symbolism of these structures conveys an interwoven heavenly and earthly reality, rendering them a microcosm of the cosmos structured by God’s precepts.⁷ The symbolism acts as a signpost in two directions. It recapitulates the gathered people and place in Eden and it previews a restored cosmos. The lampstand or menorah, for example, points to the tree of life in Eden along with its counterpart in the renewed creation, as is indicated in later scriptures.⁸ From Noah’s ark to the temple, the corporate and temporal (in time) outline of God’s objectives for creation is reflected in material forms.

⁷ John H. Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 178–92; Jon D. Levenson, “The Temple and the World,” *The Journal of Religion* 64, no. 3 (1984): 275–98.

⁸ W. David O. Taylor, *The Theater of God’s Glory: Calvin, Creation, and the Liturgical Arts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 76.

Enveloped in Christ and wandering

In the incarnation, the communal and temporal form of God's objective to be present in creation becomes centralised in Christ's historical and ecclesial bodies. In the incarnation, God in Christ "commits" to the material, and in the resurrection, God celebrates it.⁹ The Son realises the Father's objectives by becoming flesh and living among us and making known the Father who has never been seen (John 1:14, 18). The four evangelists are careful to record the geographical places where the Son realises the Father's objectives (to "be" in creation and for creation to recognise this), from Cana in Galilee to Jacob's well in Samaria.¹⁰

The people that Christ draws to himself in his historical body are enveloped in Christ, "the head of the body, the church" (Col 1:18). God realises God's objectives in Christ's ecclesial body, in which the gathered community is enveloped, conformed to his likeness, and wanders through the world as his hands and feet.

From the preceding scriptural trajectory of God's corporate and temporal objectives, my invitation is this: that the church's visible form in its meeting space points to its reality as Christ's ecclesial body, the communal and temporal site through which God realises God's objectives to be present in creation and for creation to respond to this.¹¹ This is not an argument for any extra-scriptural revelatory or salvatory power.¹² It is to suggest that church meeting

9 Philip Sheldrake, *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory, and Identity* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2001), 29.

10 Craig G. Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 93–94. See also, Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, 2nd edition, *Overtures to Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 198.

11 Cf. Dyrness, *Poetic Theology*, 243.

12 Jeremy S. Begbie, "The Future of Theology Amid the

spaces can express meaning and this is a matter that deserves attention.

Physical spaces convey meaning. This is expressed plainly in the case of evangelical church buildings that are reasonably confused with shopping centres. Their architectural features are symbols communicating materialism and hedonism, as per their original design and usage.¹³ In the evangelical church complex, a complete range of tailored services is provided within a single, mammoth, rectangular compound. The individual, as Stanley Hauerwas says, can thus "satisfy their need for intimacy yet identify with a large successful enterprise," all while remaining free from being subsumed into a single group and its program.¹⁴ There are no significant markers of entry, people drift in and out as they please. Within the church complex's white-washed and uniform regions, it is easy to lose track of time. The structure seems politically and religiously neutral in its lack of any distinctive political or religious imagery and slogans.

In a more positive direction, theologians have highlighted the constructive potential of symbols that express the goodness of creation and created entities. Symbols, when representations of created realities, can have a positive emotional or affective impact on human beings.

Arts: Some Reformed Reflections," in *A Peculiar Orthodoxy: Reflections on Theology and the Arts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 149.

13 James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, *Cultural Liturgies* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 90–131. See also, Jeanne Halgren Kilde, *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth-Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 101–222.

14 Stanley Hauerwas, "What Could It Mean for the Church to Be Christ's Body?: A Question without a Clear Answer," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 48, no. 1 (1995): 2 n2.

This is an effect of the love that underpins both the “gift and giver of creation,” as William Dyrness calls it, following Augustine.¹⁵ This affective impact can help shape one’s will. Our will is informed by what we love, or, as a contemporary book title puts it, we are what we love.¹⁶ Developing Augustine, John Calvin identified that the responses of human beings to God’s glory in creation are aesthetic responses. People are captured by the “divine art” of creation; that is, the “visible splendor” and “insignia whereby [God] shows his glory to us, whenever and wherever we cast our gaze.”¹⁷ Our wonder at the divine “workmanship” engenders “admiration of the Artificer.”¹⁸

Beauty impacts us. Glimpsing something of beauty moves a person outward, beyond themselves. It engenders a shift in awareness toward the other and toward a reality that exceeds the individual. Artistic forms, regardless of medium, can be considered symbols. They make a claim on the viewer and demand a response.¹⁹

Symbols are prevalent and powerful, whether in representations of created entities or in churches that resemble shopping centers. Symbols express meaning, point to a vision of

the whole, and call for a response. May each element of our church meeting spaces, whether bluestone edifice or rented hall, witness to the church’s dual reality as gathered in a place and sent out, in Christ, to wander in love through the world.



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¹⁵ Dyrness, *Poetic Theology*, 25.

¹⁶ James K. A. Smith, *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2016).

¹⁷ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1963), 1.5.1–2; in L. Clifton Edwards, “Artful Creation and Aesthetic Rationality: Toward a Creational Theology of Revelatory Beauty,” *Theology Today* 69, no. 1 (2012): 68–69.

¹⁸ Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.5.1–2; in Edwards, “Artful Creation,” 68–69.

¹⁹ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “Praising in Song: Beauty and the Arts,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*, ed. Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells, Blackwell Companions to Religion (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 113, 117. See also, Jeremy S. Begbie, *Theology, Music, and Time*, Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

THE CHAPPO CHILDHOOD

Baden P. Stace

Extract from Baden P. Stace, *Sydney's One Special Evangelist: John C. Chapman and the Shaping of Anglican Evangelicalism and Australian Religious Life, 1968-2001*, ACT Monograph Series, Wipf & Stock, 2022.

For the Chapman family life in Oatley was modest, communal, and parochial. John and his older brother Jim shared the back verandah, while Grandpa Varley occupied an inside room. The iceman came twice a week and the old copper handled the washing. Neighbours subsisted in these difficult years by growing vegetables and sourcing fish and oysters from the nearby George's River. With only modest means themselves, when the home next door was razed to the ground by fire, the Chapmans took their neighbours in immediately while they regathered the threads of their fractured existence.¹ Oatley itself lay on the southernmost reach of Sydney's suburban fringe. It was, quite literally, the end of the line—notable as the terminus of the first railway electrification project in Sydney, which reached this station from central Sydney in 1926.² Oatley Post Office opened in 1903, giving the suburb official recognition.³ Tom Ugly's Bridge, which crossed the George's River to the south and connected Sydney at large with the Sutherland Shire, had been in use from only 1929.⁴ Thus for the young Chapman the edges of civilisation lay at Hornsby in the far north and Sutherland in the south. The

far west was Parramatta on a good day, otherwise it was Ashfield. And though he had heard of Wollongong, further south still, he had not been there.⁵

The Chapman home was both humorous and belligerent. They would laugh as a family and jokes and humorous stories were regularly told, though quickness in repartee and able raconteuring were considered the best form of humor.⁶ Chapman's aunt made sport by sending newspaper cuttings which had tickled her, stuffed into a manila envelope until it was cylindrical. She never wrote much, just the cartoons and articles conveyed her tone. She loved misprints and wrong spellings. If a bishop appeared in a cope and miter, the cutting arrived with the caption, "Just one of the boys!"⁷ Albury Chapman was a giant personality. He was strong in his convictions and raised his sons Jim and John on a diet of argument and old Australian humor. Teasing and pulling your leg was the way of things.⁸ Albury would fish with an old friend, and jest with his impressionable son that his mate "was the first man to row a boat over the Blue Mountains." This was a claim the young John took delight in

1 Interview with Phillip Jensen, February 16, 2017.

2 I. A. Brady, "Jubilee of Sydney's Electric Trains." *Australian Railway Historical Bulletin* 27 (March 1976): 41–66.

3 Oatley was named after James Oatley, a watchmaker sent to Sydney in 1814, pardoned and put to work installing the clock at the Hyde Park Barracks. Frances Pollon, *The Book of Sydney Suburbs*, (Sydney, NSW: Angus and Robertson, 1990), 193.

4 <http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/documents/projects/sydney-south/tom-uglys-bridge/tom-uglys-bridge-maintenance-works-display-jun2006.pdf>.

5 John Chapman, Interview with Richard Chin, *The Briefing*, June 19, 2012, <http://www.matthiasmedia.com/briefing/2012/06john-chapman-interview>.

6 Interview with David Mansfield, November 29, 2016.

7 Chapman to Orpwood, February 1, 1994. Box 1, Board of Diocesan Mission Files, Sydney Diocesan Archives (SDA).

8 Phillip Jensen and Sam Freney. "Majoring on the Majors: Phillip Jensen on John Chapman." Interview, March 25, 2013. <http://matthiasmedia.com/briefing/2013/03/interview-majoring-on-the-majors/>.

remaking at school show-and-tell.⁹ “Comedians, rather than historians,” wrote the historian Manning Clark, “taught Australians who they were.”¹⁰ Indeed, few peoples have prized humor as a mode of communicating more than Australians. Their humour can be exuberant and boisterous, while dry and understated. With an air of self-mocking, it delights in an irreverence which cautions the hearer not to take oneself, nor the things most revered, too seriously.¹¹ Australian humour has the “sardonic savage flavour . . . of a people who knew . . . life is made bearable by being treated as a joke.”¹² Such was the humour of Chapman’s homelife. Albury saw the funny side in situations and was a dry humorist, with a hard edge that could often be caustic when directed at people.¹³ When Albury and his sister Millie were together, one could barely eat on account of the banter between them.¹⁴ Such room-sized personality, bequeathed subtly though surely in this way, would play a defining role in Chapman’s itinerant ecclesiastical career.¹⁵ It imbued a presence that could

9 Jensen and Freney, “Majoring on the Majors.”

10 Patrick Morgan, “Realism and Documentary: Lowering One’s Sights,” in *The Penguin New Literary History of Australia*, ed. Laurie Hergenhahn (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin, 1988), 238–52.

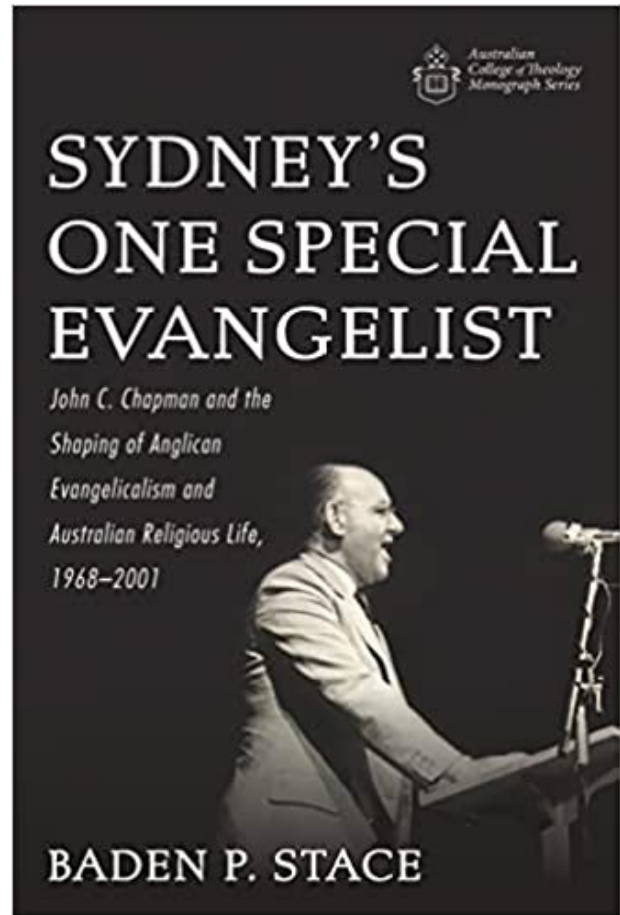
11 John Thornhill, *Making Australia: Exploring Our National Conversation*, (Newtown, NSW: Millennium, 1992), 133.

12 Judith Wright, *Preoccupations in Australian Poetry*, (Melbourne, VIC: Oxford University Press, 1965), 81.

13 Interview with David Mansfield, November 29, 2016.

14 Chapman to Orpwood, February 1, 1994, BDM Box 1, SDA.

15 Dick Lucas notes Chapman’s humor to be “an inborn gift, inherited from his father . . . John was not a joker in any professional sense. And in a preacher, self-conscious jokiness can repel rather than commend the message. But there was a sense in which John could not help himself. Humor and wit was not an extra stuck onto his personality, it was just the man himself.” So Richard Lucas, Rev. Rector Emeritus, St Helen’s Bishopsgate, Service of Thanksgiving for John Chapman, March 1, 2013. <http://www.st-helens.org.uk/resources/medialibrary/>



not be ignored,¹⁶ an ebullience that disarmed a room, and a quick-witted sharpness of mind that was often penetrating.¹⁷

Belligerence also marked the Chapman home. John was raised arguing. Albury, an intelligent and avid reader, and Labor party man to the back teeth, saw in Labor the opportunity for an “enlightened and self-reliant community, without an underclass, fitted to be the most progressive in the world.”¹⁸ His support for the Labor cause

src/talk/53263/title/tribute-reading-address-and-prayers

16 Jensen and Freney, “Majoring on the Majors”; Chapman regularly “held court” in social contexts. His presence was frequently so overshadowing that one considered themselves as “being in his company,” not “he in yours.” Interview with Grant Retief, August 29, 2017.

17 Interview with Tony Payne, November 29, 2016.

18 Ross McMullin, *Light on the Hill: The Australian Labor Party 1891–1991*, (Melbourne, VIC: Oxford University Press, 1992), 56.

was therefore unwavering.¹⁹ Even in retirement, Albury listened to the parliamentary broadcasts, giving time to the Labor speakers. When the Liberal speakers came on, however, he would turn the volume down, take the time, and turn it back up again when they were over. When asked how he knew they had nothing good to say, he simply replied, “They’re Liberals, aren’t they?”²⁰ Albury escorted his sons to hear politicians campaigning from the back of trucks in the shopping center at Oatley. It was the way they answered hecklers that he loved. If they were a politician worth hearing, they would march to Mortdale to hear the same man once more.²¹ Such a practical education in the rhetoric of public disagreement was formative. Whether “throwing dust in the air” at the Sydney Synod or Standing Committee,²² engaging in animated dialogue with his staff, or marshalling arguments with an agility that was difficult to match,²³ Chapman’s homelife steered him never to shrink from disagreement, however impressive or well-credentialed the opposition. Disconcertingly for some, Chapman was not afraid to change his mind either. Passionately arguing a case one day, he would return the next day, recognising his error and arguing the counter case.²⁴



Rev Dr Baden Stace is Rector of St Stephen’s Anglican Church, Normanhurst, in Sydney.

¹⁹ Interview with David Mansfield, November 29, 2016.

²⁰ Jensen and Freney, “Majoring on the Majors.”

²¹ Chapman to Orpwood, February 1, 1994, BDM Box 1, SDA.

²² Interview with Dick Lucas, January 20, 2017.

²³ Interview with Dr. Paul Barnett, December 2, 2016; Interview with Donald Howard, February 17, 2017.

²⁴ Jensen and Freney, “Majoring on the Majors.” Ian Powell, Chapman’s associate for some years notes, “I enjoyed arguing with him. It is done with vigor and totally without spite. I have never known a man more ready to declare he was wrong.” Ian Powell to David Mansfield, BDM Box 1, SDA.

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God Beyond Ideology: Rediscovering Theology through Narrative. CGAR (SCD) conference, 28-29 September 2023. Proposals due 30 July, 2023, to Peter Bolt <mailto:PeterB@scd.edu.au>

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PRECARIOUS WORK ENVIRONMENTS

and the gifts of routine, space, people and purpose

Kara Martin

Many of us who work in theological education experience precarious work environments. It may be because we are adjunct lecturers, waiting on enrolments to know whether we are teaching. It may be because the organisations we belong to are facing economic stress due to falling enrolment or reductions in denominational support. It may be because there is apathy or conflict among our colleagues. It may simply result from the seasonal nature of our work, with ebbs and flows of ridiculously busy demands on our time to periods of time when we must be self-directed to achieve our writing, planning, or administrative goals.

In this article, I will use some of the latest research in organisational behaviour around creating a mental space—called a personalised holding environment—where we can be both soothed, and interpret what is happening during times of uncertainty.

Whereas our natural action under challenging circumstances may be to withdraw and to experience only disruption, organisational research offers hope in the gifts of constraints (routine, space), belonging (people) and meaning (purpose). We can ask, “How is God refining us?” despite, or even because of, our challenging context.

Recent research by Petriglieri, Ashford, and Wrzesniewski showed that for workers who feel detached, their anxiety increases¹ and their

1 Gianpiero Petriglieri, Susan J. Ashford and Amy Wrzesniewski, “Agony and Ecstasy in the Gig Economy: Cultivating Holding Environments for Precarious and Personalized Work Identities,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (2019): 125.

work is rendered “precarious and personalised”. From these insights, they concluded that these leaders found the need to develop two types of identities: a viable (productive) self and a vital (creative) self.

They found that when four factors exist—routines, spaces, people and purpose—workers express enrichment, suggesting hope and fulfilment. When these factors were absent, workers expressed a sense of failure, loss, and self-blame.²

Personal Holding Environment	
Connections	
1. Routines	Viable self – to tolerate precariousness
2. Spaces	
3. People	Vital self – precariousness as creative
4. Purpose	

Theologically positive responses to precarious work identities

Theological educators who have their identity secured ‘in Christ’ and who are able to integrate their faith and work have spiritual resources that enable them to more effectively ‘be held’ according to the elements described in Petriglieri’s article.

Remaining productive: The gifts of constraints

1. Routines

As theological educators, our vocation recognises both the orientation of our work toward God and the need to fit in with rhythms that remind us of our creatureliness. Shortly after the creation of human beings and their ap-

2 Ibid., 135–153.



pointment as vice-regents over creation, God introduces the Sabbath (Gen 2:2–3). The Sabbath (literally “ceasing”) reminds us that we need to stop work, and enter a rest–work rhythm. This practice reminds us that we are creatures, not creators, and that our work should never be the object of our worship. However, in the everyday and mundane aspects of our lives we can offer worship (Rom 12:1).

Christians typically have other rhythms of reading and prayer, worship and self-examination. We also have celebrations (especially Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter) that provide a regular sequence of activities linked to the story of the Gospel. However, we are free to imagine rhythms that fill our days with spiritual practices for work. An example would be using a three-fold pattern of orienting, engaging, and reflecting on our work.³

2. Spaces

The Genesis 12:1–3 promise to Abraham included land, descendants (a nation), and the potential to be a blessing. Space/place is important for God’s people, but it is also important for God. The creation of the Tent of Meeting provides a space for the inhabiting of God’s presence (Ex 33:7–9). Once the land has been entered into,

³ Denise Daniels and Shannon Vandewarker, *Working in the Presence of God: Spiritual Practices for Work* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2019).

then a temple is built, and God’s presence enters that (2 Chr 5:14). In the New Testament, Pentecost signals the coming of the Holy Spirit on those who believe (Acts 2:1–31), and Christians themselves becoming the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19–20).

It is because of God’s mercy that in the space of our workplace we can “take our everyday, ordinary life—our sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering” (Rom 12:1, The Message). Consequently, the workspace that is part of our identity formation is the place of our worship, despite our precarious existence.

Being creative: The gifts of belonging and meaning

3. People

Being made in the image of God includes the responsibility of “filling” the earth (Gen 1:28) and continuing to unfold the process of creation. These responsibilities were never designed to be exercised as individuals, but in the Garden, Adam and Eve were expected to work in community (Gen 2:18). That is, we are to help each other. God himself also desires to work with us (Gen 2:5, 19). There is also the imperative that we are to be a blessing to others (Gen 12:3, Ex 19:4–6). Our work is never meant to be an end in itself but to be done in community and for the sake of others. In Romans 16, Paul highlights his life history as being encouraged by a diverse range of partners, including Phoebe, a

patron and a woman of influence.

At a practical level, creative sensemaking happens with support and in partnership. When you experience the messiness of precariousness, a good question is: who has God provided for you? Often, other Christians will show you empathy, encouragement and support. As theological lecturers, we need friends, since they allow us an opportunity to express what cannot be expressed in the workplace, as well as space to reframe the problem and a posture of curiosity in seeking a solution.

4. Purpose

Exercising our vocation as stewards will lead us to continue God's work in the world, through our ordinary work. Robert Banks has helpfully broken this into six categories: being creative, providing for others and the planet, revealing truth, enfleshing Jesus' work of redemption by promoting good and holding back evil, showing compassion and seeking justice⁴. For all of us, many of these six elements are components of our work and give our work a renewed sense of purpose as we align ourselves with God.

These activities of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:11–21) can also be expressions of our priestly vocation, as they are part of what Beale is describing (referencing Psalm 8): “the ultimate goal of humanity was to fill the whole earth with God's glory”⁵. As educators, we are culture-makers and culture-shapers, able to align that work with God's desire for human flourishing.

My story

Like many women, my work takes many forms, not just the work I am paid to do. I am a wife, mother, carer, mentor, preacher, speaker, lecturer, writer, coach and influencer. Some of those roles are paid, while many are not. Yet, in every role, there is the potential to educate and influence oth-

⁴ Robert J. Banks, “The Place of Work in the Divine Economy: God as Vocational Director and Model,” in *Faith Goes to Work: Reflections from the Marketplace*, ed. Robert J. Banks (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock), 18–29.

⁵ G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (London, UK: Apollos), 86.

ers.

It is easy to find myself feeling unsettled by the precarious nature of my work: irregular income, lack of routine, the variety of spaces in which I do my work, disconnection from people, and no overarching sense of mission.

Regular spiritual rhythms enable me to establish life-nourishing *routines*. Knowing myself always to be in God's presence enables me to find that ordinary *spaces* are enchanted. I am conscious that I am never alone in my work, even though much of it is individual in nature. I consciously partner with God in my work, and I am aware that my intention is that my work will benefit other *people*. Finally, I know that even the most mundane activity can be reframed as an expression of my stewardship responsibilities, aligned with God's *purposes*: whether it is restoring order through housework, creatively communicating through writing or speaking, revealing truth through teaching, discipling my children to be caring and lovers of justice, or seeking to redeem the idea of work from Neo-Platonic dualism.

Ultimately, the productivity of my work is not something driven by me but instead a gift from God. My ability to be an educator and influencer has resulted from opportunities opened up by God as he uses my work to shape me.

This article is adapted from a [paper co-authored with Peter Cumming](#), which appeared in Faith in Business Quarterly 22.1.



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PUBLICATIONS

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Recent books by faculty in our affiliated colleges.

Department of Bible and Languages

Bird, Michael F. (Ridley), [*Jesus among the Gods: Early Christology in the Greco-Roman World*](#), Baylor, 2022.

Harper, G. Geoffrey (SMBC), [*Teaching Leviticus: From Text to Message*](#), Christian Focus, 2022.

Thompson, Alan (SMBC), [*Colossians and Philemon*](#), (Tyndale New Testament Commentary Series), IVP Academic, 2022.

Tsoi, Grace (CTCA), [*Who is to Blame for Judges 19? Interplay between the Text and a Chinese Context*](#), (Contrapuntal Readings of the Bible in World Christianity), Pickwick, 2022.

Department of Christian Thought and History

Brautigam, Michael (MST), [*Flourishing in Tensions: Embracing Radical Discipleship*](#), Wipf & Stock, 2022.

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Deenick, Karl (SMBC), [*Gathered Together: The Beauty of Living as God's Church*](#), Matthias, 2022.

Dunstan, Andrew (Malyon), [*Karl Barth's Analogy of Beauty: Its Basis and Implications for Theological Aesthetics*](#) (Barth Studies), Routledge, 2021.

Ehrman, Bart D., Michael F. Bird (Ridley) and Robert B. Stewart, [*When Did Jesus Become God? : A Christological Debate*](#), Westminster John Knox, 2022.

Franklin, Kirk J. (MST) & Susan Van Wynen, [*A Missional Leadership History: The Journey from*](#)

[*Wycliffe Bible Translators to Wycliffe Global Alliance*](#), Regnum Books, 2022.

Department of Ministry and Practice

Scott Harrower, (Ridley) [*Dawn of Sunday: The Trinity and Trauma-Safe Churches*](#), Cascade, 2022.

Lisa Spriggens and Tim Meadowcroft (Laidlaw), eds, [*Practicing Faith: Theology and Social Vocation in Conversation*](#), Pickwick, 2022.

BEYOND

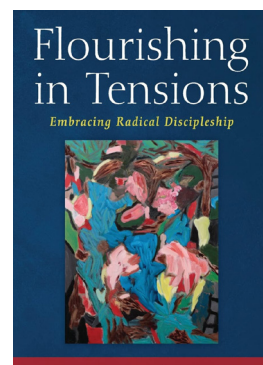
Matthew Anslow (UME NSW), [*Fulfilling the Law and the Prophets: The Prophetic Vocation of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*](#), Pickwick, 2022.

Michael Bartholomaeus (Tabor), [*Karl Barth's Doctrine of Sanctification: An Exploration of Church Dogmatics §66*](#), Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 2022.

Constantine R. Campbell (SCD), [*Jesus v. Evangelicals: A Biblical Critique of a Wayward Movement*](#), Zondervan, 2022.

Jason Goroncy (Whitley) and Rod Pattenden, eds. [*Imagination in an Age of Crisis Soundings from the Arts and Theology*](#), Pickwick, 2022.

Christa L. McKirland (Carey), [*God's Provision, Humanity's Need: The Gift of Our Dependence*](#), Baker Academic, 2022.



PLACE, PURPOSE AND THE ACT

Geoff Treloar



St Paul's College, Sydney, Dining Hall, 1870s. ACT was based at the College when it started.

The link between place and purpose is well established in understanding human consciousness and behaviour. 'Place' in this undertaking can signify different things: particular physical locations, obviously; but also general locations not tied to specific sites, such as 'the community'; and metaphorical locations, the imaginary spaces people occupy as they make sense of their lives, such as 'the nation', 'the Church' and even 'the Kingdom of God'. What role has 'place' played in the story of the Australian College of Theology (ACT)? Where, indeed, *is* the ACT? What spaces does it occupy, and how have these influenced its purpose and functions? The answers to these questions fall into two broad phases: from 1891 to 1975; and from 1975 to the present.

The ACT was established by the General Synod of the Church of England in Australia and Tasmania in 1891. At the time, this

was the most recent of the instruments devised to enable the Church to function as the national body called into being in 1872 by the creation of the General Synod. The stated purpose was to foster the study of Divinity, especially among the clergy. As the location of the General Synod meeting, Sydney reflected another, an unstated, purpose. Over the previous century, Sydney had been the point from which European settlement radiated out to embrace the entire Australian continent, a process which from the very beginning had involved the Church of England. Still seen as 'the mother diocese' of the Australian Church, Sydney's historical connections effected in the corporate life of this Church a convergence with three significant places in the history of Christianity; first-century Palestine, the site of Christian beginnings; Europe, the site of the development of Christian civilisation; and England, the site of the rise of Anglophone Protestant-

ism. As humble as it was in its origins, the ACT as an arm of the Church took as its field of operations the entire country and set out to make its contribution to the larger processes of the Europeanisation, Christianisation and Anglicanisation of Australia. None of this was said at the time; it was a presumption inherent in the operations of the Church. Even so, the ACT began as an instrument of the Church of England in Australia with a part to play in the grand process described by Edmund Barton at Federation ten years later in 1901 as building 'a continent for a nation and a nation for a continent'.

That the Church had had to create its own institution for the provision of theological education reflected another space it had been obliged to occupy. In Britain, the Church had established its own theological colleges, but it was also served by the public universities. This option was closed down in Australia by the exclusion of Theology from the curriculum of the nascent colonial universities. One effect was to force the churches into the private domain of the emerging system of higher education. Such a strict separation of

Boooloominbah, Armidale, base of Registrar Archdeacon John Forster in the 1920s.



church and state meant that, if they wanted theological education and training for their people, the churches would have to provide it themselves out of their own resources. At the same time, the absence of government involvement left them free to do it as they saw fit. Like the other theological colleges, the ACT was a response to these conditions of its political and educational environment. For most of the first century of its existence, it operated on the margins of Australian higher education as a private body, necessarily self-reliant but free to develop in its own way.

The decision of the General Synod created a 'college' which was to meet every 4-5 years around the time of the General Synod, usually in Sydney. The College consisted of the bishops and other licensed clergymen who held a recognised degree. Between the meetings, the business of the College was conducted by a Council of five Fellows. These arrangements gave the College what would now be called a 'real-time existence' which made it a place of deliberation and decision-making for the provision of theological education. As such, the College performed several specific functions for the benefit of the Australian Church and society. First, by providing curricula and conducting examinations, it

curated theological knowledge for the appropriation of the Anglican community. Second, it created qualifications that attested to educational attainment and provided standards for the bishops to use in their recruitment of clergy. Third, by also making arrangements at the 'Associate level', it provided for a theologically educated laity able to take their place as informed Anglican Christians in the Church and also in the wider society. Of course, these functions were performed across the enormous spaces of the Australian

landscape. To overcome ‘the tyranny of distance’ and the inaccessibility of theological education for many people, the ACT became a pioneer in distance education. If it was not the first to do so, the College was certainly one of the first higher educational institutions in the country to make use of this instrument in the early stages of its own development. In many and various places and ways, the College took an important part in ‘educating Australia’.

When it was not actually meeting, the College also functioned metaphorically as an imaginary entity which was coextensive with the Church and the nation. In this way, the leaders and theologically best-educated members of the Australian Church were brought together as an ever-present repository of the highest theological learning in the land that remained unique until the creation of the Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD) in 1910. An indication of what this meant is evident in the Primate and first ‘President’ of the College. William Saumarez Smith, Bishop (from 1897, Archbishop) of Sydney, was a Cambridge graduate and a former head of St Aidan’s Theological College, Birkenhead in England. Another who brought distinguished theological learning and the best recent experience of contemporary theological education into the counsels of the ACT was John Reginald Harmer, the third Bishop of Adelaide (1895-1905). Also a Cambridge graduate, he had been the domestic Chaplain of the Bishop of Durham and renowned New Testament scholar, J.B. Lightfoot. In this role he assisted in training clergy for work in the diocese, while as Lightfoot’s literary executor, he had produced a notable edition of *The Apostolic Fathers*. With men of this calibre in its ranks, the College emerged as something of a peak group, anticipating such organisations as the Royal College of Surgeons and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects as a representative of a profession (the ministry) and specialised knowledge (Theology) in Australian society.

The day-to-day operations of the College

began in 1896, with the first examinations being held in 1897. They have gone on continuously ever since. These operations were in the hands of the Registrar. At first, the College lacked the need and the means to fund a discrete physical establishment as ‘the place’ of the ACT. Instead, the College was run from the domicile of the Registrar. Initially, this was the Warden’s residence at St Paul’s College at the University of Sydney, the home of the first Registrar, W. Hey Sharp, and then, from 1908, his residence as a canon of St Andrew’s Cathedral. On Sharp’s death in 1928, the administrative centre of the College moved to Armidale, where his successor, John Forster, was the Archdeacon of the diocese. It returned to Sydney, to the rectory of Christ Church Lavender Bay, when Frank Cash became Registrar in 1945. Because his successor, Colin Duncan, was from Melbourne, it was moved to his home at Mt Eliza on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria. When he retired in 1974, the ACT administration came back to Sydney, to New College at the University of New South Wales, where the new Registrar, Stuart Barton Babbage, was the Master. That the administrative centre could be moved around the country so readily and so often was feasible because the business of the ACT could still be managed by one person. But it also reflected the character of the ACT as a theological provider for the entire nation. Its operations were not anchored to any specific location.

From the beginning, the ACT presumed a network of theological colleges to implement the curriculum. Initially this was bold, for there were only three Anglican theological colleges in 1891 (and once the ACT got underway, one of them chose not to utilise its services). However, the number of colleges increased markedly in the period before World War II. These were mostly diocesan colleges established by the bishops both to facilitate recruitment of clergy and to control their dioceses’ theological character. There was no formal relationship between these colleges and the ACT. Such a relationship was unnecessary. The ACT was a service provided (but not



The rectory of Christ Church Lavender Bay, in 2016. ACT was based here in the 1940s

funded) by the General Synod for the benefit of the whole Australian Church. Most candidates for the ministry enrolled in the colleges but registered individually with the ACT. This arrangement enabled the bishops and the diocesan synods to keep a close eye on their own colleges. At the same time, they tended to trumpet success when candidates from their dioceses did well in the annual nationwide examinations. This duality demonstrates that the ACT had become the centre of a loosely connected network of theological colleges engaged in a common work all around Australia. Today it would be called an extended community of theological practice.

These arrangements remained intact until the mid-1970s. Change came as a result of a marked shift in the operating environment furnished by the host society. This shift stemmed from the recommendations of the Martin Report of 1964 to the government's Australian Universities Commission. One of these recommendations—that public institutions of higher education should consider courses 'of a non-

dogmatic character which are relevant to theological studies'—in effect ended the exclusion of Theology inherited from the nineteenth century. This opened the way for a restructuring of theological education in Australia. In a time of what might be described as 'urgent fluidity', numerous possibilities were considered which would have changed the ACT's experience of place—amalgamation with the MCD; establishment of a permanent base in the national capital, Canberra, at St Mark's Library; a formal connection with a university; and an Act of the Victorian Parliament to furnish new warrants for its operation. In the event, these possibilities went unrealised. However, by establishing a primary degree in Theology in 1975, the second provider to do so after the MCD's breakthrough in 1973, the ACT entered the domain of degree-level higher education.

The commencement of degree-level provision coincided with an expansion in Australian higher education at large. As both a beneficiary of this change in society and also as a degree-



Escalators and sculpture opposite the door to the current ACT premises from the Wynard Station Concourse.

granting body, the size and complexity of the ACT began to increase. With the scale of operations expanding, the makeshift accommodation at New College became less and less adequate. In 1981 the ACT shifted to its own dedicated facility in a building on Anzac Parade in the Sydney suburb of Kingsford. Here it remained for some twenty years. Late in 2003, the office shifted to Druiitt Street in the CBD, close to the Sydney Town Hall. Because of further expansion, it was taken to a larger space nearby on Clarence Street in 2012. For the same reason, it moved again in 2019 to still larger premises in York Street. The move to the heart of the city with improved transport links to the rest of the country was symbolic of the role the ACT was now playing as a substantial provider in the nation's higher education system at large.

While this growth was taking place, the restructuring of theological education presented new options to the Anglican theological colleges. Most of them elected to discontinue their use of

the ACT in favour of local city-based colleges of Divinity, usually connected to a university. As a result, the space occupied by the ACT as an Anglican institution contracted markedly. However, the impact of the departures was offset by the adherence of non-Anglican theological and Bible colleges drawn by the possibility of using ACT courses—open to them from 1975—to obtain accredited degree-level qualifications for their students. Their admission introduced new dynamics and tensions into a previously relatively uncomplicated relationship between the ACT and the teaching institutions. The response was the creation of a regularly revised system of 'accredited colleges', which changed the character of the ACT. In addition to the functions carried over from the pre-1975 era, it now became the accrediting authority of a federation of teaching institutions all around the country. As the centre of a coalition of Protestant theological and Bible colleges, the ACT's work not only remained coextensive with the nation but also embraced a broader segment of the Australian Christian

community.

During this time the relationship of the ACT with the state also changed. For the legitimisation of its awards, from 1975 the ACT became increasingly subject to accreditation by the states of the Commonwealth and then, from 2011, by the Commonwealth itself through its new instrumentality, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). In the meantime, while receiving no direct government funding, as an approved higher education provider the ACT had become a distributor of public money through the FEE-HELP system introduced by the Higher Education Support Act of 2003. In return, the ACT was obliged to undergo periodic government audits (to ensure fitness for purpose), which continue under the TEQSA regime on the basis of compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework. The combined effect of these developments has been to draw the ACT more and more into the sphere of public administration. From being practically free from government influence for most of the first century of its existence, the ACT has become an agent of the Commonwealth of Australia in the higher education system subject to its ultimate control. While still fully committed to promoting the study of Theology and its applications in the service of the Christian community, in this space the ACT is now at least as much an educational as an ecclesial institution.

Half a century of change in relation to its operating environment culminated in 2022 in two changes, one of which brought a greater degree of autonomy while the other reinforced effective subordination to the state. In May, the ACT adopted a much-revised constitution which, by incorporating a wider range of stakeholders as members of ACT Limited, set it free from the majority control of its members by the Anglican Church of Australia. Under the new arrangements, the Anglican Church remains an important stakeholder in the ACT, but in proportion to the number of Anglican colleges relative to the whole (3 out of 17 in 2022). As it left the

domain of the Church, the ACT continued to be enmeshed in another. In September, it was registered as a 'University College' by TEQSA. The ACT had applied for this status to enhance its standing and to shore up its position in the higher education environment. The success of its application was based on it being recognised as an institution that delivers superior-quality higher education. However, this status will require ACT to continue to meet a high set of regulations and standards. University College status also prepares the way for the next phase in its adaptation to its situation in higher education, recognition as an 'Australian university with a specialised focus.' Together these developments inaugurated a new era in the life of the ACT and created fresh conditions for its ongoing experience of place as a determinant of its purpose and functions.

Dr Geoff Treloar is editor of *Lucas: An Evangelical History Review*, and is currently writing a history of the ACT.



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Rev Dr Ian O'Harae

Moderation & Inclusion Manager

Erin Sessions

Registry, Quality & Finance Division

Chief Operating Officer & Registrar

Simon Davies

Finance

Director of Finance

Vicki Chen

Financial Accountant

Mary Ann Navidad

Registry

Student Reporting Officer (2022)

Diana Tadjudin

Acting Deputy Registrar (2022)

Asanka Gunerathne

Academic Administrative Officer

Rebekah Wall

Academic Services Support Officer

Jayne Tan

Academic Administration Officer

Lissa Philip

IT Officer

Witali Klein

Quality

Director of Quality

Nathain Secker

Academic Quality Officer

Stephen Sarkoezy

Academic Administration Officer

Lissa Philip

CONFERRALS

June - October 2022

Doctor of Philosophy

Mark Adams (Christ College) for a thesis titled ‘The Use of Aseity in the Theology of John Webster.’

Robert Smith (Christ College) for a thesis entitled: ‘Identity and Embodiment: An Evangelical Assessment of Transgender Theory.’

Vijai Tagore (Christ College) for a thesis entitled: ‘1 Corinthians 11:3b: A Key to Understanding Head Covering in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16.’

Scott Xu (Christ College) for a thesis entitled ‘Laughter in the Whirlwind: The Irony in the Divine Response in Job 38–42 as an Adequate Response to the Issue of Innocent Suffering.’



DOORS IN THE BIBLE

Paul Moon



Doors are mentioned throughout the Bible, and in several contexts. In the Old Testament, their reference is principally in an architectural sense. There is mention in 1 Kings, for example, of the entrance to the inner sanctuary having doors made of elaborately carved olive wood (6:31–32).¹ This sort of literal description is commonplace. At times, though, there are allusions to a more symbolic function for doors, particularly relating to the notion of the separation of the sacred from the secular. In 1 Chronicles, Berekiah and Elkanah are named as doorkeepers for the ark, alluding to separation between danger and sanctuary (1 Chron 15:23). When Job curses the day of his birth, doors are referred to metaphorically, in the phrase “the doors of the womb” (Job 3:10). However, on the whole, such non-literal uses are comparatively rare in the Old Testament.

By contrast, in the New Testament, the metaphorical and symbolic references to doors are more widespread. In Matthew 2:7, Jesus issues the injunction, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you,” and later in that Gospel, when addressing the seven woes, he says, “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you

hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to” (3:13). This does not signify a literal door so much as a symbol of separation between one realm and another, but with strong dependence on the specific imagery to make the point.

In a few instances in the New Testament, doors are employed as a metaphor to signify a location of transition. In Luke 13:22–25, for example, when Jesus was asked were there only a few people who were going to be saved, he responded, “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, ‘Sir, open the door for us.’” In a similar vein, in Acts 14:27, Luke writes, “On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.” The deployment of the metaphor of a door is used in these instances to denote a sense of transition, but also transformation – symbolically depicting either faith entering into the world of the Gentiles, or faith as a destination towards which the Gentiles are heading.

Paul echoes this use of the metaphor in

¹ All verses quoted are from New International Version unless otherwise stated.

2 Corinthians 2:12, where he writes, “I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me.” However, the metaphor is inflected slightly. In addition to portraying an opening to something new, it also carries a suggestion of an invitation, as opposed to a potential barrier or obstacle. In 1 Corinthians 16:9, Paul likewise drew on this imagery of an invitation, explaining that “I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me,” and similarly, in Colossians 4:3, the idea of an invitation or opportunity was conveyed through a door: “And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.” In this extract, the door is juxtaposed with the mention of chains. The latter is representative of imprisonment, while the door is suggestive of freedom. There are also several options for who or what is going through the door. It could include Paul, his work, or the Gospel.

Doors also feature in a miracle in the New Testament. When the disciples were in a house with Thomas, it is recorded in Acts 20:26 that, “Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’” This particular application of doors is rare, and largely incidental to the miracle, but nonetheless contributes to the broad diversity of use of doors—literally, and as metaphors and symbols—in the New Testament.

Of course, the most significant miracle in the New Testament involving a door is the removal of the stone that covered the entrance to the tomb in which Christ was laid to rest after the crucifixion.² The literal stone has an echo in metaphors relating to barriers, overcoming obstacles, and a passage from one state to another, which could include a transition from death to life, or from death to a new humanity. There is almost something transactional about the imagery of doors in such contexts. Rather than an unimpeded path, doors can imply an

² Vaughan Hart, “Sigurd Lewerentz and the ‘Half-Open Door,’” *Architectural History* 39 (1996): 186.

action that needs to be undertaken or a barrier that needs to be overcome in order to progress to somewhere else.

Doors also form part of the ‘anatomy’ of churches, based on the application of New Testament metaphors. The apostles and prophets were part of “God’s household,” which was “built on the foundation” of their work. Christ is the “cornerstone,” and the body of believers grows into a “holy temple” (Eph. 2:19–22). An alternative word used for cornerstone is a capstone, which similarly contains connotations of being the head, but also the structural element on which the entire edifice depends. Elsewhere, Christ is depicted as the “living stone,” and the church as a “spiritual house” (1 Pet 2:4–5, cf. 2 Cor 5:1). Such imagery is “charged with theological meaning,” but has also resonated for centuries in various Christian perceptions of what a church building is in a practical as well as symbolic sense.³

Excerpted from “[Church Doors.](#)” Stimulus, 29, no. 1 (2022), used with permission.



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³ Daniel Jütte, “Living stones: The House as Actor in Early Modern Europe,” *Journal of Urban History* 42, no. 4 (2016): 661.

ACT PEOPLE ONLINE

JUNE - NOVEMBER 2022

Podcast and Video Series

Tim Beilharz & Al James (YthWks), [The Effective Ministry Podcast](#)

Mike Bird (Ridley) [Early Christian History with Mike Bird](#), YouTube

Cameron Clausing, Allister Lum Mow & Murray Smith (Christ College), [Down Under Theology](#)

John Dickson (Ridley) [Undeceptions](#), Undeceptions Network

Michael Jensen (BCSA) & Megan Powell du Toit (ACT) [With All Due Respect](#), Undeceptions Network

Jenny Salt (SMBC) [Salt – Conversations with Jenny](#), Hope 103.2

Articles and Interviews

ABC

June 12 John Dickson (Ridley), [What’s so offensive about Australia’s public school chaplaincy program? An open letter to Jane Caro](#), Religion & Ethics

June 26 Vicki Lorrimar (TCQ) panel, [The big questions on AI — capability, morality and faith](#), God Forbid

July 3 Brian Rosner (Ridley), [Is it good advice to “be yourself”? Why looking inward is not necessarily the answer](#), Religion & Ethics

August 23 Michael Jensen (BCSA), [panel](#), The Drum

October 7 Brian Rosner (Ridley), [Looking inwards or facing outwards — how do you find who you are?](#), God Forbid

Baptist World Aid

September 22 Megan Powell du Toit (ACT), [What If The Good Life Does More Harm Than Good?](#)

Eternity News

June 17 John Collier (Morling), [Christian Students Are Not Equipped to Face University Culture – Will The Church Step Up?](#)

Evangelicals Now UK

September 1 Peter Riddell (MST), [Crunch Looms in Gay Pride Rugby Row](#)

Hope FM

October 25 James Dalziel (ACT), [University College News interview](#)

Preachit! Podcast (Alan Stanley)

June 12, Douglas Green (QTC), [Preaching Christ in the Old Testament](#)

September 5 Malcolm Gill (SMBC), [Can Anything Good Come Out of Topical Preaching?](#)

September 26 Megan Powell du Toit (ACT), [The Role of the Arts in Preaching](#)

SBS

October 11 Michael Jensen (BCSA), [Keeping the Faith](#), Insight

Sydney Morning Herald/The Age

June 29 Michael Jensen (BCSA), [Not my tribe: Australians have turned their back on religion, but not on their faith](#)

The Blunder Bus podcast (Ed Vaughan)

October 16 Megan Powell du Toit (ACT), [When The Church Goes Wrong](#)

The Gospel Coalition Australia (TGCA)

June 2 David Starling (Morling), [“Neither”: Joshua 5:14 and the Morning after the Election](#)

June 27 John McClean (Christ College), [Worshipping with Westminster: A Response to Rory Shiner](#)

July 6 John McClean (Christ College), [Trueman’s “A Strange New World”](#)

August 1 Rhys Bezzant (Ridley), [Worshipping with John Stott](#)

August 3 Richard Shumack (MST), [A Case for Appropriately Long Sermons](#)

August 25 Andrew Judd (Ridley), [When was the Old Testament Written?](#)

The Pastor’s Heart (Dominic Steele)

June 22 Brian Rosner (Ridley), [The problem with ‘You be You’](#)

July 6 Rob Smith (SMBC), [The trans-culture wars vs lovingly pastoring gender incongruent church members](#)

August 9 Peter Jensen (QTC, SMBC), [Repentance is Needed](#)

August 30 Louise Gosbell (MAC), [How do we make church accessible to all?](#)

September 20 Rachel Ciano (SMBC), [Deconstructing the Queen’s Funeral](#)

Vision Radio

June 1 Mark Durie (MST), [Looming Split in the Anglican Australian Church, 20Twenty](#)



EVENTS

You can now inform us of events using this [online form](#).

2022

November 2022

2 UD, VIC

[Colonial Bondage: Liberating Theological Education, Anne Pattel-Grey](#)

3 Morling, NSW

[Open Night](#)

5 SMBC, NSW

[Info Morning](#)

5 Trinity, VIC

[“As spoken by the Prophets”: Studies on Readings for Year A](#)

5 Heart of Life, VIC

[Spirituality and Screen Images](#)

7 Spirited Project, online

[Online symposium: Ageing, Faith, and Spirituality](#)

8 St James Institute, NSW

[Islamophobia and the Christian Response \(Webinar\) Jordan Denari Duffner](#)

10-11 Poche, online

[The Future of Indigenous Leadership in Australian Higher Education](#)

11 Ridley, VIC

[Navigating Turbulent Times, Bishop Steve Maina](#)

15 Macquarie, NSW

[SSEC: Michael Theophilus: Ancient Coinage and the First Christmas](#)

16 Moore, NSW

[The Mothers’ Union & the Ministry of Lay Women, Jane Tooher](#)

17 MST, VIC

[Michael Bräutigam’s Book Launch - *Flourishing in Tensions: Embracing Radical Discipleship*](#)

18 RTC, VIC

[Book Launch: *Biblical Critical Theory* by Christopher Watkin](#)

21-23 Morling, NSW

[ANZATFE Conference: Developing Leaders, Formation, Supervision and Self-care](#)

21 MST, VIC (webinar)

[Do Muslims and Christians Worship The Same God? Andy Bannister](#)

21 New College, NSW

[Book Launch: *Biblical Critical Theory* by Christopher Watkin](#)

23 Wesley Uniting, VIC

[Book launch: “John Wesley’s Political World” by Glen O’Brien](#)

25-26 ISCAST, Melbourne/online

[COSAC: Christian Living in a Techno-Scientific World](#)

30-2 Dec Pilgrim, VIC

[Association of Practical Theology in Oceania Conference](#)

EVENTS CONT.

December 2022

1 UC/ANZATS/AASR (at Pilgrim), VIC

[What's GOD got to do with it?](#)

12 CTCA, NSW

[Mandarin Public Lecture: A Missional Legacy in China/國語宣教培靈會 「知難而進 — 戴德生生命傳承」](#)

2023

February 2023

6 Moore, NSW

[Lazy Complementarianism: A Fresh Look at Leadership, Relationships and Church Family Life](#)

7 Moore, NSW

[P&A 2023 Research Conference: Household in the Bible and Church History](#)

March 2023

18 SMBC, NSW

[Women's Conference: The Invitation: Luke 14-18](#)

April 2023

14-15 SCD, NSW

[Thinking for Ourselves for God's Sake: 2023 Learning and Teaching Theology Conference](#)

May 2023

6 SMBC, NSW

[Children's Ministry Conference](#)

July 2023

2-5 ANZATS, VIC

[ANZATS Conference 2023 - Melbourne](#)

September 2023

28-29 SCD, NSW

[God Beyond Ideology: Rediscovering Theology through Narrative. CGAR conference.](#)

