

N E X U S

*The Australian University of Theology
Research & Scholarship Magazine*

Issue focus:

Showcasing the Australian University of Theology's HDR Research

The NEXUS Bookshelf

New Books by AUT Staff & Faculty

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June 2026



June 2026

From the Editor

Australian University of Theology's HDR Research

Welcome to the June issue of NEXUS, the Australian University of Theology's bi-annual research magazine.

In the Research Department of the AUT, we are committed to promoting good practice and excellence in both research and research training across our consortium. A central part of that work is supporting our higher degree research (HDR) candidates in successfully completing their studies. At present, we have just over 100 HDR candidates studying in many of our colleges in a range of fields and disciplines. These students are supported not only by their skilled supervisors and co-supervisors, but also by the Directors of Research and other HDR administrative staff across the consortium.

This issue of NEXUS showcases the high calibre of work being produced by AUT HDR graduates. Our four contributors completed their research at the AUT in the last few years and have since published books drawn from their studies: Amber Dillon on John the Baptist and intertextuality in the Fourth Gospel, Ruth Sutcliffe on the theology of persecution in the third-century church, Steven Daly on the riddle of the Beloved Disciple's anonymity, and Tamie Davis on prosperity theology among Tanzanian women. We hope you enjoy reading about their work and that it gives a sense of the quality and variety of research being undertaken across AUT.

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The NEXUS Bookshelf

New books by AUT Consortium Faculty and beyond

AUT Consortium Staff, Faculty, Fellows & Graduates

Authored volumes

Steven Daly (TTC MTh [Res] graduate), *The Anonymous Witness: Solving the Riddle of the Beloved Disciple's Anonymity in the Fourth Gospel?* Broughton Publishing, 2026.

Amber Dillon (Ridley PhD graduate), *John the Baptist and Composite Intertextuality in the Fourth Gospel: The Evangelist's Archetypal Witness.* Biblical Interpretation Series 237. Brill, 2026.

John M. Hitchen (Laidlaw), *Reclaiming the Good News: Gospel, Culture, and Contextualization in the South-West Pacific.* Edited by Tim Meadowcroft. Australian University of Theology Publications. Wipf & Stock, 2026

Crystal Hong (MST), *An Introductory Biblical Hebrew Grammar* 初阶圣经希伯来文语法. Melbourne School of Theology, 2025.

Gary Millar (QTC), *Deuteronomy.* Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary. Lexham Press, 2026.

Tom Schwanda and **Ian Maddock** (SMBC), *Whitefield on the Christian Life: New Birth to Enjoy God.* Crossway, 2025.

Alan Thompson (SMBC), *A Basic Guide to Biblical Theology: Nine Themes That Unite the Old and New Testaments.* Baker Academic, 2025.

Donald West (TTC), *'Ask, and It Will Be Given to You': The Relationship of Promises and Conditions in New Testament Petitionary Prayer.* Gorgias Biblical Studies 75. Gorgias Press, 2026.

Edited volumes

William A. Ross, **Marieke Dhont**, and **Christopher Fresch** (BCSA), *Language and Identity in Hellenistic Judaism: Essays in Memory of James K. Aitken.* T&T Clark, 2026.

Have a new book coming out in the second half of 2026 and want it included in NEXUS? Let us know at research@aut.edu.au.

Interested in writing a short book review of a recent publication for the next issue? Please get in touch with us!

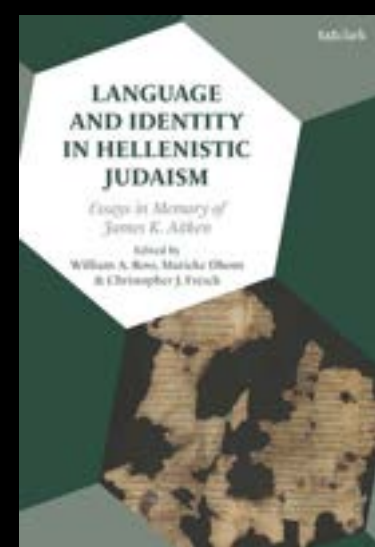
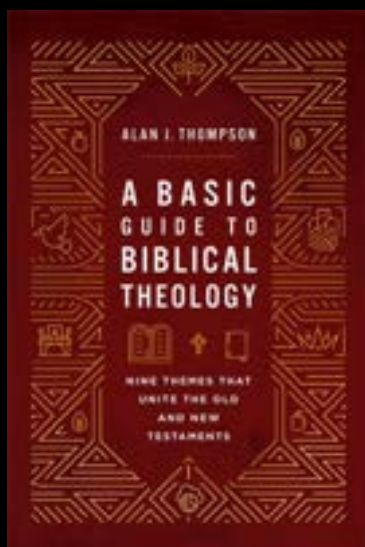
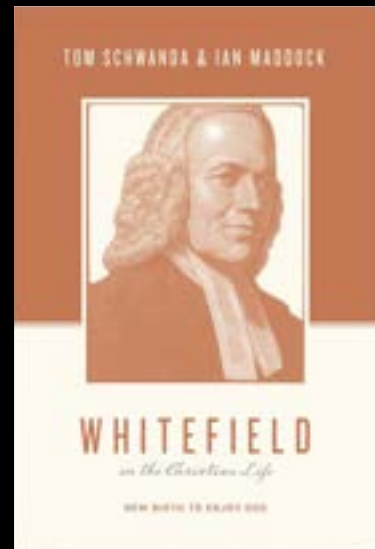
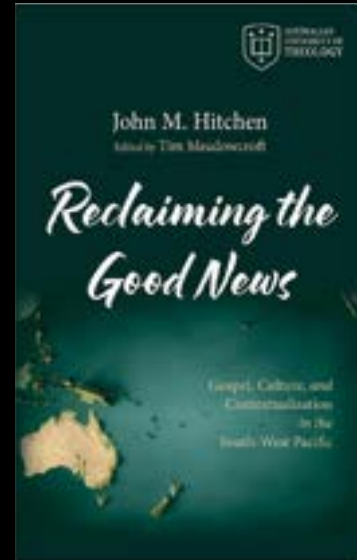
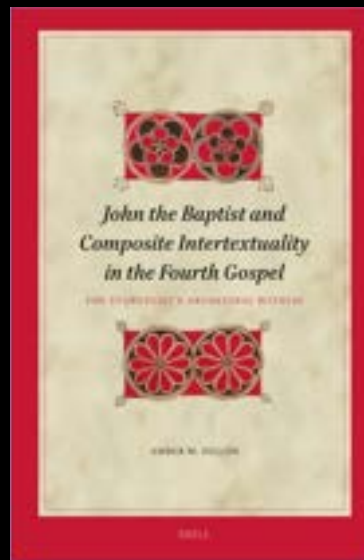
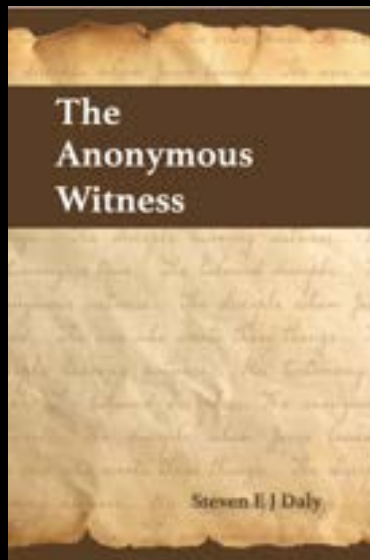


AUSTRALIAN
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THEOLOGY

The second book in the new **Australian University of Theology Publications** series was released in February 2026. This volume, edited by Tim Meadowcroft (Senior Research Fellow at Laidlaw College, New Zealand), is a collection of essays by John M. Hitchen, former Principal of Christian Leaders Training College,



Papua New Guinea, and Principal Emeritus of Laidlaw College, New Zealand. *Reclaiming the Good News: Gospel, Culture, and Contextualization in the South-West Pacific.* Hitchen provides guidance on how we might live out the gospel to have an impact in a variety of contexts.



John the Baptist and Composite Intertextuality in the Fourth Gospel: The Evangelist's Archetypal Witness

Amber Dillon – Ridley College PhD Graduate

Fourth Gospel scholarship has actively engaged important discussions regarding John's use of Scripture, his characterization, and the Gospel's relationship to Judaism. Questions arise as to how the Evangelist seems to draw heavily from the Jewish Scriptures with only around fifteen explicit quotations, along with the function of John the Baptist in the prologue of the Gospel and how this sets up the remaining instances of his characterization. It might seem that these topics have little to do with one another, yet my research in *John the Baptist and Composite Intertextuality in the Fourth Gospel: The Evangelist's Archetypal Witness* (Brill, 2026) draws these topics together and suggests how they might speak into the conversation concerning John and Judaism. Typically, these Johannine topics are treated separately, yet when examining certain features of John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel, his characterization intersects with the Evangelist's intertextual method, which is closely tied to his relationship to Judaism. My research argues that John the Baptist is portrayed as the archetypal witness of the Fourth Gospel through his intertextual, scriptural characterization, and that this integration sheds light on the complex interplay between the Gospel and Judaism.

Because of the sparse use of scriptural quotations in this Gospel, it becomes clear that the Evangelist prefers to use allusions to the biblical text when engaging Scripture intertextually. I contend that the nature of his application of allusions is composite, where the author draws from multiple texts and combines them into one. Composite citations receive far more attention in the study of intertextuality, as there are more clearly definable features in a citation than allusion. Still, the heavy reliance of the

Evangelist on allusions in his account calls for a reevaluation of the composite capacity of allusions. The two primary criteria I employ when identifying an allusion to Scripture are verbal connections with the original texts and thematic coherence with the rest of the Gospel. This means an allusion in the Fourth Gospel must have verbal overlap with the earlier texts, and the implementation of those texts must be consistent with other themes that permeate the Gospel.

Before thoroughly engaging John the Baptist's role in the Evangelist's intertextual method of composite allusions, I first examine allusions in Second Temple literature. The goal here is to demonstrate that the Evangelist is situated within his broader Second Temple literary context. Previous scholarship has proven this to be the case; my purposes aim instead to underscore the heritage of contemporary writers and their textual amalgamations as a backdrop for the Evangelist's intertextual tapestry. I identify the texts used to characterize the Baptist and explore them more generally within the period of his time. The results of this examination confirm the significance of the Law for Jewish writers, along with the prominence of esteemed figures such as Moses, Isaiah, Elijah, and the eschatological "Prophet." The Fourth Evangelist writes as a Jewish insider who employs scriptural allusions in a manner similar to his contemporaries, and this groundwork is necessary for locating the intertextual method of the Evangelist.

John the Baptist's early and prominent role in the Fourth Gospel suggests his importance not only in setting up where the author intends to go in his account but also how we are to understand future characters. Thus, a close look

at his characterization in the prologue and opening narratives is essential. A portrait of the Baptist that is made up of composite allusions to Jewish Scripture emerges from this analysis. The language used in characterizing John's person, actions, and testimony echo back to crucial moments in the scriptural text, drawing together passages from the Law, the Writings, and the Prophets, including Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Malachi, and the Psalms. John bears witness to Jesus, and the Evangelist confirms this through his incorporation of these texts into the Baptist's characterization. Thus, the author reveals not only John's testimony to Jesus but Scripture's.

Through this assessment of John the Baptist's intertextual portrait, it becomes evident that he is the archetypal witness to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel not only because his person and testimony are an embodiment of Scripture's testimony but because future characters develop themes John initiated through their words and actions. Andrew and Philip are early and clear examples of the development of themes begun in the Baptist's characterization, and the Samaritan Woman and Martha also reinforce that which originated with John. There are others beyond these four who exhibit intertextual characterizations, but these are primary examples of John's themes carrying forth into other

individuals in their actions and testimony to Jesus. This survey is important for confirming the validity of John's composite allusions in his characterization while also revealing the Evangelist's interpretation that Jesus is the realization of the story of Israel. The testimonies of these characters are not as developed as John's, but just as John's testimony is composed of composite allusions, so too the testimonies of other characters come together to form the fuller testimony of John. As we examine the Baptist's character in the Fourth Gospel, we not only grasp the Evangelist's perspective on the Jewish Scriptures, but future characters also acquire a richer depth in their testimony to Jesus.

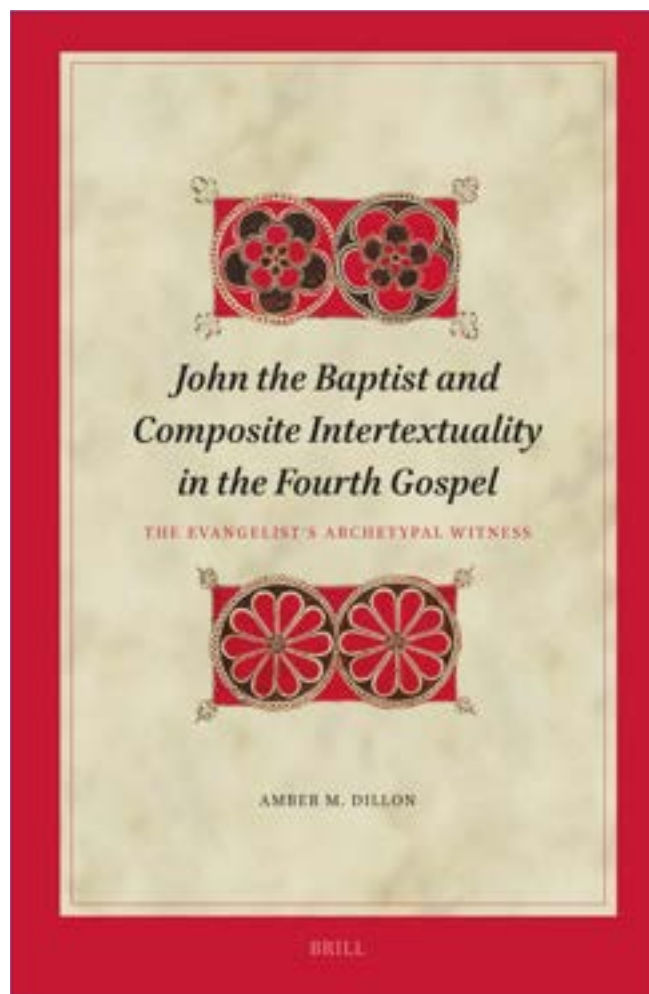
This all leads to my treatment of John 5, where John the Baptist and Scripture both emerge as side-by-side witnesses to Jesus in the first extended engagement between Jesus and οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι (often translated "the Jews") in the Fourth Gospel. Both John and the Scriptures were initially accepted by Jesus's audience but had not been fully embraced in their shared witness to Jesus. The Evangelist, in setting up their dual testimony, earnestly desires that οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι accept Jesus as the realization of Jewish Scripture and tradition. The purpose of John's testimony has been clear from the beginning of the Gospel: that Jesus might be revealed to Israel (John 1:31), and because the Evangelist sets up John's

Depiction of Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist, 1 Yesus Church, Aksum, Ethiopia.
Adam Jones, Creative Commons.



testimony as that of Scripture's, he indicates that this is also Scripture's purpose in his account. Accordingly, in John 5, Jesus suggests that John's kindled light had only been momentarily embraced, even though he wished for his audience to be saved. The culmination of my research is that John the Baptist serves as the archetypal witness in the Fourth Gospel, characterized by Jewish Scripture and tradition, whose role is to provide a framework for interpreting the Scriptures so that Jesus would be revealed to his own.

This project makes two primary contributions to broader scholarship. First, the Fourth Gospel is shown to offer insight into John the Baptist studies in ways not previously incorporated, and second, the intertextual method of the Evangelist receives attention and development with implications for wider studies in composite intertextuality. Moreover, the findings of this study are diverse, as they draw from various areas of Johannine research. In places where certain topics have not been fully explored or require more attention, this research revitalizes the discussion. Alongside these contributions, my work also breathes fresh life into Fourth Gospel characterization. Through the integration of these topics, the Jewish nature of John's Gospel gains another perspective that sees the biblical text as woven into John the Baptist as a character whose principal purpose is to reveal Jesus as the culmination of Jewish Scripture and tradition at a crucial moment in Israel's story.



Amber Dillon is an Adjunct Professor at Denver Seminary and a PhD graduate of Ridley College



Blessed Victors: Theology of Persecution in the Third Century Church

Ruth Sutcliffe – Christ College PhD Graduate

My research interests span the historical theology of the early church, with a specific focus on the theology of persecution. Prior to undertaking a PhD, I published a work on the Trinity directed at non-Trinitarians and this involved investigation of the historical understandings of the doctrine, which generated my interest in historical theology. My doctoral dissertation, in which I developed the neologism *diogmology* (from the Greek *diogmos*, persecution), was on the theology of persecution in the third century fathers Clement and Origen of Alexandria and Tertullian and Cyprian of Carthage. I developed a framework for analysing their diogmologies through five questions which intersected with other theological themes: the origin of persecution (theology, theodicy) the reason for and inevitability of persecution (Christology, soteriology) the telos of persecution (soteriology, eschatology) which in turn inform the individual and collective responses to persecution (discipleship and ecclesiology).

In particular, I assessed their use of benchmark passages on persecution, particularly from Matthew and 1 Peter. This work has since been published by T&T Clark in 2024: *Blessed Victors: Theology of Persecution in the Third Century Church*. My analysis revealed that despite some significant differences in foundational theology, hermeneutics and milieu, the four fathers shared much in common in terms of their theological appraisal of persecution. Where they differed in their conclusions this could be traced to different exegesis of key passages as a result of other presuppositions and influences, whereas their similarities were based on common exegesis of key passages.

All four were convinced that persecution was under God's control, for his good purposes, although they differed in the extent to which they believed God is directly involved in persecution.

A rare fresco depicting Jesus as the "Good Shepherd" with distinctly Roman features, Iznik, Bursa, Türkiye, Dec. 10, 2025. (IHA Photo)



They agreed that persecution comes from the devil's instrumentation, through demonic influence on idolaters and persecutors, but that humans freely choose how they respond. They all discerned a cosmic conflict underlying persecution, a conflict between Christ and the devil, in which Christians participate. All who participate in idolatry and who persecute those who reject idolatry (i.e., Christians) are on the side of the devil. Those who "in Christ" confess Christ and reject idolatry are inevitably persecuted for the name of Christ, participating in Christ's sufferings and in his cosmic conflict. Faithful endurance to the end brings victory in the conflict and a share in Christ's reward. With this foundational understanding of the origin, reason and telos of persecution, Christians can respond appropriately; loving their enemies, praying for persecutors, remaining steadfast in confession of Christ, even unto death.

In the early stages of my PhD research, I read all the works of the four fathers to gain an appreciation not only of the diognology which permeates their work but their broader perspectives and theologies. My interest was piqued in certain questions. Why did the fathers have such different interpretations of the legitimacy of flight in persecution, based on their use of Matthew 10:23? This resulted in a paper and identified the influence of broader theology and experience on their scriptural interpretation. Why did the early apologists argue against Christians being persecuted solely for the name of Christ (rather than any crime) when this was exactly what Jesus predicted and prepared his disciples for? This resulted in another paper, showing that Tertullian was able to reconcile a developed diognology with apologetics. During the course of my research I became interested in some side issues which would not directly form part of my thesis, but were nevertheless interesting. In particular, as I examined Cyprian's response to the lapsed in the Decian persecution, I discovered similarities between the catechumenate and the penitential process, which I discussed in a third paper.

In higher degree research it is very tempting to try to include in the thesis everything that is discovered and it can be very difficult to prune the final product, but I discovered that the additional diversions can be turned into further publications; no good effort is wasted!

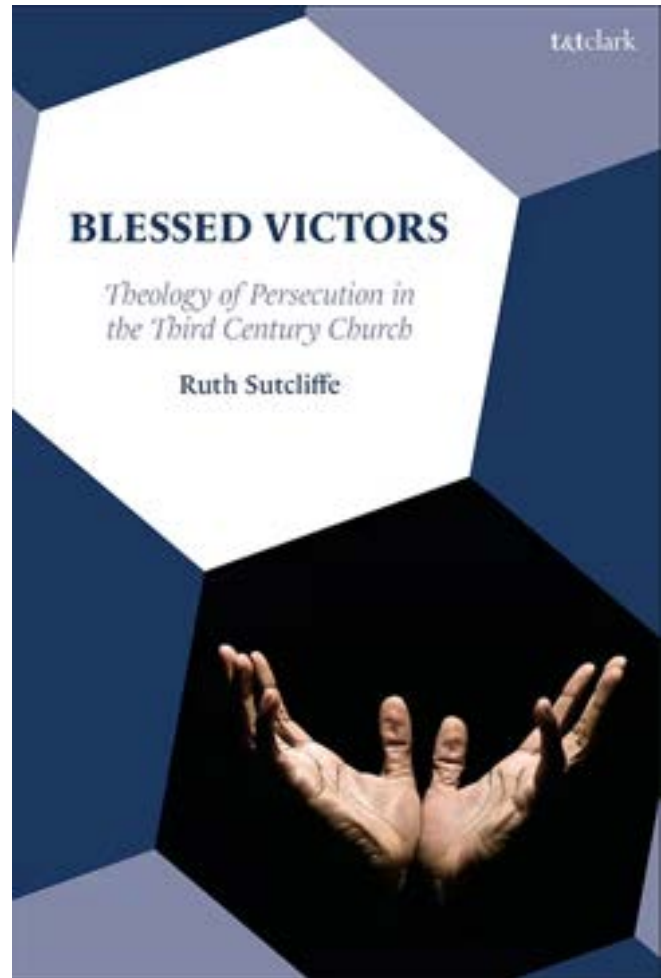
Since completing the PhD I have been involved in several more projects, alongside a busy schedule of teaching in Majority World theological colleges and seminaries. These are all still in the pipeline but should be published within the next 18 months or so: an evaluation of the theology of persecution of Arnobius of Sicca, an overview chapter on the theology of the martyr literature, a discussion of Tertullian's construction of the ideal persecuted church and the role of presbyters in Latin writers during the later persecutions. I'm also involved in writing masters courses for online delivery in Majority World seminaries and universities, through the Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life. The current project is specifically on persecution and suffering and includes a significant historical component and a good deal of further research. Finally, I have an ongoing major project which began in 2023 through a senior fellowship with Anglican Deaconess Ministries, which enabled me to build on my PhD research and draft a book covering the theology of persecution within the whole history of the church. This is a major work in progress and will doubtless continue to progress over the next couple of years, and potentially result in some more articles along the way. So my current research is directed toward how the theology of persecution must have changed from that of the early, persecuted church to permit the church itself to become persecutor (the thought of Augustine is critical here), and how later historical developments, particularly during the colonial period, set the stage for persecution of Christians throughout the world today. I hope that a deeper understanding of the historical and theological basis of persecution will better equip the church to respond to contemporary challenges.

For example, one thing history clearly teaches us is that the “answer” to persecution (real or perceived) is not a return to “Christendom”!

My teaching work in the Majority World and my research into persecution overlap; encountering Christian ministry workers, pastors and teachers who actually face persecution and deal with it in their personal and professional lives reminds me that my research is not purely academic. Likewise, my research hopefully will be helpful to both the persecuted church and the church seeking to support our persecuted brothers and sisters. Dealing with the realities of persecution requires deep thinking in the biblical, theological and historical fields. We are all members of one body, and when one member suffers, all should be cognisant of and in some way participatory with them (1 Cor 12:25–27).

Footnotes:

- [1] Ruth Sutcliffe, *The Trinity Hurdle: Engaging Christadelphians, Arians and Unitarians with the Gospel of the Triune God* (Wipf & Stock, 2016).
- [2] Ruth Sutcliffe, “To Flee or Not to Flee? Matthew 10:23 and Third Century Flight in Persecution,” *Scrinium* 14 (2018): 133–160.
- [3] Ruth Sutcliffe, “No Need to Apologise? Tertullian and the paradox of polemic against persecution,” *Studia Patristica*, 126 (2021), 267–278.
- [4] Ruth Sutcliffe, “Learning Not to Sin: Repentance in Tertullian and Cyprian,” *Colloquium* 53 (2021): 73–97.
- [5] Ruth Sutcliffe, “Arnobius of Sicca on Persecution,” *Studia Patristica*, forthcoming 2026.
- [6] Ruth Sutcliffe, “Martyrdoms and Hagiography,” in David E. Wilhite, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Early Christian Theology* (Cambridge University Press forthcoming 2026).
- [7] Ruth Sutcliffe, “Tertullian's Confessing Church” in Scott Harrower and Edwina Murphy (eds.), *Composing Communities in Early Christianity: The Hermeneutics of Identity* (Brepols, forthcoming 2026).
- [8] Ruth Sutcliffe, “Presbyters in Persecution: The Later Latin Writers,” in Bart J. Koet, Edwina Murphy, Murray J. Smith (eds.), *Presbyters in Late Antiquity: The Third Century Onwards* (Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming 2026–7).



Ruth Sutcliffe is an Honorary Research Fellow in Historical Theology and a PhD graduate of Christ College



The Anonymous Witness: Solving the Riddle of the Beloved Disciple's Anonymity in the Fourth Gospel?

Steven E. J. Daly – Trinity Theological College MTh (Res) Graduate

If he's so important, why is he anonymous?

Nicknamed by scholars "the Beloved Disciple", the disciple "whom Jesus loved" first breaks into our awareness, as readers of John's Gospel, about halfway through. He appears, kind of out of nowhere, at the Last Meal (John 13:23–26), then again at the foot of the Cross (19:25–27), then again running with Simon Peter to check out the Empty Tomb (20:1–10), and then finally—as mysteriously as ever—it turns out that he was on board that post-resurrection fishing trip (21:7). It could well be that, in addition, we catch sight of him in other places as well. Finally, it turns out that this very disciple is the author of the book that we have been reading (21:24). Or is a co-author. Or is the source. Or a source. Either way, it turns out that this fellow is of cardinal importance. He is the book's star eyewitness. But if he's so important, why not just tell us his name?

My book, named above, started out as something of a sabbatical research project, a break from parish pastoral ministry, a time to perhaps refresh my theological qualifications, and an opportunity to undertake some research and biblical study for fun. (And it was. Heaps!) And so, aged 55, I returned to full-time study, a MTh candidate with the AUT through Trinity Theological College, Perth. My book presents my research in full; but with the published volume allowing me to amplify and deepen certain points of the argument that needed more constraint in the original, word-limited, thesis.

For some ten years or so, I had been thinking about that identifying clause "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and wondering if it could be an allusion to Deuteronomy 33:12.

It did not take me long to decide that that question might be a bit of a dead end for me. But my eyes had been opened to the complexity of the "Johannine problem." This problem can be articulated in a variety of ways. But in essence, it begins (firstly) with the question of the Beloved Disciple's historical identity. Who was he? A second question seeks to understand the meaning of that identifying clause—the disciple whom Jesus loved. Just what are we expected to understand by it? A third question will then come to mind—why anonymous? And a fourth question is thus the precise nature of this fellow's relationship to the text we're reading. What are we to understand, exactly, from those final two verses (John 21:24–25)?

These four questions are inter-related puzzles. The answer to one will affect the way we answer the others.

In conversation with my supervisors at Trinity, I decided that perhaps the least discussed of these four questions was the third: Why is this star eyewitness anonymous? (Thank you to Dr Allan Chapple, who prompted me, if I recollect correctly, in this direction.)

A methodology was needed. Dr Grant Taylor directed me to the work of Peter Phillips who championed the art of 'sequential reading' as an approach to understanding how the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel (John 1:1–18) 'worked'.

Sequential reading is an interpretative methodology wherein the scholar attempts to read the text through the eyes of the first-time reader, a reader who does not know what is coming next.

Such a discipline alerts the investigator to the presence of ambiguities, incongruities, gaps, unresolved tensions and issues, in a way that we might not get or see if we allow ourselves to know the end from the beginning. Ultimately the Bible begs ‘paragrammatic reading’ — interpreting a text by way of everything that comes before it as well as after it. So then, since Rudolf Bultmann’s 1971 commentary on this Gospel, it’s been axiomatic that the Prologue is as necessary to understanding the Gospel as the Gospel is for understanding the Prologue. Paragrammatic interpretation is essential. But sequential reading reveals much that might otherwise be lost about how that journey of discovery unfolds.

My own reading alerted me to the work of Prof Adele Reinhartz on anonymity in the Old Testament. ‘Anonymity’ in a literary setting means simply ‘without name’. In our age, we might associate the term with internet security, and the need of an individual to remain anonymous in the sense of unidentifiable, untraceable, and unknowable. It is important to understand that anonymity does not necessarily function in that way in literature.

The Mother of Jesus, after all, is always anonymous in the Fourth Gospel. Even so, she is identified with absolute precision (there’s only one mother of Jesus) and Christologically (that is to say, by way of reference to Christ). And we all know her name.

Similarly, anonymity in the Old Testament is often clearly a narrative or rhetorical device employed with particular outcomes in mind. Reinhartz observes how, in many places in Hebrew narrative historiography, the anonymity of a central character is surprising, even vexing. This character is often carefully or meticulously identified and/or characterized; yet the name is withheld. The anonymous one is often contrasted with a named counterpart, who never comes off looking quite as good. And that anonymous person, whether male or female, is likely acting in the capacity of servant, or messenger, or wise person: Someone with something more important to do or valuable to bring than the question of their own name. Distilling Reinhartz’s observations, I formulated six questions with which to interrogate a text, any text wherein anonymous characters might be found.

So this was my methodology: Sequential reading and the six Reinhartz Questions (named in her honour and with her permission). My book applies this methodology to the five texts where the Beloved Disciple explicitly appears (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20), and to the three texts wherein he might or perhaps historically has been perceived to appear (1:35–42; 18:15–16; 19:35). (This same methodology was road-tested [validated] on another problem—the identity of three anonymous characters in the Prologue—elsewhere. You can read that ‘road test’ in the *Australian Biblical Review*, vol. 73, 2025.)

Detail from a 16th century fresco of the Last Supper from the Kremikovtsi Monastery in Bulgaria, photo by Edal Anton Lefterov, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

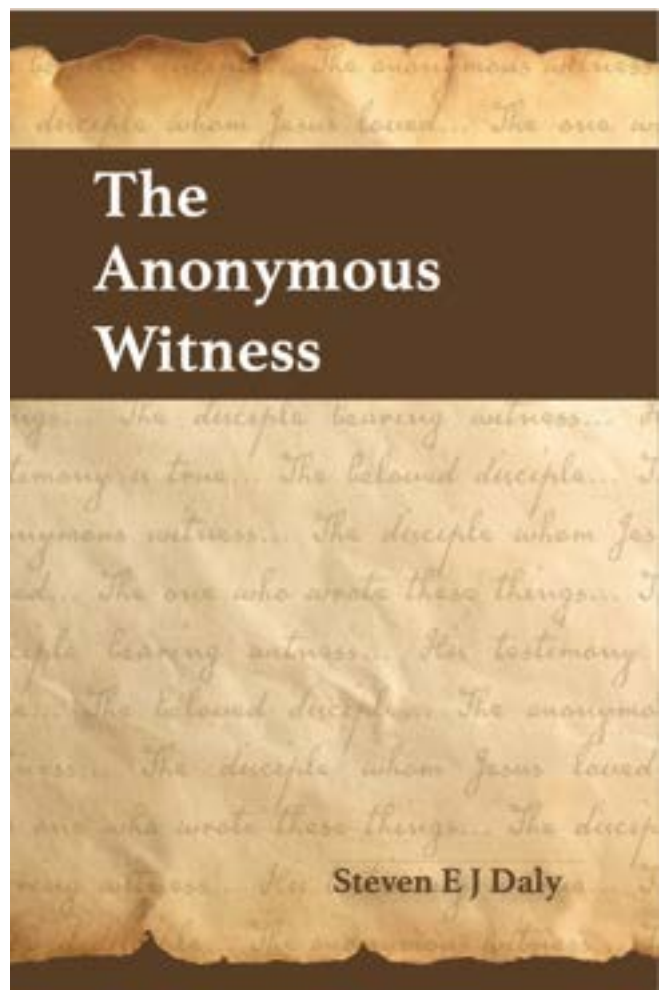


My hypothesis was this: Just as The Logos is initially anonymous, and his identity presented as a riddle or enigma to be solved, before being finally revealed as Jesus Christ in 1:17, so too the Beloved Disciple's identity is "an enigma that is [finally] revealed" (a phrase that comes from James Charlesworth), a riddle that the reader is able to solve, a puzzle with a clear solution.

Did I solve the riddle of the Beloved Disciple's anonymity in the Fourth Gospel? I think so, yes. I'll leave you to explore my reasoning and read my findings for yourself. And therein to be the judge. But I can tell you here that the author considered it necessary that, on the one hand, he remained absolutely anonymous. And yet, equally importantly, he considered it essential that you (the reader) understand precisely who it is that is talking to you when you read his words. Just as with the Mother of Jesus, anonymity here is not about keeping an identity secret. Quite the opposite. It's about the nature of his role in relation to the one he serves.

Hopefully to tantalize you further, I argue that by solving the riddle of the Beloved Disciple's anonymity the reader will indeed understand, without any doubt whatsoever, that the author is John son of Zebedee. The text reveals the author's identity unequivocally. How? You'll need to read the book. But I can tell you that my argument assumes that the reader is a contemporary of the author, that he or she is reading sequentially, that she or he is familiar with the Synoptic Gospels (those other ones—Matthew, Mark, and Luke), and that she or he knows, from the sacred Hebrew writings, how to interpret anonymity; anonymity where it applies to someone of cardinal importance.

So then, in solving one riddle, I think I've solved all four of the questions articulated above—the author's historical identity, the meaning of that identifying clause, the reason for anonymity when it is in tension with the need for precise identification, and the real nature of his relationship to the text. Four puzzles, one solution. Again, you be the judge.



Steven E. J. Daly is a Master of Theology (Research) graduate of Trinity Theological College, Perth



Mafanikio Theology: Learning Prosperity with Tanzanian Women

Tamie Davis – SMBC PhD Graduate

Many of us will know that the majority of Christians in the world live in the ‘majority world.’¹ We may have some sense that Christians in these parts of the world understand the Bible differently from us at times and may have a great deal to teach us, but our access to them is limited. As a missionary in Tanzania from 2013–2023, I was living alongside Tanzanian Christians, marvelling at the work God was doing among them: *Mafanikio Theology* is an invitation for you to marvel with me, and learn from Tanzanian Christians.

The word *mafanikio*² is the Swahili word for prosperity. Most western theologians would know prosperity theology (sometimes also referred to as prosperity gospel) to be highly problematic, if not heretical. We may associate it with smiling megachurch pastors, false promises of health and wealth, formulaic configurations for success, aversion to suffering, and exploitation of the vulnerable. We think of its adherents as seeds who fall on rocky or thorny ground in Jesus’ Parable of the Sower: prosperity theology cannot sustain deep faith in the trials of life. We may trace its roots to the American New Thought movement of the 19th century and believe that it has been exported around the world – including to Africa, where it is rife.

This was what I thought I knew when I landed with my family in Tanzania in 2013, but we quickly encountered theologising about prosperity that didn’t fit that stereotype. As we listened to Christians in the Tanzania Fellowship of Evangelical Students (TAFES) and learned from them, we found that they were not naïve about these megachurch pastors and that they desired to give people an alternative theology which could sustain their faith through suffering. However, they did not see this intention as at odds with a prosperity theology; on the contrary, they felt that unless they could

articulate a biblical prosperity theology, their people would be left only with a ‘poverty theology’ that entrenched passivity, disadvantage, and unfaithfulness.

Mafanikio Theology is the articulation of that biblical prosperity theology, by TAFES women. The research was conducted in Swahili and I chose to retain the Swahili word for prosperity in the title because I wanted to indicate to readers that the prosperity theology they were about to encounter was quite different to what they might have previously heard. Another title for this book could have been ‘Prosperity gospel – but not as you know it!’

I chose women as the subject for this study because, though in Tanzania women are rarely pastors, they are often the primary spiritual inputs in the everyday lives of Christians. All prior studies of prosperity theology had focused on (male) pastors and what was said in pulpits, missing this key aspect of Tanzanian discipleship: focusing on women was a way to concentrate on this significant aspect of people’s formation.

The TAFES women’s *mafanikio* theology is unapologetically a prosperity theology: they were unanimous that God “wants us to prosper in our lives here on earth.” However, they define that prosperity in particular ways, and these distinctives are what set *mafanikio* theology apart from what many western Christians would assume prosperity theology is.

First, prosperity for the TAFES women is a process, not a point at which you arrive; this opens up the possibility that rich and poor alike can be viewed as prosperous, because both are growing in some way.

Second, prosperity must be holistic: if spiritual life is neglected in favour of pursuing material wealth, a person does not have prosperity, and vice versa.

Third, prosperity must be understood in a communal context: a person who enriches themselves without reference to those in need around them cannot be understood to be prosperous, because they are relationally poor.

This trifold conception of prosperity guards against many of the extremes of the prosperity gospel as many of us would have come to know it in the west, and instead disciples people towards dignity, generosity, and faithfulness across the spheres of life.

Many western Christian readers will find such themes familiar from their own study of the scriptures, though they may be surprised to find them also present in a prosperity theology. This is the invitation of the book for western readers: to see how God has been at work in something that seems so incomprehensible or even reprehensible to us, if we are willing to listen and to hear voices from the majority world church. In this sense, *Mafanikio Theology* will be both deeply challenging and wonderfully encouraging.

In addition to presenting the women's prosperity theology, *Mafanikio Theology* makes two further contributions. First, it traces the sources of this theology. While some scholars are tempted to see African prosperity theologies as imports from the west, others are inclined to see modified prosperity theologies such as *mafanikio* theology, with its emphasis on effort and generosity, as a version of the Protestant work ethic. However, I argue that *mafanikio* theology is a genuinely indigenous African theology, nourished both by African religious sensibilities and deep reflection on the Scriptures. Though influenced by western sources, *mafanikio* theology is far from a western import. Indeed, the hermeneutic that is applied to the Bible in *mafanikio* theology is one that harmonises well with African epistemologies, favouring comprehensiveness over systematisation.

Mafanikio theology is an example of God at work in a very different place from the west, with very different cultural resources yet the same scriptures; again, this ought to be a source of thanksgiving for us, to a God who is not bound by culture or beholden to a particular path towards 'development.' However, the Africanness of *mafanikio* theology ought not cause us to think that it has little relevance for us in the west.



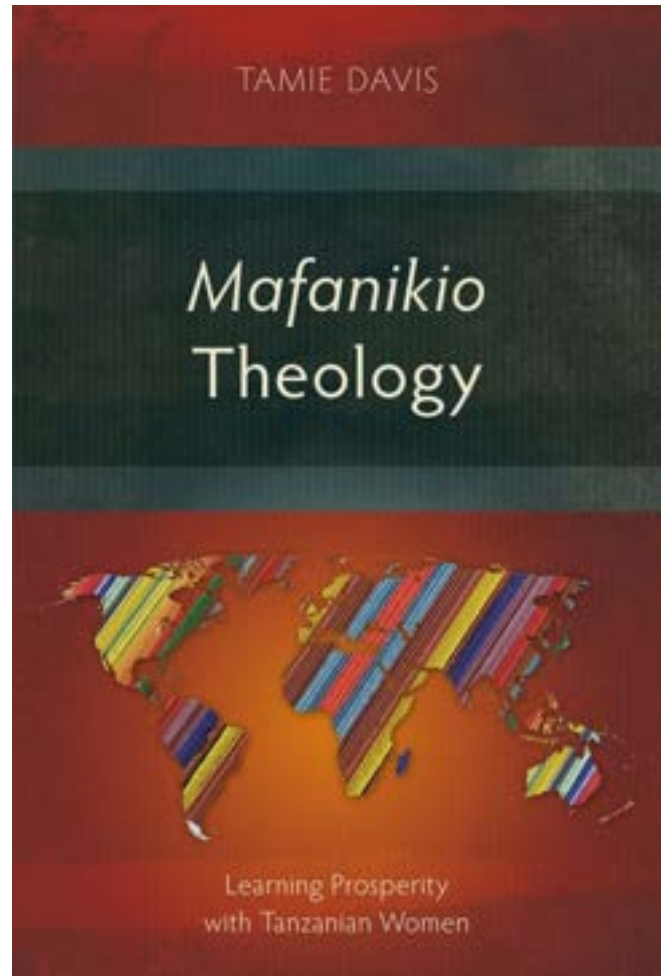
The second further contribution of *Mafanikio Theology* is that it brings the women's *mafanikio* theology into discussion with western theologies, asking how this prosperity theology interacts with western understandings of cruciformity, mission and theological anthropology. These themes are then applied in the Afterword, which highlights the popular-level missional concept of a pleasure-pain worldview, and suggests that *mafanikio* theology offers an idiom which is conversant with such a worldview and thus able to bring the scriptures to bear on it.

As we in the west grapple with how to address a people longing to flourish, *mafanikio* theology offers us a valuable theological tool, one borne and nurtured in the majority world, which we in the west would do well to receive with thankfulness and humility.

Footnotes:

[1] Also called the non-western world, encompassing what has also been known as the Global South, or, more pejoratively, the 'developing world' or the 'Third World.')

[2] *mah-fah-ni-KEE-oh* - rhymes with Havana Rio.



Tamie Davis is a Mentor at the Angelina Noble Centre and a PhD graduate of Sydney Missionary & Bible College





International Meeting

2026 SBL International Meeting

July 5-9

Adelaide, Australia



This year, Australia is fortunate enough to get to host the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) in conjunction with the annual ANZATS conference in Adelaide from July 5th to 9th. We've already heard from many AUT faculty members and HDR candidates who will be attending.

We've been gathering names of people interested in connecting with others to lower the cost of accommodation or travel to and from the airport. If you are planning on attending SBL/ANZATS in Adelaide, please let us know by completing the following form. Let us know if you are presenting and if you would like to try and connect with others to save on travel or accommodation costs. The SBL/ANZATS form can be found here: [SBL/ANZATS form](#).

Religious History Association Conference Bursary Scheme

The Religious History Association is pleased to offer a limited number of bursaries to support members presenting papers on religious history topics at national or international academic conferences. Each successful applicant may receive up to AUD \$1,000. The closing date for applications is June 30, 2026.

Eligibility

Applicants must be current members of the Religious History Association. (You can join the RHA [here](#).) Priority will be given to:

- Applicants without other institutional or current grant funding
- Early Career Researchers (within 7 years of PhD/DPhil award, excluding relevant career interruptions)
- Currently enrolled postgraduate research students in a relevant field
- Individuals in precarious employment (casual/sessional, contract excluding fellowships with travel support, or part-time roles)

Application Process

Applicants must submit a completed application form and a short CV (maximum 3 pages) to: mcassidywelch@divinity.edu.au by June 30, 2026.

Upcoming Events

Have an event coming up you'd like promoted in the AUT newsletter?
Let us know by emailing the details and links to research@aut.edu.au

JUNE

30 June: Trinity College Theological School (University of Divinity; Melbourne): **"The Dignity We Share: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives on Faith, Identity, and Human Worth"** Conference. Bookings through [TryBooking](#). In-person | \$75 full price, \$35 concession | 9am - 4:30pm (AEST).

JULY

1 July: Notre Dame University & The Great Synagogue Sydney: The 2026 John & Anna Belfer Oration in the History of Jewish Philosophy Lecture: **"Is Free Will an Allusion: Authoring the Story of Our Lives with Hasdai Crescas and Joseph Albo?"** with Rabbi Dr Samuel Lebens (University of Haifa). In-person | Free | 6:00pm.

2 July: Fellowship of Biblical Studies with the University of Divinity: Public Lecture: **"War Commemoration from Exodus to Maccabees"** with Dr Julia Rhyder. In-person | Free | 10:30am-1:00pm. RSVP by Friday, June 26, 2026.

5-9 July: Society of Biblical Literature International Meeting and Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools (ANZATS). In-person in Adelaide. See the [International Meeting](#) website for more information.

15-16 July: Reformed Theological College (Melbourne): RTC Preaching Conference: **"Guard the Gospel: Preaching the Pastoral Epistles with Courage and Grace."** In-person | \$200.

21 July: Queensland Theological College: QTC Annual Lecture: **"The Imperfect Disciple"** with A/Prof Jared Wilson (Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, USA). In-person | \$10 | 7:00pm - 9:00pm (AEST).



JULY continued

27 July: Morling College (Sydney): Preaching Hebrews Conference with Dr David deSilva. In-person | \$115.00 - AU \$170.00 | 9:00am - 4:00pm.

28-30 July: Sydney Missionary and Bible College (Sydney): SMBC 2026 Global Mission Conference with Prof J.D. Payne (Samford University, USA). In-person & online | standard price \$195 (prices vary for 1-3 day attendance, online attendance etc.).

29-31 July: International Association for the Study of Youth Ministry. (IASYM): Australia-New Zealand Regional Conference. To be held at Youthworks College, Sydney. In-person | Members \$195, non-members \$225.

31 July: Centre for Asian Christianity: Asian Ministry Conference with Daniel Lee (Asian American Center). To be held at Sydney Missionary and Bible College. In-person | Early-bird pricing (before 30 June) \$70, from 1st July \$80.

31 July - 1 August: Ridley Women's Writing Retreat: This two-day event at Ridley College is for women interested in taking time out to work on a theology-related writing project. Location: Ridley College, Melbourne. In-person | Two days: Full price \$50, Student \$40 // One day: Full price \$25, Student \$20 | 9:00am - 5:00pm both days (AEST)

AUGUST

3-7 August: Moore Theological College (Sydney): Annual Moore College Lectures: "Anglican evangelicalism in the age of John Stott, Jim Packer and Dick Lucas: Surviving and thriving in a mixed-up denomination" with Prof Andrew Atherstone (Oxford University). In-person & online | Free | 9:30am-11:30am each day.

5 August: Ridley College (Melbourne): Leon Morris Lecture in NT Studies: "I Live by the Faith of God and Christ: A Deep Dive into Galatians 2:20" with Dr Stephen Carlson. In-person & online | Free | 5:30pm-7:30pm.

10 August: Robert Menzies College (Sydney): "Ancient and Modern Collision: How the 4th Century Shaped Today." with Rev Dr John Dickson in honour of Dr Edwin Judge. More information to come.

10 August: Queensland Theological College: "The Genesis of Mission: The Primeval History and the Missionary Call of God's People" with Matt Newkirk. In-person | \$95 | 9:30am-4:15pm.

13 August: Alphacrucis University College (Sydney): 2026 Cartledge Lecture: "Miracles and Healing for Today: How Signs and Wonders Follow the Empowering of Pentecost" with Prof Craig S. Keener. In-person | \$5 | 6:00pm.

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Renowned New Testament
Scholar



AUGUST Continued

14 August: Alphacrucis University College (Sydney): 2026 Cartledge Symposium: “The Spirit of Pentecost” with Prof Craig S. Keener and Dr Médine Keener. In-person | \$90 | 9:00am–5:00pm.

19 August: Christ College (Sydney): Eliza Ferrie Public Lecture: “The Climax of Christian Love: The Virtues of Encouragement and Peace” with Dr David VanDrunen (Westminster Seminary, California). More information to come.

25–27 August: Youthworks College (Sydney): House Conference: “Anchored and Adaptable: A Timeless Word in a Changing World” with Rev Mike Dicker and Rev Dr Derek Brotherson. To be held at Youthworks Conference Centre, Port Hacking (Sydney). In-person | Prices from \$360 for full-time attendance.

Looking forward...

4–5 September: Melbourne School of Theology/Arthur Jeffery Centre for the Study of Islam: AJC Conference: “What God is Doing Among Muslims.” In-person | \$130 early bird, \$150 standard price | Program runs Friday evening and all day Saturday.

7–8 November: ISCAST (Christianity & Science in Conversation) conference: “Entangled Worlds: Seeking Understanding in Science and Faith.” More information to come.

12–14 November: Movement for the Ordination of Women conference: “Make No Mistake...God Calls Women” with Rev Dr Karen Pack, Rev Dr Elenie Poulos, Dr Rosie Clare Shorter, and Rev Dr Robyn Whitaker. To be held at the Australian Centre for Christianity & Culture, Canberra. In-person | registrations open 1 July, 2026.

Calls for Papers

Call for Papers: ISCAST: Christianity and Science in Conversation 2026 Conference - “Entangled Worlds: Seeking Understanding Through Faith and Science”

Proposals due: Tuesday 30 June, 2026
Conference date: 7–8 November, 2026

Academics and church leaders from the Antipodes and across the globe are invited to share their research and views, and to think together about further directions in exploring the entangled worlds of science and faith. It is the conviction of the organisers that, in an increasingly fractured world, a conference such as this—marked by understanding, harmony, and generous listening—contributes to a better world as it draws on diverse gifts and ways of communicating, as we journey together through history, towards God’s kingdom.

Alongside the main theme, the conference also welcomes papers that address other relevant topics pertaining to faith and science. For further information, download the following information [sheet](#).

Abstracts of up to 200 words can be submitted [here](#). For enquiries, contact Doru Costache at dorucostache@iscast.org

Call for Papers: Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality Founders’ Circle Prize

The Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality (SSCS) is excited to announce the 2026 Founders’ Circle Essay Prize, which is awarded to recognise an outstanding essay in the field of Christian spirituality submitted by an emerging scholar. Students in master’s and doctoral programs, recent graduates (within the last five years), post-doctoral fellows, and pre-tenured faculty are invited to submit their work. The winner will present their paper at an event hosted by the SSCS online on **Tuesday August 11, 2026 at 11:30am CT** and will be recognized at the Society’s annual meeting in Denver on **Saturday, November 21**.

The winning essay will be considered for publication in *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*, and the winner will receive a cash award in the amount of \$250 and a two-year membership to the Society.

Submissions (4000 words) should be submitted to Steve Thomason (sthomason@luthersem.edu) and Shannon McAlister (smcalister@fordham.edu). For more information, see [SSCS](#) website.

Submissions due: 21 July, 2026.

Call for Papers: 2026 Fall issue of the Eastern European Journal of Theology Special Issue: The Role of Christian Imagination in Resisting Injustice and Violence

Articles due: Tuesday 1 September, 2026

The editorial board invites submissions of original articles, essays, and book reviews on the topic of Christian imagination in resisting injustice and violence. Articles should not exceed 7000 words (including references and bibliography). Book reviews should be up to 1500 words for extended critical reviews and up to 500 words for shorter descriptive reviews.

To submit an article or review, please upload it to the journal's website at <http://reflections.eeit-edu.info/about/submissions>. Guidelines for authors are available here: <http://reflections.eeit-edu.info/guidelines>. For additional questions or suggestions, please contact us via email at reflections@eeit-edu.info.



Alphacrucis University College

Calling all Graduates of Australian Theological Higher Education Institutions

NEW RESEARCH:

Ecotheology in Australian Theological Higher Education

This project aims to understand the role that ecotheology plays in the formal ministry training of pastors, ministers, and ordinands within Australian theological higher education institutions. The study seeks to contribute to understanding how theological education influences graduates' perspectives on ecological theology and environmental stewardship.

Your participation in this **10-12-minute survey** will help strengthen the data.

To participate, you must:

- Be over the age of 18.
- Be a graduate of an Australian Theological Higher Education Institution.
- Have completed at least one qualification in Theology, Ministry, Chaplaincy, Divinity, Philosophy or Biblical Studies at AQF Level 4 to AQF Level 10.



✉ For more information, email Tim Healy at Timothy.Healy@ec.edu.au



Scan the QR Code to participate

Call for Chapters: Theosis and the Baptist Imagination: Grace, Glory, and the Logic of Participation – Edited by Myk Habets (T&T Clark / Bloomsbury)

This volume offers a groundbreaking exploration of the Christian doctrine of theosis—participation in the divine life—from distinctly Baptist perspectives. Long regarded as alien to Protestant, and especially Baptist, theology, theosis has often been dismissed as an exclusively Eastern Orthodox or early patristic doctrine. This book challenges that assumption by demonstrating how deification, rightly understood, coheres deeply with Baptist convictions concerning grace, sanctification, union with Christ, and covenant discipleship.

Written by a diverse group of Baptist theologians, biblical scholars, historians, and pastors, the volume engages theosis through four interrelated lenses: historical, biblical, theological, and pastoral.

- Historically, chapters trace the presence and development of theotic themes in early Christian thought and explore their reception—implicit and explicit—within Baptist and wider evangelical traditions.
- Biblically, contributors offer fresh readings of key texts (from 2 Peter to the Pauline corpus) that articulate a rich and dynamic vision of participation in God's life.
- Theologically, essays situate theosis within a Baptist framework marked by a high view of Scripture, a robust account of sanctification and good works, and the radical discipleship of covenanting believers.
- Pastorally, chapters explore the implications of theosis for spiritual formation, discipleship, worship, and the church's mission in the world.

Far from being foreign to Baptist theology, Theosis and the Baptist Imagination argues that the doctrine of theosis can renew and deepen Baptist theology and spirituality. It invites readers to recover a transformative vision of salvation—not only as forgiveness of sins, but as the gracious elevation of humanity into communion with the life of God. This volume issues a bold invitation to reimagine glory through the lens of grace.

Contributors include: Paul Fiddes, Lucas Stamps, Kate Hanch, Myles Werntz, Ben Blackwell, and others.

Call for Chapters

Chapter proposals are invited from Baptist scholars in any of the four areas outlined above, with particular encouragement for submissions in biblical and pastoral/practical theology.

- Chapter length: 6,000–8,000 words
- Submission deadline for accepted drafts: June 2027

Please email mhabets@laidlaw.ac.nz with a proposal that includes a 500-word abstract.

Call for Chapters: Encountering Critical Realism: A Theological Methodology
Edited by Myk Habets and Peter McGhee
T&T Clark / Bloomsbury

This volume provides an essential guide for theologians, scholars, and advanced students seeking to engage critical realism as a philosophical framework for theological inquiry. Both accessible and methodologically rigorous, the book begins by clearly defining critical realism, tracing its origins and core commitments across philosophy, the social sciences, and theology. It then moves beyond theory to examine how critical realism can be responsibly and fruitfully employed within theological research.

Through a series of carefully curated chapters, the volume explores how critical realism has been received, adapted, and applied across a range of theological disciplines. Contributors offer concrete case studies demonstrating how this approach helps address complex questions of interpretation, truth, and reality—bridging abstract philosophical reflection and constructive theological practice.

Designed for both those new to critical realism and experienced researchers, the book emphasises methodological clarity, critical self-reflection, and practical application. By showing how critical realism can deepen theological reasoning and argumentation, the volume equips readers to develop robust, well-grounded theological work that speaks credibly in both academic and ecclesial contexts.

Contributors include: Ben Myers, Alister McGrath, Andrew Wright, and others.

Call for Chapters

Chapter proposals are invited from scholars who have worked (or are working) with critical realism in any of its various registers. Contributors are asked to address the following:

- The nature and goals of their project
- Their understanding of the theological reception of critical realism
- How critical realism has functioned methodologically within a concrete research context
- Chapter length: 6,000–8,000 words
- Submission deadline for accepted drafts: June 2027

Please email mhabets@laidlaw.ac.nz with a proposal that includes a 500-word abstract.

Recent Events 2026



AUT Chancellor General (Retd) the Honourable David Hurley at the CTCA graduation



Simon Davies' farewell at the Christ College graduation with AUT Vice-Chancellor, Prof James Dalziel

Recent Events 2026



MST and Centre for Asian Christianity launch of the Next Generation Bicultural Program, supporting the flourishing of intergenerational, bicultural faith communities. Left: Justin Tan, Grace Chew, Crystal Hong, Grace Lung, and Theresa Lau. Right: Grace Lung



Meadowcroft/Hitchen Book Launch, New Zealand: Left: Dr John Hitchen; Top right: Rebecca de Jong (Laidlaw lecturer in theology) and John Hitchen. Bottom right: Tim Meadowcroft.

AUT HDR Conferrals

December 2025 - May 2026

Doctor of Philosophy



Heather Reid
Ridley College

“Reading Lamentations in Light of Exodus 34:6-7 and its Context within the Narrative of the Golden Calf Incident”

Principal Supervisor: Dr Lindsay Wilson
Co-supervisor: Dr Andrew Malone

Although links are recognised between Exodus 34:6-7 and Lamentations 3:21-24 or 3:32, there has been little comprehensive exploration of the textual, thematic, and contextual parallels between the theological message of Exodus 32-34 and the book of Lamentations. This study examines YHWH’s self-revelation in Exodus 34:6-7 within its Exodus 32-34 context, and seeks to uncover how this is used hypertextually in Lamentations to highlight YHWH’s dichotomous character. Textual connections between Exodus and Lamentations are identified using Genette’s concept of hypertextuality alongside Leonard’s eight principles for identifying textual connection. These hypertexts provide a richness of meaning and hope to the reader of Lamentations, which are drawn from Exodus hypotexts referencing YHWH’s actions in the face of his people’s apostasy. They speak into the anguish and pain arising from YHWH’s wrath in Lamentations, providing a vision of YHWH’s רַחֵם, his רַחֵם, and his אֱמֶת in the face of sin.



Jonathan Seth Snider
Malyon/Morling College

“The Use of Scripture to Interpret Job in the Reformation Pulpit”

Principal Supervisor: Dr Ian Hussey
Co-supervisor: Dr D. Morcom

In this thesis, Jonathan investigates how three prominent sixteenth-century preachers – John Calvin, Ludwig Lavater and Johannes Ferus – used Scripture to interpret the book of Job. Specifically, this study explores how these key individuals applied the interpretive principle *scriptura sui ipsius interpres* (Scripture is its own interpreter). Overall, the general patterns in the intertextual references make clear that Scripture was leveraged for purposes far beyond textual interpretation. Distinct patterns in the data demonstrate that Scripture outside of Job was often selected to achieve a particular rhetorical effect, amplification. These findings point to the fact that Reformation hermeneutics cannot be properly understood without careful consideration of ancient rhetorical theory.

AUT HDR Conferrals

December 2025 - May 2026

Doctor of Ministry



Stephen Carnaby
Ridley College

“From Decline to Renewal in a Regional Diocese: An Analysis of Revitalised Parishes in the Anglican Diocese of Tasmania in the 21st Century”

Principal Supervisor: Dr Graham Stanton
Co-supervisor: Dr Jeff Pugh

This thesis explored the revitalisation that took place in three small parishes in the Diocese of Tasmania from 2015–2023. Each parish saw a similar positive and deep congregational change and growth following the appointment of a new and different type of minister. There was a narrative of spiritual change underlying this culture change, which fitted with the markers of transformation seen in Ephesians 4:1–16. These findings lead to important implications for ministers, parish members and dioceses as they seek the revitalisation needed across many Australian churches.



Breeana Mills
Melbourne School of Theology

“Developing innovative Missional Leaders: A Constructivist Grounded Theory Approach”

Principal Supervisor: Dr Thomas Kimber
Co-supervisor: Dr Kirk Franklin

In this thesis, Breeana addresses a gap in existing research by examining how innovative missional leaders are formed within the Australian Protestant Church. Employing a constructivist grounded theory methodology that draws on life-mapping interviews, the Spiritual Assessment Inventory, and the IPIP-NEO-120 personality inventory, Breeana demonstrates that leadership formation is a complex and lifelong process. The study finds that innovative missional leaders emerge through the interplay of nature and nurture, where personality, gifting, and calling are cultivated within environments that encourage creativity, risk-taking, and leadership identity. These leaders are further characterised by a resilient spirituality, collaborative posture, and disciplined habits of reflection and adaptation, enabling sustained innovation in response to context and a deep attentiveness to God’s leading. This research offers an integrated framework for understanding leadership formation and contributes to contemporary missional leadership by equipping the church to more intentionally identify and develop innovative leaders within the Australian context.

AUT HDR Conferrals

December 2025 - May 2026

Master of Theology (Research)



Johannah Dalgardno
Ridley College

“The reception of Obadiah in Sanhedrin 39b:10-15 and its Implications for a Christian Interpretation of the Prophecy of Obadiah.”

Principal Supervisor: Dr Jill Firth
Co-supervisor: Dr Andrew Judd

Rhetorical observations reveal an antithetical relationship between the prophet Obadiah and the recipients of his prophecy, the Edomites, further exposing the Edomites’ disposition and horrific actions in the book of Obadiah.

Recent studies of the prophets have shifted in focus from historical interest to prophets as characters. A prophet’s dramatic symbolic actions and their own life narratives often characterize and embody their divine messages furthering the impact of their oral deliveries. What are we to make of the prophet Obadiah when the superscription to his prophecy gives no identifying details apart from a name? This thesis explores the characterization of Obadiah based on the Talmudic reception in Sanhedrin 39b:10-15. The Talmudic reception rooted in the synonymy of the prophet in the book of Obadiah and the Obadiah of 1 Kings 18 was a longstanding view held by both Jews and Christians in the early centuries of the common era. Intertextual analysis and Sternberg’s dimensions of character shed light on Obadiah’s position in society, his great fear of the Lord and faithful actions amidst tumultuous times. Applying the lens of the Talmudic characterization of Obadiah as a faithful and courageous believer to the book of Obadiah contributes another layer to the rhetorical force of the prophecy.

Sit Down & Write Sessions

Join us for our semester 2, 2026

Whether you are plodding away at your thesis, preparing for an upcoming conference, or trying to think of a witty story for next Sunday's sermon, all are welcome to join our AUT Sit Down and Write Sessions!

Each session starts with a guest speaker offering some tips on research and writing, and a brief catch-up to hear what everyone is working on, and then we use the pomodoro method to write in blocks of 50 minutes, checking in at the end of each block. It's a very encouraging and productive way of 'body doubling' and getting some writing done!

Upcoming dates:

- **1st July, 12:30-3:30pm (AEST):** with guest speaker Dr Gillian Asquith (MST) presenting on "How To Write a Successful Conference Presentation Proposal"
- **5th August, 12-3pm (AEST):** with guest speaker Dr Gillian Asquith (MST) presenting on "How To Deliver an Engaging Conference Paper"
- **7th September, 1-4pm (AEST):** with guest speaker Dr Nicole Starling (Morling) (topic TBC)
- **12th October, 12:30-3:30pm (AEDT):** with guest speaker Dr Brian Rosner (Ridley) (topic TBD)
- **11th November, 12-3pm (AEDT):** with guest speaker Dr Murray Smith (Christ College) (topic TBD)

No RSVPs necessary! Click [here to join the Zoom](#).

If you have any questions, contact Louise Gosbell at lgosbell@aut.edu.au.

