

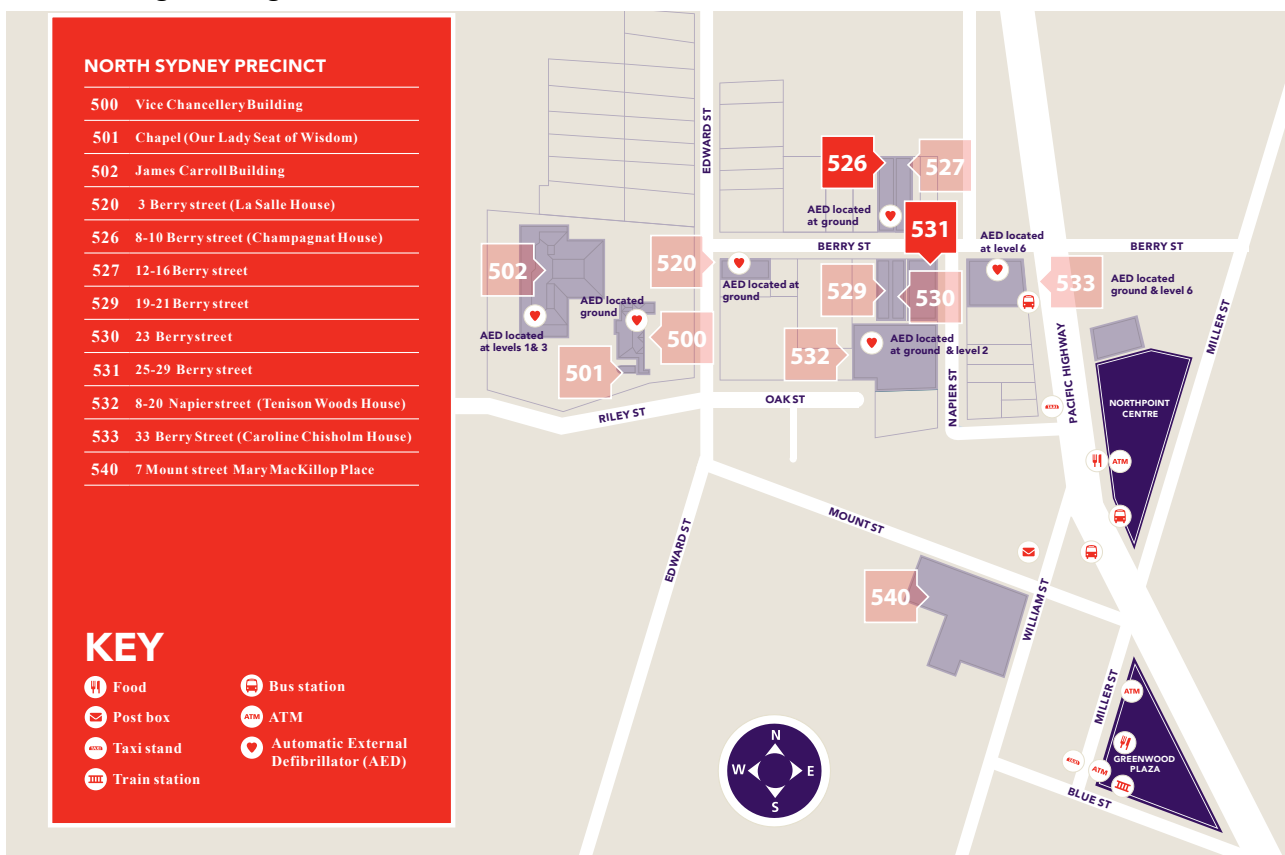


Programme

There will be time for Q&A at the end of each section. You are welcome to ask questions by:

- 1) Asking in person; or
- 2) Visiting <https://www.slido.com> with the code of the section, or clicking the slido link of the section.

We will be using buildings **526** and **531**:



TUESDAY 26th September

9.30 – 10.30am	Registration (Building 526 Level 1)	
10.30am	Welcome and Opening Keynote Address (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Stephen Cook and Gareth Wearne (Slido: #3769 495) Keynote Address: Professor Alanna Nobbs “What has the Past to offer the Future? Macquarie's Contribution to New Testament and early Christianity in the Context of Australian Scholarship and Beyond”	
12.00pm	<i>Lunch (Building 526 Level 1)</i>	
1.00pm	Section: Hebrew Bible (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Rachelle Gilmour (Slido: #2826 844) Megan Turton Let my livestock go! Animals and liberation in the exodus traditions Martin Shields Just who was Job's Redeemer? Zhong Li Legal Equality of the <i>Gēr</i> in the Holiness Code Through a Narrative Approach	Section: Connecting Testaments: Gospel, Prophets, Practice (room 526.1.03) Presiding: Stefano Salemi (Slido: #3818 636) Jeanette Fogarty A theological exegesis of Genesis 15, with particular reference to the passage's significance for the metanarrative of Scripture Paul Creevey John's Realised Eschatology: The Wisdom of God in Action Debra Snoddy The Passion Narrative and Johannine Anthropology
		Section: New Testament (room 531.B1.01) Presiding: Ali Robinson (Slido: #1162 896) Robert K. McIver Should ὕποτασσόμενοι in Eph 5:21 be Considered a Participle used in the Sense of an Imperative or as a Modal Adverbial Participle, and What Does this Mean for the Interpretation and Translation of Eph 5:21-24? Daniel Berchie Rhetorical Analysis of 1 Cor 7:1-40: Paul's Sexuality and Apostolic Right
2.30pm	<i>Afternoon tea break (Building 526 Level 1)</i>	
3.00pm	Section: History of Interpretation (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Catherine Playoust (Slido: #2595 605) Irene Petrou Sin, Sex, and 'The Hunger Games': Maximus and the Parallelism of Psalm 51:5 Simon Holloway "That We are Offerings": The Use of Biblical Quotation in Diaries and Letters of the Holocaust	Section: New Testament (room 526.1.03) Presiding: Blake Wassell (Slido: #3500 548) Murray Smith "The overseer must be able to teach" (1 Tim 3:2b): διδακτικός as the centre of the character chiasm in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 Sarah Callista Am I A Dog (<i>anjing</i>)? Reading Mark 7.24-30 from an Indonesian Peranakan Perspective
4.15 – 5.30pm	Keynote Address (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Ian Young (Slido: #2719 464)	
(9.15-10.30am Israel time)	Keynote Address: Emerita Professor Suzanne Rutland (via zoom from Israel) “What has the Past to offer the Future? The Contribution of the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne to Hebrew Bible and Jewish Studies in the Context of Australian Scholarship and Beyond”	
<i>Break for the evening</i>		

WEDNESDAY 27th September

9.30am	Special Panel: What is the future of Biblical studies in Australia? (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Ali Robinson (Slido: #4244 661) Robyn Whittaker, Brian Kolia, Ali Robinson, Emma Austin <i>(5 minutes reflection each then open-up for questions)</i>		
11.00am	<i>Morning tea break (Building 526 Level 1)</i>		
11.30am	Section: Hebrew Bible (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Crystal Hong (Slido: #1721 3999) Rachelle Gilmour Drawing for battle: Israel’s water rite at Mizpah (1 Sam 7) Anthony Rees Migration, Return Migration and the Book of Ruth Emma Austin “Who said anything about safe?”: Lions as a Mnemonic for YHWH’s Power	Section: The Bible and the Ancient World (room 526.1.03) Presiding: Megan Turton (Slido: #4004 838) Gareth Wearne National Deities and Cosmology in the Southern Levant during the First Millennium BCE Lyn Kidson Civilizing Barbarians, Young Women, Young Men and Slaves in Titus: The Power of the Gospel on Roman Crete Christopher Porter Daniel in the Land of the Oniads: Reading Babylonian Tales Against the Background of Ptolemaic Egypt	Section: History of Interpretation (room 531.B1.01) Presiding: Irene Petrou (Slido: #4140 011) Catherine Playoust “There will be many wicked elders and shepherds maltreating their sheep” (Asc. Isa. 3.24): The Response of the Ascension of Isaiah to the Emerging Endtimes Ruth Christa Mathieson Seeking the meaning of the missing wedding attire (Matt 22:11-13): A History of Interpretation of ἔνδυμα γάμου Paul Creevey The Normativity of the Future: Application to John 20:19-23
1.00pm	<i>Lunch (Building 526 Level 1)</i>		
2.00pm	Section: Hebrew Bible (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Simon Holloway (Slido: #4188 982) Liz Boase Do We Choose Our Traumas?: On Using the Concept of Chosen Trauma in Jeremiah 40-44 Natalie Mylonas Exile and Place Attachment in Ezekiel and Jeremiah Thomas Elms The death of Belshazzar as an act of sovereignty	Section: Connecting Testaments: Gospel, Prophets, Practice (room 526.1.03) Presiding: Debra Snoddy (Slido: #5358 713) Stefano Salemi “They will look on the one whom they have pierced” (John 19:37): Reading John in the context of Scriptures Lydia Gore-Jones Reading Forward and Reading Backward: Intertextual Dialectics in Joel and Acts 2 David Shaw – Exodus as the Narrative Framework for 1 Peter’s Call to Holiness	Section: New Testament (room 531.B1.01) Presiding: Ruth Mathieson (Slido: #3943 829) Blake Wassell Reasons for reading Josephus’ texts next to John’s texts Geoffrey Jenkins The Pickle of Petronius and the Dating of Mark Gillian Asquith Paul’s Unexpected Words: The Persuasive Force of Unexpected Lexical Choices in Paul’s Epistolary Formulae
3.30pm	<i>Afternoon tea break (Building 526 Level 1)</i>		

<p>4.00 – 5.30pm</p>	<p>Special Session: Elevator Pitches (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Tim Rafferty (Slido: #3190 219)</p> <p>Tim Rafferty Tabernacles All the Way Down: Finding Structure and Meaning in Leviticus Sarah Lawson Rare words are surprisingly common in language, and sadly they have tended to be neglected in biblical study. My research aims to expand the tools and techniques available for studying hapax legomena (words which only appear once) and other rare words, and show that these words are worthy of attention for a fuller understanding of the Bible through a case study on the hapax legomena of the book of James. Crystal Hong Faithful to the Holy Scripture: A Corpus-Based Study of Contemporary Chinese Translation of the Biblical Hebrew Verbal System in the Story of Joseph Gareth Wearne What do we mean by ‘biblical literacy’? Ruth Christa Mathieson Matthew’s Parable of the Royal Wedding Feast: A sociorhetorical interpretation Paul Creevey The Cohesion, Coherence, and Distinctiveness of the Empty Tomb, Burial and Appearance Narratives in John’s Gospel: A Historical-Literary-Theological Reading of Jn 19:38-20:29 Ali Robinson Dynamics of Devotion and Betrayal: An Examination of Luke 22–24 in the Context of Ancient Trust-Networks and Associations Stephen Cook Three people walked into a bar (mitzvah) ... Humour in the Hebrew Bible Thomas Elms The Literary Function of the Pseudonymous Authorship of MT Daniel Gelly McAuliffe-Bunker Heeding James Online</p> <p><i>(Time permitting, there will be opportunities for impromptu five-minute pitches after the above scheduled presentation)</i></p>
<p>5.30pm</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Break for the evening Conference Dinner at Billy Barry’s Hotel (Dinner cost not included in conference fees)</i></p>

THURSDAY 28th September

9.30am	<p>Special session for HDR students – Reaching the broader audience (How to translate your research) (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Gareth Wearne (Slido: #1199 835)</p> <p>Edwina Murphy, Louise Pryke, Crystal Hong</p>		
10.30am	<p><i>Morning tea break (Building 526 Level 1)</i></p>		
11.00am	<p>Section: Textual Criticism and Early Translations of the Bible (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Jonathan Thambyrajah (Slido: #5672 072)</p> <p>David Forward <i>Trampling Horn or Trampled Horn? An Upbeat Revision of Daniel 8:10-12 Hiding in OG</i> Sarah Lawson Using Textual Criticism and Early Translations of the Bible to Examine the Semantic Range of Greek Lexemes Ian Young Josephus' Text of Daniel</p>	<p>Section: Feminist Scholarship (room 526.1.03) Presiding: Natalie Mylonas (Slido: #2028 537)</p> <p>Barbara Deutschmann <i>Strange Fruit: Reading Rizpah Through the Lens of Deuteronomy (2 Sam 21:1–14)</i> Margaret Wesley <i>Her Hour has Come (John 16:21): Childbirth Imagery in the Gospel of John</i> Joan Riley <i>Silence. Exploring Mary and Martha in Luke 10.38-42 in a Context of Domestic and Family Violence</i></p>	<p>Section: History of Interpretation (room 531.B1.01) Presiding: Tim Rafferty (Slido: #9007 890)</p> <p>Jonathan C.Y. Lo 'What's in the Word?' Re-reading the relationship between medieval and Reformation Christological hermeneutics through a comparative reading of Bonaventure's and Martin Luther's exegesis of John 15 Tilak Groger <i>That's not Biblical!</i> A proposal for the expansion of what is considered to be "Biblical" in light of scriptural productions from within modernity Stephen Cook "Who knows"? The Hebrew Bible's agnostic redactor</p>
12.30pm	<p><i>Lunch break (Building 526 Level 1)</i></p>		
1.30pm	<p>Section: Textual Criticism and Early Translations of the Bible (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Gareth Wearne (Slido: #3651 214)</p> <p>Evan Caddy <i>Retribution and the Fiery Furnace: a comparison of some ancient editions of Dan 3</i> Jonathan Thambyrajah <i>The Persian Law in Esther and Daniel 6, according to the versions</i> Anne Gardner <i>Isa 66:7: Does zkr Really Mean "Male"?</i></p>	<p>Section: Hebrew Bible (room 526.1.03) Presiding: Louise Pryke (Slido code: #3601 426)</p> <p>Chris Thomson <i>When Is a God Not a God?</i> Tim Rafferty <i>Bless God and die! Why listening to his wife could have saved Job a lot of trouble and strife</i> Alexander McCarron <i>The Phenomenology and Articulation of Despair in the Individual Psalms of Lament</i></p>	
3.00 – 3.15pm	<p>Close (room 526.G.02) Presiding: Stephen Cook and Gareth Wearne</p>		
3.15pm	<p><i>Afternoon tea (Building 526 Level 1)</i></p>		

Abstracts and Bios

Keynote Speakers:

Professor Alanna Nobbs

“What has the Past to offer the Future? Macquarie's Contribution to New Testament and early Christianity in the Context of Australian Scholarship and Beyond”

Professor Alanna Nobbs (AM) completed her PhD at the University of Sydney in 1973, having also studied at Birkbeck, University of London, under Professor Robert Browning. She has taught at the University of Sydney from 1967–1978 and at Macquarie University from 1970–2017. She was head of the Department of Ancient History at Macquarie University from 2000–2011. She was president of the Society for the Study of Early Christianity from 1987–2018, and continues as vice-president. In 2018 she was appointed Professor Emerita at Macquarie University, and a Member of the Order of Australia in 2012 for services to education, the classics, and early Christianity.

Her fields of research include Classical languages (Greek and Latin); Greek papyri especially those documenting the Christianisation of Egypt; late antique and early Byzantine history and historiography; and the historical background of the New Testament and Early Christianity.

Emerita Professor Suzanne Rutland

“What has the Past to offer the Future? The Contribution of the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne to Hebrew Bible and Jewish Studies in the Context of Australian Scholarship and Beyond”

Professor Suzanne Rutland OAM is Professor Emerita at the University of Sydney. She was previously Chair of the Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies, serving in that position for 11 years. She specializes in the history of Australian Jews and religious education. Her works include *Edge of the Diaspora: Two Centuries of Jewish Settlement in Australia*, *The Jews in Australia* and *Let My People Go: The Untold Story of Australia and Soviet Jews, 1959–1989*, (co-written with journalist Sam Lipski). In 2016 she was joint-winner of Australian Prime Minister's Literary Award (Australian History).

She has held numerous leadership positions, including president of the Australian Jewish Historical Society (she has been invited to be patron of Society) and has been the Sydney journal editor since 1991. She has been actively involved with the Australian Association of Jewish Studies, has served as its president and been the convenor of a number of its conferences. She is also a Board Member of the Freilich Project, ANU, Honorary Secretary of the University of Sydney Association of Professors' and a member of Australia's expert delegation of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, as well as being involved with other Jewish community organisations.

Rutland received her B.A. (Hons), M.A. (Hons), and Ph.D. from the University of Sydney. She is a recipient of the Medal of the Order of Australia for “service to Jewish education and history through a range of higher education development roles and as an author and academic, and to the promotion of interfaith relations”.

Hebrew Bible

Tuesday 1.00pm

Megan Turton Let my livestock go! Animals and liberation in the exodus traditions

Abstract: In Exodus 1-15, the Israelite or Hebrew people are freed from their enslavement in Egypt by Yahweh. Yahweh's salvific actions on behalf of the people become the foundation for their entry into covenant (Exod 19:4-5; 20:2), as a people who will serve Yahweh their God instead of Pharaoh (Exod 4:22-23; 7:16, etc.). Yet, the narratives also hint at the effect of Pharaoh's oppressive policies on animals alongside humans, particularly livestock (Exod 8:18; 9:3-7, 8-12; 10:18-21, 25-26; 12:12, 29). Moreover, true liberty from Egypt requires the freeing of human and animal together (Exod 10:24, 26; 11:7, 12:31-32, 38). While some practices and laws appear to assert hierarchical relationships between humans and animals, e.g., the requirements of animal sacrifice (Exod 10:24; 12:46), others blur the boundary between animal and human, e.g., the consecration and dedication of firstborns to Yahweh (Exod 13:2, 22:29-30). This paper utilizes animal studies and liberation criticism to examine the equivalences and distinctions made between humans and animals in the exodus narratives and following laws. I contend that the laws and narratives position human redemption as fundamentally intertwined with the redemption of livestock.

Bio: Megan is the Lecturer in Hebrew Bible and Language at Whitley College, the University of Divinity. She has a PhD in Biblical Studies from the University of Sydney. Her doctoral dissertation on the textual fluidity of law and narrative in Exodus 19–24 will be published through Mohr Siebeck, FAT I. Her research interests include the Pentateuch, the character and functions of biblical law, and ecological hermeneutics.

Martin Shields Just who was Job's Redeemer?

Abstract: "I know that my redeemer lives" has long been read as an expression of Job's profound and unwavering faith, but it turns out such a reading faces insurmountable problems which push us to ask this question again, looking to the historical, social, and cultural context to find our answer. This paper highlights the problem with the "classical" reading and proposes a better answer.

Bio: Completed PhD on Qohelet under the supervision of Ian Young way back in 2006, published by Eisenbrauns under the title "The End of Wisdom". Research has focused on wisdom literature, written numerous journal articles, a few book chapters and so forth.

Zhong Li Legal Equality of the *Gēr* in the Holiness Code Through a Narrative Approach

Abstract: This paper employs a narrative approach to examine the legal and narrative texts pertaining to the *gēr* in the Holiness Code of Leviticus. The analysis commences with an exploration of the *gēr*-related legal texts found in Lev 17:8, 10, 12-13, 15; 18:26; 20:2; and 22:18. These passages are considered within a narrative framework to discern insights regarding the legal equality of the outsiders represented by the *gēr* as residents of Israel in the context of Israelite society. Narrative analysis techniques, including narrative plotting, characterisation, and point of view analysis, are innovatively applied to the legal texts. The legal texts will also be compared and contrasted with a narrative text in Lev 24:10-23.

The paper concludes that the *gēr*, as permanent residents, are subject to the same laws as the Israelite community in the Holiness Code. It is also inferred that they enjoy similar benefits as granted by the law, with the exception of certain covenant privileges reserved for the Israelites, such as land allotments and priesthood.

Bio: I am a PhD student at the University of Divinity, and my research interests include the study of the biblical law in the Pentateuch through a narrative approach. The paper to be presented is a study of biblical law concerning the legal equality of foreigners living in the community of Israel in the Holiness Code.

Wednesday 11.30am

Rachelle Gilmour Drawing for battle: Israel's water rite at Mizpah (1 Sam 7)

Abstract: In 1 Sam 7:6, the people of Israel perform a water rite. After gathering at Mizpah, they draw water and pour it out before Yhwh. In the context of 1 Sam 7:2-6, the rite appears related to repentance, following the removal of Baals and Astartes in v. 4, and preceding a confession of sin in v. 6b. However, any such rite related to repentance is otherwise unknown from the biblical corpus or post-biblical materials.

In this essay, I will suggest that the water rite was part of an early northern Samuel-Saul tradition in which the people gathered to Mizpah for battle, not for repentance, before establishing an altar in its vicinity. The rite was transformed in a Deuteronomistic expansion of the story (vv. 3-4, 6a) to recount a national return from worship of other gods. In its original formulation, before elements of repentance were inserted into the story, the significance of the people's water rite at Mizpah was similar to the significance of David's water pouring at the cave of Adullam in 2 Sam 23:13-17: a libation offering to Yhwh by military men in the context of a Philistine threat.

Bio: Rachelle Gilmour is Bromby Associate Professor of Old Testament at Trinity College, University of Divinity, Melbourne. Her most recent monograph is *Divine Violence in the Book of Samuel* (Oxford University Press, 2021) and she is currently preparing a commentary on 1 Sam 1-15 for the IECOT/IEKAT series (Kohlhammer).

Anthony Rees Migration, Return Migration and the Book of Ruth

Abstract: The Book of Ruth is a story of one family's experience of migration. Forced from their home by famine, Naomi and her husband set out for another land in the hope of crafting a better life for themselves and their sons. Moab, famously antagonistic to the people of Israel across the biblical materials, appear to embrace this family of outsiders. The death of the men in this story, voiceless as they are, creates a new crisis for Naomi, to which she responds with a familiar strategy: [re]migration. This frame shows that Ruth is a text for our time. People are increasingly pushed from their homes; migration and its social effects remain painfully contested discourses; and the experience of so-called "return-migration" has engendered a new set of social difficulties. Far from answering these concerns, Ruth asks more questions about what it means to be traveler, host and kin. In doing so, it helps us to think deeply about our own social location, as well as that of our neighbor.

Bio: Anthony Rees is Senior Lecturer of Old Testament within the School of Theology at Charles Sturt University. Prior to this he taught at Pacific Theological College in Suva, Fiji. He has authored three monographs, the most recent being *Moses: Man Among Men?* (Lexington, 2023).

Emma Austin "Who said anything about safe?": Lions as a Mnemonic for YHWH's Power

Abstract: In C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*, one of the most beloved characters is Aslan, the Great Lion, who Lewis admits to modelling after "the Lion of Judah." Although he is described as large, terrifying and dangerous, in the perspective of the protagonists and readers, Aslan ultimately embodies goodness, wisdom, courage and power. As Mr Beaver says to Lucy, "Course he isn't safe. But he's good." Yet, the biblical authors tend to highlight the fearsome, wild, amoral, predatorial characteristics of lion, rather than anthropomorphised characteristics such as bravery, goodness and wisdom. The purpose of this paper is to apply the availability heuristic on the Hebrew Bible's descriptions of YHWH as a lion. First, I outline the contextual background of lions as the apex predator and a dangerous threat to economic and ecological stability. Then, I analyse the analogous relationship between lions and ancient Near Eastern kings to symbolise authority. Kings were ascribed with leonine characteristics, such as fierce, strong, merciless and magnificent, yet also proved their royal power by hunting and killing lions. Drawing from this background, the purpose of this paper is to explore the effect of the availability heuristic on the Hebrew Bible's perceptions of lions and how they function as a mnemonic for YHWH, who is a dangerous threat to Israel in its rebellion; sovereignly powerful as a royal hunter; and the lion-master who protects Israel from her prowling enemies.

Bio: I am a lecturer in Old Testament at Alphacrucis University College and working on a PhD developing a hermeneutic of memory and nature.

Wednesday 2.00pm

Liz Boase Do We Choose Our Traumas?: On Using the Concept of Chosen Trauma in Jeremiah 40-44

Abstract: One of the complexities of the book of Jeremiah is the shifting identity politics at play in various sections of the book. Who is in and who is out, who is eligible for future divine favour and who is not, is in a constant state of flux. Trauma hermeneutics is one interpretive framework that can shed light on these shifting alliances. This paper draws on the work of Vamik Volkan, a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who has had extensive experience in international negotiation teams working in contexts of large-group conflict in the Middle East, Soviet Union/Russia, the Baltic Republics, and Croatia, amongst others. Volkan has been instrumental in the development of a psycho-political theory which accounts for the role that large-group identity can play when conflict erupts between groups who have previously lived peacefully. The discussion will outline Volkan's theory of the transgenerational transmission of trauma through large-group adoption of chosen traumas and chosen glories, and then apply this theory to a reading of Jeremiah 40-44. While this unit opens with a favourable presentation of the remnant community in Judah under the leadership of Gedaliah, it closes with this same group portrayed as being responsible for the fate of the destroyed and emptied land. Future hope shifts from lying with the remnant community to belonging exclusively with those deported to Babylon.

Bio: Associate Professor Liz Boase is the Dean of the School of Graduate Research at the University of Divinity. Liz has published in the area of Lamentations and in trauma hermeneutics, and is currently a general editor of the Sheffield Phoenix trauma series. She is currently putting the final touches on a monograph for that series which explores five current trauma frameworks in use within biblical studies, exploring the epistemological and interpretive nuances of each. Each approach is illustrated using texts from the book of Jeremiah as a worked example.

Natalie Mylonas Exile and Place Attachment in Ezekiel and Jeremiah

Abstract: This paper considers the representation of Yhwh's city and temple in Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Masoretic Text) through the lens of place attachment. Place attachment is a concept used in the social sciences to understand the emotional bonds that people form with places and the impact these bonds have on feelings of security, wellbeing, and belonging. Place attachments are integral to identity formation. As a result, disruptions in place attachment can cause alienation, grief, and despair if not appropriately negotiated. The paper compares place attachment and the attempt to reconcile loss of place in two key texts that describe the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem: Jeremiah and Ezekiel. It suggests that Ezekiel's representations of Yhwh's city and temple are responses to disruption in place attachment following the Babylonian deportation that seek to reconcile loss and form new attachments by appealing to the emotions of the exiles. Ezekiel's spatial representations of the "old" Jerusalem and temple evoke disgust, anger, and horror, characterizing these places as undesirable. This helps the exiles cope with the lost attachments of city and temple. Ezekiel creates new attachments characterized by security and hope through his redefinition of sacred space (11:16) and through his vision of the new temple and city (chs. 40-48). Jeremiah, on the other hand, negotiates place attachment disruption following the Babylonian invasion by harkening back to an idealised and nostalgic Jerusalem "as it was at first" (33:11). In doing so, Jeremiah tries to reconcile the disruption of place attachment by assuring the exiles such a place will exist again. Interestingly, Jeremiah also encourages the exiles to develop attachment bonds to the land of exile and seek its peace and wellbeing (29:7).

Bio: Dr Natalie F. Mylonas (FHEA) is the founder of Learn Ancient Hebrew Online Education and a sessional academic at Australian Catholic University in the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy. Natalie's research interests include the history of emotions, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, biblical poetry, rabbinic Judaism, early Christianity, and world mythologies. Her latest book is Jerusalem as

Contested Space in Ezekiel: Exilic Encounters with Emotion (The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies) (Bloomsbury: 2023). This book reveals the critical relationship between space, emotion, and identity politics in the Hebrew Bible, using Ezekiel 16 as a case study.

Thomas Elms The death of Belshazzar as an act of sovereignty

Abstract: Following the narratives regarding Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 1-4, reader is left with an incomplete view of the sovereignty of God. Is this God unable to act with swift judgement upon the enemies of his people or will he simply reform the foreign King who reigns over them? Daniel 5 continues to develop the theme of sovereignty with an act of judgment of God upon a king who commits a great act of idolatry. It demonstrates the complete sovereignty of the God of Daniel over the foreign king and ensures that a king who desecrates the vessels of the temple is dealt with swiftly for his crimes. The paper will then explore why this is necessary through a comparative study of the kings of Daniel 1-6 to suggest that the text argues not simply for the sovereignty of Daniel's God, but against the power of foreign kings to rule over the conquered people. It will then put this argument into the context of the rule of Antiochus IV over Jerusalem to understand its significance to those alive in the time of the Daniel B (7-12). This paper develops an argument I make in my PhD thesis regarding the literary function of Daniel A (1-6). Note: My research considers the Masoretic Text of Daniel in its final form and as such does not address the other versions of the text unless necessary.

Bio: Thomas Elms is an Assistant minister in the Anglican Parish of Church Hill, Sydney. He is currently completing his PhD in a literary study of the Book of Daniel at the University of Sydney under the supervision of Ian Young.

Thursday 1.30pm

Chris Thomson When Is a God Not a God?

Abstract: It is increasingly unpopular within biblical studies to see any part of the Hebrew Bible as reflecting a monotheistic faith. One reason for this is that אלהים and other words for "god" are used to refer not only to refer to YHWH, the god of Israel, but also to various other entities, including foreign gods. This is sometimes thought to indicate that YHWH was not seen as ontologically unique. Rather, his uniqueness was one of a unique relation to Israel, or a unique status in relation to other gods. This reasoning reflects an assumption that the Hebrew words for "god" are monosemous, so that to call two entities "god" is to place them in the same category. This paper argues that they are in fact polysemous, and that it cannot be assumed that every "god" is a god in the same sense. A number of passages will be examined in which an entity is said to be both a god and not a god, and it will be argued that such statements are best understood as reflecting a semantic distinction between two senses of "god," rather than an exaggeration for rhetorical effect or an expression of YHWH's exclusive relationship with Israel. This illuminates statements which appear to deny the existence of other gods, some of which occur in close proximity to statements which seemingly acknowledge their existence. It will be concluded that at least some parts of the Hebrew Bible reflect belief in only one god. Moreover, given that such belief is compatible with the use of "god" in other senses, it may be more widespread than previously recognised.

Bio: Chris Thomson has taught biblical studies and biblical languages at Oak Hill College, Moore Theological College, and the universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh, and has also been a Junior Research Fellow at Tyndale House, Cambridge. His PhD was on the Removal of Sin in the Book of Zechariah. His primary research interests are Old Testament theology and biblical languages, with a particular focus on sin and righteousness.

Tim Rafferty Bless God and die! Why listening to his wife could have saved Job a lot of trouble and strife.

Abstract: This paper will argue that the book of Job can be understood as a contest for blessing between Job and the Divine. It will do so by re-examining the traditional "converse translation" of בָּרַךְ in Job

1:11, 2:5, and in the wise words of Job's wife in 2:9, and the role that blessing plays throughout the dialogues and in the epilogue to the book.

Bio: I am a lecturer in Hebrew and Biblical Studies at the University of Sydney where I completed my PhD thesis in 2022.

Alexander McCarron The Phenomenology and Articulation of Despair in the Individual Psalms of Lament

Abstract: Despair and hope shape the countenance of the psalmist, that is the speaker or 'voice', within the individual lament psalms. In Psalms 13 and 22, despair is articulated as a fundamental and consuming experience where God and his covenant, as the psalmist's ground of hope, are challenged and experienced as an impossibility. In this paper, a phenomenological mode of reading, based on Kierkegaard's hope-despair paradigm that was further developed by Anthony Steinbock, is utilized as a way of understanding the shift from lament, or plea/petition, to praise/thanksgiving that is characteristic of these psalms. This phenomenological approach highlights the importance of temporality within these psalms, and the role of the 'past', 'present', and 'future' in articulating and shaping the despair and hope experienced by the psalmist.

The despair is perhaps borne out of a particular moment or event of hopelessness, that is a contextualized experience of adversity or suffering. However, this moment or event is only the means through which the psalmist experiences despair. The despondency of the psalmist's cry of despair is counterbalanced by the hope that the cry places in God's ability to transform the psalmist's predicament, and to liberate the psalmist from their abandonment to the present, which is defined by God's absence and silence. Through this cry of despair, the psalmist ultimately renews their hope for God's expected and imminent intervention. Hope is renewed and the ground of hope is reaffirmed. This paper will propose that a phenomenological approach based on a hope-despair paradigm provides a new and illuminative way of reading the seams and shifts within the Individual Psalms of Lament.

Bio: Dr Alexander McCarron completed a DPhil in Oriental Studies (Semitic Languages) from the University of Oxford in early 2022. His doctoral studies focused on the Enochic Theophany in the Book of the Watchers 1:1-9 (1 Enoch 1:1-9) as it is preserved in the Aramaic fragments of 4Q201 and 4Q204, a Greek version in Codex Panopolitanus, in manuscripts of Ethiopic Enoch, and as quoted in Greek and Latin versions of the Epistle of Jude. This project developed a new text-critical and hermeneutical method for reading variant and fragmented texts and textual traditions that envisaged variant readings as productive and generative features in the life of a text. His first monograph, based on this dissertation, is due to be published with Brill in 2024. His current research focuses on developing a phenomenological approach to interpreting the shifts between lament and praise/thanksgiving in the Individual Psalms of Lament.

Connecting Testaments: Gospel, Prophets, Practice

Tuesday 1.00pm

Jeanette Fogarty A theological exegesis of Genesis 15, with particular reference to the passage's significance for the metanarrative of Scripture.

Abstract: Genesis 15 is pivotal in progressing, and being a herald to, the eschatological plan of God.

Central to the chapter is the Abrahamic covenant cutting ceremony which, while seemingly gruesome to our modern sensibilities, not only ratifies the covenant with Abram but also encapsulates the beauty of the Gospel by implicitly pointing back to the Fall (to the grave consequences of sin – death and separation) and forward to the Cross and the New Covenant (the remedy for sin). Such Christological interpretation stems from a *drohritus* (dramatised curse) understanding of this ancient Near East ceremony and the representative nature of the bi-laterally slaughtered animals and birds which the divine symbols of a smoking torch and flaming oven pass between.

The gospel significance of this chapter is also highlighted through the identification of three sets of key cumulative metanarrative motifs – ‘multiplication and righteous rule’, ‘righteousness by grace through faith’ and ‘faith in the promised seed’. Grounded in the creation mandate to humanity, these motifs point forward to a multitude of people reconciled to God in Christ, ruling righteously in the promised land of the New Creation, God’s Kingdom over all the earth.

Bio: BBus, BTh, MTh (Research) awarded in 2020 from Tabor College, Adelaide (thesis on Genesis 15). Voluntary work as Rector’s Warden and Lay Assistant for St Andrew’s Cronulla and their branch church St James Kurnell in Sydney. Regularly leads and preaches at Kurnell. Lived in various places in Australia and overseas and loves travelling with her husband and spending time with family.

Paul Creevey John’s Realised Eschatology: The Wisdom of God in Action.

Abstract: The links to Wisdom theology in the Fourth Gospel are well presented in scholarship. Yet, in John, Wisdom is not explicitly named and where there are allusions to the Wisdom tradition these links, it can be argued, are in no sense part of her gendered character and cannot be said to be an expression of the feminine aspect of the divine. Despite this objection, this paper will argue that it is clear that John’s Gospel uses a concept and terms that are unique to the Wisdom literature. Jesus speaks of the reign of God (Jn 3:3) an expression only found in the Book of Wisdom (10:10). Similarly, the term “eternity life” (Jn 3:15,16) is unique to the book of Wisdom (5:15), as is the theology of participation now in the life of God. (Jn 4:23; 5:25). This “eternity life” in the book of Wisdom is the quality of life that Sophia offers the righteous in the book of Wisdom (Wis 6:18; 8:17,21) and is a central theme in the Johannine narrative. Hence, this paper will first provide a brief background to the figure of divine Wisdom and possible links to John’s Gospel. Second, it will explore the notion of “eternity life” in the book of Wisdom and that of the Gospel of John. Finally, it will attempt to show that this ‘eternity life’ is reflected in the “realised” or “wisdom” eschatology that is so predominant in John, an eschatology that reflects the wisdom mentality that sees God at the heart of the world. The centrality of God is reflected in Wisdom’s relationship to creation through the sending of the divine ‘Logos’. In the person of Jesus, the realised eschatology in John’s Gospel reveals God as divine love and truth in action.

Bio: I have recently completed my doctoral studies in John's Gospel at KU Leuven in Belgium. I am presently a lecturer at University of Divinity in Melbourne.

Debra Snoddy The Passion Narrative and Johannine Anthropology

Abstract: It may be contentious to say that the Gospel of John is not just about Jesus’ relationship with and in God, it is also about humanity’s relationship with and in God. This paper will prove exactly that. The Gospel begins with the allusion to Genesis’ first creation account, and the Word’s role in creation (Jn 1:1-5). However, this is a “post-fall” account and there is no mention of humanity as the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:28f.). Rather, the world is a place that rejects the Word and the light he brings emphasising both the antipathy of humanity to God and the spatial dichotomy that exists between the human and divine before the incarnation of Word as flesh (Jn 1:9-11). An exploration of the OT roots in the Prophets and the LXX may help the analysis of the Johannine passion to end this spatial and spiritual dichotomy.

The antagonism is rooted in the sin (singular) of humans which John presents as “un-belief” and demonstrates this in the tussling of his characters to believe in Jesus as the Christ of God. Jesus is, therefore, more than the Lamb coming to take away humanity’s sin of unbelief, he is the renovator of relationship with God. The incarnation of Jesus makes possible a true union of humanity and the divine which means that Johannine anthropology is intertwined with Johannine theology, and further, with Johannine soteriology as is clearly demonstrated by Lazarus’s revivification in John 11. The relational aspects of the anthropology, theology and soteriology of John’s Gospel are nowhere more evident than in the Passion Narrative of John. This paper will focus on how the relations are first whispered in John 1 and reverberate throughout John 11 before finding resounding in the events at the foot of the cross in John 19:25b-27.

Bio: Dr. Debra Snoddy is currently employed as lecturer in Biblical Studies at Catholic Institute of Sydney in Strathfield, NSW, Australia teaching both Old and New Testament subjects to seminarians and lay students. Immediately prior this posting she was employed as lecturer in Theology and Biblical Studies at Carlow College, Carlow, Ireland. Previously she had worked as full-time lecturer in Biblical Studies at All Hallows College, Dublin, Ireland from September 2007 to October 2014. At All Hallows she was responsible for developing and delivering courses on the bible especially on the Gospel of John. During her tenure at All Hallows, Debra was also head of the life-long learning programmes which formed part of the School of Adult and Community Learning. In her role as Chair she was responsible for the development of programmes and courses for adult learners returning to education for personal and/ or professional development.

For the four years prior to her career in All Hallows, Debra has worked for the Archdiocese of Armagh as Co-ordinator for the Office of Pastoral Renewal and Family Ministry (OPRFM). Much of her focus there was concentrated in creating and implementing a programme for the development of Parish Pastoral Councils, as well as organising, and providing facilitation for, various diocesan events, having successfully completed training as a professional facilitator in 2006 with the Belgian Institute of Cultural Affairs outreach programme in All Hallows College, Dublin, Ireland. She was awarded the St Patrick's Medal for services to the Archdiocese of Armagh in 2007.

Upon completion of an honours Baccalaureate in Arts and Theology at the Pontifical University, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Debra continued post-graduate studies in Theology and Biblical Studies at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium (KULeuven) and was awarded a Master's Degree in Theology and an STL in Sacred Scripture in 1999. In 2000, she successfully completed a Master's Degree in Family and Sexuality Studies (MSc) in the Faculty of Medicine of KULeuven, Belgium. More recently (2014), Debra has been awarded a PhD and STD from KULeuven, Belgium for her work on the Gospel of John.

Debra is a member of the Research Group for the Study of the Johannine and Pauline Literature at the Faculty of Theology of KULeuven, Belgium as well, the Association for Practical Theology in Oceania the Fellowship for Biblical Studies and the Australian Catholic Biblical Association. Publications include articles and book chapters for national and international publications.

Wednesday 2.00pm

Stefano Salemi "They will look on the one whom they have pierced" (John 19:37): Reading John in the context of Scriptures.

Abstract: This paper intends to investigate how the scene of blood and water, and unbroken bones of Christ at his Death, in the Gospel of John (19:34-37), constitutes a large theme which makes use of an articulated web of HB/OT citations as a frame to interpret the happening of the Cross on the horizon of the New Testament messianic expectation. The text of John uniquely presents this event, stating the fulfilment of Scriptures as its first inner interpretation. Even if it may seem, at first sight, a marginal theological question compared to other major Fourth Gospel themes, this impression has been contradicted by the interest that exegetes of past and present have dedicated to it. An effort has been made to interconnect the scene with a dense plot of interwoven texts from the Pentateuch, in the semantic field of Passover imagery, the wilderness pilgrimage and the feast of the Tabernacles in Exodus and Numbers; or from Genesis, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, in relation to blood-water purification; from the Psalms within the sphere of sin, cleansing, and the death of the righteous one; and from the prophetic texts of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, regarding the fountains of water and the prophecies of Israel's restoration. This paper will discuss this specific rich use of the HB/OT in John, which makes out of the passage of blood-water-bones a re-reading of a set of OT liturgical, historical, psalmodic and prophetic texts.

Bio: Professor Salemi is a scholar of biblical studies, languages, and theology. He has held or continues to hold research posts at various universities, including Harvard, Yale, Oxford, King's College London, Theological Faculty of Apulia, Pretoria, Sheffield, North West University, Sydney College of Divinity, and Jerusalem. He possesses the rare expertise of someone with doctorates from the UK and Italy in

both Theology and Biblical Studies. He teaches and conducts research in the fields of biblical exegesis, hermeneutics, Hebrew and Greek languages and semantics, biblical and systematic-historical theology, reception history, and intertextual studies (Hebrew Bible/Old Testament in the New Testament). He is an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and has taught at various universities, including Oxford and King's College London. His publications include books on Christ's death in John (2014) on Hebrew semantics and Ezekiel (forthcoming), and on the Christology of the cross (forthcoming).

Lydia Gore-Jones Reading Forward and Reading Backward: Intertextual Dialectics in Joel and Acts 2

Abstract: Acts 2, which narrates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost Sunday, Peter's speech and the mass baptism of 3,000, serves as the foundational text that provides the meaning of the Pentecost, especially in the liturgy of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Significantly, that meaning cannot be separate from the intertextual interaction in Acts 2 with Joel 2:28-32 (Joel 3:1-5 Heb). The hermeneutic key to understanding how this intertextual relationship has shaped the meanings of both texts is provided by Christ himself according to Luke, in the journey-to-Emmaus episode: "beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures." The implications of this interpretational principle are twofold: that the gospel events cannot make sense apart from through Israel's scriptures, and that Israel's scriptures can only gain their full potential of meaning when read through a Christological lens in terms of the Messiah's death, resurrection and glorification. This early Christian approach to reading scriptures anew is called "reading backwards" by Richard B. Hays (2014). This paper will present a study of the intertextual dynamics between Acts 2 and the Book of Joel, and endeavour to show how Luke puts his hermeneutic key into practice. His strategy is far from simply citing isolated scriptural texts as predictive proofs; rather, he creates a narrative continuity according to the same pattern of divine promise and salvation. In particular, one discovers intertextuality in Acts 2 and Joel not only at a textual level in the forms of quotation, allusion and echoe, but also at the levels of narrative and liturgical/cultic contexts.

Bio: Lydia Gore-Jones (PhD Macquarie 2018) is Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies at St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College, Sydney College of Divinity. Her research interests are Second Temple Jewish pseudepigrapha, apocalyptic and wisdom texts, and biblical interpretation in Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity.

David Shaw Exodus as the Narrative Framework for 1 Peter's Call to Holiness

Abstract: In this paper, I draw on Narrative Transportation and Social Identity theories to suggest that 1 Peter 1:13-19 presents the Anatolian believers with an abridged history of Israel's most identity-defining moments from the Exodus-wilderness narrative in order to shape their identity and way of life as God's people. I seek to show how these verses encompass all the elements for Peter's readers to be transported into the narrative. Identifiable characters include Israel in Exodus and wilderness; the believers themselves with regards to their present and former lives; God as Father/progenitor, creator, and example of holy character for the church; the forefathers in whose ways the Anatolian believers once walked but have now left behind; and Christ, their resurrected saviour, by whose blood they have been ransomed and adopted into the family of God and subsequent family history.

Bio: Research Fellow at North-West University—Potchefstroom, South Africa, and sessional lecturer at Perth Bible College—Karrinyup, Western Australia. My research interests include narrative and social identity approaches to the New Testament. My forthcoming monograph applies these approaches to 1 Peter.

New Testament

Tuesday 1.00pm

Robert K. McIver “Should Ὑποτασσόμενοι in Eph 5:21 be Considered a Participle used in the Sense of an Imperative or as a Modal Adverbial Participle, and What Does this Mean for the Interpretation and Translation of Eph 5:21-24?”

Abstract: Ὑποτασσόμενοι in Eph 5:21 is considered to be the start of a new paragraph by NA28 UBS4, RSV, NRSV, NIV, etc. In doing so, they treat it as a participle used with the sense of an imperative, as does T. K. Abbott who notes that “From iv. 32 we have a series of precepts expressed in imperatives and participles depending on γίνεσθε, περιπατεῖτε; δοκιμάζοντες, ἐξαγοραζόμενοι, λαλοῦντες. Ver. 18 interrupts the series by a direct imperative, as in vv. 3ff., 12 ff. ... It is therefore quite natural that here, where the participles λαλοῦντες, εὐχαρ., though not put for imperatives, yet from their connexion involve a command, he should make the transition to the new section easy by continuing to use the participle” (Ephesians, p. 164). While it is true that participles can sometimes be used for commands in the NT (e.g. Rom 12:9; Col 3:16), this use of the participle is rare, and I find Abbott’s arguments unconvincing. Instead, I think the progression of participles λαλοῦντες ... ἄδοντες καὶ ψάλλοντες ... εὐχαριστοῦντες ... Ὑποτασσόμενοι is too clear to miss, and that they should all be considered to be modal adverbial participles. Nor am I alone in thinking this (e.g. see commentaries on Eph 5:21 by Schnackenburg [1991] and Snodgrass [1996], as well as 2017 & 2018 articles by Gordan D. Fee and John Anthony Dunne). The paper will also explore what my conclusions means for the interpretation of the contentious passage, Eph 5:21-24 and for managing the translation of a long complex sentence in a manner that is comprehensible to English-speakers.

Bio: I have a PhD in New Testament studies from Andrews University. My areas of research include the Gospel of Matthew, Parables, Historical Jesus etc. The best known of my 7 academic books is probably Memory, “Jesus and the Synoptic Gospels” Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011; Leiden: Brill, 2012. I have published in such journal as JBL, NTS, Colloquium, AUSS, ARSR, AustBR.

Daniel Berchie Rhetorical Analysis of 1 Cor 7:1-40: Paul’s Sexuality and Apostolic Right

Abstract: This paper aims to re-assess the purpose of 1 Cor 7:1–40 from a rhetorical perspective that differs from the typical approaches that focus on Paul’s dealing with possible influences on the audience’s query about sexual attraction. The assessment is done in what is called “a text-centered approach to rhetorical analysis.” Analysis of the language of the text, as well as the rhetorical techniques, reveals Paul’s rhetorical strategy in dealing with the audience’s query (v. 1). It is argued that, contrary to the popular view that Paul sought to align the audience’s sexual attraction, Paul offered a defense for his celibate lifestyle, which the party of the married apostles may have questioned. Paul argues that a celibate lifestyle has a higher value compared with a functional marital lifestyle (1:12; 9:5). This defense strengthens his apostolic ministry among the Corinthians. Paul’s rhetorical strategy appears to have challenged any disdainful look at celibacy as a Christian ethos and thereby extolled celibacy as ideal and enviable. Keywords: celibacy, marriage, sexuality, asceticism, apostolic right, investment,

Bio: Daniel Berchie holds a Ph.D. in biblical studies with New Testament as his specialty from the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Philippines. He is currently teaching at Valley View University. His research includes Pauline hermeneutics and numerology in apocalyptic literature.

Tuesday 3.00pm

Murray Smith “The overseer must be able to teach” (1 Tim 3:2b): διδακτικός as the centre of the character chiasm in 1 Timothy 3:2-7

Abstract: This paper demonstrates that the list of qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:2–7 presents an extended chiasm, in which the adjective διδακτικός (“able to teach”) stands at the centre. Recent discussion of the list has continued to focus on the questions of its genre and possible sources (Paschke 2007;

Goodrich 2013), but given little attention to its internal structure or organizing principle. Some commentators observe that the correspondence between “above reproach” (3:2a) and “well thought of by outsiders” (3:7) provides an outer frame to the list (Johnson 2001; Marshall 2004; Towner 2006). Others note the general contrast between virtues and vices near its center (Danker 2001). Yet others find significance in the number of items in the list (Yarbrough 2018; Bray 2019). The consensus, however, is that the list is not organized according to “any discernible order or logic” (Bray 2019, 184). Thus neither the overall chiasm proposed in this paper, nor the more detailed ordering within it, appear to have been recognized in the reception history of the text, or in the mainstream of modern biblical scholarship. The paper makes its case by engaging the specialist literature on chiasmus (Lund 1942; Welch 1981; Thompson 1995; Porter 1998; Breck 2008) and establishing four criteria for identification. It then demonstrates that 1 Timothy 3:2-7 meets these criteria: the chiasm presents a balanced set of parallels; the second half revisits the elements in the first, complementing and extending them; the whole chiasm focusses on a central point—the overseer’s ability to teach—which highlights a key theme in the letter, and; there are no extraneous elements in the text. Once recognized, this literary structure sheds light on the origins and purpose of the list. In regard to origins, the carefully crafted structure of the list, and its central focus on the overseer’s ability to teach, argues against the view that the list is dependent on Hellenistic *Pflichtenlehre* (“duty codes”), and supports reading it as a distinctively Christian construction. In regard to purpose, the structure highlights the crucial function of the overseer in teaching Christian truth, and clarifies the nature of the “ability” as primarily evangelical and ethical, rather than rhetorical and performative.

Bio: Lecturer in Biblical Theology and Exegesis at Christ College

Sarah Callista Am I A Dog (*anjing*)? Reading Mark 7.24-30 from an Indonesian Peranakan Perspective

Abstract: In Mark 7.24-30, Jesus calls a woman a “dog”, *κυνάρσιον*. From an Indonesian Peranakan perspective – a hybridised identity incorporating native Islamic Indonesians, Dutch colonisers, and Chinese traders – Jesus’ words are self-evidently problematic. Not only is Jesus dehumanising a person, but from an Islamic perspective, dogs are unclean or “haram,” and from a Chinese perspective, dogs are either house pets or potential food, meaning there is no redemptive quality to these words. Readings of the text which minimise or downplay the harm of this word echo the Christian missionaries who degraded Indonesian native people and forced them to assimilate.

The historic interpretation of this name-calling has favoured the dominant voice in the text, the male rabbi, Jesus. Interpreters have largely downplayed the harshness of this saying, rejecting the harm caused by Jesus’ reinscribing of patriarchal and ethnic norms upon woman with hybridised identity. Scholars argue that Jesus is either somehow encouraging faith or using *κυνάρσιον* as a term of endearment. Such readings unconsciously centre Western patriarchal interpretations of Christian texts as normative, rendering everyone else an outsider like the Syrophenician woman, who ultimately disappears from the narrative.

Like other colonised body, the woman is left with no alternative other than to accept the insult in order to achieve good outcome for her daughter; yet her agency in responding causes Jesus to reconsider his normative stances. I suggest that readings which prioritise colonise people’s experiences are necessary to decolonise, though not de-problematise the text.

Bio: I am currently pursuing a Graduate Diploma in Theology at the University of Divinity, where I am conducting a minor thesis on Postcolonial Biblical criticism focusing on the Gospel of Mark. The objective of my research is to submit my minor thesis as a pathway to the PhD program this November. My research interest revolves around the intersectionality of my identity as Indonesian Peranakan woman. I am also particularly interested in examining how history and language are utilized as mechanism of power to dominate biblical interpretations and its implications. Through this research, my aim is to contribute towards decentring and decolonisation of biblical interpretation for Indonesian Bible readers.

Wednesday 2.00pm

Blake Wassell Reasons for reading Josephus' texts next to John's texts

Abstract: As much as New Testament studies owes to Josephus, Johannine scholars have not dedicated much attention to this debt. And when they do turn to him, they often do so only to glean historical background and context, which then provides ostensibly objective grounds for isolating Christian exceptions to non-Christian norms. This is not always the case more widely, of course. Helen Bond and Steven Mason, for instance, attend to literary and rhetorical features of Josephus' texts for the sake of either, as they will usually put it, illuminating New Testament texts or benefitting New Testament studies. Bond and Mason have contributed some representative discussions, but direct Johannine references are scarce, and in more than one case the unique relevance of this evangelist is unexplored. To this scholarship, the paper seeks to add detail relating to the more germane Johannine issues and idiosyncrasies: for example, on Josephus' view of sign prophets and his impact on Luke-Acts, as well as his use of both architectonic literary structure and literary ambiguity. Some narrower investigations from Dutch scholars Willem van Unnik and Jan Willem van Henten will similarly help to fill out the overlaps and possibilities. In short, no one has made any general case for how reading Josephus might illuminate John's texts or benefit Johannine studies. In response, this paper is a step toward justifying a book-length study that would do just that, reading these sets of texts through the lens of Romanness and as expressions of the Flavian propaganda of *Iudaea capta*.

Bio: I research the Romanness of John's gospel, and I have several areas of involvement at Australian Catholic University. At ACU, first, I am responsible for matters of coordination, learning and assessment design, and moderation as the Core Curriculum Academic Officer. I have worked on the topic of modern slavery with the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney through the Stakeholder Engaged Scholarship Unit. I also teach undergraduate and postgraduate units in biblical studies for the National School of Theology. My publications focus on interrelated issues with the Johannine literature – its anti-Jewishness, its overlaps with Josephus, its connections to the synoptics, and its relevance to Australia's settler-colonial heritage in the British empire – in a monograph (with Mohr Siebeck), multiple invited volume chapters, and peer-reviewed articles appearing in top-tier journals such as *New Testament Studies*, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, and *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*. After stints and presentations across Dunedin, Tübingen, North America, and Israel, I also have a strong international network.

Geoffrey Jenkins The Pickle of Petronius and the Dating of Mark.

Abstract: Publius Petronius was President of Syria under Emperors Caligula and Claudius. From the beginning he faced a long-running challenge to his authority, when Caligula required him to install a statue of the Emperor in the Jerusalem Temple. By playing for time, he successfully resisted the Emperor's intention and the enormous statue was never installed. This non-event is described in forensic slow-motion by both Philo and Josephus. Even so, it is reasonable to think that such an extended national crisis, complete with agricultural strike, would scarcely have left its mark on the New Testament, as commonly thought. Or is it?!

Bio: Once upon a time, Senior Lecturer in Semitic Languages and Early Judaism and founding Director of the Centre for Ancient and Classical Languages at the University of Melbourne.

Also Senior Epigrapher of the Dakhleh Oasis Project.

These days, enterprise software developer for a global telco, and

Academic Associate of the Australian Institute of Archaeology.

Gillian Asquith Paul's Unexpected Words: The Persuasive Force of Unexpected Lexical Choices in Paul's Epistolary Formulae

Abstract: Prior scholarship (e.g., Peter Arzt-Grabner, Jeffrey T. Reed, Philip L. Tite, Jeffrey A. D. Weima, John L. White) has compared formulaic elements of the Pauline epistolary prescripts with those in epistolary papyri and demonstrated that Pauline modifications contribute to his discursive self-

positioning and the persuasive force of his letters. However, no studies have explored the possibility of lexical modifications of the remembrance motif (an expression of assurance that a letter-writer remembers the recipients) in the Pauline proemia, and only limited work has been undertaken on the Pauline form of the litotic disclosure formula (οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, variously translated “I do not want you to be uninformed, unaware, ignorant”). This paper presents a multidisciplinary approach synthesising sociolinguistic and semantic evidence from documentary papyri to demonstrate that modification of these two formulae contributes to Paul’s communicative strategy. When Pauline forms of the remembrance motif and litotic disclosure formula are assessed against baselines established by epistolary papyri, they exhibit modifications that exploit epistolary norms by using unexpected, old-fashioned, formal-register lexemes. Paul’s exploitations constitute an emphatic communicative strategy to establish or maintain warm, friendly relations with his recipients and secure their cooperation: i.e., the exploitations function philophronetically. Documentary papyri also indicate that existing semantic understandings of μνεία and ἀδιαλείπτως require revision, and nuances of the lexemes complement the modified remembrance motif’s emphatic philophronesis. The distinctive Pauline form of the litotic disclosure formula anchors the presentation of subsequent information in the positive relationship that exists or that Paul wants to exist with his recipients.

Bio: Gillian Asquith teaches biblical studies at Melbourne School of Theology and has recently completed her doctoral studies at the Australian Catholic University. Gillian’s doctoral thesis, “Paul’s Unexpected Words,” adopted a multi-disciplinary approach synthesising epistolary theory, lexicography, and sociolinguistics to explore how everyday Koine Greek papyri inform our understanding of Paul’s communicative strategy. Her thesis was awarded a Pass Summa Cum Laude. Gillian is a member of the Steering Committee for the Society of Biblical Literature’s Biblical Lexicography program unit.

History of Interpretation

Tuesday 3.00pm

Irene Petrou Sin, Sex, and ‘The Hunger Games’: Maximus and the Parallelism of Psalm 51:5

Abstract: How early theologians spoke of the relationship between sin and sexuality has posed a conundrum to modern thinkers. Today, human sexuality and/or gender identity is intricately bound together, informing all kinds of issues to do with individual and universal human rights. This is counterintuitive to the theological thought of the church fathers, as the historian Peter Brown noted, in their writings the patristics tacitly assumed marriage, sex, and paradise were as incompatible as the idea of paradise is to death itself. Given early Christian reflection on Genesis 1-3, early theologians understood sexual differentiation within a context in which reproduction is seen to carry a double significance. Reproduction not only ensures the continuation of humanity as a species but also sin’s continuation in the world. This is no more evident than in how Maximus the Confessor understood Psalm 51:5, a verse traditionally linked to the classical doctrine of original sin. A look at the Hebrew parallelism in Psalm 51:5 shows that the parallelism is more than simple repetition or merely stylistic. It operates as a linguistic device, which endows imagery to do with sin with amplification, and intensification, which is also maintained in the Greek LXX (Ps. 50:5). The words work to encapsulate a picture of the inward machinations of sin’s ‘pull’/‘force’/‘power’ as a generational legacy already inherent in the human condition from the first moments of human life, a reading of Psalm 51:5 which had long been part of the early church’s scriptural tradition.

Bio: I reside in Sydney. I was awarded a PhD in Ancient History from Macquarie University. I have been working on a revision of my PhD ‘From North Africa to Byzantium and to New England: Augustine, Maximus and Jonathan Edwards on the meaning and shape of Christian Salvation’ for publication as part of an Early Christianity Series.

Simon Holloway “That We are Offerings”: The Use of Biblical Quotation in Diaries and Letters of the Holocaust

Abstract: During the period spanning Hitler’s assumption of power in 1933 until the end of WWII in 1945, Jews throughout Germany and – subsequently – Europe faced unprecedented persecution, leading ultimately to the violent destruction of Jewish communities across the continent. During what came to be known as the Holocaust, some Jews sought refuge in the religious belief that their salvation was at hand, and expressed this in letters that they sent to one another, and to documents that they produced for themselves. Others, trusting more to the power of arms than of prayer, exhorted their brethren to resist by any means necessary – to hide, to flee or if possible to fight.

When considering the documents that they produced, one notices a striking number of biblical quotations. These are at times employed unselfconsciously, as frozen elements of the Hebrew and Yiddish languages. At other times, writers are aware of their deployment of biblical quotations, and do so for rhetorical effect, in order to make or to underscore a point. In other instances still, the use of a biblical quote can serve as a type of code, perhaps enabling the author to say something that one who intercepts the letter will not understand.

In this session, we will consider examples of diaries and letters produced during the Holocaust, and seek to produce a taxonomy of biblical quotations. In identifying the range of ways that the Bible was quoted, we gain an insight into its pre-eminence in many sectors of Jewish life at the time, and into the character of those for whom it was important.

Bio: Dr Simon Holloway is the Manager of Adult Education and Academic Engagement at the Melbourne Holocaust Museum. He holds a PhD in Classical Hebrew and Biblical Studies (University of Sydney), for which he wrote a thesis on the use of metaphors in the Hebrew Bible. Simon is interested in the ways that Biblical metaphor is construed in the rabbinic literature, and the ways in which non-metaphorical passages are treated metaphorically. At present, Simon's interest concerns the employment of biblical and rabbinic passages in diaries and letters produced during the Holocaust.

Wednesday 11.30am

Catherine Ployoust “There will be many wicked elders and shepherds maltreating their sheep” (Asc. Isa. 3.24): The Response of the Ascension of Isaiah to the Emerging Endtimes

Abstract: The Ascension of Isaiah interprets its second-century Christian context as a time early in the eschaton. Religious leaders and rulers are abusing their authority, loving money and the glory of this world. Sorcery, false prophecy and sexual misconduct abound and the righteous remnant is being persecuted. The ground has been laid for the next stage: an Antichrist figure will soon emerge, leading most of the populace astray by causing them to worship him, before the true Christ (“the Beloved”) returns in glory. Such a critique of the current situation is not unusual within early Christian texts, and indeed it is familiar from later centuries too. What is distinctive here is that the argument proceeds on two fronts: there is explicit prophecy of the future relative to early Christian times (seemingly a mix of prophesying *ex eventu* and actually looking forward), but there is also a storyline about Isaiah of Jerusalem, a tale building on canonical Isaiah but with more explicit and detailed prophecy of the coming of the Beloved into the world and through to the culmination of the endtimes. After a fruitful working relationship with the pious King Hezekiah, Isaiah and his fellow prophets are facing severe opposition from wicked King Manasseh. The initial audience for this text is implicitly warned that in a climate of persecution it may need to respond as Isaiah and his companions did: refusing to engage in false worship, resisting evil leaders, withdrawing from the world’s concerns, enduring deprivation, and even facing martyrdom.

Bio: Catherine Ployoust lectures in New Testament at Catholic Theological College, within the University of Divinity. Her research interests include early Jewish and Christian apocalypticism and non-canonical early Christian literature. Among her publications are works on John’s Gospel, gospel infancy traditions, the Acts of Thomas, the Revelation of the Magi, the letters of Paul, and Hebrews.

Ruth Christa Mathieson Seeking the meaning of the missing wedding attire (Matt 22:11-13): A History of Interpretation of ἔνδυμα γάμου

Abstract: Matthew's Parable of the Royal Wedding Feast concludes with the king commanding that a guest who is not wearing suitable wedding attire to be bound and cast out into the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt 22:13). The history of interpretation of what this missing wedding garment represents is a long and varied one. As this paper traces the history of interpretation through the centuries, attention is drawn to how the interpretations are influenced by the parable theories, hermeneutical fashions and theological debates of the time. Attention is given to the discussion about whether the host may have provided the wedding clothes, as well as consideration of the understandings of the wedding clothing as representing baptism, good works, righteousness, repentance and doing the will of the Father. Critique is offered of twentieth century concern that the clothing "simply" be clean and that is about honouring the king. The potential for seeing the wedding clothing as eschatological robes is considered. To conclude there is a focus on Matthean themes rather than Pauline imagery which parallels the twentieth century shift in focus from form to redaction and narrative criticism.

Bio: Principal of St Francis College (Brisbane), University of Divinity. Lecturer in Biblical Studies. Research interests: the Gospel of Matthew, Socio-rhetorical Interpretation.

Paul Creevey The Normativity of the Future: Application to John 20:19-23

Abstract: The term hermeneutics, when applied to biblical texts, has undergone significant changes in emphasis over time (Briggs 2006). One recent approach to reading the sacred text that builds on the work of both Gadamer and Ricœur is that called the Normativity of the Future (NOF) (Beiringer & Elsbernd 2010). It is an approach that affirms the status of scripture as a criterion or rule of faith and life for the reader, but also respects the diverse approaches used by scholars to deepen both the meaning and significance of the bible as being divinely inspired. Several scholars have applied this NOF approach to particular New Testament passages, but none have applied it to John 20. In attempting to provide a NOF reading of John 20:19-23 the first part of the paper outlines briefly the NOF approach. Next, it will consider three elements of the NOF approach as they apply to John 20:19-23: the vision projected by the text; the exclusive and inclusive aspects of the text introduced by interpreters, and its pneumatological vision. John 20 is a text that has at its heart the Johannine community's reflection on the significance of the empty tomb and appearance stories for faith. This paper hopes to argue that through a NOF reading of John 20:19-23, a Johannine pneumatology opens up the joy that leads all people to a future hope, especially those who doubt, whereby they can proclaim in the person of Jesus that sin can be overcome (cf. Jn 20:23).

Bio: I have recently completed doctoral studies at KU Leuven in Belgium in John's Gospel.

Thursday 11.00am

Jonathan C.Y. Lo 'What's in the Word?' Re-reading the relationship between medieval and Reformation Christological hermeneutics through a comparative reading of Bonaventure's and Martin Luther's exegesis of John 15

Abstract: This paper compares treatments of the Johannine image of 'abiding in the vine' by two epochally distant exegetes – medieval Catholic Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (c.1227-1274) and Protestant Reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546). This will help illustrate some of the historical complexity undergirding our hermeneutical heritage.

Bonaventure's Christological exegesis in his commentary on John 15 illumines what is experientially manifest. The physical manifestation of Christ in sacramenta presupposes a metaphysical connection with the biblical reality being considered. Bonaventure juxtaposes biblical image of crushing grapes to produce wine alongside images of planting and watering to initiate readers in the experience of being purged and satisfied in the divine love. The sacramentality of such exegesis differs from later humanist-informed ideals of personal literary formation – discursive selfhood, instead of embodied wisdom regarding things, is the perfection of scriptural understanding.

Luther's sermon on John 15 envisages the experience of being purged by God through suffering by analogy to the imagined experience of a branch being pruned by a vinedresser. The branch, as believer personified, is imaged as questioning the wisdom of its vinedresser just as the suffering believer questions the wisdom of his Creator. Luther uplifts Scripture as a mirror on the believer's thought process in the face of trial. This shapes the believer's thinking as part of a process of forming ideal literary selfhood.

I contend that both treatments concern a different form of relation to the biblical subject, contingent upon a shifting constellation of exegetical and ontological values rather than in an essential change in biblical subject/origin.

Bio: In June 2023, Jonathan Chung-Yan Lo attained a PhD in Historical and Religious Studies from Monash University. Under the supervision of Professor Constant Mews and Dr Matthew Beckmann OFM, Jonathan examined the sapiential hermeneutics, in historical and literary contexts, of thirteenth-century Franciscan theologian Bonaventure of Bagnoregio. Jonathan's inter-disciplinary research demonstrated Bonaventure's unique contribution to the field of medieval exegesis and its relevance for modern reading practice. Jonathan's ongoing research examines the evolving meaning and utility of sapiential hermeneutics through close readings of selected patristic, medieval and contemporary authors, with an aim to bring historical nuance to the terms of contemporary hermeneutical debate.

Tilak Groger That's not Biblical! A proposal for the expansion of what is considered to be "Biblical" in light of scriptural productions from within modernity.

Abstract: The discipline of Biblical Studies is one that is regularly characterised as broad and deeply interdisciplinary, embracing the ambiguities of concepts and terms as central to the field as "the Bible," or "Biblical." This paper critiques the difficulties of this conceptual ambiguity, arguing that such a fluidity in definition provides an invisible rigidity to what is conceptualised as "Biblical" and thus pertinent to Biblical Studies. Taking "Biblical" itself as a meta-genre — a genre constructed as that which contains its respective sub-genres of apocalypse, psalm, history, etc., it is interrogated through a brief discourse analysis to establish its general definitional contours. Using Biblical Apocrypha as a primary boundary marker for this general definition due to the literature's explicit liminal canonical position, a literary comparison is done with select Deuterocanonical/Apocryphal texts — primarily Jubilees and 1 Enoch among others — against scripture produced within the Latter-day Saints and Seventh Day Adventism, literature not seen in current discourse as "Biblical," yet within a Frow-inspired methodology of genre — seeing genre as driven by the individual's desire — can be seen as actively being produced within the "Biblical" meta-genre: thus demonstrating an inconsistency in what is considered "Biblical." This critique eventuates in a proposal of Biblical Studies as having within its scope the literature produced among those traditions and beyond, building upon Bakhtin's emphasis on the fluidity and constant "rebirth" of genre, demonstrating the continuing expansion of Biblical literature into the current day. This not only offers an expanded and more clearly defined conceptualisation of the "Biblical" meta-genre, but also challenges overlooked presuppositions and hegemonies — Protestant and otherwise — that are enabled by vague definitional conceptualisations.

Bio: Tilak Groger has completed a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Studies in Religion as well as Biblical Studies and Classical Hebrew, at The University of Sydney, where he is currently researching his Honours Thesis. The focus of this thesis research is upon the ways that disciplinary conventions and approaches act to marginalise religious communities, specifically New Religious Movements, such as Mormonism and Seventh Day Adventism. A central part of this focus is the construction of new scriptures in these communities, and how they impact the understanding of formation of ancient Biblical literature and sacred historiography, as well as the ways in which power dynamics are construed in order to invalidate these texts.

Stephen Cook “Who knows”? The Hebrew Bible’s agnostic redactor.

Abstract: The Babylonian exile and its aftermath produced a considerable body of biblical literature which could be described as “literature of catastrophe” as it addressed, in various ways, the issues of the destruction of Jerusalem together with its temple and institutions, and the calamitous loss of life, culture and memories. Any discussion of post-exilic theology must take these traumatic events into account, together with their related questions about justice, compassion, God’s covenant relationship with Israel, and theodicy. This paper argues that there are hints in the post-exilic literature that the writer or redactor had doubts about earlier theological certainties and explores some of the texts where the writer’s agnosticism is most evident. It further argues that this suggested agnosticism about God’s care for Israel could also appear in texts attributed to a late redactor of the Pentateuch.

Bio: Stephen Cook is a lecturer in Hebrew and Biblical Studies at the University of Sydney. His PhD thesis was about reading the book of Jonah as satire. His research interests include the use of irony, satire, and humour in the Hebrew Bible.

The Bible and the Ancient World

Wednesday 11.30am

Gareth Wearne National Deities and Cosmology in the Southern Levant during the First Millennium BCE

Abstract: In a well-known text critical variant in Deuteronomy 32:8 (4QDtj, q and some LXX manuscripts), the division of the nations is given an explicitly cosmological framing: “When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the peoples according to the number of the children of God.” The alignment between people groups, territorial divisions, and national deities is also reflected in the epigraphic record. Texts like the Mesha Inscription from Moab and the Cyrus Cylinder suggest the nation-deity cosmology was replicated throughout the southern Levant and the ancient near east more widely. But questions remain: What was the nature and extent of the nation-deity relationship? Since cosmological struggles between deities are generally not described, how was divine power conceptualised and manifest? To what extent was the cosmological ordering construed in terms of geographical delimitation, as distinct from human-divine relationships? And how stable was the nation-deity pairing over time? Drawing primarily on biblical and epigraphic evidence from the Southern Levant, this chapter will explore the cosmological relationships between nations and their gods in the first millennium BCE.

Bio: Gareth Wearne is a Senior Lecturer in biblical studies and the history and archaeology of ancient Israel at the Australian Catholic University. His research focusses on Northwest Semitic epigraphy and early Jewish social history and historiography, with a special focus on the Dead Sea Scrolls. He has particular interests in historiography and the philosophy of history, the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, and the theological implications of the diversity of the biblical traditions.

Lyn Kidson Civilizing Barbarians, Young Women, Young Men and Slaves in Titus: The Power of the Gospel on Roman Crete

Abstract: The quote by Cretan poet Epimenides, “Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons,” in Titus (1:12) leaves many New Testament scholars perplexed. Is Paul (pseudonymous or otherwise) being racist? Some scholars explain any possible racism away while others concede that the pseudonymous writer is indulging in racial stereotyping. He also appears to be returning women, the young, and slaves to the shackles of their traditional social roles by compelling them to achieve what is considered exemplary and urging them to submit to their social superiors. Overall, the response many scholars have to Titus is disappointment because the writer backs away from Paul’s charismatic egalitarianism and capitulates to Roman patriarchal mores. What is disappointing is the lack of interest in the political and social climate of Roman Crete and its relationship to the ethical instructions in Titus. Perplexingly, this occurs whether the scholar thinks the writer is Paul the Apostle

or using his name as a pseudonym. Those who consider Titus to be pseudonymous often dismiss Crete as the setting of the letter (Maier, 2022). However, the ever-changing imperial ideology over the course of the first century may explain the shift in emphasis from Paul's charismatic egalitarianism to one more overtly concerned about imperial values and ethos. In this paper, I will propose that the instructions to the believers in Titus 2 are to be read against the Roman imperial ideology that can be ascertained through the statuary, inscriptions, and the numismatic evidence from Crete.

Bio: Lyn M. Kidson is an Honorary Research Fellow at Macquarie University. She works for the London School of Theology and the Australian College of Theology. She is the author of numerous book chapters and articles. Her dissertation was published under the title *Persuading Shipwrecked Men* (WUNT 526, Mohr Siebeck, 2020). Her research interest focus is primarily on the Pastoral Epistles, but she also researches and writes on numismatics, sexuality and gender.

Christopher Porter Daniel in the Land of the Oniads: Reading Babylonian Tales Against the Background of Ptolemaic Egypt

Abstract: Scholars investigating the literary background of Daniel have again turned to Egypt in search of answers, wondering, for example, whether Mesopotamian influences were mediated by the Land of the Nile rather than Babylon. To extend this train of investigation, we propose that inspiration for Daniel's Babylonian court setting, as well as the animal imagery of chapter 7, came to our author courtesy of the Ptolemies, a Greek dynasty who used a court contest tale set in Babylon to support their political agenda in Egypt.

We sketch out an Egyptian provenance for the book of Daniel on the following grounds: first, the hero evokes the Greek diviner Phippus in the Ptolemaic tract *Liber de Morte*, second, he simultaneously presents as a new Joseph, and third, he announces the establishment of the Oniad temple in Leontopolis. Blending Mesopotamian, Hebrew and Hellenistic elements, the Book of Daniel envisions an alternative temple to Zion, an alternative ruler to David and an Israelite empire with Ptolemaic trappings.

Taken together the Book of Daniel forms a powerful identity formation device for the diaspora community in and around Egypt, offering an apologetic for a non-*Eretz* based system of worship and culture in the context of a Jerusalem temple perceived to be defiled by Antiochus IV.

Bio: Chris Porter is a New Testament scholar working on the Fourth Gospel with a particular emphasis in the intersection of theology and psychology. Previously he has worked in personal and social identity and memory research, and in computational linguistics. Trained in Psychology at ANU he naturally brings a Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, et al) framework to the consideration of the biblical text and theology. His book *Johannine Social Identity Formation after the Fall of the Jerusalem Temple: Negotiating Identity in Crisis* applied a historically embedded social identity analysis to a reading of the Fourth Gospel. Broadly he has an interest in the science informed theology, Christian identity, and the varieties of Second Temple Judaism. Currently he is working on an introduction to Social Identity Theory; theological approaches to social identity formation in the Fourth Gospel; a reception history of the Christology of the Fourth Gospel; and narrative identity construction and Christian formation.

Textual Criticism and Early Translations of the Bible

Thursday 11.00am

David Forward *Trampling Horn or Trampled Horn? An Upbeat Revision of Daniel 8:10-12 Hiding in OG*

Abstract: The study of Daniel 8:10-12, commonly labelled the most difficult passage of the book, is complicated by the divergent witness of the Old Greek (OG). This longer version, which one commentator calls "hopelessly confused," is often ignored as the product of an incompetent translation. Contrary to this position, the proposed paper will argue that the OG preserves a double

reading that can be untangled by applying a simple principle and that it largely reflects Hebrew scribal activity. Once delineated and reconstructed, the OG doublet provides two additional witnesses to Daniel 8:10-12, establishing it as a significant witness to the text.

Bio: David J. Forward is a Sydney-born semitic philologist, graduate of the University of Oxford and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, who is currently completing his PhD dissertation on the compositional formation of the Danieline apocalypses (chs.7-12) under Prof. Michael Segal of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Sarah Lawson Using Textual Criticism and Early Translations of the Bible to Examine the Semantic Range of Greek Lexemes

Abstract: Many of the best techniques from contemporary linguistics for discerning the semantic range of lexemes cannot be applied to ancient languages such as the Koine Greek of the New Testament, so we have to get a little more creative. This paper will present two techniques that can be added to the lexicographer's or exegete's toolbox. First, I propose that textual criticism, in particular textual variants may provide a small window or miniature commentary into how scribes understood certain lexemes. It is well accepted that scribes had a tendency to deliberately simplify difficult readings and words, accidentally substitute near synonyms, or insert misheard or misread lexemes in the process of copying. It is reasonable in such cases to consider whether substituted lexemes may share semantic qualities with the accepted lexeme. Additionally, in cases where we might expect to see variants and do not, it is reasonable to consider that the scribes took particular care in recording the original lexeme for semantic reasons. Second, I propose that the early translations likewise may provide a window or commentary into how the translators understood certain lexemes. Since these versions were made by people for whom Koine was a current, or at least very recent language, their intuitions of appropriate interpretations may be important for determining potential meaning(s) in two ways. First, differences between languages often require creative periphrasis and second, the different semantic possibilities between the various languages' lexemes can help us narrow the possible senses of the original lexeme.

Bio: I am a PhD student with Charles Sturt University studying the semantic range of rare words in the Greek New Testament, specifically in the book of James under Dr. Jeff Aernie and Dr. Chris Fresch. I graduated top of my class from the Bible College of South Australia with a Master of Divinity in 2020 and have been teaching Christian ministry and theology at Certificate III level for the last two years.

Ian Young Josephus' Text of Daniel

Abstract: Josephus' Antiquities 10.186–281 is part way between a version and a commentary on Daniel. While he gives a paraphrase amounting to a commentary on his biblical text, he is also, by his own claim, giving some sort of "exact translation" of the chapter (e.g., Ant 1.17, cf., 10.281). The details of Daniel that can be seen underneath the overlay of Josephus' interpretation are on some points suggestive of a quite different text of Daniel.

Of the visions in chapters 7–12 Josephus only gives extended attention to Daniel chapter 8 (Ant 10.269–276), since it demonstrates Daniel's prophetic abilities without awkwardly prophesying the destruction of his Roman patrons (as he understands a chapter like Dan 7, in accordance with the "western" tradition of interpretation). This paper will discuss significant features of Josephus' (re-)telling of Daniel 8, show his relationships with other known versions of Daniel 8, and analyse cases where he is witnessing to another, unknown version of the chapter. This is an even more interesting question since the Greek versions of Daniel, the Old Greek and Theodotion, at important points present a significantly variant text of Daniel to the Masoretic Text and its relatives the Peshitta and Vulgate. Josephus' text contains important agreements with readings in the Old Greek tradition (e.g., the many horned ram of Dan 8:3), but also significant readings with the Masoretic Text against the Greek traditions (e.g., a small, not strong horn in Dan 8:9). On a number of other occasions, however, Josephus is evidently reading a text of Daniel otherwise lost to the extant manuscript tradition.

Bio: Ian Young is Professor of Biblical Studies at the Australian Catholic University. His research interests include the textual history of the Hebrew Bible, especially the Book of Daniel, and the language of the Hebrew Bible. He is the author of *Diversity in Pre-exilic Hebrew* (Mohr Siebeck), a co-author of *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts* (Routledge) and *Historical Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew* (SBL Press), and editor of *Biblical Hebrew: Studies in Chronology and Typology* (T&T Clark).

Thursday 1.30pm

Evan Caddy Retribution and the Fiery Furnace: a comparison of some ancient editions of Dan 3

Abstract: This paper is a comparative study of the Masoretic Text (MT), Old Greek (OG), Theodotion (Th), and Peshitta (P) editions of Dan 3:22 and Add Dan 3:47–50.

In the story of the Fiery Furnace in Dan 3, the flames of the furnace kill several bystanders (Dan 3:22). A more dramatic version of the same event is described in the Addition to Dan 3:47–50. In MT Dan 3, the furnace is a symbol of Nebuchadnezzar's rage and hubris: its deadliness is juxtaposed with the miraculous salvation of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. On the other hand, in OG, Th, and P, the narrative shows the furnace contributing to an ironic reversal of Nebuchadnezzar's plans; it becomes an instrument of divine retribution against Babylon and the hostile empires it represents. This suggests an effort by the producers of ancient editions to infuse Dan 3 with the broader themes of divine retribution present elsewhere in Daniel and in Second Temple confessor tales.

Bio: PhD student at ACU (North Sydney campus) working on the literature and theology of ancient versions of Daniel 3.

Jonathan Thambyrajah The Persian Law in Esther and Daniel 6, according to the versions

Abstract: The MT of Esther and Daniel 6 have often been interpreted as saying that Persian law could not be changed or revoked. This interpretation goes back at least as far as Josephus. The goal of this paper is to determine the extent to which this interpretative tradition is reflected in the translations and early versions of Esther and Daniel 6 and how these texts conceive of the relationship between Persian law and the events of the stories.

Bio: Jonathan Thambyrajah is the lecturer in Biblical Studies at BBI—TAITE and also teaches Biblical Studies and Hebrew at the University of Sydney. His PhD research on loanwords in Biblical literature was recently published in the LHBOTS series. His research focuses on Biblical languages, translations, and literature in the cross-cultural context of the Second Temple period and its aftermath (particularly Esther). He is also interested in how early translations of Biblical Books reflect the exegesis and interpretation of early Jewish and Christian communities.

Anne Gardner Isa 66:7: Does *zkr* Really Mean “Male”?

Abstract: The Masoretic pointing of *zkr* in Isa 66:7 indicates that it means “male”. This accords with the translation of the word by the Ancient Versions and modern commentators, although the later betray confusion about how the verse should be understood. This chapter demonstrates in multiple ways that Isaiah did not intend *zayin*, *koph*, *resh* to be understood as “male”. When pointed differently, these Hebrew characters lead to an Isaianic chapter located earlier in the work. Further, the three words in Isa 66:7 that relate to birth appear in the same Isaianic chapter. The remaining word in Isa 66:7 occurs in a different earlier chapter but in a context that links closely with the new translation of *zkr*. The understanding of Isa 66:7 resulting from a close study of the language of the verse and its links with earlier Isaianic chapters resolves scholarly confusion about its theology and how it connects with Isa 66:6.

Bio: Anne Gardner is currently teaching part time at Yarra Theological Union, the University of Divinity. She's a specialist in Daniel and has written several articles on the last two chapters of Isaiah.

Feminist Scholarship

Thursday 11.00am

Barbara Deutschmann Strange Fruit: Reading Rizpah Through the Lens of Deuteronomy (2 Sam 21:1–14)

Abstract: 2 Samuel 21 records the story of Rizpah, Saul's pilegeš, who guards the corpses of Saul's sons and grandsons from "the birds of the air . . . by day and the wild animals by night." Rizpah's performed mourning draws attention to the Deuteronomic curse being enacted before them: "Your corpses shall be food for every bird of the air and animal of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away." (Deut 28:26) This paper explores the role being played by Rizpah through the lens of book of Deuteronomy. It argues that Rizpah's actions draw attention to the gaps between the theological and social vision of Deuteronomy and Israel under David's kingship.

Bio: Barbara worked in international development with Interserve and with Tearfund Australia for many years and is now a post-doctoral research associate at Whitley College, and occasional tutor at Trinity College, Melbourne. Her interests include gender in the Hebrew Bible and early Australian feminism and has published a book entitled *Creating in the Garden* (T&T Clark, 2022).

Margaret Wesley Her Hour has Come (John 16:21): Childbirth Imagery in the Gospel of John

Abstract: The centrality of birth imagery is a secret hidden in plain sight in the Fourth Gospel. From the very beginning, the author declares that new birth is experienced by all who receive and believe the Word (John 1:12-13). Nicodemus, in John 3:3, is famously told he must be born again/from above in order to see the Kingdom of God. Beyond these well-known statements we find imagery of birth and nursing in John 1:18, 6:51, 7:37-39, 13:23-25, 19:25-35, 20:17. When these passages are read in isolation, readers may not see how pervasive such imagery is, or how central it is to this Gospel's framing of the invitation to life. When we choose to bring birth imagery into focus, we begin to see how powerfully this Gospel speaks of and to the embodied experience of people who are biologically female. In a Gospel that presents a biologically male saviour in eternal relationship the God he calls his Father, use of birthing and nursing imagery de-centres any implied maleness and makes space for all humanity in the bosom and womb of Triune love. Drawing on the work of Dorothy Lee, Alicia Myers, J. Massyngbaerde Ford, Juliana Claassens and others, this paper will survey the use of birth imagery throughout the Fourth Gospel, noticing the overall impression given by the various ways this thread is woven through the text, and will point toward implications for Christology, Soteriology, Pneumatology and Ecclesiology.

Bio: Rev Dr Margaret Wesley serves as parish priest at St Paul's Anglican Church in the Brisbane suburb of Ashgrove, and lectures in Johannine Literature at St Francis Theological College. Her ThD thesis was published by Wipf & Stock in 2015 as *Son of Mary: The Family of Jesus and the Community of Faith in the Fourth Gospel*, and she continues to be fascinated by the language of family formation and community in the vibrant tapestry that is John's Gospel. Margaret taught across a range of theological disciplines for six years at Mary Andrews College in Sydney, and so developed a love for integrative teaching and learning. Being a pastor and spiritual director as well as a scholar, she is attentive to the ways Scripture draws people from the margins into the delighted heart of God.

Joan Riley Silence. Exploring Mary and Martha in Luke 10.38-42 in a Context of Domestic and Family Violence

Abstract: Silence. Exploring Mary and Martha in Luke 10.38-42 in a Context of Domestic and Family Violence

This paper engages with the well-known passage in Luke's gospel of two sisters who are silent and silenced. It seeks to offer a new angle of approach using social scientific data. The characters are set within their social world and within the gospel narrative. Consideration is given to the Mary and Martha characters in John's gospel along with the conflation of Mary and Mary Magdalene in the gnostic gospel. The approach taken is less concerned with who has taken the better part than how the female characters are read and received both in the church and in the home today. The paper utilises current research into domestic and family violence in faith communities and in wider

Australian culture. The interpretation takes account of a context of violence and seeks to empower women and men to break open the uncomfortable silences and find voice through the text.

Bio: Joan Riley is Principal of St Barnabas College in Adelaide. Her research interests are in New Testament, Ancient Greek language, epigraphical studies of Asia Minor, and the interaction between religious groups in the first three imperial centuries. Her PhD thesis engaged the Christ hymn from the Letter to the Colossians with an oracle of Apollo directed toward the Highest God. More recently she is researching the Church's response to domestic violence.